

INSPECTION REPORT

Hadleigh Infant and Nursery School
Hadleigh

LEA area: Essex

Unique Reference Number : 115294
Inspection Number: 187741

Headteacher : Mrs V J Thompson

Reporting inspector : Mr John William Paull
22028

Dates of inspection : 8th - 11th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707331

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school : Infant and nursery

Type of control : Foundation

Age range of pupils : 3 to 7

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : Bilton Road
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Telephone number : (01702) 557979

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Appropriate authority : The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors : Mr N Holdcroft

Date of previous inspection : April 1996

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Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John W Paull, RgI	Science Art Music Children under five	Attainment and progress Teaching
Christine Haggerty, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
Piers W Bilston	English Design and technology History Physical education Equal opportunities	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision The efficiency of the school
Paul Story	Mathematics Geography Information technology	The curriculum and assessment Leadership and management Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Margaret Sandercock	Religious education Special educational needs	

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

Attainments in English, mathematics, science and religious education are all above average. There are strengths in attainment in art, design and technology, singing, dance in some classes and geography.

- .Provision for children under five is good, including good teaching.
- .Pupils' overall progress through the school is good, including children under five, pupils of higher attainment and those with special educational needs.
- .Relationships between pupils and adults working at the school are very good, contributing to a very good climate for learning.
- .The overall quality of teaching is good.
- .Parents' involvement in children's learning is very good and links with the community are excellent.
- .Management and efficiency are good, with very good leadership, including excellent financial control.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I.Not all subjects have up to date schemes of work.
- II.Occasionally, when they question or instruct their classes, a few teachers are not successful in preventing pupils from talking.
- III.Portable appliances and five-yearly electrical wiring checks are not up to date.

Hadleigh Infant and Nursery School is a good school. Its strengths clearly outweigh its weaknesses. The governors will include the weaknesses in an action plan, which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made good improvements since the last inspection. It has further developed strategies, including occasional withdrawal into a special group, to ensure that the needs of higher attaining pupils are met. It has done this without jeopardising the progress of pupils with special educational needs, who also receive attention in special groups. Recently, new posts for classroom support have been created and new assistants appointed. This is having a good impact on the amount of adult support available to all pupils. The school's secure and stimulating learning environment has been maintained and there are improvements in the provision for children under five. These include improved resources, separate outdoor play areas for nursery and reception aged children and new interior accommodation. This has resulted in the provision of separate classrooms for all age-groups. The school has continued to develop its schemes of work well and, although there are some foundation subjects which still lack detailed schemes of work, policies are up to date. A draft scheme of work for science is in place and recent recommendations of the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency are currently being checked against the school's provision in a number of subjects. Co-ordinators now monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of subject and teachers' plans for nearly all subjects. Standards in mathematics have improved considerably in the last year or so, going from below average to above average. Leadership and management have improved. The school was judged as effectively led by the headteacher, who was supported well by her deputy and staff. These elements are now very good and the school's ethos is very good. Systems for financial control, which were previously described as effective are now excellent.

Good overall management and efficiency, including very knowledgeable, caring and supportive governors result in a good capacity for further improvement.

Standards in subjects

The table shows the standards achieved by seven-year-olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	
Writing	B	C	
Mathematics	B	C	
English	B	C	
Science	B	C	
Information technology	B	C	
Religious education	B	C	
Other subjects	B	C	

above average **B**
average **C**
below average **D**
well below average **E**

The table shows that National Curriculum test results in 1999 are above the national average in all tested subjects. The results of 1999 Statutory Teachers' Assessments in science are also above average. When the school's results are compared with those of similar schools, attainment is in line with average levels. Compared with 1998 results, there is a slight drop in writing, which is now above average, rather than well above, whereas mathematics has improved considerably, moving from below average to above. Baseline assessments at the age of five suggest that a majority of pupils attains at around average. There are also significant proportions both below average and above average, with slightly more above than below. Current evidence in the inspection is very similar to the statistical evidence, showing above average attainment in English, mathematics, religious education and science. Attainment in information technology is in line with what is expected nationally. There are strengths in art, design and technology, singing, dance in some lessons, and geography.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science		Good
Information technology		Satisfactory
Religious education		Good
Other subjects	Good	Good

Teaching of good quality has been maintained since the last inspection. In fact, there is more good teaching than was found then. Although the incidence of very good teaching is lower, unsatisfactory teaching has dropped to only one lesson. It is satisfactory or better in 98 per cent of lessons, with 68 per

cent judged to be good, including 16 per cent as very good. The highest proportions of good and better teaching occur in English, science, religious education, music and in lessons for children under five. It is satisfactory in information technology, geography, history and physical education. Teachers have good expectations of pupils of different prior attainments. Planning is very good for children under five and good, overall. Teachers plan together a lot, which supports good equality of access to the curriculum for all pupils. There are a few weaknesses in the management of pupils when teachers allow them to talk, while they are speaking themselves. The good quality of teaching leads to good overall progress through the school.

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	Behaviour in lessons is generally satisfactory and often good. Occasionally it is very good. There are occasions when pupils talk inappropriately when their teacher is addressing the class or during assembly. This causes a loss of time while they are corrected, which has an impact in slowing the pace of lessons.
Attendance	Good. Although it is not quite as high as in the last inspection, it is still above average. There are occasions when parents take holidays during term.
Ethos*	Very good. It is a caring school, which is interested in pupils' wellbeing and security. It also cares about achieving the best educational standards that it can for its pupils. Relationships are very good.
Leadership and management	Good. There is very good leadership from the headteacher and governors, who share a common purpose for raising standards. Monitoring of teaching and the curriculum occurs; aims are well implemented and planning for future development is good.
Curriculum	The school's curriculum is good. The areas of learning for children under five and all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught effectively. Assessments are used well to adapt teaching to pupils' needs.
Pupils with special educational needs	Overall, provision is very good, with precisely written individual plans, containing clear targets. This helps with adaptations of work, so that pupils make good progress. It is good in the nursery.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Satisfactory, overall, although there are good elements. Spiritual and cultural provision are satisfactory; moral and social aspects are good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good. Teachers are well qualified. The numbers of classroom assistants have recently been increased. In-service training and induction are very good. The accommodation is very good, including good access for persons with physical disabilities and ample space indoors and outside for children under five. Resources throughout the school are good.
Value for money	The school provides good value for money.

* *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
<p>IV. The school encourages them to get involved, keeping them well informed about what is taught.</p> <p>V. Nearly all find it easy to approach staff and feel that they are well informed about their children's progress.</p> <p>VI. A high standard of work is achieved.</p> <p>VII. Children are encouraged to do more than just daily lessons and parents are pleased with homework.</p> <p>VIII. The school's values and attitudes affect children positively and behaviour is good.</p>	<p>are nur</p>

IX. Their children like school.	<p style="text-align: right;">find the not rec</p> <p style="text-align: right;">number to achie</p>
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A comparatively high proportion of parents returned the questionnaires. Responses are overwhelmingly positive and inspectors are in general agreement with these positive views. However, although inspectors agree that behaviour is generally sound, there are a few occasions when pupils are too talkative in lessons and interrupt their teachers. Many parents did not respond to the question about complaints and a few explained this, saying that they had never found anything to complain about and had no way of knowing. A few parents suggested both in the meeting and on questionnaires that there are not enough classroom support assistants in the school. However, new posts have recently been created and filled. Another parent raised concerns about the use of ability groups and streaming too soon and another felt that there were weaknesses in the provision for special educational needs. No evidence was found in the inspection to support these views. Even when parents made negative comments, they added that the school is, nonetheless, very good.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

The governors, headteacher and staff should continue to address a key issue of the last inspection:

XIII. to introduce schemes of work in those subjects where they are incomplete or do not yet exist (see paragraphs 34, 67, 111, 141 and 147).

There are two less important weaknesses, which governors should consider for inclusion in an action plan:

- a) improve pupils' concentration further, by:
 - i. ensuring that each classroom's 'golden rules' are more consistently applied (see paragraphs 16, 18, 25, 49 and 63); and
 - ii. improving teachers' strategies for preventing pupils from talking at inappropriate times, especially in those classes where they do and in assembly (see paragraphs 40, 105, 112, 125 and 157).
- b) ensure that safety checks of portable appliances and electrical wiring (five-yearly) are up to date (see paragraphs 50 and 69).

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Hadleigh is a mixed, foundation, infant school with a nursery unit. It caters for pupils aged 3–7 years old. There are currently 128 children under five on roll. Children come into the school with a range of different pre-school experiences, although most enter through the school's own nursery. Inspectors judge that at the age of five, when they begin work on the National Curriculum, most pupils attain at a level close to that expected. Nearly all children achieve and a reasonable proportion exceed the nationally recommended desirable outcomes in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Creative skills, however, often exceed what is described in the desirable outcomes. The results of baseline assessment, just before children begin the National Curriculum, largely reflect these findings. However, they vary considerably year by year. For example, in 1999, they are close to average levels, but in 1998, the school's average score was below that for all schools taking part in the local baseline scheme.
2. The school is situated in Hadleigh, Essex. It originally opened in 1965. It draws most of its pupils from Hadleigh or nearby. There are 315 pupils on the roll. This is more than average for schools of a similar type. There are 37 on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs, of whom two have a statement maintained by the local education authority.
3. There are 10.5 full-time teachers in the school, including the headteacher who is also the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). The school has three classes in each age group. The average size is 23.8, although the range is from 22 to 28.
4. Parents are given the option to start their children at the beginning of the educational year in which they reach the age of four. They attend for either three or four morning or afternoon sessions per week, depending on their age. About five per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is below average. During the last full year for which figures were collected 1.3 per cent of pupils came from homes where English is an additional language. This is a little higher than in most schools.
5. The school's main aims include providing the best possible learning experiences for children; enabling children to become independent and confident; ensuring that children achieve their maximum potential; and maintaining close links with the local community.
6. Its plans and targets for future development involve the continued improvement of provision and standards in information technology; improvements in standards of spelling; upgrading play areas for children under five and refurbishing the kitchen.

7. Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	40	34	74

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	33	38	36
	Girls	31	33	32
	Total	64	71	68
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	87 (92)	97 (96)	92 (87)
	National	80 (80)	79 (81)	85 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	36	37	38
	Girls	32	32	32
	Total	68	69	70
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	92 (94)	93 (92)	95 (88)
	National	82 (81)	85 (85)	87 (86)

Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.0
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.1
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

7. Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	16
Satisfactory or better	98
Less than satisfactory	2

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

8. When children enter the school, they join the nursery. Their attainment is broadly in line with what is usually found. However, it is widely spread. There are slightly more children above what is usual than below, but a majority are close to what is usual. Although most children quickly acquire the skills of sitting still in a group and concentrating on activities, social skills such as sharing toys and listening to other children are not consistently strong. Teachers work hard on these attributes and progress is good. This continues into the reception classes. Children are invariably prepared to gather around adults for a story or to look at books. They handle books correctly and, in the reception classes, many of them begin to recognise familiar words and relate letters to sounds. By the age of five, they develop the skills of counting, taking and adding one, matching and sorting and recognise simple shapes. Nearly all children are working at the appropriate level of the nationally recommended desirable outcomes in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Creative skills, however, often exceed what is described in the desirable outcomes. The results of baseline assessment, just before children begin the National Curriculum, largely reflect these findings.
9. The 1999 National Curriculum tests show that, at the age of seven, attainment in reading, writing and mathematics is above average compared with schools throughout the country. In comparison with similar schools, these results are broadly average. On the basis of Statutory Teachers' Assessments, attainment in science is also above average and in line with the results of similar schools. Tests in mathematics improved considerably in 1999, in comparison with 1998, which was, in turn, a better year than 1997. However, the school was disappointed with its 1998 mathematics results and analysed them closely in order to make improvements. The National Numeracy Project was introduced with considerable care, including in-service training and school-based planning to improve the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. The co-ordinator believes it has contributed considerably to the improvement and inspectors agree that this is likely. There is a slight drop in results in writing, which are now above average, rather than well above. Overall, girls achieve better results than boys, as they do nationally, but they exceed the national average level for their gender by less than boys exceed their national average.
10. Currently, evidence suggests that attainment is similar to the results of tests. In English, mathematics and science, standards are above average by the age of seven. This is also similar to findings in the last inspection. By the time pupils leave the school, their speaking skills are clearly above average. For example, in Year 2, pupils can discuss parts of a bicycle knowledgeably and with easy confidence, mentioning the importance of safety. They use appropriate technical vocabulary and speak clearly. Listening skills are not as well developed as their speaking. Occasionally, this is related to attitudes and behaviour. There are times when pupils talk while the teacher is talking. However, pupils are attentive to stories and listen well when adults read to them. Reading is above the national average. In the autumn term, the school's middle and higher attaining pupils are already working securely at the expected level for the end of the year. Several are at a level above. Lower attaining pupils and a few with special educational needs are close to expected levels. Pupils are mainly accurate and fluent and explain what they read well. Writing is above average. Pupils in the higher attaining English set are clearly well above average. There are very good examples of highly imaginative and extended writing about 'The Red Group' – a group of pupils at the school. Most pupils' handwriting is joined and legible.
11. At the age of seven, attainment in mathematics is above average. Nearly all pupils achieve at least

the expected level and a significant proportion are above, with only a few below. Pupils count quickly and accurately and use place value correctly when they calculate. They use numbers to solve simple problems, including sums with money. They recognise regular two- and three-dimensional shapes and begin to talk about and record their properties. They use simple charts, pictograms and block or column graphs to display information, particularly in science lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are usually supported well and often achieve standards that are close to average. Attainment in science is also above average. Experimental and observational skills are good. Nearly all pupils in Year 2 know that friction between the soles of shoes and the ground helps them to walk. They test the grip of different shoes, materials and tread-patterns. They know that their tests must be fair. Up to a half go beyond this when they make generalisations, understanding that smooth soles grip less well than rougher ones. They observe plants, leaves, and animals carefully, putting them into categories. They record their findings by drawing and labelling findings. Pupils also sort and check properties of wood, plastic and metal. Standards in information technology are broadly in line with expectations. A large majority of pupils use the keyboard and mouse accurately. Standards in religious education are above what is expected in the locally agreed syllabus. They know, for example, that Christians believe in God and Jesus. They know that Christian babies are baptised in a church and signed with a cross in water, linking the ceremony to Jesus's resurrection from his death on a cross. There are strengths in pupils' attainments in art, design and technology, singing, dance in some lessons and geography.

