

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **HADLEIGH JUNIOR SCHOOL**

### **HADLEIGH**

LEA area: Essex

Reporting inspector: Mr David  
Owen - 1957

Unique Reference Number: 115291

Dates of inspection: 29<sup>th</sup>  
November – 3<sup>rd</sup> December 1999

Inspection Number: 186999

Headteacher: Mrs Diane Conway

Under OFSTED contract number:

707330

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:             | Self Governing   |
| Age range of pupils:         | 7 to 11  |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed  |
| School address:              | Church Road,<br>Hadleigh,<br>Benfleet,<br>Essex<br>SS7 2DQ |
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| Appropriate authority:       | Governing Body   |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mrs G. Ellis   |
| Date of previous inspection: | No Previous Inspection                                     |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members   | Subject responsibilities  | Aspect responsibilities  |
|----------------|---|--|
| Mr F.D. Owen   | Mathematics;<br>History.  | Attainment and progress;<br>Teaching.  |
| Mrs E. Fraser  | Equal opportunities.  | Attendance;<br>Support, guidance and pupils' welfare;<br>Partnership with parents and the community.         |
| Mr J. Sangster | Science;<br>Physical education;<br>Religious education.                                       | Attitudes, behaviour and personal development;<br>Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. |
| Mrs G. Plummer | Design and technology;<br>Information technology;<br>Geography;<br>Special educational needs. | Staffing accommodation and learning resources.   |
| Mr M. Woods    | English;<br>Art;<br>Music.  | Leadership and management;<br>The efficiency of the school.  |

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## **MAIN FINDINGS**

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

- The pupils attain above average standards in English. In mathematics attainment is high and in science it is very high. The pupils make good progress in all three subjects. They also make good progress in history where attainment is better than that expected for the age group.
- The pupils with special educational needs make good progress throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching is good in most subjects including English, mathematics and science.
- The school has successfully introduced the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy.
- The school is very well led by the headteacher, the governors and the teachers who co-ordinate subjects and other aspects of school life. All these partners work together well.
- The school is run very efficiently and the standards of financial planning are excellent.
- There are very good arrangements for the training and professional development of the teachers and other members of staff.
- A very good range of extra-curricular activities is provided.
- Good provision is made for pupils' moral and social development.

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

- The school's aims have served the school well but they are now out of date.
- The periods of time devoted to the teaching of literacy and numeracy exceed national recommendations. This allocation contributes to the shortage of time devoted to other subjects most notably religious education.
- The pupils' attainment in religious education does not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus, the range and the quality of resources for the subject are unsatisfactory, and most of the teachers do not have sufficient knowledge about the teaching of the subject.
- In subjects other than English, mathematics and science the level of work is not always closely matched to the needs of individual pupils.

The weaknesses are greatly 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 pupils at the school.

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

There has been a very great improvement in the management of the school and the school's capacity to continue to improve is very good. There have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching and in the pupils' attainment in English, mathematics and science.

The school has successfully addressed all of the key issues identified in the previous inspection report. Development planning is now very good and the school has continued to review and develop policy statements for all curriculum areas. The arrangements for the assessment of the pupils' work are more effective and these assessments are now used well in English, mathematics and science. Teachers' expectations of pupils' performance are higher and standards of attainment have improved in information technology and handwriting. The pupils are now more skilled at finding information and making use of it when conducting their own researches. This is particularly the case in history, and when carrying out investigations in science. However, the pupils still make limited use of the library to retrieve and collate information.

## Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

| Performance in | Compared with<br>all schools | Compared with<br>similar schools | Key  |                             |
|----------------|------------------------------|----------------------------------|--|-----------------------------|
|                |                              |                                  | Very high<br>well above average<br>above average<br>average<br>below average<br>well below average | A*<br>A<br>B<br>C<br>D<br>E |
| English        | B                            | B                                |  |                             |
| Mathematics    | A                            | A                                |  |                             |
| Science        | A*                           | A*                               |  |                             |

In these tests the pupils' attainment was above average in English when compared with all schools and when compared with similar schools. It was well above average in mathematics and very high in science.

As judged during the inspection, the attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is above nationally expected standards in English, mathematics and science. In information technology they reach standards in line with the national expectation for the subject. However, in religious education the attainment of the same pupils is below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus.

## Quality of teaching

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

During the inspection the teaching observed was good in 41 per cent of lessons and in 20 per cent it was very good or excellent.

*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.   |
| Attendance                                      | Good and it makes an important contribution to pupils' progress. Parents keep the school well informed about reasons for absence.   |
| Ethos*  | Good.   |
| Leadership and management                       | The governors, the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the teachers with management responsibilities are very effective in developing the quality of education. Very good leadership and efficient management make a strong contribution to the pupils' progress and to the raising of standards of attainment particularly in English, mathematics and science.  |
| Curriculum                                      | Broad, balanced and relevant. Good provision for English, mathematics and science but unsatisfactory provision for religious education. Planning in some subjects is inappropriately focused on a two year age span rather than each year group.  |
| Pupils with special educational needs           | Good provision is made. The pupils are well supported in lessons. There are good individual and group programmes.   |
| Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development | Good provision for moral and social development. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is sound. However, insufficient attention is paid to developing the pupils' understanding of the richness and diversity of cultures and traditions within Britain.  |
| Staffing, resources and accommodation           | The teaching and non-teaching staff are well qualified to meet the needs of the pupils and the demands of the National Curriculum. The school provides very good opportunities for the training and professional development of staff. The accommodation is adequate for the delivery of the curriculum, although small classrooms adversely affect the efficiency of the school. The range and quality of resources are satisfactory overall but there are not enough books to support research in art, geography and music. |
| 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**

- The high standards attained in English, mathematics and science.
- Their children like attending school.
- The school achieves high standards of behaviour.
- It encourages their children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons.
- It provides an appropriate amount of homework.
- The attitudes and values promoted by the school have a positive effect on their children.
- They find it easy to approach the school if they want to talk about their children.
- They are encouraged to play an active part in school life.

### **What some parents are not happy about**

- The standards attained by the pupils in physical education and music, and the quality of teaching in these subjects.
- That there is too much variation in practice with regard to the completion of reports.
- Inconsistencies in the information sent home, the presentation of newsletters and the frequency of mistakes [the content of newsletters was seen to be good].

The inspectors' judgements support the parents' positive views.

The amount of time allocated to music is less than that for any other subject and there was insufficient inspection evidence to judge attainment. In physical education the attainment of the younger pupils is sometimes below what is expected for their age. However, sound progress is made throughout the school and the older pupils achieve satisfactory standards. Teaching is satisfactory in both music and physical education.

There is no evidence of inconsistent practice in the writing of reports, although information on pupils' progress in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is limited.

The overall quality of information is satisfactory and, although they do contain some mistakes, the newsletters are informative. The Governors' Annual Report and the prospectus do not give a clear picture of the school. The former does not contain all the information that is required by law.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to improve the pupils' attainment which is already above average in English, mathematics and science, the governors, headteacher and staff must:

- Review and revise the school's aims.  
(paragraph: 54)
- Review the effect on the rest of the curriculum of the extensive periods of time devoted to literacy and numeracy.  
(paragraphs: 12, 28)
- Improve the provision which the school makes for religious education by:
  - ◇ ensuring that an appropriate amount of time is allocated to teaching the subject;
  - ◇ enhancing the range and the quality of resources;
  - ◇ increasing the teachers' subject knowledge.(paragraphs: 6, 12, 23, 34, 63, 105, 107, 108)
- Ensure that, as is already the case in English, mathematics and science, the level of work in other subjects is more closely matched to the needs of individual pupils.  
(paragraphs: 12, 23, 29, 99, 105, 107, 110, 112, 115, 121)

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

- The planning in some subjects is not specific to year groups;  
(paragraphs: 29, 30, 100, 110, 115, 121)
- Insufficient attention is paid to developing pupils' understanding of the richness and diversity of cultures and traditions within Britain;  
(paragraph: 37)
- The Governors annual report is not very informative and it does not contain certain required information;  
(paragraphs: 47, 54)
- The prospectus does not give a very full picture of the ethos, aims, and values of the school, or provide details of the curriculum.  
(paragraph: 47)
- In the reports on pupils' progress the information provided in subjects other than English, mathematics and science is limited;  
(paragraph: 48)
- The pupils do not make sufficient use of the enquiry skills they have been taught to conduct research in the library and the range of books to support research in geography, art and music is limited;  
(paragraphs: 9, 63, 65, 69, 71, 121)

## INTRODUCTION

### Characteristics of the school

1. The School, with 300 pupils, is average in size compared with junior schools nationally. Formerly Grant Maintained it is now a Foundation School. It serves Hadleigh in Essex, although approximately 15 per cent of the pupils travel from other towns including Basildon and Shoebury. The pupils live in a mixture of privately owned, rented and local authority properties. They come from a diversity of home backgrounds, socially, economically and educationally. One per cent of pupils are from ethnic minority families but all but one of the pupils come from homes where English is the first language. The overall attainment of the pupils is slightly above average when they enter the school. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs, 16 per cent on the register, is broadly in line with the national average. Two pupils have statements of special educational need which is proportionally below average. 7 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals which is below the national average. The pupil teacher ratio, which takes account of the headteacher and the part-time teachers, is 20.7 to 1 which is well below average for junior schools. The average class size is 25.

2. The school publishes the following set of aims in its prospectus:

- We aim to create a happy, caring and disciplined learning environment which is stimulating, challenging and enjoyable and within which every child can reach their full potential. Staff wish to work in partnership with parents preparing children academically and morally for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of modern adult life.

1. The main educational priorities for the school in the current financial year, as expressed in the school development plan, are as follows:

- The monitoring of homework and the inclusion of homework in medium-term plans.
- In information technology: to develop teacher skills, improve resources and use information technology across the curriculum.
- Monitor the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy.
- Introduce the National Numeracy Strategy.
- In science develop a policy, scheme of work and improve the quality of teaching.
- To consider gender issues when planning lessons.
- Develop target setting.
- Move towards the building of a new school or, failing that, work out a schedule to address what can be afforded in the existing building and investigate ways of remedying problems.
- Research walking buses.
- Research school councils.
- Develop a new pay policy.

