

INSPECTION REPORT

**NORTH COUNTY PRIMARY SCHOOL
Colchester**

**LEA area:
Essex**

**Unique Reference Number:
114709**

**Headteacher:
Mrs. Sharon Sciachettano**

Reporting inspector:

Dr. Brian Blundell 23868

Dates of inspection:

18th to 21st October, 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707283

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant, Junior and Nursery
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	John Harper Street Colchester Essex CO1 1RP
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mrs. Barbara Miller
Date of previous inspection:	29 th April to 2 nd May, 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Brian Blundell Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Science History	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Efficiency of the school
Jenny Mynett Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Di Wilkinson Core inspector	Under fives English Religious education	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Paul Evans Team inspector	Special educational needs Mathematics Geography Music	Curriculum and assessment
Huw Davies Team inspector	Design and technology Information technology Art Physical education	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Achieves overall standards at the end of Key Stage 2 that are in line with national averages in English and science and above average in mathematics;
- Promotes very good relationships;
- Management of pupils is very good for the under-fives and good in the rest of the school;
- Standards of teaching are good throughout the school;
- The attitudes and behaviour of pupils are good;
- Overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good;
- Procedures for assessing how well the pupils are doing are good
- Leadership and management of this school are good.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. There is a lack of equality of opportunity for children in the Reception class and for some pupils in lower Key Stage 2;
- II. The use of assessments to help to plan the curriculum is unsatisfactory;
- III. Overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2;
- IV. Overall use of teaching support staff is unsatisfactory;
- V. Levels of homework are inconsistent.

The strengths at North County School outweigh the weaknesses. The weaknesses 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 is now a clear vision for the curriculum; systems for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress have improved; standards of writing and reading in infant classes have improved; there is improved provision for pupils' spiritual development, religious education and collective worship. There are no significant issues remaining from the last report apart from the need to set higher expectations in research, investigation and creative activities, particularly in mathematics. The school's capacity for further improvement is good. The school has an appropriate set of targets.

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 all schools	Compared with similar schools
English	B	B
Mathematics	C	C
Science	C	E

Key	
<i>well above average</i>	A
<i>above average</i>	B
<i>average</i>	C
<i>below average</i>	D
<i>well below average</i>	E

These grades are based on average National Curriculum levels.

- In 1999 there were improvements in pupils' performance at the end of Key Stage 2, in English, mathematics and science, compared to 1998.

- The inspection findings are that standards in English and science at the end of Key Stage 2 are in line with national averages; standards in mathematics are above national averages. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in information and communications technology are in line with national expectations. Pupils' progress in history, geography, physical education and design and technology is satisfactory in Key Stage 2; progress in art is good; progress in music is unsatisfactory. Progress of children under the age of five is satisfactory overall and by the age of five, pupils attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Good	Good
Religious education		Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

Standards of teaching are good throughout the school. Overall, nearly 99% of lessons seen were satisfactory or better, 51% were good or better and 14% were very good. There were examples of good teaching in every class in the school. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory overall, with pupils' individual education plans lacking sufficient sharp focus.

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. Overall, pupils behave well both in the classrooms and around the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Punctuality is also satisfactory.
Ethos*	Good.
Leadership and management	Good. This school has clear educational direction.
Curriculum	Good for the under-fives; satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2.
Special educational needs	Provision for special educational needs is unsatisfactory overall, with individual education plans lacking sufficiently sharp focus.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good; for their cultural development it is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Satisfactory overall. Accommodation is costly to maintain, due to it being a listed building.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

**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	What some parents are not happy about
VI. Find it easy to approach school with questions or problems. VII. Feel that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children. VIII. The school encourages children to get involved with more than just their daily lessons. IX. Their children like school. X. Children achieve high standards of good behaviour.	XI. Some parents feel that they are not encouraged to play as active a part in the life of the school as they would like to. XII. Some parents feel that complaints are not handled as well as they could be. XIII. Some parents would like more homework.

Inspectors support parents' views on the positive aspects of the school and the views of some parents about the level of homework and its inconsistent setting and the handling of some informal complaints. Inspectors find no evidence for parents not being encouraged to help in the life of the school.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to improve standards further, the Headteacher, Governing Body and senior management team should:-

- XIV. further raise levels of attainment and promote greater progress of the children who are under five in the Reception class by ensuring that the accommodation is more efficiently used to allow them to take part in the full range of activities expected, and, take steps to give them access to the same high quality of resources as the children in the Nursery class;
(Paragraph 92)
- XV. raise levels of attainment and promote greater progress of the pupils who are in lower Key Stage 2 by urgently establishing and implementing effective behaviour strategies to prevent a minority of pupils disrupting the classes;
(Paragraph 14)
- XVI. make greater use of assessments to help in planning the curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2;
(Paragraph 49)
- XVII. ensure that pupils with special educational needs make greater progress by making their individual educational plans have sharper focus and by making more efficient use of educational support staff;
(Paragraph 83)
- XVIII. continue to set higher expectations in research, investigation and creative activities, as suggested in the last inspection, particularly in mathematics;
(Paragraph 121)
- XIX. ensure that homework is set more consistently.
(Paragraph 42)

In addition to the above, the school should ensure that the Governing Body's annual report to parents complies with statutory requirements.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. North Primary School and Nursery is situated in a listed Victorian building close to the centre of Colchester. It serves a largely urban community with a mixed population, ranging from nearby families living in local authority housing to families living in owner-occupied houses. The catchment area is widespread and some pupils travel a distance to school. Some of the local children represent the third or fourth generation of their family to attend the school. There are 248 pupils on roll together with 52 children in the Nursery. Eleven pupils are from homes where English is not the first language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is similar to the national average. The number of pupils (forty nine) with special educational needs is within the expected range for a school of this size. Standards of attainment on entry to this school are broadly average.

2. The school's general aims are:
 - through high-quality teaching to provide a challenging curriculum where knowledge and skills are acquired and shared in a stimulating environment, with careful planning to enable each individual to reach his/her academic and personal potential, regardless of gender, faith, cultural background or special need;
 - to provide an environment where all children, staff, governors and parents work together to maintain a happy, friendly atmosphere in which every individual is valued and cared for;
 - to encourage spiritual and moral development within all aspects of school life
 - to create awareness and celebrate cultural diversity;
 - to encourage self-discipline in work and behaviour and respect for adults, peers and property by upholding the school's code of conduct and behaviour policy;
 - to maintain a high level of teaching effectiveness through continuing professional development for all staff and through the sharing of expertise;
 - to develop a sense of community in our school, valuing the contributions of all staff, parents, students and visitors, who work as a team to the benefit of the children.

1. The school's priorities include:
 - continuing to review schemes of work;
 - further development of literacy and numeracy;
 - writing a policy for multicultural education;
 - reviewing the behaviour policy;
 - analysing assessment data in the core subjects and making greater use of the assessments to inform planning;
 - at least achieving the published targets for the Year 2000 of 75% attaining Level 4+ at the end of Key Stage 2 in English and mathematics;
 - 20% of pupils attaining Level 2A/3 at the end of Key Stage 1;
 - analysing gender issues following on from a teacher's research into this;
 - continuing monitoring of English and mathematics in the classroom by the curriculum co-ordinators and extending this to science and information technology;
 - foundation subjects will continue to be monitored through plans, sampling of pupils' work and levelling;
 - governors to be involved in the systematic analysis of data;
 - the format of Governing Body meetings will be reviewed.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	27	11	38

National Curriculum Test Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	20	19	16
	Girls	10	11	8
	Total	30	30	24
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	79(68)	79(68)	64(85)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	19	19	25
	Girls	10	9	11
	Total	29	28	36
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	77(65)	74(88)	95(83)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

Attainment at Key Stage 2²

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2
for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	16	13	29

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	9	12	11
	Girls	10	8	10
	Total	19	20	21
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	66(52)	69(66)	72(55)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	11	13	13
	Girls	10	9	9
	Total	21	22	22
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	72(63)	75(72)	76(72)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(72)

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

² Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions)
Missed through absence for the
latest complete reporting year

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.3
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.2
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school
age) during the previous year:

	Number
Fixed period	7
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	13.9
Satisfactory or better	98.6
Less than satisfactory	1.4

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

1. Levels of attainment on intake are in line with the average of other schools in Essex and in line with schools nationally. Overall attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average, and at the end of Key Stage 2 it is also in line with the national average.
2. The results of the national tests and teacher assessments for 7 year olds in 1999 indicate that pupils' attainment in reading was below the national average; in writing it was well below the national average and in mathematics it was well below the national average. The results of the 1999 national tests indicate that pupils' attainment is above that in 1998 in reading and writing, but lower in mathematics.
3. By the end of Key Stage 1, inspection findings show that pupils' attainment in English is in line with national standards. Many pupils listen attentively and speak confidently and clearly, explaining their ideas and opinions effectively. Pupils develop good strategies for sounding out words and read simple texts with growing confidence. They talk appropriately about their story and describe the characters. Pupils' handwriting and spelling skills develop well. They write their stories and descriptions in correct sentences and begin to develop their ideas. By the end of the key stage, a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they have made satisfactory progress. Overall progress in the lessons seen was good. Pupils' attainment across the subjects of the curriculum is satisfactorily helped by their standards of literacy.
4. Inspection findings show that pupils' attainment in mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with national standards. Pupils appropriately form number problems from simple written questions. Their work in shape, space and measure and in number work is in line with national standards. Progress is satisfactory.
5. Pupils' attainment in science is in line with national standards at the end of Key Stage 1, in all areas of science. Progress through the key stage is satisfactory.
6. The 1999 tests and teacher assessments for 11 year olds at Level 4 indicate that attainment in English was below the national average, attainment in mathematics was in line with the national average and attainment in science was below the national average. Pupils' attainment at the higher Level 5 was above the national average in English and mathematics, and below the national average in science. Despite results being below the national average in English at Level 4, there is a clear improvement between the end of Key Stage 1 and the end of Key Stage 2. In English the gap between North Primary's pupils and the national average is smaller at the end of Key Stage 2 than at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils' attainment in the English tests in 1999 is higher than in 1998 and in mathematics and science it is slightly lower.
7. Inspection findings now show that by the end of Key Stage 2 in English, pupils speak confidently and use language effectively. In discussions, they show an increasing ability to listen, question and make well-judged contributions. In reading, pupils have already reached the standards expected nationally and attain standards above the national average. They read from a range of texts, including information books and poetry with a good idea of the theme and plot. When reading aloud they are expressive and interesting. Pupils write in a range of styles for different purposes, using handwriting which is fluent and cursive. Most words are correctly spelt, sentence punctuation is used effectively and they are beginning to use apostrophes and inverted commas appropriately.
8. In mathematics, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in number work is above national