12. Standards of literacy and pupils' progress are generally good. Nearly all seven-year-olds and many younger pupils are beginning to read and write with fluency and understanding. They develop legible handwriting and plan and draft stories and other forms and styles of writing. They are learning a sound technical vocabulary in a wide range of subjects and situations across the curriculum. Standards of numeracy and pupils' progress are also good. By seven, pupils have a good understanding of how big numbers are, comparing and ordering groups of numbers successfully. They are beginning to develop recall of many facts about numbers, including tables. They talk confidently about numbers, explaining what they do and how they arrive at answers. They use charts, histograms and other forms of simple graphs to display results in other subjects of the curriculum, especially in science.
13. Pupils' overall rates of progress through the school are good, which, in general terms, is similar to findings in the last inspection. Children under five in all classes make good progress. This is because teachers plan very well. Overall provision is good and experiences that meet children's needs, taking into account what they need to do next, are organised, using very good resources. This continues into classes for five to seven-year-olds. It is based on good teaching. Teachers often plan work that provides good adaptations of tasks for pupils of different prior attainments. This suits the needs and requirements of different groups well. In the case of pupils with special educational needs, adults, including the special needs co-ordinator, learning support teacher, class teachers and learning support assistants, work together very well, helping to achieve good progress. Pupils who need support are identified as soon as they settle into school. Later on, clear targets are set in individual education plans. Regular reference is made to these targets in teaching. Very good provision ensures that pupils with special needs make good progress. Higher attaining pupils are well known to teachers and questioning and tasks are planned and directed to them in most lessons. They are also regularly withdrawn into a special group in order to provide work that matches their faster progress more closely in literacy and numeracy.
14. Progress of nearly all pupils is good in English, mathematics, science, religious education, art, design and technology, music and geography. In English, the use of classroom assistants is clearly having a beneficial effect on pupils' rates of progress. In writing, particularly, they focus well on skills of planning and drafting, helping pupils to clarify their ideas and to write freely. In mathematics, the work of all groups of pupils is well matched to what they need to do next, with

clear targets and careful uses of daily assessment. In science, pupils in Year 1 are introduced to ideas of fair testing at an early stage. Teachers know individual needs well and support pupils with careful questioning and instruction. Good levels of adult help, available from parent-helpers and classroom assistants enhance this. For example, in a class in Year 1, an assistant asked very good questions, leading a lower attaining group to make discoveries for themselves. In religious education, knowledge and depth of understanding in the themes outlined by the agreed syllabus are developed. Pupils make good progress in their learning over time and progress in lessons is good. In art, design and technology, music and geography and, sometimes, in dance, teachers' good knowledge of the subject and their careful choices of tasks, resources and materials ensure good progress. In all other subjects, including information technology, history and most aspects of physical education, progress is at satisfactory rates. In information technology, whilst progress in the use of the keyboard and mouse is sometimes good, it is not as rapid in control technology or making decisions based on computer-generated information.

15. The school's checking of pupils and their progress is good. Teachers are very aware of individuals and their needs and care just as much about their academic rates of development as about their social and personal wellbeing. This is a strong contributory feature of the good progress that is made. Planning, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, contains clear progressions of skills and knowledge, showing good sequences of difficulty.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

16. Pupils' attitudes to learning and their personal development are good. Relationships with others are very good and their overall behaviour is satisfactory. This contributes positively to standards and the quality of life in the school. Pupils' good attitudes to learning, good personal development and very good relationships have improved since the last inspection. Although the behaviour of pupils is satisfactory, a few teachers do not apply the behaviour and discipline policy consistently. This was an issue in the last inspection and remains an issue. Pupils under five in the reception class are developing very good attitudes to learning. They persevere even when finding work difficult and they are enthusiastic, often staying on task for a remarkable length of time. Their behaviour is very good and they relate well to each other. They are encouraged to become independent learners and they tidy away their own resources. This has a positive effect on their development.
17. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and the under fives, have good attitudes towards learning, which has a positive effect on attainment and progress. They are enthusiastic and concentrate for appropriate lengths of time on their activities. In lessons, activities are appropriately matched to pupils' needs and this has a positive effect on attainment and progress. Pupils are keen to both ask and answer questions. They concentrate well and listen intently. This has a positive effect on their learning. When asked, pupils nearly always work together co-operatively. They concentrate well when working in small groups, particularly during literacy and numeracy hours and when using information technology. Pupils' capacity for personal study is being developed through their good responses to homework.
18. Behaviour in assemblies and in the classroom is generally satisfactory. It is not judged better than this because in a few classes, pupils chatter occasionally when their teacher is speaking, thus not following the school's rules. This interrupts the flow of the lesson, which has a negative effect on progress. However, in classes where the class rules are successfully applied, the behaviour of pupils is good. Pupils show self-discipline by lining up quietly to go to assembly and they sit in silence, waiting for assembly to begin. However, a few pupils are inclined to chatter amongst themselves, once the assembly starts. Pupils respect the grounds, the buildings and the furniture, which show no signs of graffiti or vandalism. The behaviour of pupils in and around the school is good. Pupils are polite, inquisitive, friendly and welcoming to visitors. Pupils with special needs

are fully integrated into the life of the school. The school operates as an orderly community. Behaviour in the dining hall is good, as is behaviour during breaks.

19. Relationships within the school are very good between pupils and between pupils and adults. Pupils respect the views of others even if they differ from their own. Relationships are constructive, pupils work well in pairs and collaboratively in small groups. Parents report that bullying is not an issue in the school. Pupils relate well to each other. They take turns on the computer without the need of teacher intervention, supporting and co-operating well with their partners. During an art lesson, pupils advised each other on colours and how to mix them.
20. The personal development of pupils is very good. They are fully involved in the daily routines of the school and carry out a range of duties in each class. Pupils' responsibilities increase as they move through the school and they are keen to accept the responsibilities that are offered. For example, pupils in Year 2 take the registers to each class and class monitors return them to the office after registration. Pupils thoroughly enjoy taking responsibility. Pupils in each class contribute to making rules and there are rotas to share daily duties. For example, a pupil collects the 'home-school' diaries from classmates to get them ready for the teacher. This has a positive effect on personal development. Pupils in Year 2 are expected to behave sensibly and to act as role models for the younger pupils. Pupils are involved in the wider community through fund-raising for national and local charities such as the 'Little Havens Hospice'. They also support 'Poppy Day', 'Red Nose Day' and the 'British Heart Foundation' willingly, showing care and concern for others. This has a positive effect on their own self-esteem and personal development.

20. **Attendance**

21. The attendance of pupils is good. However, although attendance is above the national average, it has deteriorated slightly since the last inspection. A spot-check of registers shows that all classes have attendance above the 90 per cent threshold. This has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress. However, the equivalent of 17 weeks of schooling have already been lost this term because of holidays being taken in term time. This has a negative effect on the progress and attainment of those pupils who miss school. It also has an impact on the overall attendance figure. The figure for unauthorised absence is well below the national average. However, the school does not always correctly identify unauthorised absence. For example, the third week of a holiday was recorded as authorised. There is no evidence of actual truancy.
22. A little lateness occurs, which is not always recorded in the late-book, although it is recorded accurately in the registers. Pupils enjoy coming to school and lessons generally begin and end on time.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

22. **Teaching**

23. The previous inspection report makes no overall judgement of teaching. During the inspection, 95 per cent was satisfactory or better, including 32 per cent that was very good. Only 5 per cent was unsatisfactory. There was a mixture of good and very good teaching in classes for children under five. Teaching in Year 2 was better than in Year 1, including a higher proportion of very good teaching. The unsatisfactory lessons occurred in Year 1. Currently, the overall quality of teaching is good. In fact, 68 per cent of lessons are at least good, including 16 per cent that are very good. Satisfactory teaching accounts for a further 30 per cent and only one lesson was judged unsatisfactory. Unsatisfactory teaching has fallen, therefore, from a small amount at the last inspection to an almost negligible amount now. The proportion of lessons judged as very good is

not as high as in the previous inspection, but the proportion of good teaching is higher. The highest proportions of good teaching occur in English, mathematics, science, religious education and music and in classes for children under five. The last is based on good knowledge and understanding of the areas of learning for children under five and, in classes for older pupils, the relevant parts of the National Curriculum. For example, reading is nearly always well taught and teachers use previous assessments particularly effectively, especially in the withdrawal groups. This includes both pupils with special needs and those of higher attainment.

24. For children under five, teaching is consistently good. Twelve out of 14 lessons are of this quality, including two that are very good. The other two are satisfactory, focusing on fairly short observations of pupils using computers. The very good teaching occurs in one of the reception classes for part-time pupils. This overall good quality is based on very good preparation and levels of resources, which are used well. All adults, including nursery nurses and support assistants respond positively to the children, whose needs are well known. Good organisation of experiences and methods results. This helps children to feel secure both personally and in their understanding, producing good progress.
25. Teaching in lessons for five to seven-year-olds is also good. About 63 per cent of lessons are of this quality, including 16 per cent that are very good. Satisfactory teaching occurs in 35 per cent of lessons and the remaining two per cent is unsatisfactory, which is only one lesson. Examples of very good teaching occur in English, mathematics, science, art, music and physical education. It is usually the result of very good knowledge and understanding of the relevant subject. This produces very good instruction and questioning, good management of pupils and very good uses of time and resources. As a result, pupils make very good progress. For example, two very good literacy hours occurred in Year 2. One of these was in a group for pupils with special educational needs. In both these lessons, teachers' planning contained clear notes about what pupils were expected to know by the end. Relationships were of a particularly high quality, including plenty of appropriate praise. This supports progress well. Generally, teachers provide good literacy hours. They have a secure understanding of the pattern and timings that are recommended for lessons in the national project. This is true, even in the one unsatisfactory lesson, in which it was weaknesses in achieving the aims of the lesson and the control of pupils' chatter that were the main difficulties. This difficulty was also found in some of the otherwise satisfactory teaching. It is significant because, although it occurs only occasionally, when it does, it slows the pace of lessons and thereby reduces rates of progress. In mathematics and science, subject knowledge and expectations are nearly always good. Teachers understand their pupils' different requirements and plan work accordingly. Different tasks meet the needs of different groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs. This results in confident, secure pupils, who learn and progress well. The teaching of information technology is satisfactory, but does not consistently make an impact across all elements of the subject. For example, an electronic musical keyboard is not often used and control technology received little emphasis during the inspection. However, improvements in resources since the last inspection are beginning to produce better planning and heightened awareness of the possibilities across the curriculum that the subject offers. Teachers and support staff have good understanding of the introduction of skills in using the mouse and keyboard. They plan these skills effectively. In religious education, teaching is good. Lessons are clearly planned, using themes in the locally agreed syllabus. Relationships with pupils are good and teachers have high expectations that all pupils will contribute and produce thoughtful work. Time and resources are well used. For example, in a lesson for seven-year-olds, a teacher used photographs of her own birthday parties and of herself as a bridesmaid at a wedding. These were discussed and good links were made to Christianity, linked to the theme of festivals and celebrations. In most other subjects, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory with good features. Overall, it is good in music and good in a single lesson seen in design and technology. Teachers prepare and organise their materials well, planning together across year groups, which helps to provide continuity and progression. Teachers often set simple learning tasks for pupils to

take home. Reading books go home on a regular basis and there are suggestions-packs of homework for children under five. This represents good provision. Based on evidence from questionnaires and in the parents' meeting that was held before the inspection, the school's arrangements for homework are well supported by parents.