## Attainment at Key Stage 2

| Number of registered pupils in final year<br>of Key Stage 2 for the latest report year: |          | Year    | Boys        | Girls   | Total   |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|---------|
|   |          | 99 (98) | 30 (39)     | 25 (22) | 55 (61) |
| <b>National Curriculum Test Results</b>   |          | English | Mathematics | Science |         |
| Number of pupils  | Boys     | 18 (29) | 22 (30)     | 29 (34) |         |
| at NC Level 4 or  | Girls    | 24 (21) | 24 (18)     | 25 (21) |         |
| above   | Total    | 43 (50) | 46 (48)     | 54 (55) |         |
| Percentage at NC  | School   | 78 (82) | 84 (79)     | 98 (90) |         |
| Level 4 or above  | National | 70 (65) | 78 (59)     | 78 (69) |         |
| <b>Teacher Assessments</b>  |          | English | Mathematics | Science |         |
| Number of pupils  | Boys     | 18 (29) | 22 (31)     | 28 (34) |         |
| at NC Level 4 or  | Girls    | 25 (21) | 24 (21)     | 25 (22) |         |
| above   | Total    | 43 (50) | 46 (52)     | 53 (56) |         |
| Percentage at NC  | School   | 78 (82) | 84 (85)     | 98 (93) |         |
| Level 4 or above  | National | 68 (65) | 78 (65)     | 78 (71) |         |

## Attendance

|   |              |                           |     |
|---|--------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Percentage of half days (sessions) missed<br>through absence for the latest complete<br>reporting year: | Authorised   | School                    | %   |
|   | Absence      | National comparative data | 3.7 |
|   | Unauthorised | School                    | 0   |
|   | Absence      | National comparative data | 0.5 |

## Exclusions

|   |              |        |
|---|--------------|--------|
| Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during<br>the previous year: | Fixed period | Number |
|   | Permanent    | 0      |

## Quality of teaching

|   |                        |    |
|---|------------------------|----|
| Percentage of teaching observed which is: |                        | %  |
|   | Very good or better    | 20 |
|   | Satisfactory or better | 97 |
|   | Less than satisfactory | 3  |

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

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

#### **Attainment and progress**

1.The children entering the school have a wide range of abilities, although their overall levels of attainment are somewhat above average for 7 year olds. Effective teaching ensures that the pupils make good progress in English, mathematics and science so that, by the age of 11, they achieve above average standards in these subjects.

2.The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for pupils aged 11 were above average in English when compared with all schools and when compared with similar schools. They were well above average in mathematics and very high in science. Although the results in English showed a slight decline in 1999 those in mathematics and science were better than in 1998. In English the results were well above expectations based on the attainments of the same pupils when they took the tests for 7 year olds in 1995. In mathematics they were very much better than predicted and in science they were very high. Over the period 1996 to 1999 the results in English, mathematics and science have been consistently above average and overall there has been little difference in the performance of girls and boys. However, more detailed considerations by the school indicate that some of the boys perform less well than the girls particularly in English. This has led the school, appropriately, to include in its development plan a target that teachers should give more consideration to gender issues when planning lessons.

3.As judged during the inspection, overall attainment in literacy and numeracy is likely to be above average by the end of Key Stage 2. The attainment of the current Year 6 pupils is above nationally expected standards in English, mathematics and science. Throughout the school the pupils make good progress in speaking and listening, reading, writing, handwriting, spelling, mathematics and science. They make satisfactory progress in information technology and in Year 6 they attain standards in line with the national expectation for the subject. However, in religious education the attainment of the same pupils is below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Throughout the school progress in religious education is unsatisfactory.

4.Pupils make satisfactory progress in art, design and technology, geography, music and physical education. They make good progress in history. The work that the pupils do is as expected for the age group in art and design and technology. Attainment is as expected in physical education, although the younger pupils sometimes underachieve. Attainment is better than expected in geography and history. There was insufficient evidence to make a valid judgement on the pupils' attainment in music.

5.During the inspection no significant difference was seen between the attainment of girls and that of boys. The small number of pupils from ethnic minority groups reach standards similar to those of the other pupils. The pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their prior attainment and towards the targets set in their individual education plans. They make good progress in most lessons particularly in literacy and numeracy. Higher attaining pupils make good progress particularly in English, mathematics and science.

6.Overall standards of attainment have improved considerably since the last inspection. Most notably there have been significant improvements in English, mathematics and science. In response to key issues from the last report there have also been important improvements in information technology and in the pupils' ability to retrieve information for research and enquiry purposes. This improvement in the use of enquiry methods is most noticeable in science and history as the pupils

carry out investigations in the former and conduct their own researches in the latter. However, the pupils still do not make sufficient use of the enquiry skills they have been taught to conduct research in the library. In the context of another key issue the school has ensured that the pupils' handwriting is of a good standard. Work has also improved in history. However, in religious education standards of attainment have declined since the last inspection and the attainment of the younger pupils is now less good in physical education. The work that pupils do in art, design and technology and geography is of similar quality to that observed in the last inspection.

7.The school has developed carefully planned and very effective strategies to raise attainment in English and mathematics using the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. These include careful analyses of test results, the establishment of targets for individual pupils and for the whole school, and the provision of additional support for lower attaining pupils. The targets set are realistic and accurate. In relation to the 1999 National Curriculum tests the school did not reach the target it set for itself in relation to the percentage of pupils who would reach or exceed Level 4 in English in the Key Stage 2 tests. However, this is explained by the fact that the proportion reaching Level 4 had been reduced by the number of pupils who had entered the school in Year 6. Despite this the results in mathematics were above the target set. The school has also effectively developed the use and application of mathematics and experimental and investigative science. All of these factors, together with the arrangements made for co-ordinators to monitor work in their subjects, make a significant contribution to the pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science.

8.The most significant factor in fostering high attainment and good progress is the quality of teaching. This was seen frequently during the inspection. For example, in a mathematics lesson for less able Year 6 pupils progress was very good, because the teacher had had the confidence to change her plans in the light of what she had judged to be poor progress and a lack of understanding in the previous lesson. The good characteristics of this lesson included the following; self evaluation of previous teaching; a good knowledge of the pupils and what they had failed to achieve in a previous lesson; a good knowledge of the subject; confidence to change teaching intentions to meet the perceived needs of the pupils; good activities and effective interaction with the pupils.

9.Extensive periods of time, exceeding those recommended in the National Strategies are devoted to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Consequently the amount of time available for other subjects is limited. Furthermore with the exception of English, mathematics and science the level of work is not usually closely matched to the needs of individual pupils. These factors adversely affect progress and attainment in religious education and other subjects. More specifically in religious education some of the teachers lack the confidence to teach the subject and the range and quality of resources are limited.

10.At a meeting held before the inspection the parents said that they believed standards of attainment were unsatisfactory in music and physical education. The inspection evidence shows that the amount of time allocated to music is less than that for any other subject but there was insufficient inspection evidence to judge attainment. In physical education the attainment of the younger pupils is sometimes below what is expected for their age. The attainment of the older pupils in physical education is satisfactory.

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

11.All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have positive attitudes to learning. They settle quickly when they come into class. They respond well in lessons. They listen attentively and with interest to the teacher and each other, for instance in the shared sessions of the literacy hour. They respect one another's views. They co-operate and work well together, for instance when

carrying out investigations in science or when working on the computer. They share resources and ideas. They show enthusiasm and excitement in lessons, for example when an experiment to create an electrical circuit is successful in a science lesson. They show similar excitement in some mathematics and history lessons. This was evident, for example, in Year 6 as the pupils used sophisticated laptop computers to help them understand the strengths and weaknesses of different types of graphical representation.

12. Pupils' behaviour is good. There have been no exclusions in recent years, and the school's behaviour policy, with its extensive rewards system, is working well. Pupils play well together during breaks in the relatively confined space of the playground. No incidents of harassment or bullying were observed during the inspection, and pupils are confident that any such incidents would be dealt with quickly if they arose. They value the 'bully box', which provides them with confidential opportunities to report bullying. Pupils also behave well in classrooms and around the school during wet breaks when there are plenty of activities to occupy them. They take part in the formulation of class rules and they understand that school rules are for their own protection. Behaviour is monitored well by the headteacher and other members of staff.

13. Relationships in the school are good. Teachers set a good example and pupils respond well. Pupils are supportive of each other and proud of their school. Their personal development is also good. Younger pupils have opportunities for responsibility within their own classes, and older pupils help considerably in the day-to-day running of the school, as monitors for assembly or the tuck shop or performing any of the large number of responsibilities which may be assigned to them. They help younger children in the feeder infant school, for instance during a book week. They respond well to opportunities to contribute to the local community and this enhances their personal development. For instance, they take food from the harvest festival to the homeless centre and they raise money for the local hospice.

14. The good standards of behaviour, positive attitudes to learning and constructive relationships between staff and pupils have been maintained well since the last inspection. Parental views that the school encourages high standards of behaviour and that its attitudes and values have a positive effect on their children are confirmed by the inspection. All this has a positive impact on the standards achieved in the school.

## **Attendance**

1. The overall level of attendance is well above the national average and there is minimal unauthorised absence. The good attendance of the great majority of pupils contributes to their attainment and progress. Parents keep the school well informed about the reasons for any absence, although the school is concerned about the adverse effect when some pupils go on holiday during term time. The punctuality of the great majority of pupils is good. However, attendance statistics are not reported in the Governors' Annual Report to Parents.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

2. Overall, the quality of teaching is good throughout the school and it makes a very significant contribution to the pupils' attainment and progress. The teaching was good, very good or excellent in approximately six lessons out of every ten observed during the inspection. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and information technology but it is unsatisfactory in religious education. Examples of very good teaching were seen in every year group and almost every subject.

3. The teachers have high but realistic expectations of the pupils. There has been a significant improvement since the last inspection particularly in Year 4, where expectations had been low.

Classroom management is effective across the school. Generally, clear routines are set and the teachers encourage good work habits. Standards of discipline are high. The teachers have good knowledge of subjects and how to teach them. They also have a very good understanding of the needs of the age groups they are teaching. The pupils' work is conscientiously marked and sometimes the marking is of very good quality, particularly when it is diagnostic and helps the pupils to improve. Marking is particularly good in mathematics but it is less good in English. The teachers make good use of classroom assistants and parent helpers. Learning resources, including computers and other forms of information technology, are used well.