standards. For example, in their work on equivalence of decimals, fractions and percentages, pupils show good knowledge and understanding. Their work on shape, space and measure is above national standards. They draw triangles to Pythagorean ratios and link it to their work on Egyptian numbers appropriately. Pupils' attainment in the handling of data is in line with national standards. Attainment in using and applying mathematics is in line with national standards. However, a relative weakness in this work is a lack of truly open-ended investigations. There is too much teacher-direction and a lack of challenge, which limits pupils' attainment in making their own discoveries. Overall progress is good.

9. By the end of Key Stage 2 in science, pupils' attainment is in line with national standards, in life processes and living things, materials and their properties, physical processes and experimental and investigative science. Attainment in the latter has improved since the last inspection. Factors restricting pupils' attainment include a lack of a coherent build up of scientific vocabulary through the school and no consistent method for writing up scientific experiments.
10. Good progress is made over the course of the key stage in mathematics. Progress is satisfactory in English and science. Inspection findings broadly corroborate the results of the latest tests and teacher assessments. Any difference between test results and inspectors' findings are due to two main factors. In the tests two pupils who were expected to attain Level 5 were absent and there have been some staffing changes since last year.
11. An analysis of the relative performance of boys and girls between 1996-1998 indicates that in the Key Stage 1 tests and teacher assessments, the results of boys in reading, writing and mathematics were slightly greater than those of the girls. In the Key Stage 2 tests and assessments over the similar period, girls performed better than boys in each of the areas of English, mathematics and science. In general, higher attaining pupils progress satisfactorily in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.
12. A comparison of pupils' results at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, with those of pupils from similar schools, shows attainment in reading and writing to be well below average. In mathematics pupils' results are below average in comparison to similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' results are above average in English, compared to similar schools, above average in mathematics and well below average in science.
13. The National Literacy Strategy has had a positive impact on standards since it was introduced in 1998. There has been satisfactory planning for the implementation of the Strategy. This has resulted in teachers confidently using new materials and methods in a way that has improved pupils' attainment and progress.
14. The National Numeracy Strategy is starting to have a positive impact on standards in mathematics. In Key Stage 1, pupils' number work is in line with national standards. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment in number is above national standards. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed in other areas of the curriculum such as science.
15. Attainment in information and communication technology is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Key Stage 2. By the age of seven, pupils use information and communication technology to generate ideas in words and pictures appropriately. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment in multimedia work is in line with national standards. Progress is satisfactory in both key stages.

16. Standards in religious education are in line with the requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism and are able to consider the place of celebration and story in religious teaching and belief. Pupils aged eleven, gain an understanding of what it means to be a member of a faith community and the effect this has on people's lives. They are developing appropriate understanding of the importance of symbolism, ritual and tradition. Progress is satisfactory in both key stages.
17. Progress of children under the age of five is satisfactory and by the age of five, children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Progress is good in personal and social development overall and very good in the Nursery in this area. Progress overall is good in number work and in speaking and listening. Progress is satisfactory in all other areas. Children's levels of attainment and progress in the Reception class are not helped by the fact that they do not have access to the same high quality of resources as the children in the Nursery.
18. Progress is good overall in both key stages in art. For example, pupils make good progress in their observational drawings, showing increasing control and detail in their work. Progress in physical education is satisfactory in both key stages; pupils make satisfactory gains in their skills in gymnastics and dance. Pupils' progress is satisfactory in design and technology, with pupils developing their skills systematically. Progress in history and geography is satisfactory in both key stages, with pupils making appropriate gains in their knowledge and understanding of life in Egypt and the Tudors. Progress in music is unsatisfactory overall in both key stages with pupils making insufficient gains in performing, composing, listening and appraising.
19. Overall standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
20. The effects of the literacy and numeracy strategy are raising standards of attainment in both these areas for many pupils with special educational needs. Progress for many of these pupils is restricted because the individual education plans (IEP's), that guide their work are presently addressing too many issues at the same time. Many pupils move from one IEP to their review and on to the next IEP with little and, in some cases, no change in targets because little has been gained. In lessons where tasks are set at an appropriate level pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. For a significant number of these pupils this limits their overall attainment. Overall progress for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

21. Pupils' attitudes are generally good. Most parents are satisfied with the attitudes and values promoted by the school, some think this area is good and that pupils' behaviour in the school is generally good. Pupils enjoy school, work conscientiously and show positive attitudes to learning. They listen carefully in class both to instructions from the teacher and to the responses of others, and enthusiastically participate in discussions. Pupils approach written work and other activities with good levels of motivation and concentration, and they are able to focus on their tasks for extended periods. Where the opportunities arise, pupils show skills of independent learning. A small number of pupils however in lower Key Stage 2 show less positive attitudes, and this affects the learning environment for the rest of the class.
22. Children under five show a confident approach to work and in their relationships with each other. They are able to work and play harmoniously with each other sharing their toys and equipment. The excellent facilities in the Nursery enable children to develop good social skills, and they are eager to explore new learning opportunities. The lack of play facilities provided in the Reception class limits freedom of choice and opportunities for the children to develop their initiative and social skills.

Where pupils are required to sit on the floor listening for extended periods results in some younger pupils becoming restless and distracted.

23. Behaviour in and around the school is usually good. There are a small number of pupils, however, who can be deliberately disruptive, displaying poor behaviour patterns. This is a particular problem in lower Key Stage 2. Teachers have generally developed effective procedures which pupils know and react to. Pupils are aware of the school and class rules, and generally respond well to the Headteacher and staff, who maintain an easy but firm control. The system of rewards and sanctions works successfully in most instances. Successes and good work are recognised and celebrated each week during assemblies. The school is working closely with the local authority 'Wrap Around Team' to contain the behaviour of the small number of disruptive pupils with behavioural difficulties. There were seven instances of fixed period exclusions. These relate to two individuals and show a rising trend in the school. There was one child excluded during the inspection week for severe behavioural problems.
24. Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils, interact well with each other, and with the teachers and other adults. Older pupils take care of the younger ones and there is good interaction within the mixed aged classes. There are no racial tensions, and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds mix well. Pupils work well together, with many examples of collective and collaborative pair and group work seen. This was particularly evident within co-operative poetry writing in Year 6, maths investigations, and a dance lesson in Year 1 with pupils planning small dance sequences together, and then performing them.
25. There is little harassment and bullying in the school. If incidents do occur pupils are aware of who to go to, and they know that incidents will be taken seriously, and dealt with promptly and effectively. Parents are also encouraged to report any concerns they may have. This area is addressed during assemblies, within the personal and social education programme, and in circle time.
26. Pupils are encouraged to value and respect others. They are willing to listen to each other and are interested in their views, ideas and feelings. A Year 5 debate discussed issues for and against the Aswan Dam, with pupils considering and responding well to each other's arguments. Where opportunities arise pupils show initiative. They also respond well to the opportunities provided for them to take responsibility. Classes select mediators and friends to sort out playground problems. Pupils elect representatives for the School Council that meets every other week and considers issues of importance raised by pupils. The meetings are undertaken in a very organised and mature way, managed and led by the pupils who have already seen some of their ideas implemented around the school. Pupils in Year 6 have increased responsibilities with monitor functions including collecting the registers, looking after the music in assemblies, helping in the office, and helping to supervise classrooms during wet playtimes. These various tasks are undertaken diligently and efficiently.

