

INSPECTION REPORT

Broomgrove County Infant School
Wivenhoe

LEA area: Essex

Unique Reference Number: 114756

Headteacher: Ms Bernadette West

Reporting inspector: Mrs Karen Finney
23163

Dates of inspection: 4 – 7 October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707289

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Type of school: | Infant |
| Type of control: | Community |
| Age range of pupils: | 4 to 7 years |
| Gender of pupils: | Mixed |
| School address: | Broome Grove Wivenhoe Colchester Essex CO7 9QB |
| Telephone number: | 01206 822141 |
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| Appropriate authority: | The governing body |
| Name of chair of governors: | Mr R Newman |
| Date of previous inspection: | 20-24 May 1996 |

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|----------------------------|---|--|
| Karen Finney, RgI | English History Physical education | Under fives Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Provision for pupils for whom English is an additional language Attendance Support, guidance & pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Equal opportunities Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Curriculum & assessment |
| David Ashby, Lay Inspector | | |
| Anthony Tallack | Mathematics Science Design and technology Art | |
| Pauline Morcom | Information technology Religious education Geography Music | Special educational needs Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development Efficiency |

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good or better in nearly half of lessons.
- There is good provision for pupils' moral education.
- There are good procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour.
- There is a positive and welcoming atmosphere in the school and there are attractive displays of pupils' work.
- The quality of support for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils with English as an additional language is good.
- There is a good range of information for parents, particularly when children start school, and there are good links with the community.
- There is efficient financial control and school administration.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. Standards are too low in information technology and religious education in Key Stage 1.
- II. The standard of written work in Key Stage 1 is not good enough.
- III. The system for checking and improving the quality of teaching is not sufficiently rigorous.
- IV. The arrangements for monitoring curriculum provision and to ensure that planned school developments are implemented are inadequate.
- V. There is no long term planning for what children under five will learn.
- VI. There is inadequate provision for developing pupils' cultural awareness.

The school has more strengths than weaknesses. The governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues from the previous inspection. Policies and schemes of work for subjects have been completed but some policies are not being implemented and some schemes of work are inadequate to support teachers in planning what pupils in each year group should learn. The school now has an agreed approach to assessment, which helps teachers to plan lessons. The provision for special educational needs and the information provided to parents are now good. The school has maintained the quality of provision for children under five.

Standards at the time of the last inspection were reported as higher overall than currently; however, the results of National Curriculum testing in reading and writing have remained at a steady average from that time (1996) and have risen slightly in mathematics. Standards in science are similar to those reported at the last inspection and standards in information technology and religious education are below.

The school is in a sound position to make future improvements.

Standards in subjects

This table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

| Performance in | Compared with all schools | Compared with similar schools | | Key |
|----------------|---------------------------|-------------------------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Reading | B | C | <i>well above average</i> | A |
| | | | <i>above average</i> | B |
| | | | <i>average</i> | C |

| | | | | |
|-------------|---|---|---------------------------|---|
| Writing | C | D | <i>below average</i> | D |
| Mathematics | B | B | <i>well below average</i> | E |

The information shows, for example, that while standards in reading were above average, they were no better than those found in similar schools.

Results for the 1999 National Curriculum tests were a slight improvement in reading but lower in writing. In mathematics more pupils achieved the average level expected but far fewer achieved above average standards.

Current standards are broadly average in reading and mathematics and slightly below average in writing. Standards in science are also average. Pupils' competence in information technology is below expectations for their age and standards in religious education are below those set out in the locally agreed syllabus. Children under five make satisfactory progress and achieve the expected standards by age five in all areas of learning. Pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, also make satisfactory progress overall.

Quality of teaching

| Teaching in: | Under 5 | 5 – 7 years |
|------------------------|--|----------------|
| English | satisfactory | satisfactory |
| Mathematics | good | good |
| Science |  | satisfactory |
| Information Technology |  | unsatisfactory |
| Religious education |  | unsatisfactory |
| Other subjects | satisfactory | satisfactory |

The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was never less than satisfactory. About one third of lessons were good and one in eight were very good. Although no unsatisfactory lessons were observed, there were unsatisfactory elements to some lessons. The quality of teaching in information technology in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory because insufficient time is spent on teaching information technology skills and there are too few opportunities for pupils to practise. No information technology lessons were timetabled during the inspection. Although the teaching of religious education during the inspection was satisfactory, the quality of teaching overall is unsatisfactory. Insufficient time is allocated to teaching all aspects of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils do not make sufficient progress.

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 | Satisfactory throughout the school. |
| Attendance | Satisfactory. Despite the regular authorised absence of a small minority of pupils the school's attendance is in line with the national average. |
| Ethos* | Good. Pupils are happy to come to school and relationships between pupils, and between staff and pupils, are positive. |
| Leadership and management | Sound overall. The headteacher has identified appropriate priorities for school development and engenders a high level of loyalty and commitment from staff and governors. The arrangements for checking and improving the quality of teaching and curriculum provision are too informal. |
| Curriculum | Unsatisfactory overall. The curriculum for children under five and pupils in Key Stage 1 is generally broad and appropriate, although insufficient time is allocated to the teaching of information technology and religious education in Key Stage 1. Some schemes of work are unsuitable for teachers to use and there is no curriculum planning relating to the areas of learning for children under five. There are a lack of writing opportunities across the curriculum. |
| Pupils with special educational needs | Good provision. Pupils make good progress in lessons when they have additional adult support. |
| Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development | Satisfactory overall. There is good provision for moral development and satisfactory provision for spiritual and social development. Provision for developing pupils' cultural awareness is unsatisfactory. |
| Staffing, resources and accommodation | Satisfactory overall. There are a good number of support staff for the size of the school. They make a positive contribution to the progress of children under five and those with special educational needs or English as an additional language, in particular. Indoor and outdoor accommodation is good. There are inadequate resources for information technology and resources for religious education are under-used. |
| Value for money | Sound. |

**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

VII. The school is approachable.

VIII. Children achieve their best and like coming to school.

IX. The school works hard to achieve positive values and good behaviour.

What some parents are not happy about

X. A small minority of parents feels that they are not satisfied with their child's progress.

Inspection evidence generally supports parents' positive views. It was not possible to identify any particular weaknesses in the arrangements for informing parents about what goes on in school or about their child's progress.

· **KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**

To improve the standards of work and the quality of education provided, the governing body, headteacher and

staff should:

XI. Raise standards in information technology in Key Stage 1 by:

- ensuring sufficient time is allocated to teaching all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study;
- developing and implementing more detailed planning related to National Curriculum requirements setting out what pupils in each year group will learn;
- planning and providing opportunities for using information technology to support learning in other subjects;
- ensuring all teachers are adequately trained and confident to teach;
- using all available means to improve the levels of hardware and software available in the school and to ensure that resources are kept in good repair;
- reviewing and improving the use of available hardware to ensure that pupils have sufficient access to practise and gain competence in all areas.

(See paragraphs 12,20,29,31,33,35,41,44,47,59,80,85,88,116,121,135-139 and 159)

●. Raise standards in religious education in Key Stage 1 by:

- ensuring that sufficient time is allocated to teaching all aspects of the locally agreed syllabus;
- developing and implementing school planning linked to the locally agreed syllabus to support teachers in planning and providing an appropriate curriculum in mixed age classes.

(See paragraphs 13,21,29,31,41,44,47,59 and 140-145)

●. Raise standards in writing by:

- developing planning and provision for extending pupils' writing skills in other subjects;
- ensuring that there is sufficient emphasis on developing writing in literacy lessons and that learning objectives are clear;
- implementing the school's clear action plan for writing.

(See paragraphs 8,18,20,33,41,48,109,113,117,119,145,159 and 162)

●. Ensure planned school developments are implemented and have a positive impact on standards by:

- developing the role of co-ordinators in monitoring curriculum provision and standards throughout the school;
- developing the role of the governing body in holding the school to account for the standards it achieves.

(See paragraphs 44,74-76,78,117,119,132,139,154,159,162,167 and 168)

●. Ensure the quality of teaching is sustained and improved by establishing a rigorous system of monitoring, feedback, support and review.

(See paragraphs 29,41,44,74,117,132,138-139,144-145 and 159)

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

- . Develop curriculum planning for children under five setting out the steps in learning in each area.
- . Improve the provision for developing pupils' cultural awareness.
- . Provide all statutory information in annual governors' reports.

(See paragraphs 40,45,56,73,79,85,97,103,105,107,147 and 168)

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INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Broomgrove County Infant School is smaller than other schools of the same type with 164 pupils (including some part-time) aged between four and seven years. The number of pupils on roll has fallen over the last three years but has risen recently and is slightly above the number at the last inspection (156). The number of boys and girls is broadly equal overall.
2. Children usually start school in the September of the academic year in which they become five, although many attend only part-time for the first half term. At the time of the inspection there were 48 children under five years of age in the early years and reception classes. Approximately twenty children were attending part-time. Most pupils transfer to Broomgrove County Junior School, which shares the same site, at age seven.
3. The majority of pupils come from local housing estates of private and local authority housing or university rented accommodation. The pupils represent a wide range of backgrounds, which are overall above average in social and economic terms. Twelve pupils are eligible for free school meals. This constitutes about seven per cent of the school population, a figure that is below the national average. Most children have attended playgroup or nursery before starting school. Attainment on entry is variable but average overall.
4. The majority of pupils are from white ethnic families but there is a significant minority of pupils (currently 12.8 per cent) with English as an additional language. The school receives additional funding for a teaching assistant to support the high percentage of pupils with English as an additional language. There are 25 pupils (15.2 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs, including one statemented pupil. This is below average for the number of pupils in the school.
5. The school aims to provide a well-structured environment to promote security and pupils' individual potential. It endeavours to provide equal opportunities for all pupils and to help them develop a positive self-image. The school's current priorities are to improve standards in writing, implement the numeracy strategy, develop information technology and complete the programme of re-decoration in the school.

5. **Key indicators**

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

| | | | | |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year: | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
| | 1998 | 32 | 24 | 56 |

| 5. National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | Boys | 23 | 23 | 28 |
| | Girls | 22 | 22 | 22 |
| | Total | 45 | 45 | 50 |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 82(87) | 82(76) | 91(97) |
| | National | 80 | 81 | 85 |

| 5. Teacher Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | Boys | 23 | 28 | 25 |
| | Girls | 22 | 22 | 22 |
| | Total | 45 | 50 | 47 |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 82(90) | 91(95) | 85(82) |
| | National | 81 | 85 | 86 |

.....

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year after the latest reporting year for which there are no national averages.

5. **Attendance**

| | | | |
|---|--------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Percentage of half days (sessions) missed | | | % |
| through absence for the latest complete | Authorised | School | 5.4 |
| reporting year: | Absence | National comparative data | 5.7 |
| | Unauthorised | School | 0.4 |
| | Absence | National comparative data | 0.5 |

5.