4. Good teaching in the school is characterised by well-prepared, interesting and appropriate activities; very good relationships between teachers and pupils; and a good balance between direct instruction and exploration and investigation by the pupils. The teachers ensure that the pace of lessons is appropriate, so that whilst pupils do not waste time, they are nevertheless given sufficient opportunity to think about the work they are tackling and to complete it satisfactorily.

5. In the very good and excellent lessons the pupils are often encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning by planning activities alone or with others. This involves them in making decisions and choices, finding out information for themselves and developing their own strategies for solving problems. Another feature which distinguishes the best lessons is the way in which the teachers skilfully assess the pupils' knowledge and understanding and use this effectively as the starting point for further teaching. They do this by asking questions which encourage pupils to explain what they are thinking or what they are trying to do. The pupils make the best progress in the lessons where the teachers are most skilled in this day-to-day assessment.

6. During the inspection, three per cent of lessons had unsatisfactory features which included unimaginative activities and work poorly matched to the needs of some of the pupils. In this very small proportion of lessons the pupils were not motivated to learn and their progress was unsatisfactory. The teaching of religious education is unsatisfactory. Whilst the teachers taking assemblies work hard to provide appropriate experiences in religious education, the subject knowledge of other members of staff is unsatisfactory. Furthermore, an insufficient amount of time is devoted to teaching the subject.

7. The teachers often make good use of other subjects to support the pupils' progress in literacy and numeracy. For example, in Years 5 and 6 work in design and technology provides good opportunities for the pupils to develop their skills in using a ruler to measure in centimetres, and to explore the suitability of cuboids and triangular prisms when making models of Tudor houses. Throughout the school lessons in mathematics make a significant contribution to speaking and listening. In Year 6 history makes a very good contribution to speaking and listening, reading and writing. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has helpfully led to an increased emphasis on pupils developing their own strategies and describing and explaining these to others. The teachers have sensibly started to introduce this emphasis in subjects other than mathematics. Whilst the periods of time set aside for literacy and numeracy lessons, are sometimes longer than the national recommendations the teachers make good use of the time and the subjects are well taught.

8. The pupils with special educational needs are well taught. All teachers and learning support assistants ensure that resources are used well and that the teaching activities meet the needs of the pupils.

9. Homework is very effective and it reinforces and extends significantly what is learnt in school during lessons. There is a high level of consistency in the setting of homework and in the constructive use made of it in school. As well as setting regular homework for reading, spelling and mathematics, good



use is made by the teachers of research that the pupils carry out at home. This was seen, for example, in history where the pupils, as 16<sup>th</sup> Century Spaniards, planned the invasion of England.

10. At the meeting held before the inspection the parents said that they believed that the teaching was unsatisfactory in music and physical education. The inspectors found teaching to be satisfactory in both subjects.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

11. Curriculum provision overall is sound. It is broad and largely balanced and meets statutory requirements in all subjects, except in religious education. A strong curriculum emphasis is placed on literacy, numeracy and science and the school has been successful in raising attainment in these subjects. However, the way the timetable is organised leaves little time for adequate coverage of other subjects. The school's provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is well planned and effective. Sex education and drug misuse are appropriately addressed.

12. Overall the arrangements for ensuring that pupils have equality of access to the curriculum are good. Pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs are given appropriate opportunities to make good progress in literacy, numeracy and science. In Years 3 and 4 lower attaining pupils are given extra targeted support in literacy and numeracy to help them to improve. However, in the other subjects planning does not always sufficiently take into account pupils' differing learning needs across two year age spans and within year groups. At times when work is planned across two year groups the older pupils are not working at a level higher than the younger pupils. Progress is inevitably affected, although the good support given to individuals in lessons is a compensating factor. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. They are well supported, on a one to one basis and within small groups, on specifically designed programmes of work. This ensures they make good progress, particularly in literacy.

13. Since the last inspection the school has made considerable improvements in its approach to curriculum planning. Policy statements and plans have been reviewed. Planning for English, mathematics and science is good. The school has made particularly good use of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy. Examples of good planning are also seen in art, history and geography where plans include what is to be learnt and to be assessed. There is not the same quality of planning in all subjects, however. For instance, plans in design and technology are a collection of activities to be tackled across the school. Whilst the schemes of work for some subjects provide guidance to teachers as to the skills, knowledge and understanding pupils are to acquire in the lower and upper school this is not generally broken down to year groups. The negative impact of this lack of detail was found in Years 3 and 4 where, in information technology, the same work was given to the two year groups. When teachers are not given a clear indication of what should be taught in each year it is difficult for them to ensure that the pupils build on the previous years experiences and thus make good progress. Where a skills list for year groups exists, such as in literacy and numeracy, the school is very successful in promoting good educational standards. Planning overall is satisfactory.

14. The school makes very good provision for extra-curricular activities. A wide range is on offer and these include opportunities to reach higher standards in music through recorder and guitar clubs, the choir and the orchestra. The provision also includes book, chess, games, 'homework' and 'eleven plus' clubs. Extra-curricular activities in sport include football and netball. These are well attended and standards are high. The school also arranges residential visits for pupils.

15. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good and have improved since the last inspection when they were judged to lack co-ordination. Progress is monitored through tests and individual pupil assessments in English, mathematics and science. Samples of work are annotated and levelled according to National Curriculum criteria. Optional national tests are also used in all years to measure year on year the standards pupils are reaching in these subjects. In addition target levels are set at the beginning of the year for all pupils, in mathematics and in key aspects of English. These

developments are having a positive effect on standards of attainment. Teachers regularly moderate pupils' written work in English, mathematics and science to ensure a shared understanding of National Curriculum levels. The school has recently introduced a twice-termly system of assessments for other subjects including information technology and religious education.

16. The school's use of assessments to inform curriculum planning is satisfactory overall. They are effectively used to identify and support pupils with special educational needs and also to identify low attaining pupils who would benefit from support and extension work in literacy and numeracy. Assessments are also used effectively to group pupils for English and set them for mathematics from Year 4 upwards; this is helping the teachers raise standards in these subjects. The school has a very detailed marking policy which has been implemented satisfactorily.

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

17. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. At present the school is conducting a trial whereby religious education is taught through assemblies. In these assemblies the act of collective worship is usually brief, offering limited opportunity for reflection. The quality of collective worship is satisfactory, but its balance is affected by its being tied to the syllabus for religious education, which requires that at least a third of the programme is devoted to religions other than Christianity. This is in conflict with the requirement that collective worship should be predominantly Christian. Since the trial provides limited time for both collective worship and religious education spiritual development in both is barely sound. However, moments of spiritual insight occur in other subjects, for instance in science, where pupils are excited as an electrical circuit is completed and a bulb lights up. They respond similarly when this is extended to work in design and technology and they make an illuminated Christmas card. Teachers do not plan for such moments but they are aware of the areas in which they might arise.

18. Provision for the pupils' moral development is good. Pupils are involved in setting class rules and understand the need for them. The ethos of the school and its behaviour policy encourage pupils to consider the implications of their own behaviour. The school rules, such as 'be friendly', are positive in tone. Pupils are given specific opportunities to appreciate the moral implications of their decisions in discussion sessions known as 'circle time'. They have a good sense of the difference between right and wrong.

19. Provision for the pupils' social development is also good. Again 'circle time' makes a contribution, and there is a good programme of personal and social education, covering such issues as 'stranger danger', friendship, racism and drug misuse, which is valued greatly by parents. All pupils have opportunities to take responsibility by performing particular tasks in the classroom. Older pupils have wider responsibilities within the school. For instance, Year 5 pupils take responsibility for the games cupboard, delivering the equipment that is required by teachers for physical education lessons. Year 6 pupils undertake a large range of tasks including helping with the music in assemblies, helping in the school office at lunchtimes and feeding the guinea pigs. They understand clearly that these tasks must be accomplished properly. In return they receive privileges, such as using the courtyard at lunchtimes. They also help with younger pupils, both within the school and in

the infant school. Their social development is promoted through a wide range of extra-curricular activities, both sporting and cultural, as well as opportunities to take part in competition with other schools in chess, athletics, rugby, football and netball, in which the school has had some considerable success. A residential visit to Dorset offers a good opportunity for pupils in Years 5 and 6 to develop socially as well as contributing to their learning. Pupils become aware of their wider responsibilities in society by raising money for both local and national charities and helping to provide food for the homeless from their harvest festival.

20.Provision for cultural development is satisfactory. There are good opportunities for pupils to visit places of cultural interest locally; for instance the castles in Hadleigh and Colchester, and further afield they visit Kew Gardens. They receive visits from theatre and pantomime groups, a percussionist who conducts workshops, and a local artist. In assemblies the appreciation of music is encouraged as the pupils listen to pieces chosen by members of staff who explain the reasons for their choices. The pupils also have opportunities to appreciate the work of famous artists such as Holbein and Raphael, and they use information technology to produce patterns in the style of Mondrian. Extra-curricular activities give pupils the opportunity to learn two European languages, French and German. The previous inspection found that the school provided insufficient opportunities for the pupils to explore different cultural environments through art and music. Progress has been somewhat limited but pupils are introduced to some aspects of Indian art and music as they study India in geography. Links have been established with a local synagogue, which pupils have visited, and they have listened to a speaker telling Hindu stories, but overall the opportunities to appreciate the richness and diversity of cultures in Britain are still somewhat limited.

### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

21.Support, guidance and the arrangements for pupils' welfare are good and the quality of provision has been maintained since the previous inspection. Parents value the care and concern staff show for the pupils, their well-being and progress. The pupils feel safe and enjoy school and the staff know them well.

22.There are effective procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic progress in English mathematics and science. The resultant assessments are effectively used to inform the planning of work, support for individuals and the grouping of pupils in lessons. However monitoring and academic support are not so well developed in other subjects.

23.There are good systems in place for identifying and supporting pupils with special educational needs and most support takes place in the classroom. The school has a good pastoral care system and outside agencies are appropriately involved in supporting individual pupils' progress. Learning support staff are fully involved in assessing and evaluating the progress of pupils with special educational needs. They support the progress of these pupils well as they work with them in lessons and in withdrawal groups.

24.Procedures for monitoring the pupils' personal development are good. Staff use 'circle time', registration time and lessons to promote pupils' personal and social education. Parents are confident that staff are accessible to pupils and responsive to their needs. Some concerns were expressed by parents over the need for more support when pupils transfer from the infant school and have to cope with a different ethos. There are, in fact, sensitive and well thought out arrangements for the induction of pupils, including visits, meetings and joint activities. The infant and junior schools work closely together to ensure a smooth transfer, and there are effective pastoral and academic links between the two schools.