Attendance

27. Levels of attendance in the school are satisfactory. The overall figure of 94% is in line with the national average. Most parents bring pupils to school on time, and lessons start promptly. Information regarding attendance is included in the school brochure.
28. Registers are completed at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions in accordance with statutory requirements. The governors report attendance figures appropriately in their annual report to parents and in the school brochure.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

29. The overall quality of teaching is good. It is good for the under-fives, good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Teaching for the under-fives varied from very good to satisfactory. It ranged from very good to satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and from very good to unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. Overall, nearly 99% of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better, 51% were good or better and 14% were very good. Only one unsatisfactory lesson was seen. The greatest concentrations of good teaching were for the under-fives, especially in the Nursery, in the upper infants and in Years 4 and 5. However there were examples of good teaching in every class in the school. These overall figures represent a significant improvement since the last inspection. Overall standards have improved, with a greater proportion of good and very good teaching. The quality of teaching makes a strong contribution to pupils' attainment and progress. This school has a good team of teachers and support assistants.
30. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is unsatisfactory overall. Teachers do match work to pupils' levels of ability in English and mathematics and do attempt to give extra support and guidance in other lessons. The deployment of support assistants during some literacy and numeracy lessons, when they spend lengthy periods of time observing introductions with little or no input, is inappropriate and does not have any effect on raising standards. Teachers and support staff using pupils' individual education plans for guidance are allotted different targets to address. This does not lead to an appropriate focus on prioritised attainable targets and is unsatisfactory.
31. The quality of teaching for the under-fives is good, with a number of strong features. Management of these children is very good. Teachers' knowledge and understanding, use of time and resources and methods used are good. The use of reading in homework is good. Overall, teachers' use of day-to-day assessments and their expectations are satisfactory. Teachers' planning overall is unsatisfactory because they identify activities rather than learning objectives in weekly and daily planning.
32. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are good in Key Stages 1 and 2. Understanding of the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy are good. Teachers understand the demands of the curriculum in all subject areas apart from music. Their good understanding in art leads to good progress. Knowledge and understanding in science are currently enhanced, with three teachers now having science qualifications.
33. Teachers' expectations are good in Key Stages 1 and 2. They expect pupils to work hard and to behave well. Lessons in both key stages usually have sufficient challenge for pupils in general and for the high attaining pupils in particular. There is sometimes a lack of challenge in investigative work in mathematics, with work not sufficiently open-ended. In most other subjects in both key stages, pupils are sufficiently "stretched" by being posed questions that really get them to think.
34. Teachers' planning is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. Procedures have improved since the last inspection.
35. The methods and organisation that teachers use are good in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. Good questioning, requiring thoughtful response from pupils is a noticeable feature of many lessons. For example, in a mixed Year 3/4 design and technology lesson the teacher asked searching questions to develop pupils' interest and understanding. The teacher used an effective range of strategies to manage some difficult pupils.
36. Management of pupils is good for Key Stages 1 and 2. Teachers endeavour to keep pupils working and expect high standards of behaviour, even from the minority of disruptive pupils.

37. The pace of the lessons is good for Key Stages 1 and 2, with time generally being metered out in small quantities. In some lessons, the pace diminished during group work, if teachers did not say, for example, "You have five minutes to...".
38. The quality and use of day-to-day assessments are good in Key Stage 1 and in Key Stage 2. In many lessons, teachers informally assess their pupils in productive question and answer sessions, with the questions being directed to pupils according to their prior attainment. Many teachers are adept at skilfully questioning those who do not volunteer answers.
39. The use of homework is unsatisfactory overall in both Key Stages 1 and 2 due to its inconsistency. This was a feature that some parents were unhappy with at the pre-inspection meeting and in the parents' questionnaire.

The curriculum and assessment

40. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for the under-fives, for Key Stage 1 and for Key Stage 2. It teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum and Religious Education to all pupils. Education about sex and the dangers of drugs are provided as appropriate. Equal opportunities are provided for boys and girls. In classes in lower Key Stage 2 a number of pupils who have special behavioural difficulties are not adequately supported. They distract others and, as a consequence, limit equal access to the curriculum for themselves and for other pupils in their class. When pupils are withdrawn from classroom lessons for extra support or to use the good information technology suite, work is well matched to that being provided in their classrooms.
41. The school has satisfactory policies for all subjects including sex education and attention to drugs misuse. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been introduced well and standards in both these areas are being raised.
42. The planning of the curriculum in literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers' long-term plans are comprehensive and weekly plans show clear progression while allowing the flexibility to make changes in the later part of the week should reinforcement of early work be required. There are good cross-curricular links particularly between literacy and most other subjects and between numeracy and history, geography and science. Information technology supports work in English, mathematics and science through carefully matched work undertaken in the well-equipped information technology suite. One notable example was when older pupils were observed working on data produced on their recent residential educational visit. Data developed from outdoor and adventurous activities was being translated into high quality graphical information on computers. This exercise combined work in physical education, science, mathematics and English. Planning for progression and continuity is good across both key stages.
43. Procedures for monitoring the core subjects of English, maths and science are well developed. Subject co-ordinators monitor lessons and feed back to teachers on their observations. These lessons also enable co-ordinators to identify whole school issues in their areas of responsibility.
44. Time allocations are satisfactory for all subjects. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities including sports coaching according to the season. A good range of visits and visiting specialists has the effect of broadening the curriculum offered. For example, Essex County Cricket Club provides coaching in the autumn. Younger pupils visit the rare breeds centre, lower Key Stage 2 pupils visit the local park, river and woods to study the local environment and older pupils visit the local secondary school for a technology day.
45. In lessons the curriculum is modified for pupils with special educational needs. However, the use of too many targets in individual education plans limits the progress these pupils make. This is a

weakness. Teachers have yet to identify clearly focussed priority targets for pupils with special educational needs.

46. The school has a good assessment policy. Teachers assess pupils' achievements in English, mathematics and science and keep good records of pupils' progress together with samples of pupils' work. The use of this good assessment information is unsatisfactory. Lessons are planned according to the scheme of work and planning is not fully guided by what pupils know, understand and can do. The school has identified this as the next stage in its development of assessment. There are effective arrangements for administering national tests at the end of both key stages and statutory requirements are met. The results of these tests are carefully analysed and this information is used to set realistic targets in English, mathematics and science.
47. The whole school curriculum is available equally to pupils with special educational needs, except in those lessons where emotionally and behaviourally disturbed pupils are unsupported. Their behavioural problems limit their own progress and that of the other pupils in the class.
48. The early identification of special educational needs is good. The testing and assessment programme for these pupils is good and identifies difficulties in literacy, numeracy and behaviour. Baseline assessments are appropriately carried out in the first six weeks in Reception.
49. This comprehensive information is not suitably prioritised to focus on limited short-term targets which pupils can achieve. This achievement would provide pupils with success thus raising their self-esteem. Instead all areas of concern are addressed simultaneously. Teachers, learning support assistants, the special educational needs co-ordinator and parents are all allocated different focus targets. This spreads attention on too wide an area and results in unsatisfactory progress for pupils.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

50. The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual development. The collective acts of worship are well planned. They encourage pupils to explore values and beliefs from Christianity and other faiths and to reflect on their own experiences. Time is provided for quiet thought and prayer. Assemblies are also used well to promote pupils' moral and social development. Children in the Nursery class learn to appreciate the wonder of the world around them. In the Reception class children under five learn about celebration when they listen to the story of Rama and Sita and make Diwali lamps. Religious education lessons help pupils to understand what it means to be a member of different faith communities. They relate the religious values and beliefs they learn about to their own attitudes and values.
51. Moral development is good and is built round an effective behaviour policy that helps to encourage and develop positive attributes. Adults provide good role models. Although there are some challenging pupils, school rules have been established which are acceptable to most pupils. These are consistently applied by staff who have high expectations of behaviour. Moral issues such as bullying are covered well in assemblies and religious, personal and social education lessons where pupils are encouraged to join in the discussions. Pupils are taught the difference between right and wrong and classes form their own rules. Consideration for others and tolerance for people who are different to themselves are well promoted, particularly in religious education lessons. All these strategies effectively support the good behaviour and relationships seen in the school.
52. Social development is good and is well promoted in assemblies and religious, personal and social education lessons. Unselfish behaviour is encouraged and pupils are taught that they have a responsibility towards themselves and others. This helps to develop self-esteem and co-operative working in groups or pairs. Co-operation begins in the Nursery class, where children play happily

together, often without overt supervision. By the time they leave the school, pupils work well together, for example in writing joint poems as seen in Year 6. Pupils begin to develop the skills of citizenship through such activities as raising funds for charities, taking part in the School Council and learning to live as part of a community on their residential trip to Dorset. The school has correctly identified this as an area where pupils' skills have yet to be developed further and there are plans to produce a policy and scheme of work.

53. Cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils learn about the works of famous artists, authors and musicians. They are given the opportunity to watch live dramatic and musical performances. Visitors to the school have included traditional storytellers from Ireland and Ghana. Pupils learn about their historical heritage through visiting local museums and places of interest. The school is aware that pupils need to learn about the culturally diverse society in which they live. As a result it has begun to focus on this aspect of cultural development. A policy for multi-cultural development is to be written and the school will hold a multi-cultural arts week later in the year.
54. The school has made significant improvements to the provision since the last inspection when spiritual development was found to be unsatisfactory and statutory requirements were not met for the religious education curriculum or the collective act of worship. Spiritual development is now good and the statutory requirements are met. The school has maintained the good provision for moral and social development and the satisfactory provision for cultural development.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

55. The levels of pastoral support, guidance and welfare offered to pupils are satisfactory. Parents are generally satisfied with this aspect of the school. Staff work hard to provide a happy, secure and stimulating environment where pupils can flourish. Teachers know their pupils well, and the provision of advice and support is satisfactory. Pupils generally have access to the school's curriculum and teachers are careful to ensure that they all have equal opportunities. The current location of the Reception class means that the under fives there are not receiving the excellent opportunities offered to the under-fives in the Nursery particularly with regards to outside play activities. In addition the disruptions caused in lower Key Stage 2 classes through bad behaviour is preventing some lessons continuing and are affecting pupils' learning.
56. Provision for monitoring pupils' academic progress and personal development is satisfactory. The school has good procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic progress. Systems for monitoring pupils' personal development however, are in an early stage of development with plans to involve pupils in target setting proposed for later this year. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support in the Nursery and Reception class that enables them to develop their abilities in all areas. The support for other pupils in the school, however, is unsatisfactory since it is not targeted effectively to enable them to make good progress and fulfil their potential. Pupils' individual education plans are not clearly focused; the targets may be obtainable in the short term, but there are often too many of them. The school has built very good links with the relevant outside agencies, whose representatives visit the school regularly.
57. The well-established and sensitive induction programme for new pupils in the Nursery eases their transition into school. There are early contacts with local playgroups, and good support for parents and pupils entering the school. Most pupils enter the school through the Nursery. Links with St Helena, the main feeder secondary school are also well established, and ensure that the progression to the next level of education is undertaken without difficulty.
58. There are effective procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance. The office staff monitor absences and contact parents appropriately when pupils are away. The importance of good attendance and promptness to school is stressed in the school brochure and through regular

reminders in newsletters. The school encourages parents wherever possible not to take pupils away on holidays during term time. There are no incentives to promote good attendance.