26. The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. Occasionally, it is very good. Teachers plan very carefully, using the targets in pupils' individual education plans. They have high expectations. Tasks are appropriate and adequate resources meet pupils' individual needs. Learning support assistants and parent helpers are well briefed when supporting pupils, managing them well when working with groups or individuals. Discussions between learning support assistants, class teachers and learning support teacher take place regularly. Precise and accurate records of progress are made on a daily basis. A record book in every class is well used and ensures that progress towards targets is closely observed. Daily assessment is, in fact, often used well by all teachers. They adapt their questioning well according to the answers that pupils give and adapt their teaching effectively.
27. Teachers share ideas and expertise very readily. This is a strength of teaching. It is a sign of good morale and of a willingness to learn from each other, raising the quality of teaching and having an impact on standards. The headteacher, deputy head and subject co-ordinators encourage this fully.

The curriculum and assessment

27. Curriculum

28. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is relevant to the ages of its pupils and which involves them in their own learning through first-hand experiences. Following recent national initiatives in numeracy and literacy, the school's timetable has been structured to increase the time spent on English and mathematics. However, the school has sought to maintain a satisfactory balance between all subjects of the curriculum. Throughout the school, the curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, religious education and the education of children under five. These findings are broadly similar to those of the last inspection.
29. The curriculum for children under five is well planned. It is based on the nationally recommended areas of learning, which are planned to ensure a smooth transition to full-time education. In Years 1 and 2, pupils follow the subjects of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. Each term, a topic focus is well used to provide relevance to the curriculum. The focus does not detract from individual subject skills or knowledge, but complements them by providing a cohesive framework for learning well linked to practical activities. Parents are advised of the titles of topics and plans of the work to be studied are displayed in the classrooms for them to consult. During the year, opportunities are taken to integrate learning in a meaningful manner through activity weeks. For example, an annual book week is held. This year, pupils explored the theme 'stories from other countries', dressing in relevant national costumes. There is also a health week when the focus is on exercise and how to look after their bodies.
30. Good provision is made for pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development. Their intellectual skills are well extended through ability grouping in numeracy and literacy sessions and through investigations in science. Through dance and gymnastics they are encouraged to refine their movements and improve and strengthen their bodily control. In history and geography they develop a sense of the past and of their own locality. Through celebrating festivals and learning about other religions, they learn to value both their own and other cultures, whilst, as they play musical instruments and copy the style of famous artists such as Van Gogh and Kandinsky, they develop not only their aural and visual skills but also their creative abilities. Pupils' social and personal development is well encouraged as they work together when using the computer or in

group tasks, or as they take responsibility for their own learning through homework and research. Within a caring context, they learn about aspects of growing up, the dangers of drugs and the need for careful use of medicines.

31. Pupils regularly take home reading books and often research details for the following day's lessons as, for example, their date of birth or the date of fixed events. Their learning is guided and supported by holiday homework packs that help to ensure continuity of learning and a smooth transition between year groups.
32. Arrangements for the induction of pupils to the nursery and the effectiveness of education for the under fives in preparing them for Year 1 are good. The curriculum also ensures a smooth transfer to the junior school as pupils enter Year 3.
33. Equality of access and opportunity is good for all pupils including those under five. It is good throughout the school in terms of ethnicity and gender as, for example, when boys in the nursery take turns in washing dolls. Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for higher attaining pupils is good. For example, when pupils are withdrawn during numeracy or literacy lessons by the special needs teacher, their work covers the same learning as their class, but at a level matched to their requirements. They have access to a full curriculum and tasks are appropriately planned and adapted to meet their precise targets. For example, a Year 1 pupil, whose understanding of numbers up to 20 is good, but who has difficulty with handwriting, has a specific target of writing the figure '9' correctly. This type of very precise attention to detail makes a very positive contribution to pupils' good progress.
34. Since the last inspection, the school has worked hard to draw up schemes of work for all subjects and to incorporate recent national guidance. The National Literacy Strategy has been adopted for English and the National Numeracy Strategy for mathematics. The scheme for religious education is based on the locally agreed syllabus. There are draft schemes for science and physical education and a recently revised scheme for information technology. The schemes for history, geography, music and art are listed in the development plan for revision. Policy statements are in place for all subjects.
35. Teachers plan termly units of work collaboratively within year groups, using the schemes of work. Subject co-ordinators check these plans for coverage and offer support and guidance. Within year groups, teachers then develop weekly plans for literacy and numeracy and fortnightly plans for all other subjects. These are detailed and identify what pupils should be taught and the activities and opportunities for assessment within each subject. They are matched to the levels of attainment in the National Curriculum. Class teachers also prepare less detailed daily plans that identify the focus for lessons and the allocation of time and resources.
36. Good use is made of a programme of visits and visitors to support and extend the curriculum. These include Watt Tyler Country Park, Hadleigh Castle, Southend airport, a local church, shops and buildings of interest, travelling theatre companies and church groups. Sound extra-curricular activities include a skipping club, choir, music festival and gardening club.
36. *Assessment*
37. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment are good throughout the school. Within the nursery and reception classes, good, detailed records of what children can do in relation to the different areas of learning are maintained. Baseline assessment on entry to the reception classes is followed by detailed and ongoing assessments of pupils' progress and attainment in the areas of English, mathematics and science. Good use is made of regular planned teachers' assessments supported

by the use of relevant standardised tests. Within the other subjects of the curriculum, assessments are made by referencing pupils' work to the statements of attainment in the National Curriculum. Very good use is made of diagnostic tests to identify the specific problems of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils' work is consistently marked. Teachers use praise appropriately and often indicate areas for improvement. Annual reports to parents are informative, giving good detail of coverage and understanding, but they do not always indicate how a pupil compares with others of the same age.

38. Since the last inspection, the school has made considerable progress in the detailed analysis of its assessment data and its use to inform curricular planning. It now makes comparisons about its performance with that of other schools. Careful use of assessment data has enabled the school to set targets for pupils in Years 1 and 2, in English, science and mathematics. By analysing National Curriculum test results, the school has identified issues relating to pupils' performance in spelling, mathematics and writing. Good use has been made of this information to modify the curriculum to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding and to raise standards.

38. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

39. The overall quality of the school's provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and, for their moral and social development, it is good. This judgement is similar to that reported in the last inspection, when a clear emphasis on spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was acknowledged.

40. The quality of spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils have a clear knowledge of the values that the school promotes. All adults treat pupils well and encourage a respect for people's beliefs. The quality of the daily acts of collective worship is satisfactory. However, when guest visitors take the assembly, there is a heightened awareness of spirituality, which is less evident in other assemblies, partly because a few pupils whisper comments. When this occurs, it detracts from the occasion. There is insufficient time for reflection, or being still and silent, although the themes that are covered invite pupils to consider the created world and their place and responsibilities in it. In the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, which the school closely follows, there is an emphasis on individuals being special. This is dealt with well. The suggested themes are followed well in assemblies and religious education lessons and the current theme on celebrations is used well. There are occasions in the provision for children under five, when they are amazed by what they see. For example, they were extremely animated when a live cockerel was brought in for them to observe. Opportunities are provided for pupils to appreciate the work of artists and composers and to make a response to what they see. There are similar opportunities for pupils to respond to literature in literacy hours.

41. The provision for moral development is good. The school clearly teaches principles that distinguish right from wrong and all adults are good role models. In assemblies and in religious education, pupils learn how to treat one another well. In stories, there are clear examples of appropriate and inappropriate behaviour. These are appropriately discussed and consequences of actions are often pointed out. There is a good behaviour policy, which is well implemented. It emphasises the friendly and caring nature of the school and this is evident in the quality of relationships that are encouraged and expected. Every classroom has its own school rules on display and there is a clear reward system for good behaviour. When awards are made to pupils, the reasons are explained well. As a result, good behaviour becomes a model for all.

42. The provision for social education is good. Pupils are encouraged to work and play co-operatively. This is very evident in paired and group work in the classroom and also in the hall for physical education, where the whole class is responsible for setting out the apparatus. Self-esteem is encouraged at times when pupils sit in a circle to consider themes, such as 'we are special' and

‘something I am good at,’ giving pupils an opportunity to express themselves and for others to listen. There are a number of responsibilities in class, including daily monitors. Pupils’ social development is also enhanced through special weeks like Health and Book Week.

43. The overall provision for pupils’ cultural development is satisfactory. Classical music is played in assembly and there are religious artefacts from world religions on display in the hall. In physical education, Handel’s firework music is used successfully during dance and, in art, Van Gogh’s ‘Starry Night’ is used to demonstrate artistic technique. In the reception class, children learn about the artistic skills and style of Kandinsky and they attempt their own work along similar lines. There is a satisfactory range of books and stories from other cultures. During the week of inspection, an assembly on Remembrance Day was well used to draw pupils’ attention to the two World Wars and the wish and drive for peace. Older pupils also visit a church. Through the themes in religious education, pupils learn about festivals and celebrations of other faiths.
44. Provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of all other pupils. They take part in all planned activities, enjoying equality of access with them.

44. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

45. Overall, the school’s provision for pupils’ support, guidance and welfare is good. Since the last inspection, the school continues to provide a welcoming and secure environment for its pupils. Parents are generally happy with the pastoral support available to their children. Some parents raised concerns that streaming could disadvantage younger pupils and that more support was needed for the middle group of pupils. The inspection found no evidence to support the view that streaming is a disadvantage to younger pupils. In fact, educational support for all pupils is good. The school has recently increased the number of available support assistants in lessons.
46. The weekly parent and toddler group provides a good introduction to the school for young children and their parents and carers. Before they enter the nursery, they are acquainted with the building and given opportunities to view the nursery. All of this ensures a smooth transition to the early years of schooling. The transition from year to year is also well managed and supported by the transfer of good quality information. Before they transfer to the Junior School, Year 2 pupils visit it on a number of occasions, both to attend events and for demonstrations of what it will be like. Staff from both schools carefully liaise to support this and, following their transfer, the links continue as, for example, when Year 3 pupils return to attend the Christmas Concert. Good information about pupils’ attainment and personal development is sent to new schools. The information about pupils with special needs is particularly detailed and additional care is taken to ensure their smooth transfer.
47. Procedures for monitoring pupils’ academic progress and personal development are good. Teachers monitor pupils’ academic progress, using baseline assessments and regular testing. Pupils are streamed according to their prior attainment in literacy and numeracy and their progress is monitored half-termly. Pupils regularly move between groups as appropriate. Academic progress is also monitored through lesson observations and staff meetings. Teaching assistants make regular observations during lessons to help class teachers with decisions about the need for additional support, which represents good practice. The school provides support for the higher attaining pupils as well as for those who have special needs. Average attaining pupils also receive appropriate support, where needed. There is effective monitoring of progress in reading. Monitoring of pupils’ personal development is also good, using ideas in the behaviour and discipline policy. Midday assistants are attached to classes and this is a very effective method of sharing information, particularly if there are concerns about a pupil. There are weekly assemblies where good work and behaviour are celebrated. The progress of pupils with special needs is

monitored through the progress that they make towards meeting the targets in their individual education plans. The school has access to and makes good use of outside agencies.

48. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. The importance of good attendance is well communicated to parents. The school is currently reviewing its procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance, including the introduction of practice as recommended by the Department for Education and Employment. Registers are generally very well kept, although two did not fully comply with statutory requirements. Arrangements do not at the moment include making contact with parents on the first day of a pupil's absence. However, when a new secretary takes up her post, the school is expecting to introduce this procedure.
49. The school's procedures for promoting discipline and managing behaviour are good. Pupils understand the system, which is well constructed and includes appropriate sanctions and rewards. The policy aims for pupils to develop self-discipline, an ability to learn independently and to work co-operatively. Each class has its own set of 'golden' rules, which are based on the school rules. However, the policy is not always implemented consistently across the school and, in a few lessons, pupils chatter a little when their class teacher is talking. However, the policy is generally effective and when it is used well pupils respond positively. There are organised activities at lunchtime and midday supervisors apply the policy in a relevant and fair way. Rewards include stickers, 'smiley faces', praise and a named entry in the Golden Book, which is celebrated at assembly. Sanctions include informing the head teacher and parents. There is no recent history of exclusions. There are good procedures in place to record all incidents. The policy includes procedures to prevent and deal with bullying and parents report that bullying is not a problem in the school.
50. Procedures for child protection and health and safety are good. The child protection policy is well constructed and specific to the school. It adds to the local authority guidelines. Members of staff receive regular in-house training on awareness of child protection issues. The headteacher is the named person and the deputy head teacher has also received appropriate local authority training. The deputy headteacher carries out regular risk assessments. There is a staff health and safety committee, which meets each term to discuss any issues that arise. This has resulted in very good health and safety practices in lessons, particularly in physical education and science. First-aid boxes are sufficient in both number and content. The school is introducing procedures to ensure that all incidents are recorded. However, fire drills, although taking place, are not always recorded. Statutory regulations are met with the testing of fire equipment and alarms. The school is aware that the portable appliance testing and the five yearly electrical wiring tests are out of date and appropriate action is soon to be taken to ensure that they occur.

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

51. Overall, partnership with parents and links with the community are very good. This aspect has improved since the last inspection and is now a strength of the school. Parents' views at the pre-inspection meeting and in response to questionnaires are very supportive of the school.
52. The information supplied to parents is generally very good. A few aspects are excellent. Pupils' annual reports are of good quality and provide all the required information, including setting targets for improvement in reading, writing and mathematics. There are two formal consultation evenings per year for parents to meet teachers to discuss their children's work. The head teacher and staff are also available to parents before and after school each day. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed of their children's progress and are fully involved in setting targets for the future. The school prospectus is informative and well presented, with a range of helpful booklets for parents to support children's learning. The nursery prospectus is easy to read with the desirable learning outcomes and nursery routines clearly explained. This has

a positive effect on the progress and attainment of pupils. The governors' annual report to parents is informative and presents as a friendly and easy-to-read document with its illustrations that are produced by the pupils. There are regular newsletters for parents to keep them well informed about events happening in the school. Parents were invited to see videos of how the literacy hour is taught and pupils took part in demonstration lessons. Very good information on the procedures for National Curriculum testing is provided. This includes a photographic slide presentation and examples of previous papers. It is very effective in enabling parents to become more involved in their children's learning and has a positive effect on standards.

53. The school has recently introduced an evening for parents of children who are about to be admitted. This includes slides to show what a child's first day at school might be like. It covers daily routines and explains to parents about the home/school diaries and reading wallets. It is an excellent introduction to school for parents and children, representing practice of high quality.
54. Parental involvement in children's learning is very good. Attendance at parents' evenings is very high. Parents are also involved in children's learning through homework and hearing children read at home. They are also fully involved in helping their children to reach targets that are discussed at parents' evenings. Parents help regularly in the school, making resources and accompanying outings and visits. There is now a group of eighteen parents helping in the school on a regular basis, hearing ten pupils from each class read. This, too, has a beneficial effect on pupils' learning, helping to reduce the pressure on classroom assistants and teachers who are very busy with the introduction of the literacy hour. A very supportive parent/teacher association is very well organised with annual general meetings and regular elections for officers. It organises a range of social and fund-raising activities. Fund-raising events are well supported by parents. Parents of pupils with special needs are fully involved in their children's learning and in the targets that are set. Questionnaires were sent out to parents with the draft copy of a home/school agreement. Its outcomes are being carefully analysed. Parents support events in which their children take part very well.
55. There are very good links with the junior school. These are of both social and academic types. There are good links, which support and enhance the curriculum.
56. Links with the community are excellent. The school nurse and a community police officer visit regularly and are very supportive of the school's personal, social and health education programmes. A recent 'health week' was very well supported by members of the community. For example, a local solicitor dressed in court-clothes and pupils acted out a case to decide whether sweets are "...good for you". A local businessman presented a bicycle to classes in Year 2 and talked about road safety. A local landscape gardener helps regularly with the grounds and also helps with a gardening club during the spring and summer terms. Members of the clergy regularly take assemblies and pupils visit the local church. Pupils make regular visits that support their topic work. These include local farms, Hadleigh Castle, local parks, supermarkets, museums, Southend Airport and the library. Pupils also enjoy a wide range of visiting speakers, which include a fireman, dentist, road safety advisers, a keep-fit expert and representatives from the Heart Foundation. A theatre group also visits twice a year. The very wide range of speakers who visit the school and the many trips that pupils make significantly enhance and support the curriculum. It has a positive effect on pupils' attainment and progress.
57. The school provides work-experience for students from Southend College, the local South-East Essex Sixth Form College and local secondary schools. It is also involved in providing placements for students on initial teacher training practices. This helps to enhance adult-pupil ratios in the school.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

58. The overall leadership and management of the school are good. The senior management, co-ordinators and governors work very well together to provide very clear educational direction for the school, putting suitable emphasis on setting standards and ensuring that pupils make good progress. Since the last inspection they have worked closely together towards their aim of fully developing provision for the early years, which culminated this year in the opening of a new nursery unit.
59. The headteacher provides good leadership and effective management of the school and is very supportive of her staff. She is well supported by her deputy, who is responsible for compiling and overseeing the implementation of the school's development plan. The headteacher and deputy work well together. With other members of the management team, they provide clear leadership and direction for the school.
60. The governing body are very well organised and very ably led. The chair of governors has a very clear view of the role and responsibilities of governors, which is shared by other members of the governing body. All governors have equal commitment and take an active and supportive part in the life of the school. Since the last inspection they have further developed their role. They work in teams, sharing and capitalising on their individual expertise. However, all governors contribute to final decisions and are fully involved in the process. They visit the school frequently and have clear ideas about why they come. Their subsequent reports show a clear understanding of their strategic role in monitoring. The governing body regularly evaluates its own effectiveness, as well as the school's and makes adjustments to the way they work. This regular process of review is well used to inform decisions. The governing body is very suitably concerned with the important issues of standards, pupils' progress, welfare and value for money.
61. Support and monitoring of teaching and curricular development is good. In-service training is closely related to the initiatives in the school development plan. Most recently these have focused on numeracy, literacy and information technology. There is a well-established cycle of staff appraisal and personal development interviews that are used to inform training needs. Governors' visits are used to support teaching or monitor particular aspects of provision. This informs the governing body's evaluations and thereby its decisions. The process is continued through the receipt of co-ordinators' subject reports and consideration of assessment data. The headteacher and senior managers contribute to it through classroom observation and monitoring of planning, coverage and standards
62. Since the last inspection, the roles of different subject co-ordinators have been strengthened and improved. Co-ordinators have a good understanding of what is expected of them and their job descriptions are well composed. They effectively carry out their responsibilities and support colleagues by regularly monitoring planning, coverage of curriculum and standards achieved in subjects. At present, because the release of co-ordinators from their classroom duties is expensive, there is a focus only on those areas identified in the school's development plan.
63. The implementation of the school's aims, values and policies is usually good, although there are weaknesses in a few classes in applying the 'golden rules' consistently. The high expectations of standards of achievement are well complemented by the promotion of a friendly caring environment, with suitable emphasis on social and personal development. The headteacher works hard to ensure consistency and this has a positive impact on the ethos of the school. Since the last inspection, the headteacher, senior managers and co-ordinators have continued the programme of developing schemes of work for each subject to support teachers' planning and ensure continuity and progression for pupils. They have been well supported in this by governors who have worked

alongside them, particularly in the introduction of the literacy and numeracy initiatives. This year, the headteacher and senior managers have worked hard to address differences in pupils' performances in mathematics as compared to English and science in National Curriculum tests and teachers' assessments to good effect.

64. The overall procedures for school development planning are good. The overall plan is divided into sections relating to the curriculum, premises, staff and governors' training. It is carefully formulated after an extensive programme of consultation and revision to which all staff and governors contribute. The five-year plan for the premises is very detailed, providing clear direction for maintenance and improvement. The three-year staffing and curricular plan outlines developments for the coming year and likely areas of improvement for subsequent years. It shows intended outcomes, staff involvement and success criteria. It would benefit from more details of cost implications and the setting of target dates for completion. The plan provides the basis of monitoring by the governing body and the senior management team.
65. The school gives due regard to equal opportunities. Although there are no formal strategies in place to monitor the equality of provision, there are no issues identified relating to equality of access to the curriculum by pupils. Special educational needs provision is well managed. The headteacher is responsible for co-ordinating special educational needs and a part-time learning support teacher works closely with the class teachers and teaching assistants. All are knowledgeable about the pupils; procedures are well established and there is a clear aim to raise standards further. There is a governor with responsibility for special educational needs, who is also knowledgeable and supportive.
66. The school environment is attractive, bright and interesting. Care has been taken in the creation of areas that encourage pupils to value and take pride in their work as well as follow independent enquiry. Relationships between adults working in the school are very good, as are those between adults and pupils and all are valued. Pupils' progress is well supported by the very good use made of assessment information and planning for continuity and progression. There is a clear desire to improve standards, which is evident in the work undertaken to improve the results of National Curriculum tests; to ensure the successful implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies; and to provide challenging activities for higher attainers. Communications are very good with very good sharing of information. All of these factors in addition to those above contribute to a very good ethos.
67. At the time of the last inspection, management was judged "effective". It is now good. There are improvements to report. Since the last inspection, the school has reviewed its key issues well and made good progress towards addressing them. The school has secured its aim of providing good quality provision for the youngest pupils through the construction of the nursery within the early years' unit. Progress has been made in developing agreed schemes of work for each subject area, although those for history, geography, music and art are still awaiting review or further work. The school has put in place strategies to create systematic approaches to monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, although classroom observation by co-ordinators is not fully developed. Strategies are in place to ensure work of sufficient difficulty for higher attaining pupils.
68. The school's capacity for further improvement is good. The headteacher, staff and governing body are in a position to maintain the standards already achieved and there is a collective determination to improve further. There are strategies in place that have clearly initiated change, improved standards, overall, and advanced the quality of education.
69. The school does not fully comply with all statutory requirements, such as safety checks of portable appliances and five-yearly electrical wiring checks. The headteacher and governors work hard to keep up to date with legislation and, in other respects, comply well with it.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

70. The school has sufficient well-qualified and experienced teachers to cover the subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and the education of children under five. All teachers, except those who are newly qualified, have responsibility for one or more subject areas or curricular aspects and have job descriptions that clearly define their roles and responsibilities. Teachers willingly undertake additional work in areas in which they have particular strengths or interests and are actively encouraged to assume additional responsibilities as opportunities arise. Co-ordinators promote their subjects well and work hard to improve standards within them.
71. The provision of support staff is good and is well supplemented by a large group of voluntary helpers. Most classroom assistants have relevant qualifications and work to extend them. This improves their effectiveness. All support staff and helpers are well informed and take a full part in lessons and planning as required. Other staff, including administrative staff, midday assistants, the caretaker and cleaning staff are all suitably experienced and skilled.
72. Arrangements for staff development are very good. The school's development plan reflects a wide range of whole school and individual needs that have been established through a thorough system of staff developmental interviews and whole staff discussions. Training opportunities are discussed and evaluated, relevant information is shared with colleagues and the development plan adjusted in the light of progress. The appraisal system is up to date and forms an integral part of the provision for development and training. Arrangements for the induction of newly qualified teachers are very good. They are very well supported in the school by appropriate mentoring. They are regularly released to work alongside colleagues and to attend courses arranged by the local authority. All newly appointed staff receive good support whether they are newly qualified or experienced and are quickly helped to settle into the school's routines. The governing body identifies its own training requirements and governors attend a variety of courses to address needs. The non-teaching staff is encouraged through personal interviews to consider developmental requirements and has access to a wide range of supporting courses. Professional development has raised the expertise of teachers and support staff and has led to raised standards of attainment. For example, the recent numeracy training has resulted in carefully planned implementation of the national project and improvements in mathematical attainment are at least partly attributable to it. Similarly, recent training in information technology has improved subject knowledge and confidence and is on course to produce similar improvements.
73. The school's accommodation is very good. It is housed in a bright attractive building that is in good decorative order. It is well maintained. The large early years' unit provides a very high level of accommodation for nursery, early years and reception pupils, including a new unit for the youngest children. The large classrooms are carpeted, which helps to reduce noise and are well equipped with wet areas and cloakrooms. Their spaciousness allows ample scope for group work and activities. Furniture is of an appropriate size for the age of pupils and is in good condition. The hall easily accommodates the whole school for assembly. It is well equipped for physical education teaching and is used for serving lunches. The wide corridors are well utilised as teaching areas as, for example, in the recently equipped computer bay. The library makes good use of available space, but is rather small for use as a research area for a whole class. The bright attractive displays in the classrooms and throughout the school are well used to celebrate pupils' work and contribute to the stimulating environment.
74. The school enjoys an expansive site that is well cared for and contains large areas of grass. The good-sized playground has markings for traditional children's games. The secure areas for the under fives contain areas of 'safer surfacing' and are equipped with large play apparatus. An environmental area with a pond provides a useful resource for science. Ramps have already been

installed in several classrooms and it is intended to install a wheelchair lift on the staircase in the main corridor to improve disabled access further.