25.Staff expect a good standard of behaviour and a useful policy emphasises the promotion of positive

attitudes and the reinforcement of good behaviour and effort. A reward system is used effectively to raise pupils' self-esteem and motivate them to succeed. Display is used effectively throughout the school to celebrate pupils' work and achievement. Monitoring of all incidents of unacceptable behaviour or attitudes is very good. Although pupils report that there is some minor bullying at times, they are positive that anti-bullying strategies are effective; they are confident that they can disclose concerns and that staff take appropriate action. The midday assistants are fully involved in promoting positive attitudes and good behaviour over the lunch hour. They work very effectively together as a team, and keep a careful record of any incidents and concerns. However, teachers do not always keep them fully informed about factors that could affect pupils' behaviour or emotional state. Parents are expected to keep the school well informed of reasons for absence. There are effective procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality.

26.The school's arrangements for child protection are good and reflect those adopted by the local area child protection committee and the local education authority procedures; key members of staff have received appropriate training. The programme for personal and social education has been well developed to include a focus on child safety and child protection issues, and this is supported by the use of outside agencies such as the police.

27.The school pays high regard to the safety and well-being of pupils in lessons, around the school and on visits. First-aid staff are well qualified and there are very effective procedures for dealing with and recording accidents, providing treatment and informing parents. There are appropriately qualified first-aid staff on duty throughout the day. The school has effectively re-examined procedures following the recent evacuation of the school after a gas leak. Subject policies and lesson planning take due account of health and safety issues and the site manager carries out regular safety checks.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

28.Since the last inspection the school has maintained and further developed its effective partnership with parents and the community. Parents are confident that they are encouraged to play an active part in school life, and that they can approach the school when they are worried about their children.

29.Some parents express concerns about inconsistencies in the information sent home, the presentation of newsletters and the frequency of mistakes. However, most of them feel that this year there has been an improvement in the quality and amount of information received, including more regular and more informative newsletters. The inspectors found the overall quality of information to be satisfactory. Although the newsletters contain some minor mistakes, they are informative and well presented with photographs and examples of pupils' work.

30.The prospectus, while giving the required statutory information, does not give a very full picture of the ethos, aims, and values of the school, or provide details of the curriculum. The Governors' Annual Report is similarly not particularly informative. Induction meetings, parent consultations and meetings about the curriculum provide useful opportunities to provide parents with information about the school and the progress of their children. However, the school finds attendance at curriculum meetings, such as a recent one on the National Numeracy Strategy to be disappointingly low.

31.There are five parent consultations each year, and an open day. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are involved at an early stage, they attend regular reviews and are consulted over individual education plans. Detailed annual reports are published in the middle of the academic year

and there is an end of year record of attainment and effort. A number of parents are concerned about inconsistent practice in the writing of reports from teacher to teacher. The inspectors found no evidence of this. The information the reports contain on English, mathematics, science and information technology is thorough although there is little focus on targets for development and areas for improvement. The information on other subjects is generally rather bland providing little more than a brief general statement on what pupils have done or enjoyed without reflecting individual strengths or weaknesses.

32.Homework is effective. It is set regularly, it is relevant to lessons and it encourages pupils to conduct research or prepare for a forthcoming area of study. Homework books are used effectively to involve parents in learning and to establish a useful home school dialogue.

33.The school offers a wide range of opportunities for parents to be involved in the life and work of the school. Parents enthusiastically support school events and productions, and attendance at consultations is very good. The teachers and pupils benefit from the commitment and skills of a substantial number of parents and friends who help regularly in lessons, with visits, trips and after school activities. The committed and active school association supports the school with fund-raising activities and puts on a varied and popular programme of social and family events.

34.Links with the community are good. The school has close and effective links both with its feeder infant school and the main receiving secondary schools. Staff in all three phases work effectively to ensure the smooth transfer of pupils. The school is an active member of the local education community, supporting a number of initiatives and joint training sessions to exchange and develop skills, knowledge and expertise.

35.There is a well planned programme of visits both locally and further afield to support many areas of the curriculum, and these are used most effectively to develop and widen pupils' interest in a range of subjects as well as for their personal and social development.

36.The school makes good use of the local community and businesses. Many of the links have developed through personal contacts. Talks by visitors from charities and close links with the local church develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding of society and citizenship. Pupils are involved in, and contribute to, the community, particularly through fund-raising activities for local and national charities.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

37.The headteacher provides very strong leadership and is very well supported by the deputy head teacher and staff with management responsibilities. They, with the support of a well informed and committed governing body, have raised standards of attainment significantly since the last inspection in 1996. They ensure that the school meets all statutory requirements, with the minor exception of some information which is not included in the Governing Body's Annual Report to Parents. Strength of leadership is evident in the shared common purpose that has been developed in recent years and the high degree of consistency with which teachers view their work. A good ethos has been created with positive attitudes, good behaviour and supportive relationships found throughout the school. There are high expectations for pupils' academic and personal development and a firm commitment to equality of opportunity. The brief statement of aims adopted some years ago has served the school well and the values it embraces run through all policy and practice. However, the changes that have taken place in primary education over the past decade are not all reflected in the wording, and the Governing Body has already recognised that the statement should be reviewed.

38.It is in the context of these shared values that the school development plan is drawn up. All those involved in the management of the school exhibit a high awareness of its strengths and weaknesses and are able to make informed contributions to the process. The current plan is detailed, set out in a form that enables regular monitoring and evaluation and exhibits a clear sense of appropriate priorities. It is an effective mechanism for improving the school. Future pressures are anticipated, woven into the plan and effectively integrated with the review and development of present initiatives. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and the introduction of a homework policy are examples of recent school development plan initiatives that have been very successful and are contributing to the raising of standards.

39.The headteacher, senior members of staff and members of the Governing Body have all been involved in the monitoring of teaching and learning. Some evaluation and valuable development arises from this programme. For example, the headteacher became aware of weaknesses in the group work in the literacy hour and a member of the Governing Body realised that expensive computers were not being used most effectively when spread around the school. In both cases remedial action was taken. It has not been possible, as yet, to extend procedures for monitoring and evaluation to all subjects. There are effective systems for headteacher and teacher appraisal, and these are used well to target staff development expenditure to the best effect. All teachers are given opportunities to develop professionally through taking on new responsibilities.

40.The provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed. There is a good policy complying with the national Code of Practice and a systematic and effective approach to monitoring the provision. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is effective and well informed. The chair is the governing body's representative for special educational needs thus indicating the high status given to this aspect of school life.

41.Monitoring and evaluation of pupil performance is rigorous for English and mathematics, where emphasis is upon the improvement of pupils' performance in national testing. Assessment evidence is used well to set targets for individual pupils and for groups. The same energy is not put into analysing performance in other subjects, although planning is carefully scrutinised and most co-ordinators have a good idea of standards in their areas of responsibility.

42.There has been a very great improvement in the management of the school since the last inspection. The governors are much more involved and school development planning is much more effective. There is an atmosphere of high expectation in the school, a healthy sense of critical reflection and a commitment to continuing improvement. The school's capacity to continue to improve is very good.

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

43.The school is well staffed with suitably qualified teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum and the educational needs of the pupils. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are used well, with responsibilities and subject expertise being suitably matched. This ensures that teachers are well supported in subjects and ultimately this has a significant and positive effect on the pupils' attainment. A good proportion of the teachers are very experienced. More recently qualified teachers are well supported by the school, particularly through the mentoring system, and they make a good contribution to the school and its ethos. Special educational needs and support staff are sufficient in number and have relevant experience and training. They make a significant contribution to progress and standards of attainment in literacy and numeracy as they work with lower attaining pupils in Years 3 and 4, and pupils with special educational needs throughout the school. All members of staff have current job descriptions

44.Staff development needs are well met by a very effectively managed staff development programme.

It ensures that staff training is linked closely to priorities identified in the school's development plan, teacher appraisal targets and individual needs. This is an area of improvement since the last inspection. All staff get the opportunity to identify school and personal development priorities and are offered training. Teaching and non-teaching staff make good use of these opportunities. An important and effective part of the professional development programme is regular, protected non-contact time for teachers. Good arrangements are in place for teacher appraisal and there is an effective induction programme.

45. The present accommodation is satisfactory overall and there is sufficient space for the number of pupils on roll and for the effective teaching of all areas of the National Curriculum. The school has done well to overcome some of the disadvantages of having small classrooms. It has achieved this by electing to reduce class sizes but whilst this is the most sensible solution it carries a cost penalty. Not all of the classrooms have sinks and this is an inconvenience to teachers and pupils during practical work. There is a spacious library area which enables whole-class teaching of library skills and independent study to take place effectively. Additionally there is an information technology suite which has made a significant contribution to raising standards in the subject. The room doubles up as a base for special educational needs teaching which ensures that these pupils have good access to the computers. There is a well-equipped treatment room to meet the needs of sick or injured pupils. Displays are used effectively to celebrate and value pupils' work. The building is maintained to a satisfactory level and is kept clean by the site-manager who has done much to improve the accommodation. The school grounds are satisfactorily maintained. There is a large hard playing surface which is more than adequate for games. Tables and seats are provided and so what is a bleak setting. The pleasant quadrangle has a grassed area, an established pond and a weather station. It provides a context for activities in science, art, geography and the wildlife club. The school field though nearby and adequate in size for physical education is not located on site which means a loss of valuable teaching time.

46. Overall, the quantity and quality of learning resources are satisfactory and meet the demands of the National Curriculum. The pupils generally have easy access to all resources including books, audiotapes and the Internet. Resources for teaching mathematics, music and design and technology are good. Those for religious education are unsatisfactory. There is a good range of resources to support the pupils with special educational needs including a number of appropriate computer programs. Classrooms have a satisfactory number of books to support the National Literacy Strategy but the quantity and quality of books in the library are only just satisfactory. The shortage of fiction referred to in the last inspection has been partially addressed but the range of books for research is limited for instance, in geography, art and music. There are a limited number of artefacts within the school but the school makes good use of the County loan service and the teachers' own property. Resources are stretched in history and geography partly because the school has grown but also because the whole of the lower and the upper school cover the same theme at the same time. All resources are easily accessible. The school makes satisfactory use of its environment to provide learning opportunities for the pupils. Effective use is made of visits and visitors to the school.