5. **Exclusions**

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

5. **Quality of teaching**

| | | |
|---|------------------------|-----|
| Percentage of teaching observed which is: | | % |
| | Very good or better | 12 |
| | Satisfactory or better | 100 |
| | Less than satisfactory | 0 |

5. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

5. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

5. Attainment and progress

6. Overall standards of attainment on entry to the school are average for children's age. Most pupils make satisfactory progress and standards in most subjects are in line with the national average by age seven. Standards at the time of the last inspection were reported as higher overall than they are now. However, the results of National Curriculum testing in reading and writing have remained at a steady average from that time (1996) and have risen slightly in mathematics.

1. National Curriculum test results in 1998 were above the national average in reading because of the high percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 which is above the level expected for pupils of this age. In comparison with similar schools these results were only average. Reading test results in 1999 are also likely to be above the national average because of the high percentage of pupils achieving Level 3. Inspection evidence is that current standards in reading for the oldest pupils in the school are average overall because there are a significant minority of pupils with English as an additional language and pupils who have not attended the school full-time who will not achieve the average level expected for their age. Also, although pupils in Year 2 read simple texts accurately and confidently, their general awareness of books, such as the difference between story and fiction books, is under-developed for their age.

2. Pupils achieved average results in National Curriculum writing tests in 1998, although these results were below average in comparison with similar schools. National Curriculum test results in 1999 were below those achieved the previous year and likely to be below the national average. Inspection evidence finds current standards to be slightly below average in writing in Year 2. As with reading this is because there is a significant minority of pupils with English as an additional language and pupils who have not attended school full time who will not achieve the average Level 2. It is also because there is insufficient emphasis on writing in the curriculum and pupils have too few opportunities for developing their writing skills.

3. There has been a significant variation in the standards achieved by boys and girls in test results over the last three years, with boys achieving below the national average in reading and well below in writing, whilst girls are achieving above the national average in reading and well above in writing. The school has recognised this difference in test results and has identified improvements in boys' literacy as a focus for school development.

4. Test results in mathematics were above the national average in 1998 because of the high percentage of pupils achieving Level 3. These results were also above average when compared with similar schools. The test results for 1999 show an improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2, although the percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 was considerably reduced because there were few higher attaining pupils in this cohort. Current standards are average in all aspects of mathematics. There are few pupils working above the level expected for their age, although progress in lessons during the inspection was good.

5. In science teacher assessments the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2 in 1998 was about average. As with reading and mathematics the percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 was well above average. Teacher assessments in 1999 are similar for the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2, although the percentage of pupils achieving Level 3 was reduced as with mathematics. Inspection evidence indicates average standards overall in science. The weaknesses identified in pupils' knowledge and understanding of physical phenomena in previous test results have been addressed by the school and pupils' knowledge and understanding of all aspects of science are in line with expectations for their age. Pupils' ability to record experiments in a written form is limited by the lack of opportunity for writing

in science activities.

6. In information technology standards are below national expectations and below those reported at the last inspection. There is very little evidence that pupils in Year 2 can generate text, tables or pictures; classify and present information or control devices such as robots. The oldest pupils can 'copy-type' text but cannot print or retrieve saved work without support.
7. In religious education standards are below those set out in the locally agreed syllabus for pupils of this age. Pupils in Year 2 have a satisfactory knowledge of Christianity, although there is some confusion in their knowledge of stories and characters from the Bible. However, they do not have sufficient knowledge and understanding of any other major religions, such as Sikhism or Judaism.
8. An analysis of baseline assessments carried out over the last two years and observations of children currently in the reception classes show that attainment is variable from year to year but average overall. Generally children's personal and social development is above average for their age on entry to the school. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in their reception year and achieve the standards expected by age five in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. A significant minority of children come into school speaking little or no English. These children make good progress in developing confidence and in their ability to speak and understand English as a result of sensitive support from all staff but particularly the part-time teaching assistant specifically appointed. There are no children in the reception year identified as having special educational needs.
9. Although children in the reception have only been in school for a few weeks they are happy and confident to come into school. They play happily alongside one another and with adults. They sit still for long periods and concentrate well. They speak clearly and confidently to express needs and ideas and most recognise their own name. They know how to handle books appropriately and older and higher attaining children draw single letter shapes accurately. In mathematics most children can sort shapes by colour and size and count in sequence up to ten. Few can recognise or draw numerals. Children have a good understanding of living things and growth. They have reasonable skills in cutting and folding and use computers to support their learning. Older children demonstrate above average skills in dance. Most children hold pencils correctly. They join in songs and rhymes and have opportunities to participate in painting, role-play and model making.
10. Overall progress in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress overall, although in lessons where they receive additional support from the learning support teacher they make better progress because of extra individual attention. Pupils with English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress overall, although records show that pupils speaking little or no English on entry to the school make good progress in their language acquisition.
11. In English pupils are making satisfactory progress overall. In speaking and listening pupils are making sound progress as a result of good opportunities to listen and answer questions in the literacy hour and 'circle time'. Progress is limited by the lack of specific planning and provision for pupils to participate in discussion and drama. Progress in reading with increasing independence and accuracy is satisfactory. There are good opportunities for pupils to read and re-read texts as part of the literacy hour but use of the library and discussion about books are not sufficiently well taught. Progress in writing is satisfactory from a slightly below average attainment level on entry. However, there is a lack of emphasis on writing in literacy lessons and limited opportunities for developing writing through other subjects, which limits pupils' progress.
12. Progress in mathematics is satisfactory overall, although progress in lessons during the inspection was better due to the good teaching. The school makes sound provision for pupils to make progress in all aspects of mathematics, including the use and application of skills in science and design and technology.
13. In science pupils also make satisfactory progress throughout the school in all aspects, although

opportunities for writing and using information technology to support understanding are limited. The school successfully identified a weakness in the curriculum and now places sufficient emphasis on physical processes in science.

14. Progress in information technology is unsatisfactory mainly because insufficient time is allocated to teaching and hardware resources are outdated and inadequate.
15. Progress in religious education is also unsatisfactory because insufficient time is allocated to teaching pupils about major religions other than Christianity and there is some confusion about the provision of collective worship and religious education.
16. Pupils make sound progress in other subjects, although there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about progress in history.

22. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

17. Children under five are well behaved and concentrate well. They are attentive to the teacher and to other adults and play happily alongside each other. Children's personal and social skills are highly developed for their age. Although it was only a few weeks into the term most children were happy and confident to come into the classroom and settle to an activity. Most activities in the morning are teacher-led but children take responsibility for choosing activities in the afternoon and for organising themselves at break-times and lunchtimes.
18. Most pupils in Key Stage 1 show satisfactory attitudes to their learning and this has a positive effect on the standards they achieve in lessons. A scrutiny of work from last year shows that pupils of all abilities work sufficiently hard to complete the tasks they are set. In most lessons, pupils are attentive during class sessions led by the teacher but they do not always maintain concentration when they are expected to work independently. In a few lessons, the content or the tasks are not appropriate for the age and ability of all pupils. When this is the case, a significant minority of pupils become discouraged by work that is too difficult, or complete easy tasks quickly. They waste time by chatting or engaging in other unproductive activity. Usually pupils are keen to participate in lessons and answer questions or volunteer relevant comments with confidence. Sometimes their eagerness results in noisiness or calling out, but when this happens, they respond well to reminders from teachers.
19. The school has maintained the standards of behaviour commented on positively at the previous inspection. Behaviour is satisfactory overall and reflects the school's emphasis on pupils' moral and social development. For example, the school's 'Golden Rules' are effective in helping pupils to understand how satisfactory behaviour positively affects their learning, social relationships and personal happiness. Most pupils know and follow class and school codes of behaviour and respond well to teachers and other adults when reminded of them. All adults working in school apply the school's behaviour policy consistently and successfully. As a result, most pupils behave appropriately in lessons, assemblies and around the school. Behaviour in the dining hall at lunchtime is good. There is a small minority of pupils who find difficulty in conforming to the school's expectations of appropriate behaviour. However, these pupils are responding well to the extra help they are given. Parents are happy with the standards of behaviour achieved and most support the behaviour policy by co-operating with the school to improve their children's behaviour when necessary. This has a positive result on the overall standards of behaviour and the relationships that pupils have with adults. There have been no exclusions from the school over the past few years.
20. Relationships throughout the school are satisfactory overall. Pupils from ethnic minorities and those with English as an additional language are integrated well into everyday school life and enjoy secure and happy relationships with adults and other pupils. Pupils play happily together at break-times and co-operate and share materials and equipment in lessons. Whilst most relationships between pupils and adults are good, a small minority of pupils show a lack of respect for adults by ignoring instructions and refusing to conform to expectations of good behaviour.

21. Children in the early years and reception classes are successfully encouraged to develop independence but this is not particularly well developed in older pupils. Some opportunities to take responsibility are provided, such as taking registers to the office, and pupils accept these responsibilities willingly. However, independent study skills are relatively undeveloped. Few pupils demonstrated independence in using the computer or selecting tools and materials in lessons. Pupils expected to choose books and read quietly were noisy and made little progress in independent reading. Pupils support extra-curricular activities enthusiastically and this successfully enhances their social skills. They are becoming aware of their social responsibilities through activities such as singing to elderly residents and by contributing to charities.

27. **Attendance**

22. Attendance at the school is satisfactory. Punctuality is generally good. Authorised absence has risen since the previous inspection because a significant minority of Muslim pupils has permanent authorised absence three afternoons per week to attend education in other establishments. The increase in unauthorised absence is due to improvements in the school's accuracy of recording.

28. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

28. **Teaching**

23. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Over half of lessons are satisfactory and under half are good. Approximately one lesson in eight is very good. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection when eleven per cent of lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. However, although no unsatisfactory lessons were observed during the inspection, the quality of teaching in information technology and religious education in Key Stage 1 was judged to be unsatisfactory overall. Insufficient time is allocated to teaching these subjects and planning and provision is not adequate to enable pupils to achieve standards in line with expectations for their age. There is no thorough system for monitoring the quality of teaching to ensure that it is improved.

24. The quality of teaching in the two reception classes is satisfactory overall. Good and occasionally very good teaching was observed in both classes. There are good relationships between teachers and support staff. The latter provide good support to children during group activities but are sometimes under-used during class sessions when they just sit and listen. Children with English as an additional language receive additional teaching support from a part-time teaching assistant. This support is well organised by the early years co-ordinator and sensitively implemented by the teaching assistant. It enables children to gain confidence in speaking and understanding English and to participate in all activities. A good example of this was seen when the teaching assistant sat alongside a group of children and showed them pictures from a bi-lingual dictionary whilst the class teacher talked about and demonstrated the planting of bulbs. During the morning most lessons are introduced to the class by the teacher and sometimes, such as in language and literacy and mathematics, followed up by group activities matched to children's abilities. These lessons generally have clear learning objectives, although they often relate to National Curriculum programmes of study rather than learning outcomes for children under five. Good relationships have been established between all staff and children. Children enjoy participating in adult-led activities and often sit quietly for long periods. There are opportunities for children to choose activities first thing in the morning and during the afternoons. This helps to promote independence and confidence. However, the choices children make are not systematically monitored to ensure that they all participate in role-play or are encouraged to write independently, for example. There are sound arrangements to ensure that children have opportunities to use the different facilities and equipment in each class but planning by the two teachers is not done jointly to ensure that all children have equal opportunities to make progress.

25. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 1 is also satisfactory overall. Teachers generally have secure subject knowledge, although competence in information technology and religious education is weak in

some classes. There is some confusion in some teachers' minds about religious education and collective worship and the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Teaching about other religions is not systematically planned and provided to ensure that pupils develop knowledge and understanding of religions other than Christianity. Although a lack of resources remains an issue for information technology, evidence suggests that some teachers lack confidence and expertise to teach. Where teachers do have a particular flair for a subject, such as English, the presentation style is lively and interesting and class and group activities are very well organised. A good example of this was seen in one literacy lesson where pupils made very good progress in reading and spelling simple words.

26. Teachers generally have clear and appropriate expectations of what pupils can achieve, particularly in English and mathematics. Although it is early in the school year, pupils are grouped appropriately by age and ability for some literacy and numeracy lessons. Tasks are usually well matched to pupils' ability and previous experience and this enables them to make progress in the lesson. Occasionally group activities are not appropriate for all pupils, such as in design and technology, or it is not clear what pupils are expected to achieve, such as in copying out writing. This results in idle chatter and pupils do not make sufficient progress.
27. Daily lesson planning is generally sound. Learning objectives are clear and it is evident what groups and individuals will be doing. The role of teaching assistants is clear and specific for group activities but occasionally in class introductions to lessons, support staff are inefficiently deployed and just sit and listen. While planning for literacy lessons is at least sound, planning and provision for pupils to apply literacy skills in other subjects are inadequate. This limits the progress pupils make, particularly in writing for a range of purposes. There are good opportunities for pupils to apply numeracy skills in science and design and technology, for example, which supports pupils' progress in using and applying mathematics. No information technology lessons were planned or provided during the inspection and the planning and provision of information technology to support other subjects are very limited. Sometimes planned activities do not take place, or where an opportunity to use information technology is provided it is not clear what pupils are expected to learn, for example, where pupils re-type words from a dictionary.
28. Lessons are usually well structured, particularly in literacy and numeracy. The best lessons include a well focused introduction to motivate interest and enthusiasm, an opportunity to consolidate and extend skills in group work and a plenary at the end of the session to reinforce or check pupils' understanding. A very good introduction was observed in one literacy lesson where the teacher encouraged pupils to choose a shell and then, with effective use of questions and voice tones, encouraged them to imagine themselves being that shell. Usually group activities are well matched to pupils' abilities with appropriate support given to less able children. The practice of linking science, art and design and technology is appropriate for this age group, although there is no clear method of ensuring sufficient time is allocated to science focussed activities.
29. 'Set' lessons, such as in literacy and numeracy, start and finish promptly. Pupils are encouraged to be efficient and organised in arriving at other classes and no time is wasted. Occasionally the timing of lessons is inappropriate and pupils do not have sufficient time to develop skills, such as in some physical education and art lessons. Resources are usually well prepared and organised and this enables pupils to get on quickly. The use of computers as a resource for learning is unsatisfactory throughout Key Stage 1. Many opportunities are missed to use computers and this limits pupils' progress in all aspects of information technology.
30. Teachers generally manage pupils well and have clear and high expectations of how they should behave. Occasionally, where teachers and pupils are not so familiar with each other, such as in 'set' lessons, expectations of behaviour and independent working have not clearly been established and repeated reminders delay progress in the lesson.
31. Questioning and feedback to pupils is usually constructive and positive. Teachers generally know the pupils well and ask appropriately challenging questions. Teachers are sympathetic to pupils' difficulties and recognise and handle misconceptions sensitively. Good use is made of pupils' ideas and this helps

them to feel appreciated and valued. The written marking of pupils' work is satisfactory but rarely indicates what pupils need to do to improve.

32. The use of homework is sound, although limited to reading in most classes. Where parents are actively involved in reading with children at home, this is having a positive impact on pupils' progress.

33. Although limited in quantity, the quality of teaching provided by the learning support teacher is good and contributes to the progress of pupils with special educational needs. There is effective planning to ensure that when this is organised on a withdrawal basis, pupils are undertaking similar activities to their peers. The teaching of pupils with English as an additional language is also good. Additional support is limited to some literacy lessons when pupils are withdrawn. There is good planning between the teaching assistant and co-ordinator to ensure that topics are appropriate and linked to what other pupils are doing. The teaching assistant uses a good range of methods to encourage pupils to read and interpret vocabulary and they make good progress in their acquisition of the English language.

39. **The curriculum and assessment**

34. The curriculum provision for children under five is satisfactory, although the policy and termly planning do not relate to learning outcomes for children under five. The school is in the process of developing this but it is not yet completed to ensure that teachers are planning and providing appropriate activities. There is no systematic monitoring of children's 'free choice' activities to ensure that all children are undertaking a balanced range.

35. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 is suitably broad, meets statutory requirements and mostly reflects the aims for the school. However, the curriculum is not sufficiently balanced. Although sufficient time is allocated to the teaching of English and mathematics, insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to use and develop their literacy skills across the curriculum. In particular, opportunities for writing are insufficient both in English lessons and in other subjects. This adversely affects pupils' progress and attainment in writing. By contrast, pupils are provided with good opportunities to use numeracy skills in other lessons, such as in science, when they measure to record plant growth, or count when conducting experiments. Science is timetabled as part of lessons that often also include art and design and technology. This is a satisfactory arrangement, although the school has no secure method of ensuring that all pupils undertake sufficient work with a science focus. There is no clear time allocated to the teaching of information technology or for pupils to use information technology skills in other subjects. There is also insufficient emphasis on religious education. The school's intention is that some religious education should take place in assemblies with themes being followed up by class lessons but there is little evidence to indicate that this intention is always carried out.

36. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is satisfactory with good features. The governors have no policy for drugs' awareness but appropriate teaching takes place to promote awareness of the mis-use of drugs. Although there is no separate statement of the governing body's policy, arrangements for sex education comply with the statement as set out in the school prospectus.

37. All pupils have equality of access to the curriculum. The previous inspection reported that girls were not given sufficient opportunity to acquire ball skills. This is no longer the case. The curriculum for physical education provides boys and girls with equality of opportunity to make progress in developing physical skills. Arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are good and they are well supported by individual education plans and additional adult help. As a result these pupils make satisfactory progress overall and often good progress in sessions where they receive additional support. Pupils with English as an additional language also receive an appropriate curriculum, through sensitive additional support where necessary, which enables them to make good progress in their acquisition of language. Arrangements for pupils of different ages, within mixed age classes, to receive a curriculum modified to meet needs appropriate to their age and prior attainment are satisfactory in English and mathematics but sometimes lack precision in other subjects when all pupils follow broadly similar

activities.

38. The previous report identified the review and production of policies and schemes of work as a key issue for improvement. Whilst the school has made satisfactory progress in completing policies and schemes of work, some policies, such as that for information technology, are not being implemented in practice. The scheme of work for religious education is not appropriate to support teachers in their planning for pupils in mixed age classes. The school has adopted nationally approved guidelines for information technology. However, these have not been modified to suit the particular circumstances of this school and have yet to be implemented by all teachers. Half termly planning is completed jointly by teachers and this ensures consistency in planning between classes. However, in practice, there is not always consistency in provision. Teachers' planning for English, mathematics and science clearly identifies what pupils of different ages are expected to learn. However, planning in other subjects, for example history, often lacks such precision and it is not always clear how tasks for pupils of different ages or ability build on what has gone before or prepare for what is to come later.
39. Satisfactory provision is made for the arts. There is an emphasis on music and on singing in particular. Dance is taught through well-planned lessons within the curriculum for physical education. The policy for art is good but this is not reflected in teachers' half termly planning. However, the arts do not make the contribution they should to pupils' cultural development nor reflect the rich and varied cultural background represented by pupils in the school.
40. The range and extent of extra-curricular provision is satisfactory. They include opportunities for music and physical activities. The basic curriculum is enhanced by a regular programme of visits and visitors.
41. The previous inspection identified assessment arrangements to inform lesson planning as a key issue for improvement. The school lacked an assessment policy and there was inconsistency in teachers' assessment practice which led to poor lesson planning. The school has made satisfactory progress in remedying these weaknesses. There is now a clear policy for assessment that is applied by all teachers. The arrangements for the assessment of pupils' attainment in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science are sound. Assessment information and records of achievement in these subjects, together with records of pupils' personal and social development, are kept in a form that is readily accessible to teachers and parents. Assessment of attainment and progress in the core subjects of information technology and religious education is unsatisfactory. There is no system of recording pupils' experiences, progress or achievements on which to base planning for what they need to learn in the future. There is no system of recording what pupils have learned in non-core subjects, such as art, history or physical education, other than record sheets completed at the end of the year indicating the level achieved in each subject.
42. The school has successfully identified weaknesses in writing, particularly for boys, through an analysis of National Curriculum test results. Samples of pupils' writing are kept as evidence of progress over time but these are not levelled or analysed to identify strengths or weaknesses which might help the school in targeting particular improvements in provision.
43. The arrangements for the assessment of children under five are satisfactory. Baseline assessments are carried out in the first few weeks of term. Assessments for this academic year were not complete at the time of the inspection. Previous assessments have been used to identify pupils who will require additional support in Year 1 and to support informal teacher assessments to plan future work. Ongoing assessments are recorded termly for English, mathematics and science but there are no ongoing records related to all the areas of learning for children under five to ensure consistent progress in all areas.
44. There is careful assessment and recording for pupils with special educational needs. The reception teachers use different systems to make initial notes on children's reactions to school. Both types of record are effective and detailed. In Key Stage 1 the special educational needs co-ordinator keeps detailed and comprehensive records of all aspects of pupils' development. These include literacy, numeracy, manual dexterity and behaviour. She uses these records well when liaising with teachers to

plan work for pupils with special educational needs.

45. Assessments and records are also kept for pupils with English as an additional language. These appropriately identify pupils' stages in language acquisition and progress to inform planning for focussed work by the teaching assistant. Records are reviewed and updated regularly.

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

46. Overall the school makes sound provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school makes good provision for moral education and sound provision for the spiritual and social education of its pupils. The provision for cultural education is unsatisfactory. No clear judgement was made about the overall quality of provision in the previous inspection report, although pupils' moral development was judged to be sound. There have been improvements in this aspect of the school's provision which is now good but weaknesses in the provision of multi-cultural resources remain a weakness.

47. The provision for spiritual development is sound. Acts of worship are of satisfactory quality but do not take place every day as required; the singing assembly does not fully constitute an act of worship because there is no element of worship. Assemblies are carefully planned at an appropriate level for infant pupils. A reasonable time for quiet reflection on a spiritual theme is provided in most assemblies. Other good examples of opportunities for spiritual development were seen when pupils were quietly asked to contemplate the shell they were holding. Children in one reception class explored the grounds with their teacher and their spiritual awareness of the natural world was deepened when they were invited to 'hug a tree'. A fossil was used effectively to create a moment of awe related to the aeons of time since it was a living creature. Different curriculum areas make a contribution to spiritual development but there is no planning or structured approach to spiritual development throughout the school, apart from a brief outline in half termly planning, to ensure opportunities are consistently provided. Curriculum areas such as English, art and music are not fully exploited to support pupils' spiritual growth.