75. The school is well resourced with equipment that is in good condition and well cared for. Provision for the under fives is particularly good with a wide range of good quality items that include large play apparatus, which supports imaginative play well. For information technology, each classroom has its own computers and printers in addition to the central computer bay with its Internet link. There is a satisfactory range of books to meet the requirements of the literacy hour and sufficient mathematical resources to meet the needs of the numeracy strategy. The school is very well supported by its Parents' Association, which regularly assists with the purchase of equipment. Their support, together with government funds, has financed the recent purchase of computers and the construction of the computer bay. Although small, the library contains a suitable range of reference books that is supplemented well by book areas in each classroom. Educational visits and visitors are well used to support the curriculum and to enhance pupils' learning.

The efficiency of the school

76. The school budget is very efficiently managed and there are clear and very effective systems to ensure careful financial planning. The efficiency of financial control is excellent. The headteacher and governors ensure that very effective use is made of all staff including teaching support assistants, to raise standards. This overall judgement is a further improvement on the good and effective procedures acknowledged in the previous inspection in 1996.
77. Last year there was a large financial underspend in order to support the development of the new purpose-built nursery, which has recently opened. The school has recently changed status from grant maintained to foundation and has used the transitional grant very successfully. This grant, together with some prudent savings, has supported the building and resourcing of the new nursery area. This has meant that the underspend is much reduced. However, there is a prudent planned surplus for this financial year.
78. The school has an excellent five-year care and maintenance plan for future development, which is very carefully costed. The three-year school development plan has satisfactory basic costings for staff and curriculum. There is less detail in these areas. However, the overall plan is satisfactory in outlining further educational developments. The governors have been actively involved in reviewing and assessing costs in the light of the priority to develop the nursery. The headteacher receives good help and support from the governors' finance committee, which actively and regularly reviews financial spending.
79. Very good use has been made of the transitional grant in order to help with the provision of an excellent and spacious nursery facility. Special educational needs funds are well used and the school has increased provision to support lower attaining pupils with an increased number of classroom assistants.
80. The teaching staff is used well. Classroom assistants are well managed and used very well in supporting pupils' learning in class. The English and mathematics co-ordinators have been used well to monitor standards. However, time for monitoring has not yet been extended to involve all co-ordinators, because of its cost implications. The use of the information technology assistant is satisfactory in familiarising pupils with programs. The teaching staff also makes very effective use of a number of voluntary parent-helpers. This is most successful in supporting reading and design and technology activities. The spacious accommodation is used well. The outside areas are also used well by children under five. Learning resources are used effectively, particularly books with large print and pictures that are designed for use with whole classes during literacy sessions and specialist tools and resources for art, and design and technology. For children under five,

mathematical equipment is used particularly well to teach number. The caretaker ensures that cleanliness is of a very good standard.

81. The financial control of the school is excellent. The school received a very positive auditor's report and implemented the minor recommendations immediately. There is a very efficient and supportive chair of the governors' finance committee. The finance committee also includes an effective responsible officer and an efficient finance officer, who, together with the chair and headteacher, give high quality support to the effective running of the school's finances. General school administration is efficient and the secretarial duties are currently shared temporarily between a governor and classroom assistants. The school has recently appointed a new secretary and is waiting for her to take up the post.
82. Given the income that the school receives and the good quality of education provided, combined with the above average national test results and pupils' positive attitudes to learning, the school provides good value for money. This maintains the judgement in the previous inspection.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

83. At the time of the last inspection, there were good standards and high levels of provision for children under five. This remains the case. In fact, with the reorganisation of indoor space, including the building of a new nursery area and the development of separate outdoor facilities for nursery and reception, provision is even better.
84. Parents are given the option of starting children in the nursery at the beginning of the educational year in which they will reach four-years-old. It is on the basis of four half-day sessions for the autumn-born children and three for those with spring or summer birthdays. In the term after they are four, children are offered five sessions. Children move on into reception classes at the beginning of the year when they will reach five. They remain part-time, attending every morning or afternoon, until the term in which they are five-years-old, when full-time education begins. However, summer-born children become full-time from January. The attainment of most children on entry to the nursery is around what is usually found for their age. However, there are a few pupils whose attainment is below this and another, larger group, whose attainment is clearly above.
85. The overall progress of children under five is good. By the time they begin work on the National Curriculum, at around five-years-old, nearly all attain the nationally recommended desirable learning outcomes and exceed them in aspects such as speaking and personal confidence. These judgements are largely supported by the results of local baseline tests.

85. **Personal and social development**

86. By the time they are five, children's personal and social development is in line with the desirable outcomes. They are confident in selecting activities and choose what they want to do willingly and without fuss. They make good progress. In the nursery, children in all sessions develop very good relationships with adults and they begin to sit still for reasonable and growing lengths of time. Occasionally, their confidence and talkativeness cause concentration to waver. However, they respond well to correction, obeying teachers, nursery nurses and helpers quickly, when asked to listen. Children enjoy taking responsibility. For example, in all classes, they act as waiters and waitresses during refreshment times. In the nursery and all reception classes, pupils' understanding of right and wrong is developed well. They play together safely during outside play sessions. Using the hall for some music lessons enhances their sense of belonging to the school. They also join whole school assemblies on particular occasions. Children in the oldest class, which attends full-time, use and look after resources particularly well, sharing sensibly and helping each other, discussing tasks very well. Teaching of personal and social development is consistently good and includes examples of very good teaching. Teachers encourage pupils to work and play sensibly together and plan tasks such as serving daily refreshments, or washing dolls, so that children learn about meeting personal needs.

86. **Language and literacy**

87. By the time they are five, a large majority of children meet the desirable outcomes. They make consistently good progress. Older children talk freely about familiar experiences, responding well to conversations about families or stories that they know. In one session, they talked sensibly to a visitor about her baby, whom she has brought for them to observe and they listened attentively to what she told them. They enjoy books and handle them carefully. In the part-time reception classes, they usually listen well and confidently ask relevant questions of their own. For example, they talked excitedly about a cockerel, which a visitor brought for them to see, asking and

answering relevant questions clearly. In the nursery, too, pupils are confident speakers. They know how to hold a book the correct way around and show interest in the pictures that they see and characters that they hear about. Younger children in the nursery begin to make marks on paper, asking for felt pens, crayons or a pencil. As they move into the reception, they write their names and begin to relate the correct sounds to the shapes of letters. In a literacy hour in the class for the oldest under fives, children began to form letters that were clearly shaped. They are well aware that text conveys meaning and recognise several words, using recall, initial phonic sounds and pictures to help them. The teaching of language and literacy is good. Teachers plan very well together and have good expectations of children. Organisation and the use of time and resources are good.

87. Mathematics

88. Provision for the mathematical development of children under five is very good. By the time they are five-years-old, the majority meet or exceed the desirable outcomes. Progress is good. However, there is a wide range of attainment in reception classes. For example, a few children are insecure in adding one on, when using numbers up to five, whereas others achieve it as far as 20. In all sessions in the nursery, children play relevant and appropriate counting games. They sort and match shapes, using, for example, different types of pasta, plastic shapes and similar objects. They play with sand and water, filling containers and comparing the quantities that they can hold. In the reception classes, such types of activity are developed further. For example, children can recognise the numbers on a die, when playing a mathematical game. This requires them to recognise and pick up a simple shape that is related to what they throw and position and match it correctly on a board. In the full-time reception class, children understand mathematical language as required by the national desirable outcomes. For example, they use the terms “more” and “less” confidently and know several words for “add”. The teaching of mathematics is good. Teachers and nursery nurses in all classes know the children’s needs well. They keep relevant records and use them to build on experiences. Very good planning results in providing appropriate tasks. Teachers praise children appropriately for their successes. This supports progress well.

88. Knowledge and understanding of the world

89. Provision for knowledge and understanding of the world is good, and children mostly meet the desirable learning outcomes by the age of five. Progress is good. Children’s ideas about their environment are developed through experiences. For example, they talk about walking in the locality, perhaps to the shops, comparing this with their experiences of travelling further away, using a means of transport. They observe and experiment with everyday materials and use construction kits to assemble and disassemble models and toys. In the nursery, they make simple predictions about what they think will happen when they soak pasta. They learn how it reacts in water, changing from hard and brittle, to soft. They build intricate road layouts with wooden and plastic blocks. In reception classes, children use sand, water and a variety of materials to make artefacts as might be expected for their ages; they learn about peoples in other parts of the world and in the past and they make observations of the natural world. They use computers well to support their work, clicking icons, areas on the screen and buttons, for example, to create pictures. The overall quality of teaching is good, both in the nursery and in reception classes. Resources are used well to set up experiences from which children acquire relevant knowledge and understanding. Questioning and instruction help to engage children’s interest on what is planned, supporting their progress.

89. Physical development

90. By five-years-old, the standards of attainment of nearly all the children are approaching those described by the desirable outcomes. Children in all classes are developing their co-ordination and

manipulative skills through the use of pencils, crayons, colouring pens, brushes, scissors and many other simple tools. They use construction kits confidently, improving manual dexterity by joining and separating the pieces. They have access to safe outdoor areas, which are provided separately for nursery and reception children. The provision includes tricycles, trolleys, and similar types of wheeled toys, which are used regularly and frequently throughout the year. There are climbing frames with 'safer surfaces' beneath them in both areas. Children use the equipment well. They run, jump and balance successfully. Teaching is good. Teachers encourage children to use the equipment and praise them appropriately. Supervision is good, with an emphasis on safety.

90. Creative development

91. At around five-years-old, standards of attainment are above what is described in the desirable outcomes. From entry to the nursery onwards, children are introduced to the work of artists and encouraged to work in their style. They make very good progress in expressing ideas and feelings creatively, using art, music and role-play. For example, paintings by children in reception that represent the style of Kandinsky are carefully composed. There are very good uses of colours and skills, which result in finished pictures that resemble Kandinsky's use of shapes and space. Teaching is good. It is based on very good knowledge and understanding of the creative area of learning and young children's requirements. Resources are plentiful, varied and very well used. This produces a high standard in all nursery sessions and throughout the reception classes.

91. Teaching

92. The overall quality of teaching of children under five is consistently good in all areas, although in information technology it is satisfactory. Teaching is often very good in one of the reception classes for part-time children. Very good teaching occurs in about one-sixth of lessons. Apart from information technology, it is good on all other occasions. This good quality is based on very good planning. Teaching is well co-ordinated by the deputy-head, who is also the co-ordinator for provision in the early years. Her expectations are high and this influences all classrooms. The curriculum is firmly based on the nationally recommended areas of learning. There is a good range of appropriate methods and strategies, including direct teaching, often in small groups; occasions when children choose for themselves; role-play; good questioning, and planned activity with numerous artefacts and resources. Teachers work hard to ensure good attitudes and behaviour and are usually successful in achieving them. Teaching assistants make a very strong contribution to provision. They are knowledgeable and skilful, supporting teachers by leading groups, supervising and preparing tasks and activities. They make direct contributions to the high quality of provision in both nursery and reception classes. Classroom assistants and parents are generally used well. All members of staff enjoy good relationships with children, who offer them their respect in return.

93. Good support and induction procedures are in place for a newly qualified teacher, contributing to good teaching and progress. Facilities are well organised and resources are well managed and maintained. Children are well prepared for the next stage of education in Years 1 and 2.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

English

94. The standards that pupils achieve by the time they leave the school are above the national average. Since 1996, attainment has been above the national average in reading and writing. This trend continued in the 1999 national tests. Inspection findings are similar to those of the previous report, which judged pupils good in comparison with national expectations. The 1998 results indicate that in comparison with schools of a similar type, pupils' attainment is above average in writing, but below in reading. However, the 1999 results in both reading and writing are average when

compared with similar schools. These slight differences are accounted for by differences between the groups themselves.