### **The efficiency of the school**

47. The school is run very efficiently and the quality of financial planning is excellent. The governors have launched a determined campaign to replace the school building. This has required the accumulation of a 'carry-forward' fund that would be sufficient to cover anticipated expenses, if the campaign is successful, or to carry out substantial renovation of the existing building if it is not. Despite this major call on the budget it has still been possible to maintain favourable class sizes, employ part-time teachers to provide class teachers with non-contact time, and make satisfactory

provision for learning resources. However, whilst it is desirable to have small numbers of pupils in each class the school has to a large extent been forced to employ extra teachers because of the size of some of the classrooms. This has limited the school's flexibility in spending and thus it has had an adverse effect on efficiency. The governors maintain an effective overview of the school's financial position through the finance committee. This is made up of well-informed governors with some specialist knowledge represented in their number. The headteacher is given full responsibility for running the school from day to day and, in this task, is supported by a well-qualified part-time finance officer. This officer provides regular financial statements for the Governing Body, and attends the meetings of the finance committee where he acts as clerk. Value for money is assessed through questioning the headteacher on her reports and through a programme of governors' visits to the school.

48. The teachers are very well deployed enabling skills to be used to the best effect. The employment of part-time teachers makes it possible for subject co-ordinators to fulfil some of their responsibilities in school time. The headteacher is active around the school during the day often carrying out her monitoring role. She plays an important part in the teaching programme, covering for teachers who are out of school on courses. This has the double advantage of enabling her to evaluate what is happening in classrooms at the same time as saving expenditure on supply teachers. Setting arrangements are having a positive effect upon standards in mathematics. Resources are stored efficiently, are easy to access and are used well in lessons. The creation of a computer room has made a good contribution to the teaching of information technology. The library is used by all classes every week to good effect, although the school has already recognised, as a result of a library audit, that the area needs to be revitalised if it is to have maximum impact. The pupils do not make sufficient use of the library to conduct research. Administrative and financial procedures are unobtrusive and result in efficient day to day organisation, allowing the teachers to focus on classroom work.

49. Taking into consideration the attainment of pupils upon entry; the attainment, progress, attitudes and behaviour of the pupils; the quality of teaching and overall expenditure the school is judged to provide good value for money.



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

### **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

#### **English**

50.The 1999 National Curriculum tests show pupils attaining, at the end of Key Stage 2, above average results both in relation to all schools nationally and to those in a similar context. This represents a small fall but it does not diminish the school's general record of attainment. The pupils in the 1999 year group reached standards above those suggested by an analysis of their attainment in reading and writing at the end of Key Stage 1. Year 6 pupils have attained at least above, and often well above, national averages over the past four years.

51.Inspection judgements of the attainment of the present Year 6 pupils, based on a much wider range of evidence, show an above average picture. Attainment in speaking and listening, reading and writing are all above average in terms of the proportion of pupils likely to reach the expected level by the end of the school year. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress towards the targets set for them. Higher attaining pupils make good progress.

52.There has been a substantial improvement in standards of attainment since the last inspection. Two key issues from that inspection have been successfully tackled. The standard of handwriting is now good and retrieval skills for enquiry and research purposes are being taught, both in terms of the use of reference books, and of electronically stored information. However, the pupils are not making sufficient use of the skills they have been taught and they lack confidence in the use of the library. This limits the pupils' attainment in reading.

53.In lessons the inspection team found more listening than speaking as a whole. The pupils behave well and have a good attitude to lessons overall; thus they listen carefully. However, the teachers often push activities along too quickly and opportunities for extended speaking are consequently limited. Where lessons are arranged to promote discussion pupils show a generally good understanding of what they hear and make good progress in explaining their thoughts and ideas. In history lessons pupils are often given time to express themselves at length, thus consolidating their historical understanding through extended speaking. In one example, the pupils' attainment in speaking and listening was very good as they discussed in groups the differences between the rich and the poor in Tudor times. Teachers have increased the amount of direct teaching they do, notably through the literacy hour, and in numeracy sessions the pupils are very appropriately required to explain the mathematical strategies they are using as they calculate in their heads. These two developments are having a positive effect upon standards in speaking and listening. Pupils in Year 6 are making good progress and are on course to attain standards above the national average in speaking and listening by the end of the year.

54.Reading interviews carried out with pupils from each year group confirm the school's own assessments of attainment in reading. Most pupils make good progress overall between Years 3 and 6. There is a steady improvement in the accuracy and fluency of reading and in the ability to tackle difficult words. The pupils' understanding of text grows with age, as does the ability to discuss the content. Older pupils are showing an appreciation of ideas and characters and are developing preferences for certain types of books. A very good example of an appreciation of poetry was seen in a literacy lesson in Year 6 when pupils showed that they recognised different styles of writing and had a growing understanding of the power of the language used. Generally pupils have a limited knowledge of authors and their work. Those with the deepest knowledge own many books of their

own and to use the local library. Where teachers make time, in a relaxed atmosphere, to share good literature with their classes, this has a beneficial effect upon pupils' attitudes to books and their motivation to read more widely. There is satisfactory progress in the ability to locate stored information, although little evidence that this is a frequent activity. This limits pupils' progress in the higher skills of reading. Pupils in their final year of Key Stage 2 are making good progress overall and are on course to be reading above the level expected for their ages by the end of the year.

55. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in writing for a wide variety of purposes. They are developing an appreciation of the need to vary tone, style and format to meet the needs of different audiences. They plan their work well and they can draft and revise it. They are using punctuation with increasing appropriateness. The accuracy of their spelling improves, although that seen in the pupils' written work is only satisfactory compared with the good standards achieved in exercises and tests. Handwriting and the quality of presentation are good. Past work from Year 6 includes well argued cases for social reform, promoted by the challenge of 'Changes I would make if I became King/Queen'; well ordered recording of scientific experiments, which includes good use of scientific vocabulary; autobiographies and biographies; and an anthology of poetry exhibiting a high level of descriptive vocabulary. Pupils write frequently, at length and to a good standard. Written work is frequently set for pupils to complete at home. This is a valuable routine and helps to raise standards. Pupils in their final year of Key Stage 2 are on course to be writing at a standard above the national average by the end of the year.

56. The response of pupils to English lessons is, in the great majority of cases, good or very good. This helps to create a good classroom ethos in which learning can take place. The pupils behave well, are sensible and attentive and keen to take part in discussion. Written tasks are completed carefully, including those done in unsupervised groups. However, when attention strays, it is usually in group-work. A small number of pupils lose concentration and their rate of work becomes slow.

57. The quality of teaching is good. Most teachers have very natural relationships with their classes. After three months together, expectations are understood and classroom routines are set. Teachers are well supported by the National Literacy Strategy framework and in most cases have developed detailed plans to guide their lessons. They are well-prepared, confident and teach in a lively manner. The most confident teachers have modified the format of the National Literacy Strategy in favour of seeking a balance of activities over time. This is thought about carefully and is successful. One of the best lessons retained its theme of non-fiction writing throughout the shared text and word work sessions, through group work and into the plenary time. Pupils were clear about their tasks throughout and benefited from the consolidation of the shared plenary. This willingness to adjust the use of time ensures that the pupils have long enough to produce extended pieces of writing and to draft and revise their work. In some lessons, where the links between the different parts of the lesson are not clear, pupils are not as well motivated and can drift off task.

58. Teachers are very conscientious about marking and monitor pupils' work regularly. However, there is wide variety in the quality of comments made and no evidence that targets are set for pupils as a result of teachers' findings. Time has been found to teach handwriting, spelling and library skills and this is improving standards of attainment. Group reading has largely taken the place of individual reading and teachers are finding it difficult to offer less confident readers the support and guidance they need outside of the literacy hour. It is part of the English co-ordinator's action plan to tackle this problem. Generally there is good use of homework. However, although homework books show some evidence of interaction between school and home in relation to reading, teachers rarely make suggestions to parents which are specific to their children. More able readers usually select their own books and are not always challenged and stimulated to read widely.

59. Pupils with special educational needs are always given work to suit their levels of attainment and are supported well in lessons. Additional literacy support is provided for small groups of pupils who are not on course to attain appropriate levels in English. Support assistants are effective in providing intensive, well-focused tasks using resources specific to the needs of the pupils.

60.The recently conducted library audit confirms the view of the inspection team that, despite considerable spending in recent years, the library is only just adequate for a junior school of this size. The area is not attractive and welcoming, shelving is poorly labelled and much of the stock is well worn. The fiction library does not provide sufficient range and variety of books to stimulate the reading of able pupils over a four-year period. Several sections of the non-fiction library are inadequately stocked; particularly in the arts. There is no system to monitor and track loans and therefore the effectiveness of the library cannot be monitored. The co-ordinator is well informed and very organised. Her monitoring activities have identified most of the steps that need to be taken to develop and improve the subject.

## **Mathematics**

61.The 1999 National Curriculum test results indicate that at the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils' attainment was well above average when compared with all schools and when compared with schools which have pupils from similar backgrounds. Over the period 1996-1999 attainment, as measured by the tests, has been consistently above the national average. The 1999 results were well above expectations based on the attainments of the same pupils when they took the tests for seven year olds in 1995. During the inspection the attainment of the pupils in the current Year 6 was above the national expectation in numeracy and other aspects of mathematics. Thus standards are being maintained despite the fact that there is a higher proportion of less able pupils in the year group.

62.Throughout the school the pupils confidently carry out mental and written calculations. They have a good knowledge of technical vocabulary, as was shown by Year 6 pupils when they discussed the mean, mode and median as different measures of average. The pupils understand the work set for them. They also exercise initiative and develop strategies of their own. They have a very good understanding of the number system, they know important numerical facts, including those for multiplication, and they can use mathematical equipment and apparatus well. They skilfully make use of their mathematical knowledge in other subjects. For example, during the inspection Year 5 pupils used their knowledge of scale to help them calculate distances on a map in geography.

63.By the end of Key Stage 2 the pupils demonstrate above average attainment in a wide range of mathematical activities. Their knowledge of mathematics covers all aspects appropriate to their age. They have well-developed investigative skills which enable them to look for patterns and check outcomes in the light of their forecasts. They have a good understanding of the interrelationships between fractions, decimals and percentages. They can discuss with confidence various ways of representing data. They have good skills when calculating mentally and on paper. However, they rarely demonstrate that they know when and how to use a calculator.