48. There is good provision for moral development. Assemblies are used well to support awareness of appropriate behaviour. Religious education lessons are used to reinforce the moral messages given in assemblies. The school behaviour policy is implemented and teachers are vigilant and sensitive in seeing that it is followed. For example, when one pupil accused another of being stupid for not speaking English accurately, the school planned additional activities to raise awareness of the achievement involved in working in a second language. The activities were conducted with humour and a lightness of touch that helped their success. Pupils discuss their actions during 'circle time' and consider their consequences. A minority of Year 2 pupils are so embarrassed by the prospect of discussing their feelings in relation to their actions that they act in a silly fashion to disrupt the lesson. The teacher and other pupils deal with this difficult behaviour in a mature and sensible manner designed to support the pupils who find the experience difficult. All staff in the school stress the importance of fairness and honesty and pupils understand that if they are sincerely sorry for a bad action, a fresh start is possible. A good example is set by all adults to support pupils' moral awareness.

49. Sound provision is made for pupils' social development. The pupils have respect for themselves, each other and for adults. Staff work hard to encourage positive attitudes and good relationships. Assembly is used appropriately to praise pupils' achievements. Social development is enhanced for some pupils, such as those joining the choir or taking part in the music festival. However, there are missed opportunities to develop independence and social responsibility in lessons.

50. Cultural provision is unsatisfactory. The judgement in the previous inspection report is unclear but implies that provision was then at a very early stage of development. Provision appears to be the same as it was then. Neither music, art or English make the full contribution to educational provision for pupils' understanding and appreciation of their own culture or of other cultures. Cultural resources of all kinds are in short supply. Music tapes are old and although the school is building up its collection of CDs it relies heavily on the generosity of staff in lending their own. There are many missed

opportunities in reflecting the cultures of pupils' families through the curriculum. An assembly on different styles of writing has been held, with good parent participation, however, there are a limited number of dual language texts in the school. Opportunities to reflect on the music, art, history, geography or religious observances of other countries are not systematically exploited. The school is involved in local music festivals and these provide a good cultural experience for the pupils involved. However, non-western European art and music are not regularly introduced to the children and pupils do not learn systematically about other faiths.

56. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

51. Overall, provision for pupils' support, guidance and welfare is satisfactory. The school continues to provide effective support and guidance for its pupils as reported at the last inspection. Parents feel that the school is caring, teachers are approachable and that their children are well supported.

52. Arrangements for children starting school are good. Good communications, information and a phased introduction into school give children under five a secure and confident start to their schooling. Parents are particularly appreciative of these arrangements.

53. Arrangements for monitoring pupils' progress and development are satisfactory. Staff know pupils and families well and procedures for monitoring are well established. Generally, this enables teachers to 'set' pupils appropriately according to their ability for literacy and numeracy and generally to provide work matched to ability. Pupils' progress in information technology and religious education in Key Stage 1 is not systematically recorded or monitored.

54. Pupils with special educational needs are well known to their teachers, and all information regarding their personal targets and progress is up to date and readily accessible in teachers' files. These pupils have good, well-defined and attainable individual education plans. Additional support is limited but well organised. There has been a good improvement in the arrangements for supporting pupils with special educational needs since the previous inspection.

55. Arrangements for supporting pupils with English as an additional language are also good. The successful integration of these pupils and others from ethnic minority groups, some of whom do not attend the school full-time, is a credit to the school and the staff.

56. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance are satisfactory. Good arrangements are in place for monitoring and following up day-to-day attendance issues but the promotion of good attendance through the prospectus and annual governors' report is inadequate. Staff identify from the daily registers any pupils that are persistently absent or not punctual and communicate with parents promptly to resolve the issue quickly. The Education Welfare Officer is used appropriately to resolve any extended issues. Staff follow up any unauthorised absence and have a system of recording parents' communications about reasons for absence. Promotion of attendance to parents through newsletters, the pupils' annual reports and the new 'Home School Agreement' is good. All parents receive a copy of the local authority guidance on attendance. This is clear and concise and a very good reminder to parents and carers about their responsibilities. However, the school prospectus includes only a brief reference to attendance and the inclusion of the official absence return, in this and the annual governors' report, is inappropriate to inform parents and encourage better attendance.

57. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are good. School documentation clearly sets out the expectations for behaviour and the management of inappropriate behaviour. The 'Golden Rules' help promote the school expectations. Consistent management of pupils' behaviour by all staff supports this. There is effective monitoring which ensures the arrangements for dealing with behaviour and discipline issues are prompt and fair.

58. Arrangements for child protection are sound overall. The co-ordinator for child protection is trained

and experienced. Staff are clear about the procedures for child protection and are familiar with guidelines, although there are no formal arrangements for training staff about up-to-date procedures.

59. Arrangements for ensuring the health and safety of pupils are satisfactory and consistent with the last report. There are clear records of a health and safety audit and checks are made by staff. Records are kept of issues and these are updated regularly. High priority issues are dealt with immediately. There are some issues which the school has identified, and others were observed during the inspection. The school is in the process of addressing these. Records of testing fire, electrical and physical education equipment and fire drills are kept and most are up to date. Midday assistants are aware of the need to be vigilant in health and safety matters although they do not recall seeing the health and safety policy. Risk assessment training for staff who have key roles in health and safety matters has not been undertaken. The school has successfully resolved the issue from the last inspection report regarding cars driving onto school premises as pupils arrive.
65. **Partnership with parents and the community**
60. Overall the partnership with parents and the community is good. The school has made good progress in providing a range of information from the first induction of children into the school until pupils leave to go to the junior school. This aspect of the school's provision was identified as a weakness at the last inspection but is now good. Links with the community are consistent and well established.
61. The school uses a good range of letters and newsletters to communicate regularly with parents. There are particularly good induction packs for parents with children starting school and clear annual school reports on pupils at the end of each year. Curriculum information meetings provide additional opportunities for parents to understand what the school is teaching but these are not very well attended. Information regarding topic coverage is passed on to parents before each term starts and parents are encouraged to discuss anything they do not understand with the headteacher or teaching staff, who make themselves available on a daily basis. Information that should be included in the governors' annual report to parents is not complete and this needs to be resolved.
62. The quality of information provided to parents regarding provision for special educational needs is satisfactory overall. The details in the school brochure are very limited and do not give a full picture of all that the school does. However, the school provides good information to the parents of individual pupils with special educational needs. Parents are appropriately involved in the development of individual education plans and work in partnership with teachers to help pupils make progress.
63. Parents help with reading at home and are consistent in supporting school activities, such as visits locally or further afield. Some parents help in school whenever they are available and a small number do this regularly. Many parents support the school association that organises a number of key fundraising events throughout the year. These activities are well organised by a very enthusiastic core of parents and help to fund the maintenance of the swimming pool.
64. The induction of children into the school is thorough, sensitive to the needs of each child and well informed. This provides a secure introduction to school for all new starters. Transfer to the junior school is equally well informed, sensitive to pupils' needs and ensures they settle quickly. There are well-established meetings between junior school teachers and infant pupils and Year 2 pupils have opportunities to join in junior playtime sessions before they join the school. Year 2 pupils also have joint reading sessions with Year 5 pupils so that they do not feel intimidated by the older pupils when they transfer. Parents appreciate these arrangements to ensure that their children feel confident and secure about starting a new school.
65. There are good links with the community through a range of well-established activities. The school is part of an active cluster of schools who are regularly involved in community activities, such as music sessions in local shopping centres, music festivals, exhibiting in the local library and area shows. Local library staff visit the school and read stories and pupils also make visits to the local library. Pupils

attend a Christingle service in a local church and local clergy visit the school. There are extensive links with local playgroups and nurseries. The school provides good opportunities for students and sixth form pupils to work in school. Visitors also include travelling theatre groups and musicians. Pupils have raised money for various charities such as Shelter, Children's Aid, Outreach International and Friends of Kaur which supports an infant and junior school in Gambia. These opportunities provide a richness to pupils' learning and the opportunity to appreciate their place in society as a whole.

71. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

71. Leadership and management

66. Overall, the leadership and management of the school are sound. The headteacher has successfully identified appropriate priorities for school improvement and engenders a high level of loyalty and support from staff and governors.
67. There has been satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues from the last inspection and the school is in a sound position to make further improvements. Good progress has been made in providing information for parents and in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. There has been satisfactory progress in agreeing and implementing assessment in short term planning but unsatisfactory progress in developing schemes of work. Although these are now completed for all subjects, some are insufficiently detailed or unsuitable to support teachers in planning what pupils in each year group should learn next. There is no whole-school planning setting out what children under five will learn in relation to areas of learning for children under five.
68. The role of subject co-ordinators and senior managers in monitoring the effectiveness of teaching and learning is identified in job descriptions but there are no clear methods for doing this. Most subject co-ordinators look at planning to ensure coverage of the National Curriculum but there is no regular sampling of pupils' work throughout the school or systematic monitoring of the quality of teaching to ensure that school policies are being implemented and that the quality of teaching is steadily improved. Weaknesses in information technology, religious education and writing have been identified but there has been no systematic monitoring of these aspects to identify specifically what the school needs to do to raise standards and to ensure that planned school developments are implemented.
69. Governors are very supportive of the school and some are actively involved through regular visits. Governors now acknowledge an increasing need to methodically monitor what is going on in the school. A rota of monthly visits has been initiated, with each governor taking on responsibility for focussing on one or more aspects of the school's work. However, this system is at an early stage of development; some governors do not have a clear idea of what the school needs to do to improve and they are not yet actively involved in ensuring that planned school developments are implemented and having a positive impact on standards.
70. The school is generally successful in achieving the aims set out in the school prospectus. This is reflected in the positive ethos, confidence of pupils and generally positive views of parents. There is a commitment to providing equality of opportunity for all pupils seen in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and the support and successful integration of pupils with English as an additional language. However, there is no system of monitoring to ensure that there are equal opportunities for all pupils. The school has recognised a significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls in test results but has no clear strategy for ensuring that the school is doing everything it can to minimise this difference.
71. The provision for special educational needs is very well managed by the co-ordinator who has worked hard to implement the recommendations of the previous report. All statutory requirements are met in respect of this provision which is now good. The special educational needs governor attends relevant

training and is actively involved in working with pupils in school.

