

INSPECTION REPORT

FINGRINGHOE CE (AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Fingringhoe, Colchester

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115139

Headteacher: Mrs L Berkeley

Reporting inspector: Tony Painter
21512

Dates of inspection: 5th – 7th June 2000

Inspection number: 189919

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior school

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Church Road
Fingringhoe
Colchester
Essex

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Appropriate authority: Governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr M Kimmance

Date of previous inspection: 14th October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Tony Painter	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History Music Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed?
Helen Griffiths	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mike Wehrmeyer	Team inspector	English Information technology Art Design and technology Physical education Children under five Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Fingringhoe CE Primary School is a much smaller than average voluntary aided school for boys and girls aged from four to 11 years. There are currently 54 pupils on roll. Children under five enter the reception class in the term before their fifth birthday. The overall attainment of children entering the school is similar to that found nationally. There are currently no children under five in the school. The school is situated in the village and takes pupils from Fingringhoe and surrounding areas. Pupils have a range of backgrounds but all are from white families and no pupils have English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils eligible for free meals, at five per cent, is below the national average for this type of school. Throughout the school, there are 12 pupils on the register of special educational needs, slightly above the national average. None of these pupils have statements of special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective and provides satisfactory value for money. Good management, with very effective leadership by the headteacher, is raising the quality of provision. This is beginning to raise standards effectively. Children under five receive a good foundation for their learning. Satisfactory teaching ensures that pupils make appropriate progress through the school. They achieve overall standards that are similar to those found nationally although standards in science are below average. The provision for mathematics is good and pupils achieve consistently above average results in this subject. Satisfactory progress overall has been made since the last inspection. The rate of progress since the appointment of the headteacher in January 2000, however, has been very good. The school is now very well placed to make further improvements in the quality of education and pupils' attainments.

What the school does well

- Good management is building an effective team approach between staff and governors. The headteacher's clear vision is leading to well-focused developments in all aspects of the school.
- Effective provision is made in mathematics and for children with special educational needs and promotes pupils' learning well.
- Good relationships are fostered between staff, pupils and parents. These create a caring and supportive atmosphere that has a positive impact on learning.
- Teaching and support staff promote pupils' personal development well.
- Effective use is made of parents, volunteer helpers and support staff to promote pupils' learning.

What could be improved

- The school's provision for science does not promote sufficiently high standards.
- Teachers' expectations are not high enough, particularly for higher-attaining pupils.
- Teachers do not yet make sufficient use of the developing system of assessment procedures to plan work for pupils at appropriate levels.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in October 1996. The overall rate of progress is satisfactory although developments have been slow until the appointment of the headteacher in January 2000. Very good progress has been made since then and there have been improvements in all of the identified areas for development. In particular, substantial improvements in the quality of teaching are beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' standards. Teachers' organisation and planning is improved and improved assessment systems have been introduced. They are not yet being effectively used to improve standards further. Much of the curriculum has been successfully revised to improve the guidance for teachers. Allocations of time to subjects have been improved and there is clearer attention to ensuring smooth progress for pupils through the school. However, the allocation of time to science is still too low leading to lower attainment. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, much improved from the last inspection.

The headteacher has been very effective in setting out a clear path towards achieving higher standards. A rigorous approach to school development is helping to target well-focused action to make improvements. A greater emphasis on staff and governors working together effectively is contributing to improvements in planning, assessment and teaching. Good systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning are

helping to further raise standards. The school is now appropriately placed to address the challenges and improve further.

STANDARDS

The number of pupils taking the National Curriculum assessments at the end of both key stages is very small. The performance of individual pupils, therefore, can have a disproportionately large effect on the overall picture of standards. For this reason, the table of comparisons with national averages and similar schools has not been included.

There have been variations in the year-on-year results from National Curriculum assessments at both key stages. These relate, primarily to the different groups of pupils involved. The trend of results has been variable and has not consistently kept pace with the national trends. However, pupils' current performances are better and are appropriately high overall. There are indications of rising standards through the school. These result from more effectively focused teaching. Teachers are making good use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies to raise standards well. The school is now setting more rigorous but achievable targets for pupils' attainment. These are effectively based on the increasing range of assessment systems that have been introduced.