64.Pupils of all abilities including those with special educational needs and higher attainers make good progress. In some lessons, the rate of progress is very good. In Year 6, for example, the pupils with above average attainment increased their knowledge of average as a statistical measure, became more skilled at using information technology to support their work and developed their ability to communicate their findings to other children. In another Year 6 set the least able pupils also made very good progress in refining their understanding of fractions, improving their skills in measuring length and developing an understanding of decimals. The pupils' numeracy skills develop well as they move up through the school. In particular they learn about the connections between addition, subtraction, multiplication and division and use these and other number facts to develop and improve their ability to calculate. Progress in other aspects of mathematics is also good as the pupils learn new ideas, sometimes from one another, and develop the ability to make the best use of what they already know. They become increasingly skilled at making decisions and choices. Clear progression between age groups is seen.

65.Throughout the school the pupils respond well. They are attentive and they are interested in their work. They participate enthusiastically and they are willing to 'have a go' mainly because they know that their contributions will be treated with respect by both the teacher and fellow pupils. They are very

well behaved. They respond well in whole class lessons and they work hard individually and in small groups where they share ideas and challenge one another's thinking. There is always a pleasant atmosphere in mathematics lessons and pupils relate very well to one another.

66.The quality of teaching is good overall and it makes a very significant contribution to the pupils' attainment, attitudes and progress. During the inspection it was good or very good in 75 per cent of the lessons seen. It was particularly good in Year 6. The main strengths of the teaching include very good relationships with the pupils, the provision of well prepared, interesting and appropriate activities and a good knowledge of the subject and how to teach it. Deceptively simple strategies are used to motivate pupils. For example, in one lesson in Year 3 the pupils were very keen on division because of the sharing of chocolate biscuits which had taken place! The teachers make sure that the correct mathematical vocabulary is used in lessons. They have high expectations of the pupils. The marking of pupils' work is very effective and very good use is made of homework. Resources ranging from simple number cards to sophisticated laptop computers are used very effectively.

67.In the best lessons the teachers are skilled questioners, observers and listeners. They use these skills to find out what the pupils know and then use the information to provide a starting point for further teaching either immediately or sometimes in a subsequent lesson. They evaluate their own teaching and revise plans where necessary. They encourage the pupils to think and they provide them with appropriate opportunities to develop strategies and make decisions and choices. The methods employed are good and the teachers have a very good understanding of the needs of their pupils.

68.Good attention is given to the teaching of numeracy and the teachers have been particularly successful in developing the pupils' skills in mental calculation. They ensure that they teach the pupils specific strategies for calculating and provide good opportunities for the pupils to develop their own methods. Games are used effectively in some lessons to help the pupils to practise their skills in mental arithmetic. However, insufficient opportunities are provided for the pupils to use calculators either in mathematics or in other subjects.

69.The work in mathematics meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. Many lessons provide good contexts for speaking and listening, and therefore, make a good contribution to the pupils' skills in literacy.

70.Factors which contribute well to high attainment include effective leadership in the subject, consistently good teaching, good resources and the very efficient monitoring of teaching and the pupils' attainment. The system for setting the pupils on the basis of prior attainment in Years 4, 5 and 6 works well because the teachers pay careful attention to the progress of individuals within a set. Standards of attainment have been improved since the last inspection when they were judged to be sound.

## **Science**

71.In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2 the number of pupils achieving the expected level was very high compared both with all schools and with similar schools. More than half the pupils, well above the national average, achieved the higher Level 5. Although the results for the previous three years were consistently above average, the results for 1999 showed an improvement. The pupils' attainment is also very high in comparison with that expected from these pupils' National Curriculum assessments at the end of Key Stage 1. The evidence of the inspection indicated that pupils' attainment in Year 6 remains above average but not at the high level of the previous year. This is largely due to the composition of this particular year group. It still shows an improvement since the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be average.

72.Pupils develop good investigative skills. In Year 3 pupils set out their work, for instance on light, according to an investigation plan. They are able to predict which materials will complete an electric

circuit. In Year 4 they are able to choose their own materials to make a switch in an electric circuit, although not all predict accurately which materials will be conductors and which insulators. By Year 5 they have a satisfactory understanding of what constitutes a fair test and understand variables. In Year 6 they plan their own investigations, devise their own methods of recording and are able to draw appropriate conclusions, for instance from an investigation into floating and sinking. By the end of the key stage they have developed good investigative skills and have a good understanding of a fair test.

73. There had been a focus on physical processes in the term of the inspection. In Year 3 pupils show a good understanding of the principles of electrical circuits, and that some materials conduct electricity and others do not. Pupils in Year 4 understand how to construct an electrical circuit, and higher attaining pupils do so successfully. In Year 5 they show a good understanding of forces such as gravity or air resistance when constructing parachutes, or of the difference between transparent, translucent and opaque materials when studying light. At the end of the key stage, in Year 6, they have a good understanding of the forces involved in levers and pivots and in floating and sinking. All pupils, both boys and girls, make good progress through the school. Progress is promoted by careful planning by the teachers, the good use of resources and the good support given to individual pupils and groups.

74. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Younger pupils become very excited when an experiment to light a bulb is successful. They work well together at tasks, such as completing an electrical circuit, and they co-operate well in choosing materials. Older pupils are very attentive and respond well in discussions. They work well independently, but also co-operate well, for instance when discussing how to carry out an investigation. They are keen to complete their recording, even when it means continuing the work into break time.

75. The quality of teaching is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed during the inspection and there was some very good teaching. Most teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and use questions well to extend pupils' thinking, particularly in investigative work. They give clear explanations of concepts such as gravity and air resistance. They plan lessons well ensuring that there are extension tasks for higher attaining pupils. Resources are prepared and used well in investigations. Teachers monitor the work of groups and individuals in the class well and intervene appropriately when it is clear that some pupils have not understood what they are doing.

76. The previous inspection criticised a lack of open-ended investigational work. This issue has been addressed and the teachers plan well for the development of investigative skills. The recently appointed co-ordinator manages the subject well. The work planned covers the National Curriculum programmes of study and there are good arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment. The results of statutory assessments are analysed, for instance to highlight any differences between boys and girls. The subject provides good opportunities for pupils' social development, for instance when they work together in investigations. It makes a good contribution to developing the pupils' skills in literacy as they discuss their investigations and record their findings. Good contributions are also made to numeracy as the pupils measure and as they record their findings graphically. There is a satisfactory range of equipment for the teaching of science, which is easily accessible to staff. The accommodation is supplemented by the wildlife area which is being developed in the school quadrangle as an extra-curricular activity. These factors make a good contribution to attainment and progress.

## Information technology

77. At the time of the last inspection standards in information technology were unsatisfactory. There was a lack of progression in developing the pupils' computer skills throughout the school, the use of software was not planned into the curriculum, and there were no records of what pupils had covered or could do. These issues have all been addressed and good improvements have been made.

78. Overall standards in information technology at the end of the Key Stage 2 are in line with the national expectation. Standards are above those expected in relation to the pupils' skills in communicating information. In data handling, controlling and modelling they match what is expected of pupils aged 11 years. Year 6 pupils are confident computer users. Most can open 'Microsoft Word 6' and in relation to their age they can type script accurately taking account of the importance of layout, as in a poem or a poster. The basic functions of 'Microsoft Publisher' are understood and can be used successfully to create a page for a newspaper or an advert. The pupils are competent in using graphics and inserting pictures into text. They also know how to position and rotate text and images. They can successfully change the properties of text, including print size and style, and save, load, and print from a disk. They can produce graphs and tables of results and give a series of instructions to achieve specific outcomes when using a programmable robot. The pupils scan photographs when writing their autobiographies.

79. The pupils make satisfactory progress in most aspects of information technology including data handling, modelling and control technology. They make good progress when communicating information, particularly at the beginning and end of the key stage. They also make good progress in using a keyboard, in word processing and in the use of graphics. For instance, in Years 3 and 4 pupils used 'colour magic' icons to create complex screen designs, they selected colours well, and were beginning to combine images and text. As they move up the school they become increasingly confident and more independent in generating multimedia presentations. Their ability to use a key board quickly and accurately increases significantly as does their understanding of menus.

80. In lessons the pupils' attitudes to information technology and its applications are always good and often very good. They organise themselves quickly and use the computers sensibly when working in the computer suite. They are very enthusiastic and get on with their work, demonstrating good levels of concentration and perseverance. They work very well in pairs; taking turns, sharing ideas and giving each other instructions as they review and improve their work. Their behaviour is good. Pupils are respectful to one another and to teachers.

81. Overall the teaching is good with some very good teaching in Year 6. Learning objectives make it very clear what the pupils are to know, understand and do as a result of the lesson. Learning activities are well structured to ensure that the pupils make good progress and clear assessments are identified which are directly related to what has taken place in the lesson. The teachers' subject knowledge is good. They effectively use correct terminology to enhance the pupils' knowledge and understanding; for example 'text', 'frame', 'font' and 'icon'. High expectations are evident in the nature of the tasks set. For instance, pupils in Year 6 are expected to be able to explain procedures as well as use them. Questions are used effectively. For example, a teacher asks "How can we make it better?" Lower attaining pupils, including those with special educational needs, are well supported. All teachers manage pupils well through positive feedback and by having high expectations of behaviour.

82. The pace of all lessons is good and usually a number of pupils complete the set task before the end of the lesson. However, extension work is not always planned with higher attaining pupils in mind and sometimes it does not demand a higher level of skill. Though informal assessments of pupils are made, much reliance is placed on pupils working at their own level. While this is generally effective, in a number of instances higher attaining pupils do not produce standards of work which reflect their abilities.

83. The co-ordinator had a clear vision of what had to be addressed following the last inspection report

and has successfully improved standards in information technology. Professional development has been provided to improve teaching skills and the use of information technology in other subjects is well planned. The scheme of work offers good support for teachers by setting out the skills to be taught in the lower and upper school. However, it does not make it clear what it is to be learnt in each year group. The negative impact of this on pupils' progress is found in Year 3 and 4 where the work given to the two year groups is at the same level of difficulty.