72. The school development plan includes appropriate priorities for school improvement in the light of national initiatives and school test results. There are sufficiently detailed action plans for key priorities such as information technology and literacy, although the action plan for raising standards in writing is only in draft form and not included in the main plan. Some school initiatives are clearly having a positive impact, such as the re-organisation of the provision for pupils with English as an additional language. However, some plans have not been implemented, such as those in the writing action plan. The arrangements for monitoring other developments are too vague to ensure that they are successfully implemented. For example, the arrangement to check teachers' planning for the inclusion of information technology does not ensure that teachers are allocating sufficient time to teaching information technology nor that standards are appropriate for their age.
73. The school meets all statutory requirements other than providing a daily act of collective worship and including the following information in the annual governors' report to parents: progress on the post-inspection school action plan; arrangements for the admission of disabled pupils; steps taken to prevent disabled pupils being treated less favourably than others and the facilities to assist access by disabled pupils.
79. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
74. Overall, the staffing, accommodation and learning resources of the school are satisfactory. The school continues to have an appropriate number of teaching staff with suitable experience and qualifications, although there is insufficient confidence and experience among the staff to ensure that information technology is fully and properly taught. There is a consistently high level of commitment to the school.
75. The number and experience of support staff are good. They also show good commitment to the school and work hard. This contributes to the progress of pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language in particular.
76. The midday supervisors are well established in the school and continue to provide good support. They know the school procedures but do not share staff training sessions on health and safety. Overall, their support is good and provides a positive influence on the work of the school.
77. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. Staff undertake a good range of training appropriately linked to personal development needs and school priorities through the school development plan. Training for information technology is appropriately planned to coincide with the provision of new resources. Feedback arrangements through staff meetings and demonstrations to staff are satisfactory. Appraisal arrangements are up to date.
78. Overall the quality of the accommodation is good. Classrooms have good provision of space and storage arrangements. The classroom accommodation continues to be well maintained. Some floor areas and the re-locatable classroom have recently been refurbished and this has improved the working environment generally. The grounds are well cared for and are an attractive feature of the whole school, although some paved areas and rainwater gullies are in need of attention. The swimming pool and outside play equipment are well managed. The building and grounds are cleaned and maintained to a good standard that adds positively to the warm welcoming ethos of the school. The secure fenced area for the youngest children in the school has appropriate play facilities that are well maintained and attractive. Upgrading of the accommodation to include a computer suite has been planned but funding has yet to be agreed.
79. Overall resources satisfactory. Resources are good for mathematics, design and technology, science and music and satisfactory in physical education, art, geography, religious education and English. Resources are unsatisfactory for information technology. They are also unsatisfactory for history and to develop

pupils' cultural awareness. This lack of resources is having a negative impact on pupils' learning, particularly in information technology. There is one computer per class but most of these are old and unreliable. The software and control technologies available are not adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. Additional funding has been allocated through the National Grid for Learning but current resources are unsatisfactory. Resources for special educational needs and for the increasing number of pupils with English as a second language are satisfactory.

80. The storage and location of resources is not efficient. There is no system of regularly auditing and logging resources and their location to easily determine their quantity, range and accessibility.

86. **The efficiency of the school**

81. The previous inspection report judged the budget to be effectively managed but observed that there was insufficient detail in school development planning on the efficiency of resource allocation in relation to its impact on standards. The situation found during the current inspection is similar. The financial planning of the school is satisfactory. The school has a conscientious and hard-working governing body who give their time generously to the school. The recent severe budget fluctuations have caused great financial difficulties. The governing body and the headteacher have shown prudent financial management in turning the budget round from a large deficit to a small surplus. During this period of financial stringency, spending on resources, particularly spending on the repair and replacement programme of computers, has been severely compromised. The school development plan is appropriately costed and a programme of action is agreed with the governing body. Alternatives are carefully examined. Spending is regularly reviewed but decisions are not fully evaluated to ensure that they are effective in supporting the educational aims of the school and raising standards because the school itself does not have a complete picture of attainment and progress.

82. The previous report judged that the use of staffing, accommodation and resources was effective. The current situation is similar. The use of staffing, accommodation and resources is satisfactory. Areas where the school has made good progress are in the use of teaching staff to support children with special educational needs and for those who are learning English as an additional language. The use of funds for special educational needs is well monitored by the co-ordinator and governors. Areas where the school has made unsatisfactory progress are in the use of learning resources for information technology and in the use of the library. The school has allocated insufficient time to information technology both as a separate subject and when taught through other subjects. The school has made good efforts to review library stock but there are missed opportunities in the use of these resources. Year 2 pupils have a limited awareness of how to use the library for independent research.

83. The previous report judged financial control and school administration to be effective. These aspects of the school's work are now good. The points raised in the most recent auditors' report have been addressed, except that the school has not yet carried out the full inventory of stock required. This is scheduled to take place in the near future.

84. Taking into account children's average attainment on entry, their satisfactory progress as they move through the school, their attitudes and behaviour, the quality of education provided and above average costs, the school provides sound value for money.

90. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

90. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

85. Children under five are admitted to the reception year in the September after their fourth birthday. The younger children are encouraged to attend part-time during the first term. At the time of the inspection there were 48 children under five years of age. There were only seven children already aged five. Approximately 20 of the reception children were attending part-time, although this varied from day to day.
86. The children are organised into two classes mainly according to their age. Younger children are taught in a large classroom with access to a separate, fenced outdoor play area. Older children are taught in a smaller classroom with access to the playground. During playtimes older children have the option to play in the separate, fenced play area and there are regular exchanges of groups in the afternoon to ensure that all children have access to all facilities.
87. Teaching is led by the early years co-ordinator and a reception teacher. Both classes have full-time support from a teaching assistant in the mornings and share support in the afternoons when there are fewer children. One class has eight hours per week additional support from a teaching assistant for children with English as an additional language.
88. Standards of attainment on entry are variable from year to year but are overall average. In personal and social development many children are above average when they start school. Most children make at least satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and are in line to achieve the expected 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning' by age five in personal and social development, language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. Children with English as an additional language receive good support from all staff, particularly the part-time teaching assistant, and make good progress, particularly in their personal and social development and speaking and listening skills. There were no children identified as having special educational needs at the time of the inspection.
89. The quality of the provision for children under five has been maintained since the previous inspection.

Personal and social development

90. Children have only been in school for a few weeks but are already happy and confident to come into the classroom. They follow instructions and work happily with different members of staff. They behave sensibly and concentrate well in class activities led by their teacher and when working independently on free choice activities. They sit still for long periods of time, for example when talking about a book, and organise themselves independently for snack and lunchtimes. There are very few squabbles between children and they play happily alongside each other and respond positively to adult intervention.
91. The teaching of personal and social development is good. It is specifically planned, although not timetabled as such, during 'circle times' when children are encouraged to co-operate in a good range of class games to promote confidence. For example, children pass a teddy bear around the circle and introduce themselves one at a time. There are good opportunities for children to organise themselves and co-operate with others during snack times and lunchtimes and during 'free choice' activities in the afternoon. The good relationships established between all children and adults support this aspect of their development. Occasionally children are expected to sit still for too long. There is no long term planning relating to children's personal and social development to ensure that they continue to make good progress.

Language and literacy

92. Most children's speaking skills are above average for their age. In other aspects of language and literacy children's skills are in line with expectations. They speak clearly and confidently to express their ideas and listen carefully to stories. They know how to hold books and that text is read from left to right. They enjoy joining in with 'reading' with the teacher from a class book and most recognise their own name. Older and more able children recognise a few letter sounds. Most children hold pencils correctly to write and many form letters correctly as part of a class lesson. There was little evidence of children's free writing or ability to write their own name.
93. Overall the quality of teaching in language and literacy is satisfactory. In one very good lesson the class teacher made very good use of humour and questioning skills to encourage children's awareness of books and participation in reading a story. Generally teacher-led sessions are well structured with clear learning objectives. There are good opportunities for children to listen and learn specific vocabulary, such as the names of basic shapes, and good opportunities for children to learn how to draw letters correctly and experiment with different writing materials. There are opportunities for children to 'write' freely as part of 'free choice' activities in the early morning and afternoons but no planning to ensure this is consistently encouraged. There was little evidence in previous work of opportunities for children to experiment with writing independently. Displays are attractive and clearly labelled but they are often above the children's eye level and therefore children are not regularly involved in reading and talking about the displays.

Mathematics

94. Most children can sort shapes by colour and size and older and higher attaining children can name basic shapes correctly, such as circle, triangle and square. Most children can count in sequence up to ten but few recognise or draw numerals.
95. The quality of teaching in mathematics observed during the inspection was good. Sessions are specifically planned to develop mathematical skills and knowledge and children, including those with English as an additional language, are organised into groups with activities well matched to their abilities. Whilst there are opportunities for developing mathematical skills during 'free choice' activities, there is no monitoring of children's choices to ensure progress is consistent. Records of children's progress are updated termly but these are not sufficiently detailed or related to areas of learning for children under five.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

96. Children have a good understanding of living things and growth. For example, older children recognise acorns and conkers and know that they can grow into trees. Younger children recognise soil and bulbs and help to plant bulbs in pots under different conditions. There was little evidence to judge children's understanding of past and present or features of where they live so early in the term. Most children know that they live in Wivenhoe but few can state their full address. They use cutting and folding skills to make fans and use scissors to cut out pictures with reasonable accuracy. Evidence from previous work shows that children have opportunities to use the computer to support their learning.
97. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection was good. There are good teacher-led opportunities for children to observe and understand living things, such as trees and growth. However, there is little opportunity for children to initiate their own model making with a range of materials and there is no specific planning to ensure children develop an understanding of past and present and the geographical aspects of their environment.

Physical development

98. Most children move about with reasonable awareness of space and follow instructions carefully. In one

dance lesson, older children showed a very high level of control and imagination in responding to music played by the teacher. They demonstrate good balancing skills on large apparatus and show good awareness of each other and safety. Older children make models with dough and use pencils and scissors with control and accuracy. There was no evidence at the time of the inspection for using a wider range of tools.

99. Overall, the quality of teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. Children are given good opportunities through formal class sessions to develop gross motor skills in using large apparatus and responding to movement. However, termly planning is not related to areas of learning for children under five, and not consistent between classes, to ensure that all children have equal opportunities to make progress. There is no specific planning, other than for handwriting, to ensure that children develop skills in handling a wide range of tools and materials.

Creative development

100. Most children join in familiar songs and rhymes led by the class teacher and choose and play a range of percussion instruments confidently. Older children can clap in time to a simple rhythm and respond with a high level of imagination to music played by the teacher. In both classes children this term have had opportunities to paint in different colours and make models with dough. Evidence from previous work shows that there are also opportunities for collage work. Children participate in role-play during 'free choice' activities in the afternoon.
101. Little direct teaching was observed during the inspection other than in a music and dance lesson. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. In one dance lesson the quality of teaching was very good. The teacher made very good use of a range of instruments and told an imaginative story to stimulate the children to respond creatively to different sounds. There are appropriate opportunities for children to sing and play instruments under the direction of the teacher but no evidence of opportunities for children to play instruments as part of free play. There are good opportunities for children to use paint as part of directed activities and there are role-play areas in both classes. However, there is no specific planning to stimulate creative development as part of free play and no monitoring of children's choices to ensure that all children participate in imaginative play.

107. ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

107. English

102. National Curriculum test results in 1998, for pupils in Year 2, were above the national average in reading because of the high percentage of pupils achieving Level 3. In comparison with similar schools these results were average because a significant minority of pupils, including some pupils with English as an additional language, did not achieve the average Level 2 expected. Reading test results in 1999 were a slight improvement. This is a result of the school's satisfactory implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and improvements in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Writing test results in 1998 were in line with the national average but below those achieved in similar schools. Results in 1999 were lower than this.
103. Inspection evidence confirms average standards overall in English with some variations in the different elements. In speaking and listening and reading, standards are average, and in writing, standards are slightly below average. This is because there are a significant minority of pupils with English as an additional language who enter the school with little or no English capability. Whilst they make good progress in reading, speaking and comprehension in particular, they do not achieve the expected Level 2, particularly in writing. This weakness is also the result of an increased emphasis on reading in literacy lessons and lack of planning and provision for developing writing skills within other subjects. This limits the attainment of all pupils in writing.