By the time pupils leave the school, overall attainment is average, similar to that found in the last inspection. Pupils' performance in English is similar to the national average, while results in mathematics are above average. Overall attainment in science is below the national average. This results from limited attention to the subject and weaknesses in the development of pupils' investigative skills. Attainment in information technology is average. Detailed results and pupils' work show that higher-attaining pupils do not consistently achieve the higher levels of attainment. This is particularly true in science and writing although high standards are often reached in mathematics. The school's results, therefore, often compare unfavourably with the achievements of similar schools. However, analysis of the progress made by individual pupils shows that they often make good progress through the school. For example, pupils' results in the 1999 Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests generally show good gains from their Key Stage 1 results.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils generally listen carefully and concentrate on their work. They work well together and support each other effectively.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good overall. A small number of pupils sometime behave inappropriately in lessons by calling out and making unnecessary comments.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good and pupils take responsibility for a wide range of activities through the school.
Attendance	Very good levels of attendance.

Pupils have generally good attitudes to learning, although some silly behaviour takes place in lessons. They enjoy coming to school and their good attendance contributes to their learning. They take responsibilities willingly and carry these out well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	No judgement	satisfactory	good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

The quality of teaching is satisfactory and helps pupils to make appropriate gains overall. Almost all of the observed lessons were at least satisfactory with only one unsatisfactory lesson (4.8 per cent). Nearly a half of lessons were good or better with one very good lesson (4.8 per cent). This represents good improvement

since the last inspection. Although most lessons seen in Key Stage 2 were good or better, this good quality of teaching is not consistently apparent in pupils' past work. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and they make good gains in their learning.

No teaching of children under five was seen as the reception pupils had all begun Key Stage 1. Teachers' planning indicates that they are given a good start to their schooling. They have good opportunities to learn across all the areas of learning and activities are planned well. Throughout the school, teaching places appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' basic skills. Satisfactory attention is paid to developing literacy and numeracy skills. Teachers give pupils sound opportunities to apply their developing skills across the curriculum. English is taught soundly overall and the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy is improving the quality of teaching. The teaching of mathematics is good in both key stages with some effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy. Although the science teaching observed was at least satisfactory, pupils' past work shows that this is not the consistent standard of teaching. Too little time is devoted to science and teachers' expectations are too low, particularly of higher-attaining pupils. Lessons are well planned but some teachers do not expect enough of pupils' attainment, particularly of higher-attaining pupils. These weaknesses are particularly found in science and writing and limit the gains that pupils make in their learning. Teachers increasingly make clear to pupils what is to be learned in their lessons and this helps pupils to understand how well they have learned.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced, with good provision for children under five. Improvements have been made in the time allocations to subjects. However, the amount of time devoted to science is low and this limits teachers' planning for the whole curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Early identification of concerns is made and good provision allows these pupils to make effective progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall good provision is made, with effective strategies to promote social and moral development. Pupils are given good opportunities to work and play together. The provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. There are effective links with the local community but pupils have limited opportunities to find out about the wider world.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils. New systems for tracking pupils' development are not yet used effectively in guiding teachers' planning

The school has effective links with parents and these have a positive effect on the work of the school. Parents are given good information and are welcomed into the school. The curriculum is soundly planned and the school is making good improvements in policies and schemes of work. The school uses the local authority guidance for child protection and teachers recognise their responsibilities. However, there is no formal statutory policy for this.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good management overall with very effective leadership from the present headteacher. She has introduced a clear and rigorous plan for the improvement of standards in the school. She is developing good levels of teamwork between staff, governors and parents.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are taking increasing responsibility for shaping the direction of the school. They have good understanding of their role and a commitment to ensuring the success of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good systems have been introduced that give useful information. These are being used well to have positive effects in ensuring the quality of teaching and raising standards.
The strategic use of resources	All resources are soundly used with very effective use of support workers and other adults in classrooms.

High quality management has been established and this has introduced important improvements in the school. The headteacher has quickly established a very thorough understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. A rigorous development plan is linked to responsibilities and effective action plans for all staff. The governing body is increasingly active in monitoring and supporting the work of the school. Performance evaluation has begun and has identified appropriate priorities for the school. As a result, improvements are rapid and are leading to higher standards of pupils' work.

The school accommodation is appropriate and there are satisfactory levels of staffing and resources. The governing body ensures that financial planning is linked to the school's needs and is monitored well. All expenditure is carefully considered to ensure that best value is achieved.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is approachable and parents are welcomed. • Teaching is good and recognises the strengths of individual pupils. • Leadership and management are effective. • Pupils are helped to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities available outside of lessons. • The work pupils are asked to do at home.