84.Resources are adequate. The computers are housed in a very useful information technology suite and laptops are used in the classrooms in Year 6. A computer located in the library allows pupils access to the Internet. Other items include a laser scanner and an ion camera. There is a satisfactory range of software, including CD-ROM disks. There are some good programmes for supporting pupils with special educational needs.

85.Word processing skills are making a good contribution to developing pupils' literacy skills across the school whilst numeracy skills are well supported through data handling activities and control programmes.

### **Religious education**

86.At the time of the inspection religious education was being taught only through assemblies, which included four whole school assemblies and one class assembly a week. There was no opportunity during the inspection to observe class teaching. However, inspectors examined pupils' written work from last year and this year, attended assemblies and held discussions with pupils and staff. From this evidence pupils' attainment does not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2.

87.Pupils in Year 6 have a limited recall of the theme of the current week's or previous weeks' assembly themes. For instance, they cannot recall the name or details of the Hindu festival Divali. They can recall some details of the Ramayana from work in drama in a previous year which was related to a topic on India. They do not recognise Hanukkah as a Jewish festival, and only about half recognise that the Jewish Sabbath is Saturday. They do not understand that the Jewish law is part of the Old Testament. They know about Christian baptism but do not know about confirmation or Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah. Pupils can identify items of church furniture but do not know their significance in worship. Only a small minority of pupils show an understanding of the significance of religious belief to an adherent of a faith.

88.Progress in religious education is unsatisfactory. The same theme is taught each week to lower and upper juniors in four out of the five assemblies. In the fifth, class assembly there are different approaches, but there are insufficient opportunities for teachers to match work to the needs of individual pupils. In past years there has been no clear planning to develop pupils' understanding and skills, and the present strategy is an attempt to address this. However, the time allocated to religious education is less than that recommended in the agreed syllabus. The school does not follow the guidance of the syllabus that only some of the religious education curriculum may be taught through assemblies, that those parts of the programmes of study should be clearly identified and that all teachers should be present in assemblies when they are being delivered. The school has introduced a series of assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, these are not as yet sufficiently well developed to support teachers in planning the next stage of pupils' work. In particular they are not linked to the end of key stage statement of the Agreed Syllabus.

89.Pupils' attitudes in the assemblies observed were satisfactory. They were mostly keen to answer questions but a significant minority of older pupils find it difficult to maintain concentration throughout. Pupils with whom discussions were held had reasonably positive attitudes to the subject.

90.The teaching of the subject only through assemblies is unsatisfactory because the teachers cannot match the work to the needs of all pupils and there is insufficient opportunity to assess the response and

understanding of all pupils. From discussions with pupils and staff and looking at pupils' work, it appears that teaching has been of an uneven quality, although there has been some good teaching through other subjects especially geography. Misunderstandings in pupils' written work are rarely corrected, although spelling errors sometimes are, and there is a lack of adequate subject knowledge among the teachers.

91. The school has some artefacts but the range of books is limited, particularly for religions other than Christianity. This lack of books makes it difficult for pupils to undertake independent learning and research and adversely affects standards. Although the hall is an appropriate area for assemblies, it is not an effective place for teaching, as there is a lack of close contact between the teacher and all pupils. The co-ordinator has only recently taken over responsibility for the subject. Although he has attended a course on assessment, there has been no recent in-service training for teachers to increase their confidence and subject knowledge. There has been a decline in standards since the previous inspection, when attainment was judged to be meeting the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus and teaching was satisfactory.

## **Other subjects and courses**

### **Art**

92. Overall the pupils make satisfactory progress in art. This general judgement masks a complicated situation, as progress in Years 3 and 4 is good but it is only just satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. Standards of work are as expected, although there is some good work in all year groups. For example, in Year 3 there are carefully observed pencil drawings of various household lights and some successful batik work. In Year 4 pupils have explored and recorded their findings about colour mixing in a very controlled way. In Year 5 pupils have created their own striking illuminated letters after studying examples in books. In Year 6, pupils in one class particularly, have researched Tudor costumes and made their own small dressed figures with great attention to style and detail. Work seen from last year's Year 6 pupils, where various techniques had been used to make images of mini-beasts, is of a high standard.

93. The teachers are working to two programmes of work; one for the lower school (Years 3 and 4) and one for the upper school (Years 5 and 6). The pupils over two-year age spans work on challenges that are too similar. The school's policy for art makes it clear that individual strengths and abilities should be catered for through different starting points. This is not always the case and this limits progress in all classes.

94. Pupils in the lower school are being taught a programme that explores an element of art over several weeks. At the time of the inspection the theme was colour and, as the development of experiences was carefully planned, progress was good and standards of work appropriate for the year groups. This scheme of work is being introduced over a period time and when fully implemented it will have a positive effect upon standards.

95. Pupils in the upper school are working on art projects linked to other subjects; thus for example, Tudor history is being used to promote a study of portrait painting. Preparatory studies of facial proportion and the use of pastels to obtain appropriate tones and textures ensure that good progress is made albeit over a limited field. However, this approach limits progress in art overall by largely dictating what is covered. Thus pupils towards the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have limited



opportunities to experiment with their own ideas, call upon past experiences and make their own choices about how to go about their work. In Year 6 teacher direction is often too strong, the work does not vary much from pupil to pupil and progress is therefore limited. This is a very similar situation to the findings of the last inspection when it was reported that opportunities were limited for pupils to produce their own ideas and solutions to problems.

96. In the small number of lessons seen, teaching was mostly good. Sensible workshop atmospheres are created and individuals and groups are well supported as they work. The pupils are generally interested and responsive to practical work, concentrate on their tasks and work hard to develop their techniques. Pupils in one class were handicapped as they tried to use very poor quality paintbrushes. A recent workshop for teachers on display techniques, has had a very positive effect on the way pupils' work is celebrated in the classrooms and around the school.

## **Design and technology**

97. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection so there is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching. Evidence is taken from curriculum plans and the pupils' work. Standards of attainment have been maintained since the last inspection and remain satisfactory. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. In Year 3, when designing a lamp, they label their drawings well and clearly identify the materials and tools to be used. However, few diagrams focus on the way a lamp operates. During the inspection the pupils applied their knowledge of electrical circuits well by designing a Christmas card that lights up. Most pupils know and can explain where the bulb will be placed and some of them can successfully and independently plan where they will put the wires, switch and battery. Year 4 pupils work on the same task. Their work is of a similar standard though their design diagrams are slightly more complex and there is more written explanation about the making process. In Year 5 pupils' work on levers, bridges and Tudor house designs shows a greater awareness of the importance of proportion and how to fit elements of a construction together. They can score and fold prepared nets of Tudor houses with a reasonable degree of precision, forming accurate corners. In making bridges they know triangles are the most rigid shape. Their ability to evaluate this work is limited though they can explain how different types of bridge operate. In Year 6 the pupils have also made Tudor houses. In doing this they show that they can investigate the suitability of cuboids and triangular prisms in their constructions. Furthermore a very good contribution is made to numeracy as the pupils develop an increased awareness of the importance of accurate measurement. The pupils can evaluate what they got right 'the measurement of the roof' and wrong 'assembling the boxes', what they learnt 'measurements have to be the same for sides to fit together' and how they can improve their model by having 'straighter beams'.

98. A useful and clear programme of study sets out design and making skills and the knowledge and understanding pupils are to acquire as they move up through the school. However, neither this nor the medium term plans nor the assessment system provide sufficient guidance to enable the teachers to match the work to the pupils' different abilities either within a class or across a two year age span. There is a heavy reliance on pupils producing different outcomes, from the same starting point, which reflect their attainment in the subject. However, these arrangements do not always provide sufficient challenge for the higher attaining pupils. Since the work in design and technology is often linked closely to other subjects some of the higher level skills in the subject are not being covered.

99. Resources are good overall and are sufficient to meet National Curriculum requirements for food technology, a criticism in the last report. They are used well.

## Geography

100. Geography lessons and an examination of the work that pupils have done in the past demonstrate that overall standards of attainment in geography are at least satisfactory and often good. Standards are good at the beginning and end of the key stage.

101. The pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Pupils in Year 3 compare and contrast life in Hadleigh and Chembakoli. They have, for their age, well developed concepts of 'near', 'far' and 'further away'. Their factual knowledge of aspects of Indian life is good and enables them to successfully identify similarities between the places being studied. Comparing weather differences they respond thoughtfully to geographical questions. Some of them can suggest sources of secondary evidence that might provide them with clues to the weather differences. Year 4 pupils work on the same theme as Year 3 and often there is insufficient difference in the level of work produced between the two years. For instance, most pupils in Year 4 can successfully draw a local map of Hadleigh and place on it key features. This is identical to work in Year 3. Year 4 pupils are being introduced to the concept of climate though most struggle with distinguishing between weather and climate. Year 5 pupils learning map work skills are aware that each map in an atlas has its own scale. They are able to measure with reasonable accuracy distances between major cities and make scale conversions using a simple ratio of centimetres to kilometres. However, there is some uncertainty about the difference between a continent and a country. The location of cities are identified using longitude and latitude and most pupils have a basic understanding of grid references to four figures. Six figure grid references are introduced in Year 6 though pupils' struggle with these. These pupils have also progressed to working with a range of scales and maps when measuring distances. They are aware that there are different kinds of maps for different purposes and that these have different scales.

102. Pupils' attitudes to learning geography are good. They listen well to teachers' explanations and show interest in what they are learning. They are very responsive to instructions and take their work seriously. Most are confident to ask questions and express themselves well. They collaborate well and readily share resources. A very good example of this is seen in Year 4 when pupils, working in groups, studied photographs and shared information about the climate of India and specific features of the weather. Behaviour is good. Work is satisfactorily presented and presentation is particularly good in Years 3 and 4.

103. Overall the quality of teaching is good. All teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory or better. In half of the lessons it was good. Teachers are well prepared and they effectively use geographical resources, particularly maps and photographs, in supporting pupils' understanding of mapping and weather. Good lessons are well structured, sequentially developed and it is clear what skills and knowledge pupils are to acquire. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is sound; most use geographical terms appropriately. Open questions are effectively used at times to get the pupils to do the thinking; for example, "What did you find out?" and "What will that tell us about the weather?" Lessons are well organised and there is usually a good balance between teacher explanation and pupil activities. Work is marked and positive comments are frequently written but these rarely indicate to pupils how they could improve their work. Lower attaining pupils are well supported and higher attaining pupils are occasionally challenged, for example by a comment such as "write the measurement as a decimal".