59. The school has appropriate systems for promoting discipline and good behaviour. There is a playground charter and a comprehensive behaviour policy that aim to encourage positive and responsible attitudes. This is due for review to ensure that the consequences of poor behaviour are clearer. Anti-bullying measures are considered within the behaviour policy. There are guidelines setting out standard procedures to be implemented if incidents occur. Staff take reports of incidents seriously and carefully monitor the situation to ensure that this does not continue. Weekly circle times offer safe circumstances to raise pupils' self-esteem and discuss issues of concern such as bullying. One class sensitively considered the situation of a child with few friends who felt excluded from games at playtime, and discussed how they as a class were going to resolve the matter and include him in future.
60. Procedures for promoting child protection and pupils' well-being, health and safety are good. The school has appropriate child protection policies. The Headteacher is the designated person and has undertaken relevant training. The school is very aware of child protection issues and all members of staff are kept updated and informed of procedures. Weekly staff meetings consider issues and children presenting causes for concern. The health and safety policy is comprehensive. Regular checks are undertaken by the Headteacher and site manager to review safety and security arrangements in and around the school, and they report back to the Governing Body. The last external audit was undertaken in 1995. The school nurse visits regularly to undertake health checks and adds into the health programme. There are very effective systems for looking after pupils who may fall ill during the day. An appropriate number of staff have emergency aid qualifications.
61. The deployment of support staff is not providing satisfactory support for emotionally and behaviourally disturbed pupils in lower Key Stage 2 classes. The school has a very supportive and caring attitude to all its pupils but the low level of support given to these pupils affects the progress of all pupils in these lessons. The use of group individual educational plans for pupils with similar behavioural difficulties is satisfactory.

Partnership with parents and the community

62. Partnerships with parents and the community are satisfactory. The school recognises the importance of effective liaison between home and school, and the active role parents can play in their children's education. The school provides comprehensive information for parents in the school brochure, the Nursery guidance booklet and the governors' annual report. The school has recently circulated parents with its home/school contract.
63. The contact between home and school is very thorough. The newsletters, pupils' reports, reading diaries and the consultation evenings each term keep parents informed of school events and pupils' progress. Curriculum information is circulated each term to keep parents informed of projects being undertaken. Workshops covering areas such as spelling and handwriting, literacy, numeracy and drugs education keep parents updated on new initiatives. There are frequent opportunities for parents to meet with teachers and the Headteacher to discuss any concerns that may arise. However, a small number of parents felt that the school does not respond well to suggestions and complaints. There are no formal systems in place to record these concerns by the school. The annual reports on pupils' attainment are generally informative describing what pupils have done and the levels reached. They provide less information regarding how well pupils are progressing and rarely provide targets for improvement. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the review processes.
64. The school encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning. Parents are invited

to help in the school, and the small committed group participates mainly in Key Stage 1, making a good contribution to pupils' learning. They assist in the day-to-day activities of the school by listening to pupils' reading or changing library books and helping with classroom activities in art and maths, or on school visits. Parents are well briefed by the school for these roles. There is little formal homework set or regular reading undertaken at home; parents are not fully involved in promoting this aspect of their child's education. The parent teacher association is very active and makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school. Significant sums of money are generated which have helped provide furniture for the millennium library or over-head projectors. It is currently raising money to sponsor story-tellers and dance groups for the forthcoming multi-cultural arts week.

65. The school recognises the importance of building links with the local community and seeking ways to enrich pupils' learning. There are a significant number of visitors as well as visits twice a year to support project work and enhance the curriculum. Making good use of the local environment, pupils have the opportunity to visit the park, museum, castle, river and woods undertaking local walks. There are annual visits to the theatre for a pantomime, and visiting theatre groups to the school. The local police come in twice a year or as needed to contribute to the drugs education and safety programme. Year 6 pupils participate in the crucial crew programme which gives them a good awareness of safety issues. Pupils are involved in fund raising for both local and national charities, and have recently been baking cakes to sell. This makes them aware of those less fortunate than themselves. Local clergy visit each half term to take assemblies. Links with local football and cricket clubs enable pupils to receive additional coaching and improve their skills. Overall there is an appropriate balance of visitors and events which affects pupils' learning positively. The school has benefited from recent redecoration with the help of those on community service orders. Links with local schools and colleges results in students visiting for work experience or training, providing additional help in the classrooms. Apart from two companies providing some element of sponsorship and visits to a local garden centre, business links are less fully developed.
66. Parents are involved in all aspects of special educational needs concerns. Parents are given specific individual educational plan targets on which to focus. Unfortunately these are not always appropriate to their children's needs.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

67. The overall leadership and management of this school are good.
68. The Headteacher, Governing Body and senior management team provide good leadership and give clear educational direction for the school. Improvements that were starting at the time of the last inspection have continued. The school is well led by the Headteacher who shows a good level of sensitivity to the needs of all staff in the school. The Governing Body gives good support to the school and act appropriately as a critical friend. The Governing Body makes a positive impact in all major areas of decision making and is in an appropriate position to make informed judgements when holding the school to account for the educational standards achieved and the overall quality of education provided. The Governing Body's annual report to parents does not meet statutory requirements. The key issue raised in the last inspection, to develop systems for the monitoring of policies and evaluating the school's work has been addressed. The school's capacity for further improvement is good.
69. Support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development are satisfactory overall. Whilst the monitoring of the core subjects by curriculum co-ordinators is being carried out appropriately, this

has still not spread to the monitoring of the teaching of foundation subjects by curriculum co-ordinators. Nevertheless, the Headteacher does carry out some appropriate monitoring in these areas and provides appropriate verbal feedback to staff.

70. Implementation of the school's aims, values and beliefs is satisfactory. The teachers are aware of these aims. The school has set clear targets to raise standards further and indeed expects to exceed some of these aims. Parents are generally supportive of the school's aims and values and feel that these have a positive influence on their children.
71. Development planning, monitoring and evaluation are good overall. The school has set clear targets for improvement and has put strategies in place to achieve them. The school's priorities and targets are appropriate and it is analysing data from national tests appropriately.
72. Whilst the special educational needs co-ordinator organises the identification and analysis of needs very well, the lack of sharp focus in the individual education plans limits progress. The governor with responsibility for special educational needs has been actively involved in the organisation of this provision through providing a high level of support and leadership for the special educational needs co-ordinator and the school. She has a clear strategic view of future developments.
73. The school's ethos is good. There is an effective learning environment and relationships overall are good. Whilst there is equality of opportunity for most pupils at this school, there are two areas where this is unsatisfactory. Firstly, children in Reception who are under-five do not have the same access to the high quality resources in the Nursery. Secondly, there are currently two mixed age Year 3 and 4 classes; in one of these classes, the overall behaviour of a small minority of pupils is preventing other pupils in that class having the same educational opportunities as pupils in the other Year 3 and 4 class. The leadership of the school is aware of these problems and is actively pursuing possible solutions.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

74. The school is well staffed to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. Staff have a range of relevant experience. Job descriptions are in place for all staff and there is a named co-ordinator for each subject area of the National Curriculum and religious education. Curriculum co-ordinators are generally effective in their roles and their subject expertise is used well in their curriculum area. Support staff are suitably qualified for their roles and are effectively integrated into all aspects of the school. Administrative staff are efficient and mid-day supervision is effective. All support staff, including the Site Manager, are competent and they make a contribution to pupils' welfare and to their attainment and progress.
75. The school has outlined a programme of staff development in its school development plan allowing opportunities for teachers to update their skills in line with curriculum responsibilities and for the general requirements of teaching the National Curriculum. Teachers meet regularly, both formally and informally, to discuss and disseminate school-related information. The school belongs to the Colchester Consortium of Schools, through which staff have access to a good range of professional development courses. The school's appraisal arrangements are in line with the Local Education Authority's requirements. Induction procedures are in place and are effective.
76. The school's accommodation is a Victorian listed building. The school premises committee is actively involved in a rolling programme of redecoration. Improvements in accommodation have been made since the last inspection and include the refurbishment of junior toilets, administration offices, a new staff room, new library and an excellent computer suite. However, upkeep of the accommodation is costly and causes the school some financial difficulties. For example, the Nursery and Key Stage 1 areas are heated by an old and unreliable system that often causes wide variations in temperature. Also, the consistent movement of one class through another, in order to

gain access to the main part of the school, causes inappropriate disruption to learning.

77. Resources for most subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education are satisfactory. Resources for information and communication technology are good and the range of apparatus and equipment in the Nursery is very good. There is a satisfactory range and quantity of fiction and non-fiction books in classes and in the library. All equipment and materials are well stored and access to them is good. Displays in classrooms and public areas are usually good and add to the quality of the learning environment.