95. By the time pupils leave the school, their speaking skills are clearly above average. For example, they can discuss parts of a bicycle and the importance of safety, using good technical vocabulary and speaking clearly and confidently. However, listening skills are close to average, which matches the judgement of the previous inspection, when they were 'less well developed in some classes'. There are occasions when pupils are restless during the introduction to lessons, interrupting while the teacher is talking and not always listening attentively to instructions. However, pupils follow stories well and quickly settle to work in groups. In Year 1, pupils engage in conversation easily and talk knowledgeably about their work and interests. They answer teachers' questions well and comment sensibly on the 'Big Books' that are used well during the literacy hour. Reading standards are above the national average. Average and higher attaining pupils are currently found on tasks that match or even exceed national expectations for seven-year-olds, well before the end of the educational year. Furthermore, several pupils with special educational needs are reading at levels close to average. Pupils are accurate and fluent, although a few lower attainers use little expression. Higher attaining pupils read very fluently. In Year 1, pupils clearly enjoy reading and talk knowledgeably about titles, authors and illustrators. Average and higher attaining readers often recognise errors, correcting them by themselves, and they identify favourite parts of stories. In both Years 1 and 2, the home and school reading programme encourages good parental involvement, resulting in positive attitudes towards reading. This is clearly a factor that contributes to good levels of attainment. The quality of writing is above average and pupils in the class for higher attainers are clearly well above average. In Year 2, there are very good examples of highly imaginative and extended writing about 'The Red Group' – a group of pupils from the school. The quality of handwriting is good and, by the time pupils leave, it is particularly well formed, cursive and legible in nearly all cases. Handwriting has been an area for development, which has clearly had a marked effect in producing accurate letter formation. The quality of spelling is generally around average. However, accurate spelling amongst higher attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 is good and they use a wide vocabulary.
96. Nearly all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with attainment above average, make good progress. The programme of withdrawal for pupils with special needs and the use of classroom assistants are clearly having a beneficial effect on pupils' rates of progress. This is especially so in writing tasks. Pupils' literacy skills are developing well throughout Years 1 and 2. This good progress relates closely to the quality of teaching in lessons. It is based on teachers' good planning, which emphasises good consolidation of learning and careful progression in the selection of tasks. Work is also well matched to prior attainment, with good provision for pupils of previously higher attainment. For example, higher attaining pupils are brought together into a separate class so that their needs can be met better with tasks of greater difficulty. Arrangements for improving literacy are good. Pupils are introduced to relevant vocabulary and are encouraged to write in a variety of styles as they move through the school. This promotes writing skills across the curriculum, so that pupils record factual work, as well as imaginative tasks or poetry, in ways that match particular circumstances and needs well.
97. Pupils' attitudes are good. They settle quickly to their tasks and work hard. However, pupils are sometimes restless and occasionally talk while the teacher is talking. Generally, pupils' behaviour is good. They work, co-operating sensibly with each other and, whenever the need arises, collaborating effectively.
98. The overall quality of teaching is good, with only one unsatisfactory lesson observed. In Year 2, one sixth of lessons are very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and appropriately high expectations. They focus and follow the national literacy strategy well, offering good knowledge of words and texts. The quality of weekly planning is good, although the quality of daily planning

is occasionally brief, lacking detail. Most lessons have a good pace and teachers organise their classrooms well, using teaching assistants and voluntary parent-helpers particularly well to support pupils' learning. Where teaching is less successful, it does not sufficiently support pupils' understanding with detailed explanation. Where teaching is very good, teachers use previous assessments particularly effectively, planning work to match its information. In Year 2, for example, the teacher successfully ensured that all work and questioning matched prior attainment closely, when setting activities based on a non-fiction book about bicycles. Teachers use reading homework successfully to develop pupils' interest in books and the annual Book Week clearly motivates pupils to learn about other cultures. The quality and use of assessment are satisfactory, overall, and the use of individual target setting helps pupils to focus on their areas for making progress.

99. The school has made a good start to the national literacy strategy. The subject is well led by the co-ordinator, who has monitored the quality of teaching and has further plans to scrutinise samples of pupils' work. During the inspection, the library was frequently in use for teaching groups, but was under-used as a resource for private research or for pupils to choose their own books or pursue their own interests.

Mathematics

100. The attainment of seven-year-olds is above the national average. Results in the 1999 National Curriculum tests are above the national average and show a significant improvement since the last inspection in the number of pupils achieving the higher levels. When the results are compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the school's 1999 results are in line with the average. These results show a marked improvement on those of 1998, when results were below the national average and, in comparison with similar schools, well below average. The results from the past three years show no discernible difference in attainment between boys and girls.
101. The findings from the inspection are broadly in agreement with these latest results. By the age of seven, most pupils attain above average standards in number. Nearly all count reliably to 100 and many go beyond this. They currently add and subtract numbers up to 20 and are developing an understanding of place value, for example, by grouping numbers in tens and units. They use their knowledge of number in simple shopping activities, adding up the money in their purse and calculating the cost of shopping and by giving the change needed. Some pupils are developing the concept of multiplication as repeat addition and they count in fives or count five sets of different numbers. Many have good recall of simple multiplication facts, involving two, five and ten. All pupils recognise common shapes such as triangles, squares and cubes and describe properties such as the number of corners or edges. Many pupils go beyond this by applying their knowledge to a cylinder or pyramid. Pupils tell the time to the half or quarter-hour and accurately measure objects, drawing lines of a given length in centimetres. Simple diagrams are used to illustrate their work, as, for example, the different coins that can be used to make 50 pence or a pound or to show the results of their investigation into ways of using dice up to 12. Their work is neatly presented and there is obvious care.
102. Pupils make good progress through the school in all strands of mathematics. They gain knowledge and skills systematically, working first with numbers up to 20 and then extending their understanding to 100 and beyond. This progress is built on well as pupils move from Year 1 to Year 2, developing an understanding of place value and the necessary skills to add on or take away. Using number lines and squares, they learn to count on and back in groups of twos, fives and tens and use this as the basis of multiplication and division. Their estimation skills are refined as younger pupils estimate the number of cubes in a jar or on a plate and older pupils estimate how many times they can write their name in a minute or how long they think a minute is. They begin to use centimetres as the standard unit of measure, rather than blocks or other non-standard

units and they learn the days of the week and months of the year. Teachers' assessments are used to group pupils within classes according to prior ability. Higher attaining pupils are well supported by these arrangements and the targeting of suitable extension activities. Less able pupils are also well supported by tasks that are suitably matched to their abilities and needs. All pupils benefit from the additional support provided by teaching assistants and adult helpers.

103. The school identified pupils' performance in mathematics as an area of concern and has worked hard to address it. The school adopted and began to implement the national numeracy strategy in September 1998. The mathematical focus is now firmly directed towards numeracy skills. Lessons are closely based on the format of the framework and the use of ability groupings in class provides good opportunities for the extension of more able pupils and the support of those with special educational needs. Early indications are that this initiative, coupled with the school's own monitoring and evaluation, has been a major factor in the recent improvements in pupils' attainment and progress. For example, standards of numeracy are good. Pupils have a strong grasp of the relative sizes of numbers and put them into order well. They understand the need to make estimates and count and carry out simple everyday sums accurately. They measure competently and read mathematical information from charts and data.
104. Overall, pupils have good attitudes to mathematics and work well. They are attentive to their teachers and this is clearly reflected in the standard of their answers. Pupils are very enthusiastic about the tasks and eager to demonstrate their knowledge. Very occasionally, unnecessary chattering detracts from learning. On the whole, pupils' work is neatly executed with numerals carefully formed and containing few errors.
105. Generally, teaching is good in the majority of lessons seen and is never less than satisfactory. In three-fifths of the lessons, teaching is good. In one-fifth, it is very good and the remaining fifth is satisfactory. Where teaching is good, the lessons have a brisk pace and suitable numeric challenges in the tasks. Teachers plan carefully and clearly identify what pupils are expected to know by the end of lessons. They make good use of learning resources, such as counting cubes, coins and shapes. They deploy classroom assistants and helpers well. Teachers use careful assessment and questioning to check pupils' understanding and match tasks to their ability. They have good expectations of standards, although, occasionally, they do not prevent pupils from whispering at inappropriate points in lessons. Links with other subjects of the curriculum are well made through the topic focus, as for example, when pupils use co-ordinates on maps, time their performance in physical education or measure materials in technology. Good links are also made with information technology through the sessions in the computer bay that are used to support numeracy. Suitable use is made of homework activities to support learning. For example, pupils are asked to find out their date of birth and the dates of festivals for use in their work on time.
106. Co-ordination of mathematics is very good. Careful analysis has been made of assessment data to identify areas for development. Much effort has been put into the introduction of the numeracy strategy through a careful audit of provision and staff training. Planning sheets that support teachers have been introduced and parents have helped with the making of resources. The subject co-ordinator has monitored the curriculum and teaching and it is intended that release time will be available later this year to allow this to continue. Resources for mathematics are satisfactory and in good condition.
107. The findings of this inspection are broadly in line with those of the previous inspection, which found attainment to be above national standards, progress good and teaching often very good with other aspects of the subject satisfactory.

Science

108. At the time of the last inspection, standards in science were generally above national expectations and progress was good. These standards have been maintained. The 1999 Statutory Teachers' Assessments of seven-year-olds show that the percentage of pupils who achieved the nationally expected level or above was above average. The results are in line with similar schools. The percentage that achieved a level above that expected was well above average and was above the average for similar schools. This represents a clear improvement in comparison with 1998, when results were in line nationally and below those of similar schools. The improvement has occurred because the school analysed its results and adapted its teaching of the subject successfully. There are no significant differences between the results of girls and boys.
109. Currently, overall attainment in science remains above average. Nearly all pupils are working at least at the expected level and a high proportion are working above it. Experimental and observational skills are good. Nearly all pupils in Year 2 know that friction between the soles of shoes and the ground helps them to walk. They test the grip of different shoes, materials and tread-patterns. They know that their tests must be fair. Up to a half go beyond this when they make generalisations, understanding that smooth soles grip less well than rougher ones. They also employ numerical skills, counting the bricks in a ramp, measuring the incline at the point when a shoe loses its grip on the surface. A scrutiny of past work and planning shows that they meet expected standards and often exceed them, when they observe plants, leaves and animals carefully. They put them into categories and record their findings by drawing and labelling them well. Pupils also sort and check the properties of simple materials such as wood, plastic and metal.
110. Progress through the school is good. It is based on curricular planning, which contains all parts of the subject, ensuring that work is provided that matches pupils' needs and requirements. The monitoring of weekly plans is also a factor, ensuring that overall progression is appropriate. When pupils begin work on the National Curriculum, most have a scientific knowledge and understanding of the world that matches what is usual for their age. A few are below what is usual and another fairly large group is above. From these levels, pupils develop skills and understanding at a good rate. For example, in Year 1, ideas of fair testing are already being introduced. Teachers know individual needs well and support pupils with careful questioning and instruction. Another strong feature in developing pupils' understanding is the good levels of adult help that are available from parent-helpers and classroom assistants. This helps to keep pupils on task and busy. It increases their involvement with activities and helps with their understanding, so that good progress results. For similar reasons, pupils with special educational needs achieve similar rates of progress. For example, in a lesson in Year 2, a group was checking materials to see what would make a good raincoat. An assistant asked very good questions, leading them to make the discoveries for themselves.
111. Generally, pupils' attitudes to science are good. They particularly enjoy simple experiments, observing what happens carefully. They are very willing to talk about their findings and make many suggestions about what is happening and what they are finding out. Occasionally, this confidence is inappropriate and slows lessons down. For example, in a few classes, there is a tendency for talking without putting up a hand first. When this occurs, it interrupts the teacher and time can be lost in getting everyone ready again. However, behaviour is never less than satisfactory and is often good. Pupils mix well with each other, sharing ideas and collaborating well in investigative work.
112. The teaching of science is generally good. None of the observed teaching was less than satisfactory and three-quarters was good. A very good lesson was observed in Year 1. Teachers know the subject and their pupils well. The result is that they plan well, achieving a good match between pupils' previous work and what needs to be done next. In the very good teaching, for example, planned opportunities for assessment contained a different focus for different groups. Activities were, therefore, different, based upon the assessed needs. The teacher kept her pupils on

task very well by using her voice skilfully. At no time did she shout or even raise it, but by varying the tone and directing her remarks to individuals or groups, it was very clear to pupils what she wanted, and whether they were meeting her expectations. This resulted in good behaviour and little interruption to the flow of the lesson. Time was, therefore, spent well and very good progress occurred. Conversely, in otherwise satisfactory teaching, the control of pupils' chatter is less secure and time is therefore occasionally lost. While progress remains satisfactory, it is then not as consistently fast as in the very good lesson.

113. The co-ordinator has only recently taken up the post. However, she is already knowledgeable about the school's provision and has a very good vision for maintaining and improving on its already good standards. This is focused on further checking of the school's scheme, which is currently in draft, ascertaining where guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency might enhance it. The subject is soon to be a main focus of the school's development plan and new, more rigorous systems of assessment and evaluation are also being considered.

OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

Information technology

114. Pupils' attainment in information technology is broadly in line with national expectations by the age of seven. All pupils use the mouse and keyboards satisfactorily to control functions and to enter and retrieve information as they interact with a good range of software programs. They use word processing for inclusion in their work and use the computer to paint or assemble pictures. They understand and competently use control devices such as the cassette recorders and headphone sets in each classroom to listen to story tapes and are being introduced to the possibilities of scanners and a digital camera. They know about the basic storage capabilities of the CD-ROM and how to access its information. They can search for definitions and explanations in a micropaedia dictionary. They have sound knowledge of the Internet link in which they can access an educational web site.
115. Overall, pupils make sound progress in the development of information technology skills and understanding. They make good progress in their use of the mouse to control computer functions and show increasing levels of dexterity as they move through the school. Younger pupils learn to use the mouse to select items of clothing to dress Teddy or use computer generated shapes to form a picture. They learn how to drag and position them, by using the mouse and confirm their selection by clicking before instructing the computer to print the finished picture. Pupils in Year 2 develop skills to use the mouse to draw the nets of three-dimensional shapes or assemble triangles to form a hexagon. They regularly use word processing skills to present items of news, poems or book reviews and learn to use spell checks and the cursor to correct their text. As they move through adventure programs, they explore the effects of different decisions and think about the possible outcomes of their actions. If they fail to solve this puzzle correctly, will the witch come?
116. Pupils have good attitudes to information technology. They work confidently and carefully with electronic equipment. Taking turns, they co-operate well on tasks. They maintain high levels of concentration for extended periods and often work without the need for direct supervision. Pupils are well motivated and keen to explain what they are doing. Many talk about programs that they know and have access to computers at home. They are delighted and excited by the capabilities of the equipment.
117. Teaching was satisfactory in all the sessions observed. Information technology is usually taught through its usage within other subjects. Pupils work individually or in pairs at the computer. All the observed teaching took the form of teachers making interventions, supporting pupils' efforts as they interacted with educational programs. Whilst this ensured successful outcomes for pupils and good support for other subjects of the curriculum, it did not always advance pupils' information

technology skills.

118. The strength of the subject lies in the good quality computer equipment and resources available to pupils. The recent acquisition of new machines through government funding and parents' association donations means that each room has its own equipment. This is in addition to that in the central computer bay. The subject is well managed by the recently appointed co-ordinator and well-qualified computer technician. The newly developed scheme of work takes account of recent national guidance and ensures a good progression of skills. Recent attendance on an in-service course has ensured that all teaching and non-teaching staff have recently renewed their skills. Although the co-ordinator views teachers' planning and supports their work, few opportunities exist for them to work alongside colleagues or to monitor computer usage. At present, there are no detailed records of what experience pupils have had in information technology or how their skills are developing.
119. Good use is made of information technology to support other areas of the curriculum, a result of considerable effort being made to plan its use. This is particularly true of the sessions that involve literacy or numeracy, with pupils practising skills that they have learnt in class or in groups in the computer bay, as, for example, when pupils have to match the time on a digital display to that on a clock face, or when they select the right word from a spellchecker to replace incorrect spelling in a news item. History is well supported by it, as pupils retell the story of Guy Fawkes or write descriptions of the antique bicycles that they have seen. Although good use is made of information technology to support other subjects, there are times when computers are switched on, but left unused, in classrooms.
120. The previous inspection judged attainment to be good, even though some equipment was close to the end of its useful life. Furthermore, expectations in the subject are higher now than then, making a fair comparison difficult to make. It is too early to judge the full effects of the new resources; the effectiveness of the scheme of work and recent staff training. However, there are signs that they will contribute strongly to the establishment of good provision, balancing the use of computers in supporting other subjects and the extension of pupils' skills.

Religious education

121. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in religious education were mostly good and many pupils exceeded the expectations for their age. All teachers were involved in teaching religious education and activities were well planned and linked to other areas of the curriculum. A policy for teaching, including guidelines about what was to be taught were in place and resources for teaching religious education were adequate. Current inspection evidence shows that improvements have been made. Although it is early in the academic year, Year 2 pupils already exceed the expected standard in the locally agreed syllabus and the teaching of religious education and level of resourcing are good.
122. Only a small number of religious education lessons were seen during the inspection, due to timing of lessons. However, an evaluation of pupils' work, discussions with pupils and staff, scrutinies of plans, the school policy, the locally agreed syllabus and school resources were all undertaken. These show that currently, the knowledge and understanding of seven-year-olds is above that suggested in the locally agreed syllabus. They are able to speak confidently about most aspects contained within the syllabus. They know that Christians believe in God and Jesus and celebrate Christmas because it is the birthday of Jesus. They are aware that Christian babies are christened in church and know that a cross is drawn on the baby's head in water, linking the act to the fact that Jesus died on a cross and rose from the dead on Easter Sunday. In one lesson, pupils learned that at Christian celebrations in church, like christenings and weddings, people say prayers and make promises to God, which they are supposed to keep. Their knowledge of other faiths and

cultures extends to the celebrations of the Jewish faith and they know that Jewish people eat apples dipped in honey at special times, to make the coming year sweet. They can describe the synagogue and know that women have to sit upstairs and men downstairs and that ‘the Rabbi is sort of, their vicar.’ They are aware that Jewish boys have a special celebration of Bar Mitzvah at the age of 12 or 13, ‘because they are grown up, now.’ Their knowledge of Hindu festivals has increased, and they can explain why lights and candles are an important part of the Diwali festival, that Rangoli patterns decorate Hindu houses and that the Hindu god Lakshmi will visit and bring good fortune to those who celebrate in this way.

123. Progress is good. Five to six-years-old are working at levels expected for their age. They investigate celebrations and special occasions in different religions, widening their knowledge and skills by producing attractive Rangoli patterns for the Hindu festival of Diwali. Pupils learn that a church is a place for Christian worship and that celebrations, like christenings and weddings, take place inside them. They are taught to be sensitive to the feelings of others, as when they identified with Little Bear’s disappointment when he found that his trousers had been mistakenly used for different purposes. They are encouraged to express their feelings about celebrations confidently and thoughtfully. One pupil said, “...special occasions make *everyone* happy.” This increased knowledge and depth of understanding indicate that the syllabus is covered well and that pupils make good progress in their learning over time. Overall progress in lessons is also good. Pupils always make at least satisfactory progress and, in two-thirds of lessons, pupils make good progress. When progress is good, it is because teachers manage pupils well, keeping them on task by having interesting learning resources available and tactfully limiting pupils’ contributions in lessons to what is interesting and relevant to all.
124. Pupils’ response to religious education teaching is good. They listen carefully and absorb what is taught well. Some of their work is not written up, although most is remembered and pupils enjoy sharing interesting information and contribute their experiences confidently. Pupils take a pride in recording their work neatly and illustrating their work carefully. In reception, children have compiled an attractive display illustrating ‘Myself and Being Human’ and showing ‘how I have grown’. In Year 1, the displays featuring ‘Autumn’, associated with The Natural World and the Universe are particularly colourful and well presented, showing good recognition of patterns and cycles in nature. In Year 2, a wide range of work reflecting ‘Spiritual Experience’ and the positive feelings associated with festivals and celebrations is reflected in work on display, for example, when showing aspects of Judaism, with appropriate comments from pupils. Examples of Christian stories like the Creation are very well presented, neatly drawn and carefully coloured.
125. The overall quality of teaching in religious education is good. This takes into account evidence of pupils’ work, displays and lessons seen during the time of inspection. Teachers follow the outline scheme, which is closely linked to assembly themes. Lessons are clearly planned around the theme and identify links with the locally agreed syllabus. Relationships with pupils are good and teachers have high expectations that all pupils will contribute and produce thoughtful work. Teachers’ use of resources and time is good. For example, in one lesson, seven-year-olds were shown photographs of the teacher’s own special celebrations, like birthday parties and being a bridesmaid at a wedding. These were discussed and good links were made to the Christian religion and to the theme of festivals and celebrations. Classroom management in lessons is always sound and often good. An effective balance between supplying information and arranging discussions generally ensures a good pace to lessons. However, when pupils are allowed to be over-talkative, it results in a slower pace to lessons. The procedures for the assessment of pupils’ work are satisfactory. At home, pupils are expected to research religious education themes and several pupils have used the Internet for information about Diwali.
126. The school uses the locally agreed syllabus well, linking religious themes successfully with other subjects of the curriculum. The headteacher co-ordinates this well, setting appropriate themes for

assemblies to ensure that the teaching of religious education is relevant. The level of resources is good, with a wide selection of books for teachers and pupils and artefacts from world faiths. The local resource centre is used well, enhancing the school's stock and making an effective contribution to the quality of learning. Religious education contributes adequately to spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

126. **Art**

127. At the time of the last inspection, attainment in art was good in relation to national expectations. Currently, there are many strengths to report in pupils' achievements and standards have been maintained. For example, from an early age, pupils discuss the work of famous artists such as Kandinsky and Monet. They learn about the skills of famous artists. They appraise works of art, observing the different styles closely. Opportunities are then provided for them to try the techniques that they learn. They produce work of good quality and are confident in trying to paint in the styles that they see. For example, pupils in Year 1 produced firework paintings, using lolly-sticks to achieve a lightly textured effect, after observing Van Gogh's "Starry Night". Furthermore, the quality of pupils' work in displays around the school and in their classrooms is of a high quality. This includes collage and work with string to create three-dimensional wheels. Art supports work across the curriculum in, for example, history, when pupils in Year 2 make good representations of a penny-farthing bicycle.

128. Progress through the school is often good. The appraisal of famous artists and works from an early age captures pupils' interest in the development of techniques. Teachers teach this well, pointing out the link between the techniques and the finished work particularly effectively. This encourages pupils to try to reproduce a similar style themselves. As a result, pupils practise and improve the necessary skills. For example, they take the frequent opportunities offered to learn how to mix shades of colour and to use a range of papers, paints, crayons and pastels. After pupils are taught that Van Gogh often resorted to laying on thick layers of paint with a knife, they practise the technique themselves with lolly-sticks. As a result, they progress in their appreciation of the artist.

129. Pupils' attitudes are good. They enjoy art. They respond well to opportunities to paint and create patterns, pictures and three-dimensional works of their own. When asked to draw, many of them do so with care and perseverance. They usually listen to teachers carefully, but, on occasions, they interrupt with comments or make remarks to each other whilst a teacher is speaking. This affects the flow of teachers' introductions, because when it occurs, it slows the lesson down, affecting the pace for others. Art lessons provide good opportunities for pupils to share ideas and resources. For example, they collaborate well on joint topics, creating displays to exemplify their learning in cross-curricular topics.

130. Evidence from planning, a scrutiny of work and three inspected lessons suggests that the overall quality of teaching is good. Teachers' knowledge of the subject is good. There is an emphasis on the development of pupils' skills and this is planned across year groups. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are high and very good displays of work around the school contribute strongly to this. In a very good lesson in a Year 1 class, the use of parents to support pupils and the provision of a wide variety of resources permitted several changes of relevant activities. A very good pace and flow of work resulted, enhancing pupils' attention and matching their spans of concentration. Such approaches raise pupils' concentration and lead to very good rates of progress. In otherwise satisfactory lessons, the management of pupils is occasionally insecure and teachers are not sufficiently assertive when pupils chatter. This causes a reduction in the pace of lessons, leading to a lower level of concentration.

131. Co-ordination is good. Two job-sharing teachers have responsibility for the subject and both are

knowledgeable and effective. They monitor pupils' work and standards by checking plans and classroom displays. They offer feedback and very good advice to colleagues about techniques and suitable materials. A detailed scheme of work is being developed. Resources are good and a visit from a local artist has been planned.