The inspection team generally agrees with the positive points raised by parents. However, the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and there are some weaknesses in teachers' expectations, particularly of higher-attaining pupils. The range of extra-curricular activities has declined somewhat since the last inspection although it is satisfactory. Some inconsistencies in the use of homework are apparent and the school has begun a process of analysis and consultation to improve this.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Pupils' overall standards of attainment by the time they leave the school are average. This is similar to the findings of the last report. The very small numbers of pupils taking the National Curriculum tests at the end of each key stage make statistical analysis unreliable. There have been variations in the achievement from year to year and between subjects. These primarily relate to the different groups of pupils involved. The trend of pupils' results in the Key Stage 2 tests has not consistently kept pace with national results. However, pupils' current standards are generally a little higher. There are indications that standards are now rising in the school. This results from more clearly focused teaching, including the effective use of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The school is making considerably greater analysis of pupils' results in National Curriculum and other tests. This analysis is being used well to focus curriculum development and to set appropriately challenging but achievable targets. Evidence from the inspection suggests that the school is making good progress towards these targets.
2. Pupils' achievements in the 1999 Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests and assessments show strengths in their work in mathematics. Their achievement in reading is similar to that found nationally although their writing is weaker. In particular, no pupils achieve the higher Level 3 grade in writing. The school's results in mathematics are in line with those of similar schools. Results in reading and writing are much lower.
3. The National Curriculum tests in Key Stage 2 show pupils' performances in English are average. Results in mathematics are well above the national average while attainment in science is well below national averages. Detailed results and pupils' work show that higher-attaining pupils do not consistently achieve the higher levels of attainment. This is particularly true in science and writing although high standards are often reached in mathematics. The school's results, therefore, often compare unfavourably with the achievements of similar schools. However, analysis of the progress made by individual pupils shows that they often make good progress through the school. For example, pupils' results in the 1999 Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests generally show good gains from their Key Stage 1 results.
4. Children enter the reception class with attainment that is broadly average. They make good progress through the reception class in all the areas of learning. By the time they enter compulsory schooling, their attainment is similar to that found nationally with most achieving most of the Desirable Learning Outcomes¹. Teachers pay good attention to developing children's personal and social skills. Children therefore socialise well and develop good levels of confidence to work with others and persevere. They are given good practical activities that help them to develop new skills. This is seen in mathematics where children begin to achieve standards above those expected nationally. Children gain vocabulary and apply their early literacy skills in appropriate reading and writing tasks. They observe closely and use these observations well in their creative activities such as painting. They also develop good knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are agile and make good progress in physical development.

¹ Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education – SCAA/DfEE. These are goals for children's learning by the time they begin compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy, numeracy and personal and social skills.