The efficiency of the school

78. The efficiency of the school is satisfactory overall. The school has maintained standards since the last full inspection report.
79. Financial planning is good. The school has an appropriately costed school development plan to summer 2000 with provisional items identified to 2001. The plan is a culmination of the collaborative work of the Headteacher, management team, staff and governors. The finance committee monitors overall expenditure on a regular basis and the school benefits from the services of the local consortium's budget manager. Monies for special educational needs are appropriately spent.
80. Use of teaching support staff is unsatisfactory overall. In some numeracy and literacy sessions, support staff are not employed to best effect during the sometimes lengthy, whole-class taught parts of the lessons. Because pupils with special educational needs have individual educational plans that lack focus, time spent by support staff is not used to best effect. In a lower Key Stage 2 class there are several pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties. In several lessons observed, the behaviour of these pupils was so extreme as to severely limit the progress of the majority of the remainder of the class. Under these circumstances, these pupils, who were not supported by additional staff, restrict the ability of the class teacher to deliver lessons at an appropriate level.
81. Use of learning resources and accommodation is satisfactory overall. However, there is inefficiency in the use of the accommodation for the Reception/Year 1 class, with children who are under five in this class being at the opposite end of the school to those in the Nursery. This results in them having limited access to the high quality resources available to those children in the Nursery.
82. The efficiency of financial control and school administration are good overall. The process of establishing the school development plan includes appropriate consultations and is a valuable document to take the school forward. The school has not been audited since before the last inspection; the recommendations contained in it have been carried out. The administrative assistant is competent and efficient and helps the smooth running of the school.
83. Given pupils' attainment on entry, the quality of education provided, the levels of attainment in the school and the progress of pupils, together with the levels of expenditure per pupil, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

87. The majority of children are admitted to the Nursery class in the term in which they have their fourth birthday. There is an effective programme for helping children settle in to school. They attend part time until the term in which they become five when they transfer to the Reception class which they attend full time. Good arrangements are made for helping children to transfer to the Reception classes. On entry to the Nursery, children's attainment is average overall although it ranges from below to above average. All children, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall although in activities when they work with their teacher they make good progress. By the time they are five, they reach the standards expected for their age, attaining the Desirable Learning Outcomes. (These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five.)

Personal and social development

84. Both the teaching and curriculum for children's personal and social development are very good. As a result, children exceed the standards expected by the time they are five. Children make good progress in the Nursery and satisfactory progress in the Reception class. The differences between the two classes are mainly the result of the fact that the accommodation in the Reception class restricts some of the activities which help children to further develop their independent learning skills. In both the Nursery and Reception classes teachers have very high expectations of the way children play and behave. Good routines are maintained from the outset, which help children to feel secure and confident. Children's social development is promoted in all activities very effectively. This is seen both when children are working with the teacher and also in their structured play. Most children listen well, take turns and put up their hand to answer questions. They work well together co-operatively and sustain concentration, often staying for a long time at one activity. There are good relationships between all adults and children and behaviour is good.

Language and literacy

89. The good curriculum and teaching ensures that children make at least satisfactory progress and attain the standards expected by the time they are five. There is a very good focus on the development of oral language skills and in this aspect children make good progress and reach the standards expected before statutory school age. All adults are skilled at encouraging discussion and vocabulary development. There are a small, but significant number of children who have speech problems, but due to sensitive support by their teachers, all children begin to speak confidently and communicate effectively. They listen in a focused way to gain information and follow directions accurately. Children enjoy the stories that are read to them and develop a good attitude towards reading. They know how books work and relate text to the story. In the Reception class children know the sounds of some letters and retell or act out a story using props. Most children write their own name and begin to write other letters and marks to convey meaning.

Mathematical development

90. The teaching and curriculum provision for children's development and awareness of mathematical language and skills is good. Children make satisfactory progress overall and good progress in developing their number skills. This means that they achieve the overall standards expected by the age of five and in number they exceed them. In the Nursery class children count, order and match numbers to ten and then record the amount in pictures. They match and sort objects by shape, colour and size. In the Reception class children gain a secure measurement vocabulary and compare lengths and height as by identifying whether objects are longer or taller than. They begin to use number lines.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

85. The curriculum for children to develop knowledge and understanding of the world around them is good and teaching is satisfactory. Observation skills are promoted well both in the Nursery and Reception classes and this helps children to discover things about the world around them. They develop the skills and confidence to operate a computer program by using the mouse. They develop a secure understanding of their homes and families and begin to gain a sense of the passing of time through their study of what happens during their day, and the seasons. They have a sound knowledge of different types of weather. Most children are familiar with technology through construction games and toys although the use of the Reception classroom as a thoroughfare restricts their use. They construct models from junk materials, for example, a house which they designed. By the age of five, children make satisfactory progress and attain the levels expected in this area of learning.

Physical development

86. Children make satisfactory progress in their physical development and, by the age of five, reach the standards expected. The curriculum and teaching are good. Good opportunities are provided in the Nursery class to develop dexterity through the handling of objects such as malleable material, jigsaws and different sizes of construction equipment. The very good outdoor accommodation allows them to develop good skills and confidence in using large apparatus and toys. However, the accommodation in the Reception class makes it more difficult to offer Reception age children these opportunities. Children use pencils, crayons and other art materials well. They cut, mould, stick and paste materials satisfactorily, for example when making a rainbow collage.

Creative Development

87. Children make satisfactory progress and attain the standards expected by the time they are statutory school age. Curriculum provision is good and teaching is satisfactory. In the Nursery children work carefully to paint effective figures although they still need help in choosing and mixing colours. In both the Nursery and Reception they make satisfactory progress in developing their imaginative skills and Reception children act out the story of Rumpelstiltskin. Nursery children sing tunefully, accompanying themselves with percussion instruments.
88. The overall quality of teaching is good. Two very good lessons were seen. A strength of the teaching lies in the very good relationships which are established. In the Nursery class the quiet calm manner of the teacher helps children to feel secure and develop self-confidence. In both the Nursery and Reception classes teachers ask effective questions and give clear explanations and demonstrations. Teachers' planning is unsatisfactory; it identifies activities rather than learning objectives. However, it makes provision for children of different prior attainments which was a weakness identified at the last inspection. Satisfactory day-to-day assessment helps teachers to plan future work although it is not as effective as it could be if the learning objectives were identified in the weekly plans. Teachers maintain a sensitive control that is warm and encouraging, where children are keen to learn and correct their mistakes. They use resources very well to help children understand and, in the activities that are led by the teacher, time is very well used to promote good progress. The pace of learning in structured play is satisfactory although time could be more efficiently used by encouraging children to reach specific targets. Children take books home to share with their parents and this gives good support to their progress in developing their reading skills.
89. Curriculum planning is good. The long and medium term plans effectively address the areas of learning for children under five. These help teachers to successfully build on and extend children's skills and knowledge. Teachers' weekly and daily planning relate to these. However, this short term

planning focuses on the activities to be covered and does not identify the learning objectives for the children as set out in the medium term plans. Inspection evidence shows that these objectives are being met, but the lack of identification of objectives in lessons makes it hard for teachers to assess whether pupils have achieved them. Very careful attention has been given to preparing and moving children on to Key Stage 1. Good assessment procedures are in place and this information is used well to inform termly planning and to meet the needs of individual children.

90. The amount of resources for children under five is satisfactory. However, they are of a high quality and support children's learning well, particularly in the Nursery class. Very good outside facilities including large climbing apparatus, a track for wheeled toys, hard and soft play surfaces and covered areas for inclement weather support children's learning very well. The accommodation for the Nursery class is good. However, the fact that the Reception class is housed in a room which is used as a thoroughfare restricts the effectiveness of its use to support all the areas of learning. In addition, its distance from the outside play area for the under fives means that Reception children do not have the same opportunities to use this as children in the Nursery class. The school makes good use of teaching and support staff for special educational needs and the number of adults is enhanced by student placements.
91. These findings show that the school has maintained the good features seen at the last inspection and improved the provision for the higher attaining children and the quality of the outdoor resources.
- 97.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

92. Inspection findings show that overall attainment in English, at the end of both key stages, is in line with national standards.
93. The results of the statutory assessments in the summer term of 1999 show that the number of pupils reaching the expected levels of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Level 2 or above) was below the national average in reading and well below average in writing. The number reaching the higher levels was below average in reading and well below average in writing. Teacher assessments were fairly similar to these. Over the last three years standards have risen in both reading and writing. The performance of boys is higher than that of girls in both reading and writing. This differs from the national picture.
94. At Key Stage 2 in 1999, the number of pupils reaching the expected level of attainment in English (Level 4 or above) was below the national average. The number reaching the higher levels was above average. In the reading test the number of pupils reaching the expected level was below average, but in writing it was above. Teacher assessments over estimated pupils' achievements. Taken over the last three years standards fell in 1998 but rose again this year, both overall and in reading and writing. Boys outperform girls and this differs from national trends.
95. Inspection findings show overall attainment in English to be in line with national standards at the end of both key stages. Differences between test results and inspection findings are due to a combination of:- improved teaching, the continued impact of the National Literacy Strategy and cohort differences. Pupils make satisfactory progress over time. The National Literacy Strategy is having a positive impact on progress and, in the majority of lessons seen during the inspection, pupils made good progress. In addition, this good progress has already had a significant impact at Key Stage 2, where pupils reach above average standards in reading by the time they leave the school.