104. There is a substantial difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls in reading and writing test results over the last three years. The school has acknowledged this difference and has identified improvement as a priority for school development.
105. Progress in English is satisfactory overall. In speaking and listening pupils make satisfactory progress in talking with increasing confidence and clarity and in responding to questions with greater accuracy and with a more extended vocabulary. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities for speaking and listening as part of the literacy hour and there are opportunities for pupils to talk and listen to each other in 'circle time' and 'talking with partner' sessions; however, termly planning is not focussed on developing pupils' listening skills or their ability to participate in discussion or adapt their talk for a range of purposes. Pupils in Year 2 answer questions clearly and accurately but do not have sufficient opportunity to talk to a range of audiences and participate in drama, role-play and discussion.
106. Progress in reading is also satisfactory. There are good opportunities within the literacy hour for pupils to read and re-read texts as a class and within small groups. By Year 2 most pupils read simple texts with accuracy and use picture, context and initial letter cues to identify unfamiliar words. Teachers continue to provide opportunities for individual reading which encourages fluency and accuracy but pupils' general awareness of books, for example the difference between story and factual books and knowledge of authors, is under-developed for their age. There are few opportunities for pupils to use the school library and 'quiet reading' sessions are sometimes noisy and unproductive for those pupils who are not under the direct supervision of the teacher. The practice of having individuals stand alongside the teacher who is seated does not encourage a comfortable consultation about books.
107. Whilst progress in writing is satisfactory from a slightly below average baseline, there are aspects of the school's provision which limit progress. In particular there is a lack of emphasis on writing within literacy lessons. Where opportunities are provided, writing or re-writing lacks a clear focus. There are limited opportunities in other subjects, such as history, science and religious education, for pupils to write in different styles and for different purposes and limited opportunities for extended imaginative writing, such as stories and poetry. The range and quality of pupils' writing in Year 2, including the use of punctuation and spelling, is below expectations for their age.
108. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress when they receive additional support from the learning support teacher but overall make satisfactory progress in line with their peers. Pupils with English as an additional language make good progress in speaking, reading and comprehension as a result of effective support from all staff, particularly the part-time teaching assistant. A significant percentage do not attend the school full-time or do not complete the infant stage of education and do not achieve the level expected for their age by the time they leave.
109. Most pupils are attentive in literacy lessons and behave sensibly. They are keen to answer questions and settle reasonably well to work independently. In one lesson pupils concentrated very well to play matching and dice word games. They made very good progress in learning to read short common words. A small minority of pupils call out and fidget when behaviour management is not clearly established by the class teacher. This limits the pace and overall progress in the lesson.
110. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Five lessons observed were satisfactory, one was good and one very good. The features of the best lessons were a lively and imaginative presentation and good pace which encouraged sustained concentration. There was a good range of group activities to follow up class activities and independent working skills were clearly established. In most lessons there are clear learning objectives and work is well matched to pupils' ability. Teaching assistants are usually well deployed to provide support in group work but are occasionally under-used for class sessions. There are usually good opportunities for pupils to read and re-read familiar text. Teaching is less effective when class routines and behaviour management are not well established. This occurred in some 'set' lessons where teachers and pupils were not so familiar with each other; also when group tasks, such as punctuating sentences correctly, are not appropriate for all pupils, or where it is not clear what pupils are expected to achieve in a writing activity. Generally, the use of information technology to support the

curriculum is unsatisfactory. Occasionally, where pupils do use computers, the task does little to develop English or information technology skills; for example, where pupils copy-type words from a dictionary or where the sound volume is too low for pupils to hear text being read.

111. The school has implemented the literacy hour satisfactorily. Teachers' plans are adequate and monitored by the headteacher. The headteacher, subject co-ordinator and literacy governor have all observed literacy lessons being taught but this monitoring lacks the rigour necessary to identify specifically what teachers need to do to raise standards in writing. Whilst the school has identified writing as an appropriate focus for improvement through school development planning, the action plan remains in draft form only. Actions to identify strengths and weaknesses and improve provision, such as the monitoring of samples of writing and evaluation and feedback on existing provision, have not been implemented.
112. There are satisfactory resources for English. There is a good range of fiction 'big books' and group reading books. The library area is reasonably well stocked and attractively organised but under-used.
113. Standards in English are below those reported at the last inspection, although test results show little variation in standards over the last three years. Joint planning ensures there is now more consistency between classes but the lack of specific action to raise standards in writing is a weakness.

119. **Mathematics**

114. The 1998 Key Stage 1 National Curriculum test results were above average in the percentage of pupils achieving the expected Level 2. The percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well above the national average. Compared to schools with pupils from similar backgrounds test results were also above average. Over the last three years test results have risen slightly and remained above average. The National Curriculum test results for 1999 show an improvement in the percentage of pupils achieving Level 2, although fewer pupils achieved the higher Level 3. Inspection evidence confirms that the majority of pupils currently in Year 2 are attaining standards that are close to the national average and that few are reaching a standard beyond this because of the lower number of higher attaining pupils in this cohort.

115. By the end of Key Stage 1 most pupils are able to count, read, order and write numbers to 100. Most pupils have a good understanding of the place value of tens and units. Pupils enjoy mental mathematics and this aspect of their work is progressing well. Pupils in Year 2 can count backwards from 20 and count on in twos to 50. They suggest strategies for carrying out mental calculations involving numbers up to 100. Written work shows that pupils understand different ways of setting out their work to solve number problems using simple algebra and that they have an appropriate understanding of different two- and three-dimensional shapes. By the time pupils reach the end of Key Stage 1 they are developing good mathematical language. Pupils use their skills of numeracy effectively to support their learning in other subjects, such as science. For example, they measure to check the rate of plant growth or to record how far a toy car runs down a slope in an experiment on forces. Pupils do not use information technology sufficiently to support their mathematics work or to extend their information technology skills.

116. Progress was good in lessons seen throughout the school, with the school's strategy for teaching numeracy having a positive effect. A scrutiny of pupils' work over the last year indicates that they were making satisfactory progress overall and does not reflect the quality of teaching and progress seen during the inspection. Recent changes in the school's provision have had a positive impact on teaching quality and pupils' rates of progress. The school has placed emphasis on the subject as part of its overall planned development and to prepare for the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils are also 'set' in groups on the basis of prior attainment for one lesson per week and there has been an increased emphasis on mental mathematics in lessons. This has had a positive impact on current progress. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported and also make satisfactory progress overall.

117. Pupils' response in lessons is usually good and most work well individually and in smaller groups. Most pupils are interested in their work and are eager to learn. They are polite and explain their work confidently using mathematical terms correctly. Most listen carefully to their teachers and sustain concentration well when teachers work with the whole class or a group but a significant minority find difficulty in maintaining concentration for any length of time when expected to work independently. Presentation of pupils' written work is satisfactory and well set out written calculations contribute positively to accuracy.
118. The teaching observed during the inspection was good overall with over half of lessons being good or better. All teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. This enables them to plan well organised lessons with clear learning objectives. They use appropriate methods and have appropriately high expectations of what pupils should achieve. In the best lessons, teachers explain tasks carefully and their questioning is effectively based on pupils' responses. For example, a pupil's speculation as to how many conkers were in a bag led to well focussed questioning by the teacher to help pupils to find ways to count large numbers of objects quickly. Teachers' questioning is well matched to pupils of all abilities and is used effectively to assess pupils' understanding. Teachers use the results of formal and informal assessments to adjust levels of challenge or to provide additional support within lessons and to plan subsequent work. Teachers' joint termly planning and individual lesson plans identify clearly what pupils of different ages and abilities are expected to learn. In this respect, good improvements have been made since the last inspection.
119. Mathematics is well co-ordinated by the deputy head who oversees planning and monitors teaching. The school has a good policy and an effective scheme of work that successfully incorporates the National Numeracy Strategy. These provide teachers with a good structure for their joint planning and a secure framework for their individual lesson plans. Arrangements for assessment are now secure and the results are used effectively to track pupils' progress and attainment and to identify targets for improvement.
120. Standards in mathematics are currently below those reported at the last inspection, although test results have improved over the last three years since 1996.

126. **Science**

121. In teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1998, results were similar to the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was in line with the national average and the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was well above average. In comparison with similar schools, the percentage reaching the expected Level 2 was below average but the percentage reaching the higher Level 3 was well above average. There were some variations between standards reached in different aspects of the subject. The performance of pupils of all abilities in physical processes was below average. The results for 1999 are below those of the previous year, particularly in the percentage of pupils achieving Level 3. This is a similar change to that in mathematics due to the low number of higher attaining pupils in this cohort.
122. These results are broadly consistent with inspection findings which are that most pupils across the ability range are achieving average standards in all aspects of science, including physical processes. Pupils learn through practical experiences and are beginning to understand about the principles of the subject, such as the need for gathering data, through investigation. The main focus of work throughout Key Stage 1 during the inspection week was on forces. Pupils had experimented with toys and were recording in categories on the basis of whether they worked by pushing or pulling. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils had examined large playground equipment and investigated how forces made them work and how structures needed to be built to overcome forces. Pupils in Year 2 build on their observations and understanding of forces by using construction kits to make model toys, such as swings, designed to respond to forces while remaining stable. Most pupils show a satisfactory knowledge of topics they have studied in science and talk about them using correct terminology when appropriate. For example, when

pupils explain forces and their effects, higher attaining pupils refer to gravity and friction. Pupils record their findings satisfactorily but do not make sufficient use of literacy skills to write about experiments and do not use information technology to record and display results. Most pupils are beginning to grasp the basics of scientific modes of enquiry and higher attaining pupils are beginning to appreciate the need for a fair test when carrying out an experiment.

123. Pupils across the range of ability, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in lessons and as they move through the school because of the breadth of experiences they encounter. Pupils in Year 1 were making satisfactory progress in developing their observation skills and drawing conclusions from evidence as they examined toys and playground equipment. Pupils in Year 2 provide evidence of sound progress in investigating forces.

124. In the school grounds there is a very well equipped playground, a conservation area and a garden that are frequently used for teaching. During the inspection they were used to show similarities and differences in trees and to investigate forces. Pupils enjoyed the practical aspects of these lessons and made good progress. Most pupils are interested in their lessons and enjoy them. In lessons where pupils learn best they are encouraged to predict and are involved in close observations and practical work whilst being encouraged to develop scientific vocabulary.