5. Pupils' standards in English are average by the end of both key stages. Their achievements in writing are average but they are a little higher in reading. Standards in speaking and listening are average. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils read with increasing enjoyment and develop an appropriate range of strategies to tackle new words. Some higher-attaining pupils have the fluency and expression needed to gain the higher Level 3. Most pupils write clearly with effective use of sentences and sequencing of ideas. Spelling is generally accurate and pupils use appropriate basic punctuation. Higher-attaining pupils do not, however, have a sufficiently varied and interesting vocabulary. They are not given enough opportunities to write in a good range of styles so that more achieve Level 3. Pupils answer questions and discuss activities with teachers and pupils but their listening skills are less well developed.
6. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' reading is above average. They read independently and fluently with confident strategies to tackle new words. They enjoy reading and discuss their books well, giving appropriate opinions and looking for meaning. Higher-attaining pupils make good references to styles when talking about different books. Standards in writing are in line with national averages. Pupils write well-structured stories and make good use of notes and planning boards. They often redraft their work well, sometimes with the use of a computer. Their spelling and punctuation are generally accurate. However, their handwriting is less consistent than in earlier years, as teachers do not set sufficiently high standards. Higher-attaining pupils have good ideas and write appropriately extended pieces. Their use of complex sentences, adventurous vocabulary and imagery is limited and restricts their attainment. Most Year 6 pupils are articulate but have too few opportunities to speak in a range of contexts and this limits their achievement. Satisfactory opportunities exist for pupils to use their developing literacy skills throughout the curriculum. They understand the library systems and use them well. Many become proficient at finding information in reference books and within CD-ROMs. Their opportunities for writing in other subjects are less well developed.
7. Pupils' attainment in mathematics is above national averages by the end of both key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make good gains in their knowledge of number. They apply this with increasing accuracy to simple addition and subtraction problems. They measure with increasing accuracy and understanding of standard units. By the end of the key stage, they set out work carefully and are accurate in their calculations. Most use graphs to display data and can understand what they represent. Pupils in Key Stage 2 apply their increasing mathematical understanding in realistic contexts. They collect information methodically and make predictions from their graphs and tables. By the end of the key stage, they have well-developed understanding of number operations and use large numbers with confidence. They use a good range of effective strategies when considering problems. They use their numeracy skills well in a wide range of contexts within other subjects of the curriculum. Pupils measure accurately when tackling design and technology projects and apply sophisticated data analysis when using information technology.
8. Attainment in science is below national expectations by the end of both key stages. The weaknesses in achievement relate to a lack of concentration on the subject and lower than average time allocation. In addition, low expectations by teachers, particularly of higher-attaining pupils, restrict their attainment. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop understanding of healthy lifestyles and how plants and animals grow. They identify a range of materials and their properties. They begin to recognise aspects of fair testing such as the need to make predictions. Their work lacks depth and few pupils are challenged to achieve the higher Level 3. Pupils in Key Stage 2 understand scientific processes such as filtration. They use these in problems such as separating water from soil. Some good recent opportunities have improved their range of investigative skills. However, pupils have not been given enough opportunities to apply their developing skills to practical activities. Higher-attaining pupils, in particular, have not been challenged sufficiently to allow them to achieve at appropriately high levels.

9. Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations in both key stages. Pupils in Key Stage 1 gain confidence with computers and, by the end of the key stage, they locate and run software, enter information and use an appropriate range of programs. They word-process their language work and describe the pictures they have made with an art package. Pupils in Year 6 have good skills at finding information from CD-ROMs and the Internet. They understand the structure of databases and use them effectively with realistic data. Their word-processing skills are increasingly detailed although there are some gaps in their knowledge, for example of cutting and pasting.
10. Pupils make sound progress in art in both key stages. All pupils make good use of close observations. The youngest pupils gain good techniques of colour mixing in paint. Year 2 and 3 pupils look at the work of Monet and make drawings of the pond and water lilies by the school. Older pupils have produced a limited and variable range of work due to a period of unsettled teaching. They use pastels and have developed skills in shaping and joining clay. They know the work of some famous sculptors such as Rodin, Henry Moore and Andy Galsworthy.
11. Progress in design and technology is sound. Pupils' skills are methodically developed through the school. Younger pupils, for example, build on simple structures in Year 1, to creating working models in Year 2. Older pupils are particularly good at drawing on skills they have learned. They take an effective approach to problem solving. They use their plans well, choosing and testing the materials carefully. They are not quite so good at measuring accurately or using precise finishing techniques to get the best results.
12. Pupils make satisfactory gains in history and geography through the school. Pupils in Key Stage 1 find out about some famous people and events. They develop increased understanding of places through comparing their own village with other places. The youngest pupils make effective progress through an appropriate topic approach. They identify similarities and differences between the seaside of the present and that of Edwardian Britain. Older Key Stage 1 pupils find out about the Great Fire of London and look at pictures and maps from the time. In Key Stage 2, pupils find out about water and how it influences weather. They identify a number of geographical features, making correct use of terms such as valley and rivers. They understand how water erodes rock to form riverbeds. Pupils gain greater understanding of life in Gambia through interesting links and exchanges of letters. Good attention is paid to the development of understanding of how we can protect our local environment. They place important past events on a time line. They identify famous Victorians and find out about them with developing research skills. Their studies are enhanced when they act out roles as Victorians in a simulated classroom and in school productions.
13. Progress in music is similar to that found nationally although a large number of pupils have tuition in instruments and their attainment is higher. Throughout the school, pupils listen to pieces of music and talk about their responses. Pupils use a good range of percussion instruments, handling them with care. Singing in assemblies is enthusiastic and pupils show evident enjoyment of hymns that include actions.
14. Pupils' gains in skills and techniques in physical education through the school are satisfactory. Pupils in Key Stage 1 throw balls and beanbags with increasing accuracy. They apply their developing skills well to simple defending games. Pupils in the early part of Key Stage 2 improve their ball control soundly. They gain skills in throwing, catching and striking a ball in rounders games. Older Key Stage 2 pupils achieve higher standards of fielding and ball skills, similar to those expected of pupils of this age.
15. There are no significant differences between the standards achieved by pupils of different gender, background or ethnicity. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and reach levels of attainment in line with their capabilities. Particularly good early