96. In speaking and listening Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress and attain the standards expected for their age, by the end of the key stage. They listen attentively and this helps them to gain information in a range of subjects. A good example of this was seen in a physical education lesson where pupils' skills helped them to carry out their tasks effectively. Although pupils have a range of ability in their speaking skills, the majority speak confidently and clearly. They explain their ideas and opinions effectively, for example when comparing the poetry they read. At Key Stage 2 pupils are given good opportunities to increase their speaking and listening skills, particularly in Circle Times. They make satisfactory progress and, by the time they leave the school, reach average standards. Pupils develop well focussed listening skills which allow them to pose well thought out question to their teacher and classmates and to make carefully judged contributions to discussions. However, the school has recently introduced a new scheme of work which is having an impact on progress. During the inspection in a Year 5 class, a very good debate on the pros and cons for building the Aswan Dam led to pupils attaining above average standards.
97. At Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their reading skills and, by the end of the key stage reach average standards of attainment. As the result of good teaching in literacy lessons, pupils develop good strategies for sounding out words and develop a satisfactory sight vocabulary. By the end of the key stage most pupils use these strategies as well as the clues gained from pictures and the sense of the text to read with increasing confidence. They talk with enjoyment about the stories they read and describe the characters. The higher attaining pupils predict what is likely to happen and correct their mistakes. Pupils with special educational needs recognise common words, but need help in sounding out the letters of unknown words.
98. These secure foundations are well built on and, at Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress. By the end of the key stage, standards in reading are above the national average. Pupils read fluently and expressively from a range of texts including poetry, some of which they write themselves. Their comprehension skills are developing well and are above average. Most pupils talk about the plot and character, referring to the text and giving valid reasons for their findings. They easily retrieve information from non-fiction books. The more able pupils have a very good understanding of genre and the themes, plot and characters in the stories they read. They read from a range of authors. Pupils with special educational needs read more hesitantly although they have a good understanding of what they read. Their skills in talking about the themes and characters are good and match the levels expected for their age.
99. At Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their writing skills and attain average standards by the end of the key stage. Many pupils write clearly with well formed letters and a number are already beginning to write cursively. Most pupils spell simple common words correctly and use their knowledge of letter sounds to spell new words. In these aspects their attainment is slightly above average. The higher attaining pupils' writing is mature in style and they make few spelling mistakes. The handwriting of pupils with special educational needs is legible and accurate although not always uniform, they spell a number of common words correctly, but do not have the skills to spell unknown words. The majority of pupils write their stories and descriptions in correct sentences and begin to expand their ideas, for example in writing a description of Autumn. The higher attaining pupils write very effectively using an interesting style, for example describing someone as having "a fiercesome look". The written work of pupils with special educational needs is usually confined to one or two sentences.
100. Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress and attain national standards by the time they leave the school. However, they are given good opportunities to write in a range of styles and for different purposes and standards are rising. Year 5 pupils write an imaginary episode to match the story of "The Wind in the Willows". Year 6 pupils wrote some very effective poetry as a result of reading the poem "Whoppers". The majority of pupils' handwriting is cursive and the more able write

fluently and neatly. Pupils with special educational needs do not always form their letters correctly. Most pupils spell and use punctuation correctly. Average and above average pupils are beginning to use apostrophes and speech marks correctly.

101. Pupils use their literacy skills well in other areas of the curriculum. Speaking and listening skills are used in all subjects and make a good contribution to discussions and debates; for example, in the School Council. Pupils use their reading skills to gain information from books in subjects such as history and geography. They write for a range of purposes in subjects like science and religious education and word processing skills help them to produce written work in different formats.
102. Across the school pupils are well motivated and are interested in their work. They listen well to their teachers and each other and work well collaboratively when required. During the inspection this resulted in some collaborative poetry writing of a high standard. Pupils handle resources, particularly books carefully and take pride in their work, making sure it is well presented when required.
103. The overall quality of teaching is good in both key stages. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Two very good lessons were observed. This is largely as the result of the good implementation of the literacy strategy. At both key stages teachers have a good knowledge of English and the analysis of poetry and prose, and the teaching of reading skills is good. Teachers plan challenging activities for pupils of all levels of attainment and have high expectations of what they can achieve. They use resources such as big books well and during the whole class sessions and when pupils are working in groups under the supervision of the teacher the pace is good and learning is rigorous. The use of homework to support the work in classrooms is inconsistent. In a mixed Year 4/5 class it clearly extended the work in the lesson and helped pupils to make greater progress as well as increasing their skills in independent learning. In other classes the amount of homework set is minimal.
104. Curriculum provision is good. It is effectively built around the National Literacy Strategy, with further provision for speaking and listening. Schemes of work provide helpful advice on planning to build on and extend pupils' skills. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment. Their skills in reading and writing are regularly assessed. Each term a piece of written work is assessed and moderated against National Curriculum levels of attainment. Assessment evidence is used effectively to assess the progress of groups of pupils and the school has put in place systems to allow the progress of individual pupils to be tracked. The use of assessments to help to plan the curriculum, whilst developing, is still unsatisfactory overall.
105. The co-ordinator is hard working and well qualified. The subject is being effectively managed by the Headteacher and the Deputy Headteacher during the co-ordinator's absence. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented well with staff being effectively supported. Good systems are in place for monitoring planning and teaching and learning. This has helped to identify the areas to target, for example speaking and listening. A good audit of resources was carried out and, as a result good resources to support literacy lessons and reading in particular have been purchased. These are a high quality, are well stored and easily accessible. As a result of the good teaching and curriculum and effective leadership good progress is being made and standards are rising.
106. The findings represent an improvement since the last inspection where progress and attainment, particularly in written work, slowed between the Nursery and Year 3. Now pupils make satisfactory progress in these year groups. Cursive handwriting is taught before pupils leave Key Stage 1 and the co-ordinator now plays an effective part in managing developments.

Mathematics

107. Inspection findings show attainment in mathematics to be in line with national standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and above national standards at the end of Key Stage 2.
108. The results of the 1999 end of key stage tests and assessments showed that by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils performance was well below the national average at Level 2, the expected level for seven year olds. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was also well below the national average. The introduction of a new scheme of mathematics in Key Stage 1 during 1998/1999 was not properly co-ordinated. Teachers were not fully convinced of the value of the change and confusion led to poor quality teaching of the subject. The school identified the problem and rectified it. However, this was too late to have an effect on the 1999 test results. The mathematics co-ordinator has already monitored the teaching of mathematics in all Key Stage 1 classes this year. The school's target is to return test results in Key Stage 1 to at least their 1998 levels when at Level 2 and above they were in line with the national average. Inspection evidence confirms that this is an attainable target.
109. The results of the Key Stage 2 1999 tests showed that by the end of the key stage pupils performance was in line with the national average at Level 4, the expected level for eleven year olds, and above. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 was above the national average.
110. At the time of the last inspection standards at the end of Key Stage 1 were below the national average. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 were above the national average. With the exception of the 1999 results the school has made good progress in mathematics in Key Stage 1. Results were above average in 1996 and 1997 and in line with the national average in 1998. In Key Stage 2 the school has consistently maintained standards above the national average every year.
111. At the end of Key Stage 1 average pupils count confidently to 100, recognise odd and even numbers, add and subtract within 50 and identify halves and quarters of common two dimensional shapes. They find halves of numbers to 20, double single digits and recall number facts of 2, 5 and 10 times tables. Pupils learn to tell the time, use non-standard measures such as hands and paces and begin to use grams and centimetres. They identify right angles in everyday objects, interpret data: for example, measurements of their peers. Pupils also use their mathematical knowledge in other areas of the curriculum such as history, geography and science.
112. Pupils enter the school with average skills and knowledge in mathematics. Progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory with pupils achieving standards in line with the national average by the age of seven.
113. At the end of Key Stage 2 average pupils add and subtract numbers in thousands, hundreds, tens and units. They add and subtract fractions and decimals to two places. They multiply numbers within 100 by fractions, find the mode, median and mean of a range of data and can equate decimals, fractions and percentages. Pupils calculate area and perimeter by formulae, use their knowledge of ratio to draw Pythagorean triangles and use frequency charts to gather data for example the number of boys and girls in various classes. They translate data into graphs such as block and line graphs and bar charts using computers on some occasions.
114. Progress in Key Stage 2 is good. Their previous satisfactory knowledge and understanding are well built upon and they achieve standards above the national average by the end of the key stage.
115. All aspects of mathematics are suitably well covered. Pupils use their mathematical knowledge and understanding in other areas of the curriculum and the use of computers in the subject is good in both key stages. However, when pupils investigate within mathematics teachers offer too much guidance. The range of investigations is limited and this restricts what pupils can discover for themselves.

116. Pupils' attitudes to their learning are good overall. Most enjoy the subject and work with enthusiasm. Most pupils sustain concentration and persevere well with their work. Co-operation and collaboration between pupils are good when this is appropriate. Some pupils with behavioural difficulties, in a lower Key Stage 2 class, are not adequately supported. Their inappropriate behaviour limits the progress of other pupils in the class on occasions.
117. The National Numeracy Strategy has been fully introduced in both key stages and is already beginning to raise standards by encouraging pupils to examine how they think mathematically. Standards in numeracy are satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2.
118. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 but unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2. In both key stages teachers modify work to match the prior attainment of pupils. The level of support given to pupils in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and sometimes good, classroom assistants and some parent helpers being well prepared to give pupils the support they need. This level of support is not available to many pupils in Key Stage 2 and a significant minority do not have satisfactory levels of self-discipline or motivation to enable satisfactory progress.
119. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of mathematics are good overall and all have high expectations for pupils' performance. Explanations are clear and specific vocabulary is consistently used and extended. In the best lessons, high pace is maintained, time targets for completion of work are well used and pupils learn from each other in the introduction to tasks and in the end of lesson review.
120. The planning of mathematics lessons is good. All lessons are planned in weekly blocks to the framework of the national numeracy strategy. Teachers' assessments of pupils' progress are good and each teacher keeps good records of these assessments. The use of this high-level assessment information is satisfactorily used in planning future work. The school recognises that assessment information should be used more effectively to match work more closely to pupils' abilities and professional development is planned in this area.
121. There is a newly appointed, knowledgeable subject co-ordinator who is monitoring the subject and supporting the staff well.
122. The range of textbooks and equipment for mathematics is only just adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. The co-ordinator is conducting an audit of resources and priorities will then be agreed to improve levels of resources.