Design and technology

132. Currently, there are several areas of strength in attainment to report and pupils make good progress in making and satisfactory progress in designing. This is similar to judgements in the previous inspection. For example, in Year 2, there are many small and large wheeled models of good quality on display. These include imaginative moving vehicles including skateboards, lorries and a 'couch potato'. They are constructed carefully, using a variety of relevant skills and materials. There are good uses of balsa wood, axles and wheels and there are satisfactory designs, which meet expectations for the age group. These take the form of drawings to direct and support pupils' making skills. In Year 1, pupils have made 'baby bear' furniture, including beds and tables. Several of these models are clearly above the standard expected for pupils of a similar age. Pupils receive good support from a number of voluntary helpers who assist with pupils' making. However, occasionally adults assist too much, not allowing pupils to make mistakes, evaluate and correct errors for themselves. Pupils can cut, saw and glue competently. Younger pupils in Year 1 use wooden and plastic bricks to build towers. They evaluate the results by considering how sturdy their structures are and whether they could be improved.
133. Pupils are clearly making good progress in using a range of tools, materials and resources to construct their models. As a result, they develop skills of joining, cutting and shaping at a good rate. They obviously enjoy making and take a pride in their finished artefacts. They develop good finishing skills as they move through the school. The progress in pupils' designing skills is satisfactory as they continue to produce drawings rather than offer details of materials, techniques and measurements.
134. Pupils' attitudes to design and technology are good. They are keen to discuss what they make and obviously enjoy making models, products and artefacts. They are co-operative and, judged by what is on display, are careful over the appearance of finished items..
135. During the week of inspection, there was insufficient teaching of design and technology to make definitive judgements of all aspects. However, teachers' planning is sound. From the work on display, teachers also have a good understanding of how to address the teaching of pupils' making skills and expectations are high.
136. The subject is well led and resources are sufficient, including a variety of materials and handtools. Teachers are well supported by voluntary helpers and assistants, who are very willing to share ideas and expertise. This helps to maintain a good breadth and balance in what is taught. The recently published guidelines of the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency are currently being reviewed to decide how they might best be used and adapted to the benefit of pupils.

Geography

137. During the week of the inspection, it was not possible to observe geography in all year groups. However, scrutinies of pupils' work and teachers' planning and interviews with teachers and pupils indicate that attainment is at least in line with expectation of pupils of similar ages. For example, Year 2 pupils begin to understand the use of co-ordinates; know the countries of the United Kingdom, and use good terminology to describe features in their surroundings.
138. Pupils make sound progress as they move through the school. In Year 1, they learn about the

effect of human activity on the environment. They survey their school grounds for litter and discuss its effects on the safe use of play areas. They extend their skills and knowledge by drawing their ideal park or woodland and contrasting the same setting with the addition of undesirable features. They can explain that tidiness could be improved by the provision of more litter bins or that broken glass or tin cans not only look unsightly but are also dangerous. They develop their mapwork skills as they move from maps showing nursery stories through sketch plans of their classroom and the playground to plans of the local area that, in Year 2, include co-ordinates. Pupils develop their observational and enquiry skills as they visit the local park to survey its features or the local supermarket to investigate the facilities and produce available. Their powers of reasoning are developed as they consider the usage of the school and its grounds or the buildings and facilities on the local High Street. They extend their knowledge and understanding as they consider the difference in climate and features between tropical rainforests and polar and desert regions. Their knowledge of the world is extended as they research information about different countries, when preparing for book week or learn about the holiday adventures of the teddy bears Tess and Ted. They learn the countries of the United Kingdom and about the effects of weather and the seasons.

139. Pupils' attitudes are good. They take an obvious interest in their geography lessons. They are eager to participate and keen to offer answers in response to questions. Having listened attentively to instructions, they carry out tasks in a careful and thoughtful manner. They justify their choices with sound reasoning and make good links between subjects. For example, a pupil draws the attention of the class to a picture of an uncared for park in a book he is reading.
140. Teaching is satisfactory in over half the lessons seen and good in the remainder. Teachers possess good knowledge of the subject. In all lessons, they clearly explain the task and make good use of resources to support it. For example, Year 1 pupils follow the story of the Teddy Bear's Picnic, commenting on attractive features of scenery before considering the effects of litter. Expectations are good. In the more successful lessons, teachers use correct vocabulary as they talk about the 'environment'. They demonstrate good planning, taking account of previous learning. Methods are sound when teachers adapt pupils' work according to prior attainment, using the results of assessment to make decisions.
141. The strengths of the subject rest in the good use made of practical activities as the basis for learning and also in the use of the school grounds, locality and visits to provide good examples for observational study. The co-ordinator monitors and supports teachers' planning, but, at present, there are no other formal systems for long or medium term planning or monitoring the quality of teaching in geography. The current assessment arrangements do not provide sufficiently detailed information of what pupils know understand and can do. These findings broadly agree with those of the last inspection.

History

142. Pupils make satisfactory progress in history and achieve standards that are in line with pupils of a similar age. Pupils' progress is similar to that identified in the previous inspection.
143. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed a sound understanding of chronology. For example, they can place bicycles in order of their development through the ages. This understanding is well developed after a good visit from a bicycle specialist who brought in examples of bicycles from the past. Pupils have visited the local castle and know about the reasons for its construction in the past. They have a good knowledge and awareness of the Gunpowder Plot and can talk at length about Guy Fawkes.
144. Pupils make progress in their historical awareness at sound rates and are developing a satisfactory

understanding of chronology. Some of their written work on Guy Fawkes shows a good knowledge of historical facts in an imaginative context. During a whole school assembly, pupils learnt about Remembrance Day and knew about the World Wars.

145. Pupils have a satisfactory attitude towards the subject and concentrate well on their drawings of bicycles from the past. However, during the teacher's introduction, pupils are sometimes too restless, although they settle to their tasks well during group activities. Pupils clearly enjoy handling historical artefacts, looking at photographs and drawing pictures.
146. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Uses of resources are sound. Photographic resources, showing bicycles from the past, are an example. Teachers use appropriate methods, asking pupils to place artefacts in chronological order. The quality of daily planning is satisfactory and teachers give appropriate support to groups of different needs to ensure understanding. Teachers use people from the community well and various classes have visited Hadleigh Castle, a Victorian school and Southend Airport to look at bombers. They take pupils on historical trails of the local area. There is good use made of a table museum in the corridor to present artefacts from the past.
147. Medium term planning of the subject lacks detail. However, guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Agency are currently being reviewed with a view to their adoption by the school, in order to ensure better coverage of the National Curriculum.

Music

148. At the time of the last inspection, standards were good throughout the school and pupils made good progress. Currently, there are several areas of strength to report. High standards have therefore been maintained. Throughout the school, pupils sing very well. In assemblies and in lessons, they use their voices expressively, varying dynamics and tone. For example, when they sang "Shalom" in an assembly on Remembrance Day and then gently hummed a reprise as they left at the end, the effect was dramatic. In lessons, pupils in Year 1 demonstrate good recall of the names of tuned and untuned percussion instruments, which they play confidently. Pupils in Year 2 know many simple songs, which they sing with skill and enjoyment. For example, in a very good lesson, they managed to hold the tune accurately whilst singing a round in four parts. They use 'word-scores' to read rhythms, clapping out the suggested beats. Many pupils show that they are confident performers by volunteering to sing a solo line, or to play instruments by themselves. Another strong feature is the way that work is recorded and displayed in all classrooms, contributing to pupils' early ideas of notation. Opportunities are provided for pupils to explain what they think about the music that they play. They express their ideas clearly and offer simple reasons for their preferences.
149. Progress through the school is good. Teachers plan well together, sharing ideas and expertise, which supports progression and continuity. The use of a nursery nurse who acts as a pianist and consultant to all classes is an asset to the school. Her expertise and advice help to raise expectations and provide songs and other materials in plenty, which match needs and support links across the curriculum. In lessons, several different activities produce a series of challenges to pupils, which hold their interest well. This supports their progress. Work thus builds on what pupils have learnt previously. Those with special educational needs are included well in lessons, and also make good progress. They join in well and play instruments and sing along with all other pupils.
150. Pupils' attitudes are good. They work hard in lessons and co-operate well with each other. They use instruments sensibly. Nearly all pupils enjoy music and seem pleased to sing and perform. Behaviour is usually good.

151. Teaching is good. It is well supported by a qualified nursery nurse, who supports about half the taught lessons as accompanist. Her knowledge of the subject is particularly useful in enhancing the available expertise in lessons by supporting non-specialists. Expectations of what pupils can achieve are good and the use of time and instruments to support progress are good. This helps to promote good progress. Very good teaching occurred in a lesson in Year 2. This was based on particularly high expectations, in which pupils were asked to appraise their own performances. The information that they gained was used to encourage progress within the class. This worked well and very good progress resulted..

152. Music contributes well to the overall ethos of the school. For example, there is a choir, which is convened at Christmas to perform carols and to give concerts. Parents and members of the community are invited. The school also prepares pieces to sing and perform at the annual, local schools' music festival.

152. **Physical education**

153. During the week of inspection it was possible to see only the teaching of gymnastics and dance, as only these areas were timetabled. Nearly all pupils achieve in line with what is normally expected of pupils of a similar age, which is better than is usually found.

154. By the end of Year 2, pupils move around the hall and use the apparatus and space well. They perform a variety of jumps, rolls and balances on the mats and when using benches and small gymnastic table tops. Pupils perform a simple sequence of movements and finish appropriately. In dance, they work well in pairs and move imaginatively like fireworks to Handel's Firework Music. However, many of their balances and movements lack precision and there is insufficient attention paid to developing the quality of pupils' movements. Nevertheless, in one class, pupils danced creatively to music by Pink Floyd.

155. Pupils make satisfactory progress in gymnastics and dance. They develop a range of movements, although their pauses during balances tend to be fleeting, resulting in insufficient practice to make quick progress. Pupils make good progress in putting out equipment safely, although this is currently taking a long time and noticeably reduces the amount of time for physical activities. Pupils are clearly learning about the effects of exercise on their bodies.

156. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory. They are all changed and dressed appropriately and clearly enjoy gymnastics and dance. However, their listening skills are sometimes unsatisfactory and teachers constantly remind classes about noise levels. All pupils use the equipment safely and help each other well in placing apparatus around the hall.

157. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There is good attention to appropriate warm-ups and teachers give a good lead when explaining the movements required, which is a sound teaching method. In one dance lesson, the teacher gave a very good lead in encouraging creative movements both individually and as a class. However, there is often insufficient attention paid to the progression and quality of pupils' skills throughout a session. Although some teachers use pupils to demonstrate good techniques and skill, they do this too inconsistently. The gymnastic apparatus and music are used well during lessons. However, the pace of lessons slows when teachers permit too much chatter, causing pupils not to pay attention to instructions.

158. The subject is led satisfactorily. The co-ordinator has introduced an annual Health Week, which is clearly a very beneficial addition to the curriculum. She is aware of the lack of a detailed scheme of work. The school invites a range of sporting and fitness experts to support football, aerobics and dance. There is a regular skipping club, which was initiated after a sponsored event. These activities are all beneficial to the development of pupils' skills and fitness.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

159. A team of five inspectors, including a lay inspector, carried out the inspection over a period of four days. This involved 16 inspector days. Inspectors observed 63 lessons or parts of lessons, amounting to 41 hours. A further 17 hours were spent scrutinising pupils' work in all subjects and talking to them about what they can do. A representative sample of pupils read to inspectors and talked about their books. In addition, selections of school assemblies and class registrations were attended.
160. Inspectors also gathered evidence from a wide range of other sources. These included interviews with the headteacher, teachers, chair of governors, other members of the governing body, including parent governors and support staff.
161. Inspectors considered a range of documents, which included the school's development plans, policies, teachers' planning notes, schemes of work, financial information and pupils' reports and records. Information from a questionnaire sent to parents, which was returned by 40 per cent was analysed. A meeting was held for parents, of whom 12 attended.

162. DATA AND INDICATORS

162. 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 – Y2	214.5	2	37	10
Nursery	26	0	2	0

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	10.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.4

Education support staff (YR – Y2)

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked each week	91.5

Qualified teachers (Nursery)

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

Education support staff (Nursery)

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week	39

Average class size:	23.8
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Financial data

Financial year:

1998-9

	£
Total Income	559,023
Total Expenditure	513,910
Expenditure per pupil	1,663
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,031
Balance carried forward to next year	58,144

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

315

Number of questionnaires returned:

78

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	61	39	0	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	47	45	3	4	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	17	43	36	4	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	29	58	10	3	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32	63	3	3	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	39	53	4	3	1
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	9	59	28	1	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	29	64	7	0	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	42	49	8	0	1
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	30	51	16	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	58	36	1	3	1

Other issues raised by parents

A comparatively high proportion of parents returned the questionnaires. Responses are overwhelmingly positive and inspectors are in general agreement with these positive views. However, although inspectors agree that behaviour is generally sound, there are a few occasions when pupils are too talkative in lessons and interrupt their teachers. Many parents did not respond to the question about complaints and a few explained this, saying that they had never found anything to complain about and had no way of knowing. A few parents suggested, both in the meeting and on questionnaires, that there are not enough classroom support assistants in the school. However, new posts have recently been created and filled. Another parent raised concerns about the use of ability groups and streaming too soon and another felt that there were weaknesses in the provision for special educational needs. No evidence was found in the inspection to support these views. Even when parents made negative comments, they added that the school is, nonetheless, very good.

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