identification of specific needs triggers the beginning of a coherent programme of action. Teachers help to set detailed targets in the pupils' individual education plans and match the work accordingly to ensure good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Overall, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. Attendance is well above the national averages and there is no unauthorised absence. Pupils are keen to come to school and punctuality is good. Participation in extra-curricular activities is good. Pupils are generally well motivated, concentrate well and show enthusiasm for their work. They co-operate well with one another and with their teachers and ask good questions. However, they tend to wait to be told what they should do rather than showing initiative. They are sometimes shy and hesitant in group discussions. Parents are very happy with the attitudes and values promoted by the school.
17. Behaviour is generally good. There have been no exclusions in recent years. The school works well as an orderly community. There is no evidence of bullying. Although there are no formal school rules, pupils know how they should behave. Their behaviour in assemblies is good. However, in lessons where the teaching does not engage their interest or where the pace of lessons is slow, there are occasions where pupils make inappropriate comments or do not pay proper attention. They do not always understand the impact of their behaviour on others. For example, in a physical education lesson, some Year 4 boys refused to join in the practising of fielding skills and their behaviour disrupted other pupils' learning. This represents a decline from the findings of the previous report.
18. Pupils willingly take responsibility in school. There are many good opportunities for them to do so. Younger ones take registers to the school office and older pupils help at assemblies and with school dinners. They also act as monitors when younger pupils come in from play and when walking from the school to the playing field. They help one another well in information technology lessons. Relationships within the school are good.
19. Pupils with special educational needs usually behave well. They have positive attitudes to their work. They show increasing levels of concentration. They establish good relationships with the special needs co-ordinator and support assistants, who encourage independence and determination.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. Teaching has substantially improved since the previous inspection. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have responded well to an intensive period of monitoring, guidance and training. A recent re-organisation of teaching duties has brought greater stability to the teaching for the class of older pupils, after a long period of disturbance. Consequently, teaching has acquired a greater degree of consistency across all classes. The level of unsatisfactory teaching has fallen from the 20 per cent indicated in 1996 to less than five per cent. Nearly a half of all teaching observed was good or better. However, this good quality of teaching is not consistently shown in pupils' past work. It is evident from teachers' planning and pupils' work that the quality of teaching is improving. This is a result of the good identification of weaknesses and the clear action being taken.
21. The school has made satisfactory progress towards resolving the key issue of monitoring teaching and learning in order to improve teaching. Staff have raised their awareness of the links between good teaching and effective learning conditions during numerous discussions, and have settled into the routine of the monitoring arrangements. The school's plans for developing the monitoring process are proceeding well.
22. Teachers have shown a commendable readiness to respond to guidance of various kinds. Their knowledge and understanding of the programmes of study has grown. They have

effectively used the successful introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies to develop consistent planning methods. These have extended to all subjects for which national guidance material exists. Teachers have greater understanding of the nature and purpose of clear lesson planning. The practice of sharing with pupils what they need to learn in the lesson is now established. To make pupils aware of factors that influence their learning, teachers help pupils to frame individual targets for improvement. As well as insight, pupils gain a sense of responsibility for their own learning. Teachers of older pupils encourage them to write a self-evaluation sheet. This identifies areas where they think they achieve well and areas that they feel need attention. This is a useful exercise, capable of being expanded to discussion of standards in terms of curriculum attainment targets.