104. Insufficient account is taken of pupils' differing abilities at the planning stage to ensure that higher attaining pupils reach the standard they are capable of during lessons. Even when extension work is planned it often does not get tackled. Pupils often work on the same task at the same pace and level. The present system of covering a topic without a skills list of what pupils should know, do

and understand at the end of each year is hindering pupils' progress across year groups and therefore the standard attained. Resources are satisfactory in amount and range to meet National Curriculum requirements. They are of good quality and easily accessible. However, the library does not contain a range of books to support individual research. The school makes appropriate use of the local community and visits to enhance its geography curriculum, these include a study of a local stream and a visit to the Thames Barrier. Good use is made of numeracy skills in work on scale and literacy skills are enhanced particularly through opportunities to write in a variety of styles.

## **History**

105. During the inspection it was only possible to see lessons for pupils in Years 5 and 6. Evidence from these together with work that pupils had completed previously show that standards of attainment have improved since the previous inspection. The pupils' work is now better than that expected for the age groups concerned and there have been particularly good improvements with regard to the pupils' use of research and enquiry methods.

106. In Year 5 the pupils have a good understanding of the past as they study explorations in the Tudor period. They discuss possible reasons underlying the national enthusiasm for exploration at that time, they are knowledgeable about the Tudor monarchs and they have a good understanding of monastic life.

Year 6 pupils are able to use various forms of evidence to study the past and they have a sound sense of chronology. Most of them can explain different interpretations of past events. They have a very good knowledge of, for example, the background to the Spanish Armada and show considerable skill in researching the lives of the rich and poor in Tudor times.

107. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall but within lessons progress varies from very good to unsatisfactory. Pupils of all abilities make good progress from Year 5 to the end of Year 6. They extend and develop their knowledge of the Tudor period and become more sophisticated in the research methods which they use. For instance, they become more skilled at extracting the relevant information from a variety of texts and in judging whether the information they are using is fact or opinion and whether the source of evidence is primary or secondary. Good progress in individual lessons is fostered by good teaching but progress is much more limited in the occasional lesson where the activities are too difficult for some pupils.

108. The pupils enjoy their history lessons, they work hard, collaborate well with one another and have positive relationships with their teachers. They are interested and keen to find things out. They listen attentively and support each other in reaching conclusions. In the best lessons they show a real enthusiasm for the subject. In a small minority of lessons the pupils show little interest or initiative, they are not well behaved, they show little respect for their own work or that of others and consequently their progress is unsatisfactory.

109. The quality of teaching is good overall but it varies from excellent to unsatisfactory. The teachers generally have good subject knowledge and very high expectations. In the best lessons activities are carefully designed to encourage pupils to develop enquiry skills and to stimulate their interest. Very good use is made of individual and group research and group discussions. At times the teachers make excellent use of role-play. In one example Philip II of Spain, played by the teacher, received very good advice from his advisers, played by the pupils, about the possible options for invading England. Very good use had been made of homework to support this activity. This and much of the rest of the work in Years 5 and 6 make a significant contribution to developing the pupils' literacy skills. Time lines, activities involving chronological ordering and techniques for sorting make a useful contribution to the pupils' skills in numeracy. Unsatisfactory teaching is characterised by unimaginative activities and low level interaction with the pupils. The co-ordinator supports the teachers well and she has a good understanding of the range of work undertaken throughout the school.

## **Music**

110.It is not possible to make a clear judgement about the pupils' attainment in music or the progress they make throughout the school. Observation of music during the inspection was restricted to just four lessons, singing in assemblies and small periods of time watching club activities and private instrumental tuition. Progress in the lessons seen was satisfactory because of the teachers' confidence in following a published scheme of work which provides them with detailed guidance. Lesson plans provided in the scheme are adapted to suit the circumstances of the school and progress and continuity are assured. Progress between Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory with the level of attainment improving noticeably. The work seen in Year 5 is very similar to that in Year 4 and no Year 6 lessons were taught during the inspection.

111.The pupils' response to music lessons is variable but satisfactory overall. When the pupils are working as a class, behaviour is good; they are receptive and contribute willingly. A significant minority of pupils find collaboration difficult when they are asked to compose and perform in groups and their behaviour adversely affects all those with whom they are working.

112.The teaching is satisfactory and in one lesson it was good. In this lesson the pupils were grouped in a circle and the teacher was able to ensure full attention and participation when the whole class was working together. The tasks given to groups were of different levels of difficulty and designed to meet assessed needs. Most groups were able to achieve a satisfactory outcome. However, in another lesson the teacher was too tolerant of unsatisfactory behaviour and, as a consequence, some groups of pupils made unsatisfactory progress.

113.Singing in assembly is satisfactory but not marked by the involvement of the choir or instrumental accompaniment by pupils. The choir and recorder clubs are supported enthusiastically and the standard of performance in those clubs is good. Two peripatetic music teachers work with individual pupils and groups each week. The advanced skills of these pupils encourage them to take an appropriate lead in lessons. The amount of time given to music is insufficient. It is less than that for any other subject, and the pupils' relatively modest progress and the low profile of the subject reflect this.

## **Physical education**

114.During the inspection most of the lessons observed were games lessons. One gymnastics and one dance lesson were also seen, but there were no opportunities to observe swimming, athletics or outdoor and adventurous activities. The school maintains a broad physical education curriculum, although some of the indoor sessions are too short for useful progress to be made. Outdoor and adventurous activities take place mainly on the residential visit for Years 5 and 6 pupils. There is good provision for swimming at a nearby secondary school and the majority of pupils meet National Curriculum expectations by the end of Year 6.

115.The pupils make satisfactory progress as they move up through the school. The standards of the oldest pupils in games are as expected for their age. For example, they show satisfactory skills in throwing and striking a ball. Younger pupils' skills, for instance in controlling a ball with a hockey stick and passing it to a partner, are below those expected for their age but in lessons observed during the inspection they made satisfactory progress in improving these skills. In a Year 5 gymnastics lesson the majority of pupils were able to move symmetrically on the apparatus and perform a sequence involving rolls and jumps at an appropriate level. In a dance lesson in Year 3 the pupils demonstrated limited skills in the planning and evaluation of their performance. This was below the expected level and progress was unsatisfactory. Although pupils make satisfactory progress in developing games skills there are insufficient opportunities to apply these in the context of a small game.

116.Pupils' attitudes to lessons are satisfactory. They enjoy activities and generally co-operate in taking

out and putting away equipment. Teaching is generally satisfactory, although teachers do not always pace their lessons so that there is sufficient time to consolidate skills. They plan suitable indoor activities when games cannot take place outside. Teaching is unsatisfactory when the pupils are not given sufficient guidance in developing a sequence of movements or opportunities to evaluate their own performance.

117. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, including rugby, football and netball, which involve about a quarter of the pupils. They are all run by parents. The school takes part in inter-school competitions in football, rugby, netball and athletics. There has been good liaison with the main receiving secondary school in building up a range of activities for lessons and in some direct teaching.

118. The school has satisfactory resources for the subject, including an extensive playing field which it shares with the infant school. It has also developed appropriate systems for the assessment of pupils' skills. These factors make a sound contribution to the pupils' attainment and progress.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

119. The school was inspected by a team of five inspectors, one of whom was a Lay Inspector. The team spent a total of 19 days in the school. A range of evidence was gathered over this period.

- 64 lessons were observed.
- The team observed at least two full 'Literacy Hour' and two full numeracy sessions in each year group.
- A sample of the pupils' work covering all subjects of the curriculum was scrutinised.
- 18 pupils were heard reading. The sample included children from all year groups.
- Discussions were held with pupils about their work in a number of subjects.
- Interviews were held with subject co-ordinators, the headteacher, members of the
- Governing Body, the school secretaries, the finance officer, the premises manager and other members of staff.
- 68 parents returned the questionnaire which was sent to them before the inspection and 14 parents attended a meeting with the Registered Inspector.

## DATA AND INDICATORS

### 137. Pupil Data

|   | Number of pupils<br>on roll (full-time<br>equivalent) | Number of<br>pupils with<br>statements of<br>SEN | Number of pupils<br>on school's register<br>of SEN | Number of full-time<br>pupils eligible for free<br>school meals |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| · Y3 – Y6   | 302   | 2  | 48   | 29  |
| · <b>Teachers and classes</b>                                 |   |  |  |   |
| · <b>Qualified teachers (Y3 – Y6)</b>                         |   |  |  |   |
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time<br>equivalent): |   |  |  | 14.50   |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher:                       |   |  |  | 20.83 : 1   |
| · <b>Education support staff (Y3 – Y6)</b>                    |   |  |  |   |
| Total number of education support staff:                      |   |  |  | 7   |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week:                       |   |  |  | 43.5  |
|   |   |  |  |   |
|   |   |  | Average class size:                                | 25.2  |
| · <b>Financial data</b>                                       |   |  |  |   |
|   |   |  |  |   |
|   | Financial year:                                       |  |  | 1999  |
|   |   |  |  | £   |
|   | Total Income  |  |  | 527,021.00  |
|   | Total Expenditure                                     |  |  | 538,520.00  |
|   | Expenditure per pupil                                 |  |  | 1,783.18  |
|   | Balance brought forward from previous year            |  |  | 38,524.00   |
|   | Balance carried forward to next year                  |  |  | 27,025.00   |

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 302  
 Number of questionnaires returned: 68

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           | 17.9           | 67.2  | 10.4    | 3.0      | 1.5               |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 35.8           | 47.8  | 14.9    | 1.5      | 0                 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well   | 11.1           | 42.9  | 36.5    | 7.9      | 1.6               |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught                                     | 14.7           | 61.8  | 17.6    | 5.9      | 0                 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress                                | 20.6           | 66.2  | 2.9     | 10.3     | 0                 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work                             | 32.4           | 58.8  | 7.4     | 1.5      | 0                 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons            | 32.8           | 56.7  | 9.0     | 1.5      | 0                 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home                   | 22.4           | 64.2  | 6.0     | 6.0      | 1.5               |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)                       | 23.5           | 60.3  | 16.2    | 0        | 0                 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour  | 19.1           | 55.9  | 22.1    | 1.5      | 1.5               |
| My child(ren) like(s) school  | 39.7           | 52.9  | 7.4     | 0        | 0                 |

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