125. The school timetable includes science within lessons that also include art and design and technology. Only one lesson during the inspection had a specific science focus, so judgements on the quality of teaching are mainly based on teachers' planning, a scrutiny of completed work and observation of pupils as they worked on science tasks in other lessons. The quality of the teaching is satisfactory overall. Joint planning by all teachers ensures that the content of work is broadly similar between classes. Learning objectives are clear and good links are made to previous learning. Overall, lessons are well planned but sometimes the science focus is lost and it is not clear what progress pupils are making in scientific knowledge and understanding as opposed to other subjects. The school has developed a good system to help teachers improve their own subject knowledge. Particularly good subject knowledge enables teachers to respond to pupils' questions and to ask challenging questions themselves. This promotes good progress. Teachers use adult helpers effectively to support pupils working in groups. Teachers place appropriate emphasis on the health and safety aspects of the subject to ensure that pupils become aware of safe working methods. Methods of assessment are satisfactory and are used appropriately to inform planning. For example, the teaching of physical processes has been included earlier in the school year in the light of the 1998 teacher assessment results. No homework is set but pupils are encouraged carry out simple tasks to prepare for, or extend, work in lessons.

126. The leadership and management of science are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject and has developed secure systems to ensure that improvements are made in the provision. For example, she has introduced a system to identify areas where teachers need support and has provided or made arrangements for further training where necessary. She inevitably has an incomplete picture of the current status of science in the school as she has no regular opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and does no sampling of work in different year groups to judge standards and progress. There is a good quality policy statement and scheme of work that provide teachers with secure guidance for planning work. Resources for the subject are good and are well organised.

127. Standards in science are in line with those reported at the previous inspection.

133. **OTHER SUBJECTS**

133. **Information technology**

128. There were no information technology lessons timetabled during the inspection week and few opportunities to observe pupils using computers in other lessons. Judgements are based on these few

observations, discussion with pupils and the subject co-ordinator and a scrutiny of teachers' planning

129. Pupils' attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is below national expectations. Standards are below those reported at the last inspection. Pupils in Year 2 do not know how to start the computer independently. They have little experience of loading and using CD-ROMs and are unable to explain how to search for information. They explain how to use the mouse to 'drag and drop' but are less familiar with using it in connection with drop-down menus to select functions. They type text infrequently, and are unaware of how to use programmable robots. They are not able to retrieve saved work or print work unaided. The younger children in Year 1 have a working knowledge of computers appropriate to the early years phase from which they have just emerged. They readily explained how they used simple paint programmes to draw winter trees on screen, or how they made a picture of a house by manipulating shapes, then filling them with colour. They talk about early work with programmable robots. This indicates that experience during the reception year is satisfactory and in line with what is expected for the youngest pupils nationally.
130. Progress in the reception year is satisfactory because pupils have sufficient opportunity to experiment with computers in a relaxed and supportive atmosphere. In Key Stage 1 progress is unsatisfactory because pupils do not have enough experience of computers. No lessons are specifically timetabled for teaching information technology and there are few opportunities to use information technology in other subjects. There is no evidence of the use of data handling in mathematics, geography or science, for example, and little evidence of word processing in English. The curriculum at Key Stage 1 does not contain systematic teaching of control technology. A new programmable robot was delivered to the school during the inspection and was in use in a classroom within minutes of being unwrapped. The lack of information technology experience is due mainly to a lack of planned time for its teaching but also to a lack of resources. The age of the hardware means that staff have had no training on PCs and therefore their skills and expectations are also under-developed. Pupils learning English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs also make unsatisfactory progress.
131. Pupils' attitudes are satisfactory when they are given the opportunity to learn. They enjoy their work and behave and concentrate reasonably well, though are currently rather over-enthusiastic and tend to disagree over turn-taking. There is little opportunity for pupils to develop social skills or independence in using the computer because there are few opportunities for pupils to practise skills with each other.
132. Overall, the quality of teaching is unsatisfactory because teachers do not include the teaching of information technology in their timetables. No teaching was seen during the inspection because no direct teaching of information technology was planned. Use of the computer by small groups was planned in other subjects but did not always take place. Small groups of pupils were observed using the computer in some classes, but in many cases this was during the final ten minutes of the lesson. Records of skills and computer use were clearly displayed in the reception classes. One example of a record of information technology experience was found in one Key Stage 1 class. No records of skills achieved were available. There were no examples of work in information technology in a scrutiny of work from the previous academic year. Discussions were held with the co-ordinator, teachers and pupils about the use of computers. Teachers' subject knowledge and skills appear to be under-developed.
133. Resources for information technology are insufficient. The computers themselves are outdated and prone to breaking down. This discourages teachers from using them. Historically, the school has been unable to invest appropriately in information technology. The school's inability to fund repairs and replacement adequately have contributed to the current problem. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of information technology in the school. She has introduced a nationally recognised scheme of work to support teachers' subject knowledge; however this has not been fully implemented. She has scheduled good training for the prospective co-ordinator, to coincide with the delivery of the new computers funded through the National Grid for Learning. There are well-thought-out plans for developing a computer suite to assist class teaching; however the school still needs to consider the level of detail in its scheme of work. The outline gives some idea of how pupils will progress from year to year through the school but there is insufficient detail to support an inexperienced teacher, or a teacher who lacks confidence. There are no arrangements for the systematic assessment of pupils' information

technology skills. Insufficient time is allocated to the teaching of information technology and it is not used to support literacy, numeracy or other subjects in a systematic way.

139. **Religious education**

134. Pupils' attainment by the end of the key stage is below the expectations set out in the locally agreed syllabus and the progress pupils make is unsatisfactory. This represents a decline in standards since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be average. During the inspection only one religious education lesson was timetabled and there appeared to be a confusion between the teaching of religious education and provision for spiritual development through assembly. Evidence was gathered through this one religious education lesson, 'circle time', assemblies, a scrutiny of work, discussions with staff and with pupils and by looking at teachers' planning and records.
135. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are aware that different people hold different beliefs, and that people worship in different places and with different observances. They are less aware of the similarities between major religions. Some pupils know that Christians believe that Jesus is the Son of God. They also know that Christians worship only one god. However, their knowledge of biblical stories is partial and below expectations for their age. For example, some pupils identified characters from the Old Testament as friends of Jesus. Pupils are not aware of any fundamental facts about other major religions practised in this country such as Sikhism or Judaism. Muslim pupils are well aware of their own religion but similarly have little knowledge or understanding of faiths other than Islam.
136. During the lessons seen, pupils made satisfactory progress, and were able to explain what they had learnt at the end. Over time, however, progress is unsatisfactory because by the end of the key stage pupils' knowledge is superficial; they have studied the key themes identified in the locally agreed syllabus in insufficient depth. Pupils with English as an additional language and pupils with special educational needs make similar unsatisfactory progress.
137. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory. Pupils listen when new work is explained and when asked questions by the teacher they respond appropriately. They listen to the ideas of others and seem keen to learn about different faiths, customs and beliefs. They generally work together without disturbance but sometimes object when asked to share equipment. Little written work produced.
138. The teaching of religious education overall is unsatisfactory because pupils do not have sufficient opportunity to study and make unsatisfactory progress over time. No examples of work from the current or previous academic year were available. Teachers' records contained little or no data about the standards reached in specific areas covered. This situation indicates that some teachers have insufficient knowledge and understanding of the locally agreed syllabus to teach it effectively. This is particularly the case for religions other than Christianity. Expectations of pupils are too low and tasks are inappropriate because they do not challenge pupils, extend their own ideas, or develop their understanding. During the inspection, the observations of religious education teaching were satisfactory. There is a sound understanding of the social and moral elements of the agreed syllabus and sound lesson planning to reinforce issues raised in a recent assembly.
139. The curriculum is based on the locally agreed syllabus but insufficient time is devoted to the full curriculum. There are no plans to develop the use of literacy in religious education. The study of other faiths is taught largely through assembly. The agreed syllabus recommends that where teaching about other religions is part of assembly, teachers should follow up themes through specific lessons containing suitably differentiated tasks. No evidence of this could be found in the scrutiny of work or in day-to-day planning. The Jewish festival of Succoth was mentioned in termly planning in relation to Harvest but no reference was made to this during assembly or in daily planning. The termly plan contains references to areas of religious education but there is no clear progression and no school approach to its teaching. Religious education is not taught in sufficient depth to interest pupils and pupils are not prepared appropriately for the next stage in their education. There is an overview of the year's topics with a section devoted to religious education but no suitable scheme of work based on the agreed

syllabus. The school has no clear idea of pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education and is not in a position to ensure that they make sufficient progress. The time actually spent on religious education, as opposed to the figures noted in school records, is insufficient and this limits pupils' progress. There are insufficient books and artefacts are shared with the neighbouring school. There was little evidence that the latter are used to support teaching. Visits are sometimes organised to places of worship that are broadly Christian but not to those of other faiths. Similarly, there have been visits from Christian ministers but no visits from representatives of other religions. The school plans to adopt the new scheme of work devised by the local education authority to implement the agreed syllabus. The school also plans to review a nationally recommended scheme of work on religious education.

145.

Art

140. In practical art work pupils of all abilities are making satisfactory progress. They are provided with opportunities to work with a suitable range of media in two-and three-dimensions. The last inspection found that more emphasis was needed on observational drawing. The school has successfully remedied this weakness. Pupils' progress in observational drawing is now good. By Year 2, pupils' drawings and paintings of sea shells show close observation and good use of a range of media to record detail. In one lesson seen, all pupils made good progress and some made very good progress because of the quality of the teaching and the sustained concentration with which pupils carried out the task.

141. Pupil's knowledge and understanding of art is less well developed. Although pupils are given some opportunities to look at the work of noted artists, this is not given sufficient emphasis and pupils are not encouraged to use techniques to improve their own original work. In one lesson, pupils were set to copy a painting instead of using an examination of it to provide ideas for their own work. Opportunities are missed to promote pupils' awareness of the rich diversity of cultures that contemporary art draws on. There is little evidence of the systematic study of art that reflects the rich and varied cultural backgrounds represented by pupils in the school.

142. Pupils enjoy their work in art. Most concentrate hard, look carefully and strive to do their best. Many pupils persevere to achieve the desired effect and older, higher attaining pupils are beginning to evaluate their own work to suggest how they might improve.

143. The policy for art is good. It is based securely on National Curriculum guidelines and is supported by a good quality scheme of work that identifies key art skills and knowledge to be taught. The scheme sets out in sufficient detail what pupils are expected to learn from year to year. However, the policy and scheme are not fully implemented by teachers. This results in too narrow a curriculum in practice and missed opportunities to promote good all round progress. The time allocated to art in some classes is not sufficient to meet the objectives of the school's policy. Overall the quality of teaching is satisfactory because teachers successfully teach basic practical skills and motivate pupils well. In one of the two whole-class art lessons seen, the teaching was very good and in the other it was satisfactory. In the very good lesson, expectations were high, pupils' attention was very well directed to detailed observation and pupils were challenged to improve. In this lesson, all pupils made very good progress. In the other lesson, the teacher's organisation, planning and motivation of pupils were good but misunderstanding of the school's scheme of work resulted in some mismatch between activities and objectives. Teachers provide a stimulating visual environment for pupils. Displays around the school are of good quality and celebrate achievement well.

144. The co-ordinator is a part-time member of staff and has only recently taken up her role. She has not yet had time to influence standards but she has already made a thorough evaluation of existing provision and what needs to be done to develop the subject. She has very good knowledge and understanding of her subject and her vision for its development is very good. She has made suitable plans to provide support for colleagues to help them to develop their knowledge and understanding of art. Resources for making art are plentiful, accessible and of good quality. The previous inspection noted that the school needed to develop its range of reference materials to enable pupils to research and extend their

knowledge and understanding about art and artists. These resources are now adequate.