23. Teachers use informal assessment in lessons effectively to guide pupils on particular points. They have become more adept in setting different work for different groups of pupils. This assists pupils of different attainment levels in their learning. They use their evaluations of lessons to adjust further planning. They gather useful information through the school's comprehensive assessment procedures. However, they do not yet use this information to identify accurately the precise needs of the different groups of pupils. Teachers do not have sufficiently and consistently high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Therefore some work and some of the starting points of lessons are based on a low estimate of pupils' capabilities. Planning is generally conscientiously carried out. It does not, however, consistently provide enough opportunities for higher-attaining pupils to achieve the levels they are capable of. As a result, higher-attaining pupils' learning is restricted and they do not consistently make good progress.
24. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. In the early years and Key Stage 1, teachers create particularly good learning conditions by good deployment of staff to support pupils. Teachers use the targets in pupils' Individual Education Plans to plan work to match the needs of the pupils well. This has improved since it was a key issue in the previous inspection. Teachers develop good and sensitive strategies to meet pupils' needs. For example, during a number bingo session for the whole class, a teacher quietly supplies a simpler version for a lower attaining pupil. This focuses carefully on pupils' learning and promotes good progress. Good teamwork between class teachers and support assistants and special needs co-ordinator ensures the effective transfer of instructions and feedback.
25. Teachers focus well on basic skills, which contributes to pupils' success in reading and understanding of number particularly. Most lessons begin with an effective review of previous learning so that pupils are building on existing knowledge. This helps pupils to be aware of their existing knowledge and how the lesson will take them further. Teachers use an appropriate range of strategies. They value and use pupils' ideas drawn out by effective question and answer techniques. Pupils' responses are usually short in these sessions, which limits the opportunities for expanding speech. Teachers have been using a lot of worksheets. These have been useful as a part of the familiarisation process to the literacy and numeracy strategies. However, worksheets also often limit opportunities for pupils' extended written responses. Therefore, pupils' learning is restricted and this is most evident in the progress of higher-attaining pupils. In better lessons, the methods that teachers use promote a strong pace that holds and keeps pupil's attention. Some lessons still have slower pace, so that pupils are less involved and their restlessness indicates lower interest levels. Their progress in these lessons is slower.
26. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and carefully. The pattern of marking varies from class to class, and, while encouraging, does not always suggest ways of improvement. The school is aware of this and a marking policy is in preparation. Similarly, the pattern for the setting of

homework is not regulated, but is due to receive attention shortly. At present, the setting of homework through the school lacks consistency although some is used effectively.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

27. An appropriate curriculum that meets the statutory requirements is established. Curriculum weaknesses were a key issue in the previous inspection. The school has, over the last two years, taken effective steps to strengthen the curriculum. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced, together with the national guidance to underpin the scheme of work for science. These measures ensure full coverage for these subjects. The numeracy strategy is particularly effective in raising standards. Action plans for English and mathematics are in place to ensure that the school's achievement targets are reached. Schemes of work based on national guidance are in place for information and design technology, history and geography. These create a sound framework for planning and promote a secure progression of skills and knowledge teaching. They give good guidance to teachers in ensuring that pupils make smooth and continuous progress across the key stages and from year to year. Similar provision is prepared for art, music and physical education. The schemes of work are ready and will be put in place as soon as the appropriate in-service training is completed. Basic curriculum statements exist for history, geography and physical education. A new policy for the regular review of policies and schemes of work provides rigorous monitoring. This process has already begun with good effect to guarantee that the subject development intentions are realised. The provision for children under five is good with effective activities in all the areas of learning.
28. Overall, the school has made good progress on its action plans to meet the key issues to improve the curriculum. It now provides a sound quality and range of learning opportunities, with good coverage of the programmes of study. The school provides a good breadth of experience, including enrichment of the curriculum by its programme of extra-curricular activities. Some parents expressed dissatisfaction with the range of extra-curricular activities provided. The range has reduced from the time of the last inspection, primarily linked to the substantial recent staff changes. However, a satisfactory range is provided. Netball and football clubs as well as an information technology club are provided, as well as a sewing group for Year 6 pupils. The French club and the recorder group are to be revived. Visits to centres of educational interest are appropriately included. A good number of visitors to school share their expertise with pupils, including many from the local community.
29. The school has made effective changes in the amount of time available for teaching the curriculum. The overall teaching time for juniors has been extended to meet the national recommendations. The amount of time given to each subject generally reflects that found in most schools. The time given to physical education, for instance, is now the same as that which most schools allocate. The time for English and mathematics has moved from an unsatisfactory low level to a generous third of the taught time each. The school is allocating to English a timetable share at the top of the scale of schools nationally. However, there is a correspondingly low share of time given to science, which is at the lower end of the scale. This has an impact on reducing the depth of study in science and depressing standards, without a corresponding benefit for the teaching of English.
30. Provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved significantly since the previous inspection, and is good overall. There is particularly effective early identification of pupils' individual needs. A good process then begins with a coherent programme of action. This effectively and fully involves class teachers, support staff and the special needs co-ordinator. Teachers help to set detailed targets in the pupils' Individual Education Plans and match the work accordingly. When pupils are withdrawn from class for special help, this is done sensitively. The work they do in these sessions is mostly linked to the basic skills of the

subject being taught in their class. On their return, teachers ensure that pupils are brought up to date with relevant aspects of the work they have missed.