Science

123. Inspection findings show overall attainment in science to be in line with national standards at the end of both key stages.
124. In the 1999 teacher assessments, the proportion of pupils attaining Level 2 was above national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and the proportion attaining Level 4 in the tests at the end of Key Stage 2 was below the national average. The percentage of pupils obtaining the higher Level 3 in the end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments was well below the national average and the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 in the end of Key Stage 2 national tests was below the national average. In the teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1998, results were better than in the tests and were just above the national average overall. The reason for this

discrepancy at Key Stage 2 between test and teacher assessment results is that some of the higher attaining pupils were absent on the day of the national tests. Pupils' performance in the end of Key Stage 2 tests in 1999 was well below average compared to schools of a similar type. The average attainment of pupils in the three years 1996 to 1998 was close to the national average in the Key Stage 2 tests. The average performance of boys was higher than that of girls in the end of Key Stage 2 tests for these three years. Attainment in the recently published 1999 national tests has shown improvement in the results in both the end of Key Stage 1 tests and the end of Key Stage 2 tests, although the proportion obtaining the higher Level 5 has not kept up with the increase nationally.

125. Attainment in lessons observed, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils is in line with national standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and also in line with national standards at the end of Key Stage 2. This broadly matches the improvement in the results of the 1999 tests. Within the range of science work seen during the inspection, many pupils in Key Stage 1 demonstrate satisfactory attainment related to experimental and investigative science, life processes and living things and materials and their properties. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 understand the effects of micro-organisms in the spoilage of food and have satisfactory knowledge of the functions of the skeleton. There is evidence to show that standards have been maintained in science since the last inspection.
126. Overall progress of pupils in science is satisfactory in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Factors aiding progress include the attitudes of the pupils and the overall standard of teaching. Factors mitigating against progress are a lack of a coherent build up of key scientific vocabulary in both key stages. Pupils with special educational needs generally make unsatisfactory progress in science, due to a lack of focus in some of their individual educational plans. Whilst pupils with higher prior attainment are making appropriate progress, some lessons contain insufficient challenge for them.
127. Pupils' response in lessons seen is good in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. They generally behave very well and concentrate on the task in hand. Pupils' attitudes to science are positive and they show enjoyment for the subject. Relationships all round in science between pupils and with their teachers are good.
128. The overall quality of teaching is good in both key stages. All the lessons seen were at least satisfactory and there were examples of very good teaching in both key stages. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. The best lessons have a brisk and appropriate pace. Teachers thoroughly assess what the pupils know, understand and can do, set high expectations and meter out time in small portions so that the pupils stay on task. In such lessons there is a rigorous way of teaching the topic so that the pupils are left in no doubt as to the method to follow and the teaching is enthusiastic, as for example in lessons seen in Years 1, 3/4 and 4/5. In the less good lessons there is a slower pace, with lower expectations. In the lessons observed, teachers had at least satisfactory knowledge and understanding and day-to-day planning was satisfactory. Assessment procedures are satisfactory overall but the use of these assessments to help to plan the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Day-to-day marking of pupils' work was inconsistent. In some cases it was detailed with comments to help the pupils to improve and comments which posed deeper questions for those who had obtained full marks. In other cases it was less thorough. The standard of presentation of the pupils' work was satisfactory. The use of homework is inconsistent.
129. The school has satisfactory resources for science. Use of these resources to support the work in hand is satisfactory and supports learning. Teachers' day-to-day planning is satisfactory. The scheme of work covers the requirements of the National Curriculum. There is generally equality of opportunity in science. However, this is not the case in Year 3/4 where a minority of pupils in one of the classes, prevent other pupils in that class enjoying the same educational opportunities as pupils in the other class. The co-ordinator is very keen, enthusiastic and competent. She currently has insufficient time provided to monitor and evaluate the teaching of science throughout the school or

to help spread the existing good practice.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information and communication technology

130. By the end of both key stages attainment of pupils in information and communication technology is in line with the nationally expected levels. By the end of Key Stage 1 the majority of pupils have good keyboard and mouse skills and they can talk about the way they use a computer. Pupils use information and communication technology to help them generate and communicate their ideas, such as in text and pictures. With help they are able to save, retrieve and amend their work. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils are able to combine different forms of information, showing an awareness of the audience. They are able to load, retrieve, amend and save their work independently. Pupils use information and communication technology to monitor physical changes and apply these to practical, real life contexts. Information and communication technology is used to support knowledge and understanding in other subjects. For example, the school is developing the use of the Internet and CD-ROM software for to support work in mathematics, English and science. Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the use of information and communication technology in the outside world.
131. Progress of the majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, in information and communication technology is satisfactory overall and sometimes better. Information and communication technology is introduced from the time children enter the school. During Key Stage 1 pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of the basic vocabulary of information and communication technology. Pupils in Key Stage 1 also make good use of audio equipment to enhance their listening skills. In Key Stage 2, pupils make good progress in communicating their ideas through text and pictures. Throughout the school, pupils have positive attitudes and develop good working habits. They are confident and enthusiastic when using computers and enjoy the challenge presented by their teachers.
132. In the aspects of information and communication technology observed during the inspection the quality of teaching was good. Teachers give clear instructions on how to use the selected programs and use effective questioning to test pupils' knowledge and understanding. Expectations of pupils' attainment are good. Appropriate use is made of both time and resources and lessons are well planned. Very effective individual support is given to small groups, particularly when they are using the well-resourced computer suite. Teachers are developing their own expertise to ensure that the whole curriculum is effectively taught. The school has a good scheme of work which assists teachers in the use of information and communication technology within the curriculum. Assessment is at an early stage, though is developing as teachers work through the scheme of work. Record keeping is also developing and is focusing on the level of expertise developed by pupils in relation to National Curriculum levels of attainment.
133. Information and communication technology is well organised and managed by the curriculum co-ordinator who supports the staff well. In Key Stage 2 the timetable is organised so that all classes have the benefit of being given individual support in the computer suite.
134. Since the last inspection good progress has been made. Pupils now have access to a much wider information and communication curriculum through significant developments in resources and teacher expertise.

Religious education

135. In both key stages all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress although in the majority of lessons seen during the inspection good progress was made. Attainment at the end of both key stages is in line with the standards set out in the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Good links have been made between the collective act of worship and religious education lessons. In addition teaching in religious education plays a significant part in pupils' personal and social education. These are factors in the good moral, social and spiritual development of pupils.
136. At Key Stage 1 pupils gain a knowledge and understanding of the religions they study and reach the standards expected. They consider the place of celebration and story in religious teaching and belief. For example, the youngest pupils gain a sound understanding of the Hindu festival of Diwali when they make lamps and garlands. Older pupils gain a good understanding of some of the teachings in Judaism such as that of jealousy and forgiveness seen in the story of "Joseph". By the end of the key stage pupils have made satisfactory progress in learning about and learning from religion. For example, they begin to analyse the meaning in Christian parables such as "The Lost Son".
137. At Key Stage 2 pupils make gains in their understanding of what it means to be a member of a faith community, for example when they learn about how Christian belief affects the lives of people like St Francis and Mother Theresa. They make satisfactory progress in building up their understanding of what religious belief means in the lives of ordinary people and begin to develop an understanding of the importance of symbolism, ritual and tradition. An example of this was seen when they learnt about the importance of family worship in Hinduism and the significance of different items on the Puja tray. They attain the standards expected.
138. At both key stages pupils' attitudes are good. They are attentive and enthusiastic and behave well. Most pupils listen and contribute thoughtfully to discussions. This also supports the development of their speaking and listening skills well. Pupils have a genuine interest in different religions and this helps them to develop a good understanding of the differences between themselves and others and promotes religious and cultural tolerance.
139. The overall quality of teaching is good. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. At Key Stage 1 teachers' knowledge and confidence are good. They often read or tell stories very effectively and correctly focus pupils on the teaching behind the story. At Key Stage 2, teachers' subject knowledge is satisfactory. This is mainly because the syllabus covers a wider area than that for Key Stage 1. In the lessons seen during the inspection teachers were confident, explained things well and helped pupils to understand the importance and significance of religious belief in people's lives.
140. The curriculum is effectively based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus and is soundly planned to give pupils a wide range of experiences and build on their knowledge and understanding. Key Stage 1 pupils follow a general programme and, at Key Stage 2, pupils learn about Judaism and Hinduism as well as Christianity. Good links are made to personal, social and cultural education. The school is now making satisfactory use of visits to places of worship, for example the local church and also visitors to the school. Key Stage 2 pupils experienced a day on Judaism where they studied the customs and traditions including food and clothing. Assessment is fairly informal although some lesson plans identify good strategies for assessing whether the objectives have been met.
141. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and gives sound support to colleagues. Monitoring of developments and pupils' attainment and progress is mainly through scrutiny of planning and pupils' work. However, it is not as effective as it would be if there were opportunities to monitor the work in classrooms. Resources are adequate with the school having a few of its own artefact and video resources. Previously the close locality of the teachers' centre allowed good use to be

made of loans, but with this facility no longer easily available there is a need to increase resources further.

142. The school has made good improvement to the provision for religious education since the last inspection. Statutory requirements are met.