150.

Design and technology

145. Pupils of all abilities are making satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. Pupils enter Key Stage 1 with a good grounding in basic making skills, such as cutting and joining techniques and knowledge of materials for different purposes. They make good use of these early acquired skills across the curriculum by using and applying them as they move up through the school but not all pupils make as much progress as they should in extending their making skills. Although tasks set for older pupils in mixed age classes are more complex and call on more advanced designing skills and knowledge and understanding, their ability to complete tasks is not noticeably better than many younger pupils. All aspects of the subject are covered through efficient planning. For example, when pupils use construction kits to make stable structures in science, they use drawings and manipulation of materials and components to develop their ideas on stability. However, they tend to proceed by trial and error rather than planning ahead and testing ideas.

146. Pupils respond well in lessons. A small minority find sustained concentration difficult when tasks are not appropriately challenging but most pupils work carefully and many become absorbed in their work. Pupils enjoy the tasks teachers set. This was particularly evident in a lesson when Year 1 pupils made model rabbits to their teacher's design brief and tested them by seeing if they fitted model playground toys. Pupils in Year 2 show that they can collaborate well as they work together and compare and discuss their progress in making stable structures from a construction kit. Pupils share tools and materials, treat school property with respect and avoid waste.

147. Design and technology teaching is organised to take place within lessons that also include science and art. During the inspection only two lessons with a specific focus on design and technology were observed and it was not possible to draw secure conclusions about the overall quality of teaching in the subject. However, the evidence from the lessons seen, teachers' planning and records and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicate that teaching is satisfactory. There is some lack of focus when different subjects are combined but teachers' planning is satisfactory overall and follows the guidance of the school's scheme of work. The activities that teachers provide capture pupils' interest and imagination and promote their involvement and hard work. In both lessons seen, pupils were well managed and the lessons had clear objectives and were well organised. Pupils have opportunities to design and make for themselves but there is also evidence of over-direction by adults.

148. The co-ordinator provides sound guidance and monitors teachers' planning but does not monitor standards throughout the school by looking at samples of work to ensure progress is consistent. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory and the information is used appropriately to plan future work. Resources are plentiful and well organised.

149. The lack of a scheme of work identified at the last inspection has now been addressed.

155.

155.

Geography

150. Progress over time is satisfactory.

151. When beginning their study of geography in Key Stage 1, pupils learn through simple investigations about themselves, their class and their family. Most pupils have a satisfactory sense of spatial awareness, though some still have difficulty in telling their right from their left. As they progress through the school, they develop an understanding of the local environment, consolidating their knowledge by taking trips to the bluebell wood in Spring and then mapping their route. Records of work

show that they make local trips to Fingringhoe for pond dipping and have made trips to the local docks to observe both the natural world and the effects man has on his environment. These trips are not officially geography field trips, although their contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of the world around them is significant. By the end of the key stage most pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, can describe their journey to school or explain how to get to the local shop. The specific teaching of geographical vocabulary is of particular value to both groups of pupils.

152. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. Evidence was also gathered by talking to pupils, teachers and the co-ordinator, by looking at work and by examining teachers' planning. Overall, the teaching of geography is satisfactory with good features. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound, and is supported by effective planning at all levels. During the lesson seen, the teacher showed effective control and management, had appropriately high expectations of work and behaviour and had carefully differentiated the work at class and group level to take account of the needs of pupils' different ages and abilities. At present, the school is introducing the study of a comparative location in Britain. This is the first time systematic teaching of a comparative area has taken place. Work in this area was only seen in two Key Stage 1 classes.
153. The co-ordinator hopes to introduce a new scheme of work to provide more consistency throughout the school. Currently the co-ordinator monitors the subject through looking at planning, and provides help and support to colleagues, but does not monitor the quality of teaching or standards throughout the school. Teachers have satisfactory subject knowledge but do not always make good links with other subjects in the curriculum. Good links are made with mathematics during the collection of weather data in the Spring term. However, there was no evidence of links with information technology. Opportunities to use the geography curriculum as a stimulus for extended writing are not taken, although good attention is paid to the development of subject specific vocabulary.

159.

History

154. There were no history lessons timetabled during the inspection period and very little recorded evidence of pupils' previous history work. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of planning and discussion with the co-ordinator and Year 2 pupils.
155. Pupils' historical knowledge and understanding is limited. Only one of a small group of Year 2 pupils could recall features of the seaside in the past from work done earlier in the term and only one referred to Guy Fawkes, as an example of a famous person living long ago. Pupils could not recall using books or looking at old things, although they could recall a visit to the old school in the village and referred to pictures on display as evidence of this.
156. Planning for history is very brief but does specify in general terms what pupils in each year group should learn. However, opportunities for developing reading and writing skills within history are not identified and there was little evidence that teachers provide opportunities for writing in history work. There are no records of pupils' achievements and although the co-ordinator tries to set an example, through her own displays, there is no monitoring of pupils' work throughout the school to ensure planned work is carried out consistently. There are no history resources, other than books, in school, although the locality provides good potential for developing historical study.

162.

Music

157. It was only possible to see a limited number of lessons during the inspection. Additional evidence was obtained by listening to pupils singing in assembly, looking at teachers' planning and discussions with pupils. The school has not maintained the overall high standards found at the previous inspection.

Progress is satisfactory. The reason for this is the recent change in schemes of work used by the school.

158. Pupils at Key Stage 1 recognise that sounds are made by a variety of instruments and sing a range of songs from memory. They pay attention to keeping time and appropriate rhythm but do not always sing out well during music lessons and assembly. During one singing assembly pupils' singing was well above expectations for their age. They pitched notes accurately, and sang with confidence and enjoyment. They modulated from C major to D minor and back again. Their singing was clear, with pure tone and was very moving to listen to. At local music festivals last year, pupils sang simple cantatas and the most able sang a counterpoint against the choir. Progress in singing is well above average. Progress in the other areas of music is satisfactory.
159. Overall pupils make satisfactory progress over time. Year 2 pupils learn songs, some of which are quite challenging, listen to an extract from Berlioz's 'The Ball' and then perform a simple accompaniment.
160. Pupils' response to their music lessons is generally satisfactory and sometimes good. They enjoy performing and listening, especially to the 'rainmaker' instrument. Pupils with special educational needs take particular pleasure in their success in music lessons.
161. There are specialist teachers for instrumental lessons and pupils reach a good standard for their age. Overall teaching seen was satisfactory. The teaching of singing is very good, characterised by well-developed subject knowledge, high expectations of pupils' performance and clear goals. A lack of musical knowledge inhibits other teachers. The recently introduced commercial scheme is not always pitched at the right level for the pupils and provides insufficient support for teachers. The previous scheme of work produced by the co-ordinator is carefully crafted to match the needs of the pupils, whilst providing a rich diet of musical experience. It is primarily the loss of this scheme, and the very good support it provided for non-specialist teachers, that is responsible for the drop in standards in part of the music curriculum.
162. Due to the reliance on a recorded commercial scheme, music does not currently make its full contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education and to other areas of the curriculum. Resources are good, with sufficient untuned percussion to enable a class lesson to be held. There is a good range of tuned percussion, such as glockenspiels and xylophones. Whole-school curriculum planning for music is not fully established, particularly in view of the different needs of pupils in Year 1 and Year 2. The previous scheme provided a good basis for planning for both year groups across the whole music curriculum. The school participates in local music festivals, which enhances the musical experience for those who take part.

168. **Physical education**

163. Pupils make satisfactory progress in physical education.
164. Pupils in Year 2 have a good awareness of health and safety in physical education and move apparatus safely. They have reasonable control of body movements in dance when responding to music and more able pupils move gracefully. In games, Year 2 pupils can throw a beanbag into a hoop with reasonable accuracy and throw, bounce and catch a large ball with reasonable control.
165. Most pupils are well behaved and work sensibly. They work happily alongside each other but do not actively co-operate. When given the opportunity they appraise each other's work sensitively.
166. The quality of teaching was good in one out of four lessons observed. In three out of four lessons it was satisfactory. There is a good awareness of health and safety by all teachers, which is reflected in the school policy. Teachers and pupils are usually suitably dressed and there is an appropriate warm up activity to start each lesson. Occasionally lessons are too slow or insufficient time is spent on physical activity. Good use of music is made in dance and teachers provide good role-models. There are usually

opportunities for pupils to appraise each other and this enables them to provide a more polished performance.

167. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed and has not had time to review what is going on in the school. Short term planning is clear but there is insufficient detail in the scheme of work to ensure that pupils make continuous progress throughout the school. There are no records of what pupils have achieved in physical education but there are opportunities for all Year 2 pupils to attend a games club and for Year 2 girls to attend a gymnastics club after school. In the Summer term pupils can swim regularly in the pool shared with the junior school.

173. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

173. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

168. The inspection was carried out over 3.5 days by four inspectors who spent a combined total of 12.5 days in school. A total of approximately 47 hours was spent in lessons, talking to pupils and looking at their work.

1. The following sources of evidence were considered:

- observations of 42 lessons or parts of lessons;
- a sample of pupils' reading from all year groups;
- informal discussions with pupils;
- observations of registration sessions and a scrutiny of registers and other attendance records;
- assemblies;
- samples of pupils' work from all year groups;
- interviews with the headteacher, teaching staff, parents, governors and others connected with the school;
- the views of 16 parents at the parents' meeting and 43 questionnaires;
- teachers' planning, records and reports on pupils;
- the school's written policies, schemes of work and development plans;
- budget figures and other financial data;
- minutes of the governing body;
- the range, quality and use of resources for learning;
- the accommodation available.

176. DATA AND INDICATORS

176. 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 | 144 (+20 part-time) | 1 | 25 | 12 |

176.

Teachers and classes

176. Qualified teachers (YR – Y2)

| | |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): | 7.24 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher: | 23 |

176. Education support staff (YR – Y2)

| | |
|--|----|
| Total number of education support staff: | 6 |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week: | 88 |
| Average class size: | 27 |

176.

Financial data

| | |
|--|---------|
| Financial year: | 1998/99 |
| | £ |
| Total Income | 278912 |
| Total Expenditure | 271690 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1940.64 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | -5806 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 1416 |

177. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 140

Number of questionnaires returned: 43

Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

| | Strongly agree | Agree | Neither | Disagree | Strongly disagree |
|---|----------------|-------|---------|----------|-------------------|
| I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school | 28 | 58 | 7 | 7 | 0 |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 40 | 58 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well | 16 | 35 | 49 | 0 | 0 |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught | 9 | 63 | 19 | 9 | 0 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress | 12 | 56 | 23 | 9 | 0 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work | 23 | 58 | 19 | 0 | 0 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons | 23 | 44 | 30 | 3 | 0 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home | 26 | 46 | 21 | 7 | 0 |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren) | 28 | 49 | 21 | 2 | 0 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour | 19 | 56 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| My child(ren) like(s) school | 51 | 44 | 2 | 2 | 0 |

177.

177.