Art

143. In both key stages, the progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs is good. In Key Stage 1, pupils are beginning to recognise similarities and differences between their work and that of others. Many are confident in exploring different media in order to draw, colour, paint and print, and experience using a good range of materials. In Key Stage 2 the majority of pupils develop good control, accuracy and detail in drawings. Most pupils make good progress as they move through Key Stage 2 in their ability to evaluate the visual and tactile qualities of their work.
144. Pupils thoroughly enjoy art. They respond well to their practical tasks and think carefully about what they are doing. Almost all apply care and sustained concentration to their tasks.
145. The quality of teaching art is good. Teachers demonstrate a good subject knowledge and give clear instructions. The quality of artefacts pupils are provided with in order to stimulate imagination and motivation is often very good. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work and the planned activities usually promote pupils' ability to make choices about the materials and techniques they can use. Art is well-planned and taught mainly as part of a topic. All pupils are encouraged to respect tools and equipment and to use them safely. Information and communication technology is used to support art. Pupils throughout the school use painting and picture programs to design and produce work. Resources for art are satisfactory and they are well used.
146. Art is well led by the co-ordinator. The school has a satisfactory scheme of work and this helps teachers to promote the development of skills in a progressive way.
147. Since the last inspection progress in providing pupils with first-hand, inspiring experiences, leading with opportunities to explore their own ideas, has been good.

Design and technology

148. Progress in design and technology is satisfactory in both key stages. In Key Stage 1 pupils are developing their awareness of the links between the designing and making elements. They are beginning to use simple tools accurately and talk about their work. In Key Stage 2 pupils work with a range of materials including card, textiles and wood. In designing and making they learn to identify step by step plans, taking account of the tools and materials they will need and can evaluate their work in the light of what it was intended for. Throughout the school progress of pupils with special educational needs is sound.
149. The majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs enjoy design and technology lessons. They are well motivated, sustain concentration and apply themselves to their work. Pupils work well individually and in pairs and are usually happy to share ideas.
150. The overall quality of teaching in design and technology is satisfactory. Sometimes, teaching is good. Throughout the school design and technology is taught through topics. Teachers have a satisfactory subject knowledge and understanding, and use effective questioning techniques that challenge pupils to think and justify their ideas. Practical skills are taught effectively and opportunities are provided for pupils to select from a range of materials. Organisation of pupils is effective and this encourages them to work collaboratively together.

151. The school has a policy and a scheme of work for design and technology that helps promote progression in learning. Resources are satisfactory and well used.
152. Since the last inspection report progress in design and technology has been sound. Long-term planning has been put in place which helps promote balance in the curriculum.

Geography

153. In Key Stage 1 pupils study their local environment appropriately. They undertake local walks and compare what they see and discover with the different environment found on a visit to the beach. Pupils begin to develop a sound understanding of directions and build early mapping skills. Progress in Key Sage 1 is satisfactory.
154. Pupils in Key Stage 2 build satisfactorily on their early skills and abilities. They visit the local park and the river Colne and frequently visit Highwoods when studying their environment. Geography skills are used in historical studies, for example good quality maps of the Nile delta in a study of the ancient Egyptians. Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory.
155. Only one lesson in geography was observed during the week of the inspection. However, from talking to pupils and teachers and by looking at pupils' work, in both key stages, the whole of the geography curriculum is covered and satisfactory standards are achieved at the end of both key stages.
156. The school prioritises the topics taught in the restricted time now available to geography. There is a strong geographic influence during the summer term but the school maintains a truly cross-curricular development through the years.
157. Resources are less than satisfactory overall. Up to date atlases and globes are few in number and research material for geography is unsatisfactory. The good subject co-ordinator is aware of the deficiency in teaching and learning resources.

History

158. Due to timetable constraints it was only possible to see history lessons in Key Stage 2. This was supplemented by a scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. There is appropriate history coverage in Key stage 1, involving Guy Fawkes, the story of St George, pupils role-playing historical characters and work on pupils' personal history. Work in Key Stage 2 includes appropriate work on the Tudors and some worthwhile and detailed studies on Ancient Egypt.
159. Progress of pupils is satisfactory through both key stages, including those pupils with special educational needs. Pupils use their literacy skills satisfactorily to read texts and to write detailed accounts of what they have learned. Work is generally sufficiently open-ended to stretch the higher attainers.
160. Pupils show enjoyment of history. This enjoyment has been stimulated greatly by a recent visit to the British Museum. Pupils are curious to learn and talk confidently about the lives of the Pharaohs and Egyptian artefacts. They talk with zest about life in ancient times and outline with reasons whether they would have wished to live there then.
161. In the five lessons observed, teaching was satisfactory overall, with one good lesson No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Planning was generally satisfactory and lessons had sufficient pace with appropriate expectations.

162. The subject is well led by a co-ordinator who has real enthusiasm for the subject. The subject has satisfactory resources overall although there is a shortage of some every-day artefacts. Good use is made of the local vicinity:- for example Castle Park in Colchester and visits to Kentwell Manor House. The department has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in addressing the issue of a suitable scheme of work.

Music

163. The school has not had the services of a specialist music teacher for some time. Standards in music are below expectations at the end of both key stages. Progress is unsatisfactory in both key stages.

164. Pupils in both key stages have regular opportunities to sing, in lessons and assemblies. During the week of the inspection pupils sang or performed musically in several assemblies. On each occasion the quality of singing was of a low level. Pupils are unable to pitch music or sustain a melody line once a song is begun. In one assembly Year 5 and 6 pupils used tuned and untuned percussion instruments to provide accompaniment for whole school singing. The level of playing was below average for pupils of this age and the quality of singing was also unsatisfactory. Singers were unable to maintain the time and the tempo of singing ran ahead of the accompaniment.

165. The school is aware of the weaknesses in the delivery of music in the school. A peripatetic music teacher is employed to provide tuition, but time is limited. Both the music co-ordinator and the part time accompanist are presently on leave. While the school is very keen to protect music within the curriculum progress for pupils, in both key stages, in all aspects of the subject is unsatisfactory.

166. Three lessons were observed during the week of the inspection. In one of these lessons pupils in a Key Stage 1 class made good progress in playing percussion instruments. In the other two lessons, one in each key stage, progress was satisfactory in consolidating their knowledge and understanding of known songs or in playing percussion instruments. Experiences in composing and performing are too infrequent, in both key stages, to enable satisfactory progress.

167. The school's involvement in the area music festival each year with the Colne Valley Orchestra and in musical presentations at Christmas all contribute to pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Some pupils receive tuition in guitar and violin and this helps raise standards for those involved.

Physical education

168. Progress of pupils, including those with special educational needs is satisfactory overall in both key stages. In Key Stage 1 pupils are developing confidence and control in their general movement skills such as balancing, travelling and jumping, both on the floor and on apparatus. Many pupils are beginning to plan and perform their skills and can make simple judgements about the quality of their work. From an early age, with the assistance of their teachers, pupils are able to lift, transport and assemble the apparatus and equipment with confidence. In Key Stage 2 pupils are developing control and imagination in their gymnastics sequences. However, some older pupils in Key Stage 2 were observed making unsatisfactory progress in skill development and in their understanding of playing striking and fielding games.

169. Pupils in both key stages respond enthusiastically in their physical education lessons. They usually listen to their teachers and, where teaching is challenging enough, respond with interest and imagination. The majority of pupils are able to persevere at their tasks and can sustain energy over an appropriate amount of time.

170. The quality of teaching physical education is satisfactory, though it ranges from good to

unsatisfactory. The best lessons are well structured and activities are suited to the pupils involved. Teachers give clear instructions and have appropriate expectations of pupils' attainment, and focus appropriately on how pupils can improve their performance. Where teaching is unsatisfactory lesson content does not challenge the needs of pupils, organisation is poor and expectations of pupils are low.

171. There are schemes of work for games and gymnastics to support teachers in providing progression and continuity in learning. There are no schemes of work in other activity areas. Formal assessment of pupils' skills and understanding is undeveloped. Pupils have access to a full physical education curriculum. Swimming is provided appropriately in Year 3 with pupils attaining the appropriate standards.
172. The quality and range of apparatus and equipment is satisfactory. Access to it is good and it most is well used. The school has two large halls, a surfaced area and a small field. Access to all areas is good.
173. Since the last inspection, overall progress in physical education has been unsatisfactory. Teaching and pupils' progress remain variable and schemes of work exist for only games and gymnastics.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

174. The inspection team consisted of five inspectors who spent a total of 19 days in the school. Teaching was observed on 72 occasions and covered all subjects of the curriculum. All members of staff were seen on at least one occasion and many were seen several times. In addition, inspectors attended registrations and assemblies. They also visited a number of extra-curricular activities taking place during the week.
175. The school had collated the work of three pupils from each class. The pupils had been selected by the school to represent the range of attainment within each class. Their work was scrutinised, as was the work taking place in the classrooms. Some subject areas arranged for inspectors to see other examples of pupils' work. Many opportunities were taken to discuss with pupils their feelings about the school and the education they were receiving.
176. During the inspection, discussions were held with all teachers who held posts of responsibility within the school, along with representatives of the Governing Body and other members of staff.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	248	1	49	47
Nursery Unit	26			

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23

Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked each week	112

Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26

Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked each week	32.5

Average class size:

27.5

Financial data

Financial year:	1999
	£
Total Income	416,785
Total Expenditure	417,519
Expenditure per pupil	1,694
Balance brought forward from previous year	16,361
Balance carried forward to next year	15,627

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

200

Number of questionnaires returned:

48

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	22.9	60.4	10.4	2.1	4.2
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	37.5	52.1	8.3	2.1	
The school handles complaints from parents well	14.6	45.8	29.2	10.4	
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	14.6	58.3	18.8	6.3	2.1
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	22.9	54.2	12.5	8.3	2.1
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	18.8	64.6	12.5	4.2	
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	29.2	50.0	16.7	4.2	
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	14.9	55.3	23.4	6.4	
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	35.4	52.1	12.5		
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	22.9	56.3	18.8	2.1	
My child(ren) like(s) school	41.7	54.2	4.2		