31. The school is generally successful in achieving equality of opportunity for all pupils. Activities to suitably challenge the higher-attaining pupils, however, are not consistently planned, particularly in science and writing. The school is aware of this weakness and is beginning to work on it. The headteacher has embarked on a valuable programme of constructive communication with partner schools. This benefits pupils by easing children's entry into school, and providing effective induction of Year 6 pupils into secondary schools. The local community and the unique immediate environment play a distinctive and positive part in the overall curricular provision. Links with the local community are good and pupils are encouraged to feel part of the village and church community. Successful links with a local company have helped with development of the playground. There is good input from local police and the school nurse.
32. Overall, the school makes good provision for the personal development of pupils. The overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is good, in line with the findings of the last report. Aspects of personal, social and health education are included incidentally within the planning for instance of science, religious and physical education. Pupils receive appropriate teaching about health, sex and awareness of misuse of drugs. The school is aware that there is not a cohesive structure to this provision. It is a priority of the school development plan to establish this as part of a full review of the curriculum in 2000.
33. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is suitably provided through assemblies where pupils are encouraged to lead the prayers. These acts of collective worship meet all statutory requirements. The religious education curriculum provides appropriate opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their world and their beliefs. Weekly visits to the parish church help pupils to see themselves as members of the Christian community. The Rector visits the school regularly. However, there are comparatively few planned opportunities for pupils to reflect on spiritual issues in lessons, except occasionally in art.
34. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. Although there are no formal school rules, teachers act as good role models. They have generally effective strategies to ensure that pupils behave well. Pupils are taught a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong. Pupils of all ages are given opportunities to consider and understand the ideas and opinions of others. They are taught to respect their environment and the property of others through appropriate projects. Moral issues are debated. For example, the effects of deforestation and its effects on the community are discussed in geography lessons. The community police officer makes regular visits to talk to pupils about vandalism and road safety.
35. Good social provision and a strong family atmosphere are features of the school. Members of staff, visitors and support staff act as good examples for pupils' social development. Pupils have good opportunities in curriculum subjects, especially mathematics and physical education, to develop social skills. Further emphasis on social development is included in the personal, social and health education programme, which includes assemblies and circle time. For example, the theme in an assembly during the inspection was "Friendship". Pupils were successfully encouraged to think about what friends meant to them. The importance of working together was emphasised well. Annual residential trips for the older pupils contribute to their social development.
36. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory, but the multicultural element is weaker. This finding is in line with that of the previous inspection. Western culture is promoted effectively through history, geography and art topics. Painting in the style of great

artists such as Monet features in the curriculum, but there is little evidence of the work of the work of Eastern or West Indian artists. Many pupils learn to play musical instruments. Pupils are given the opportunity to study other religions in religious education. A member of the Colchester community visited the school to talk about his visit to a school in the Gambia. There is a good display of photographs and letters exchanged with the school. Percussion instruments from other cultures are used in music lessons, but there is little opportunity for them to become aware of the culture of other traditions.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school has improved its arrangements for assessing pupils' attainments and progress since they were a key issue in the previous inspection. Overall, the new procedures are very good. Recently the school has put rapidly into place a very wide range of testing, recording and monitoring procedures. The teacher for early years uses the local education authority pattern of recording information to establish a baseline of attainment early in the year. Standardised tests measure pupils' reading, spelling and mathematical achievement year by year. Optional standard tests track pupils' performance towards National Curriculum levels. Appropriate arrangements are made for the statutory National Curriculum tests to be carried out. Teachers are beginning able to track progress in reading by their comprehensive reading records. Profiles of pupils' strengths and weaknesses are being built up in reading and writing. Teachers have started to retain samples of pupils' writing that is levelled according to a recognised grading system. In science, a system of 'positive statement banks' records pupils' growing skills over time, and simplified versions of this are being introduced for other subjects.
38. Evaluation of this information is able to inform the school of general trends, for instance that writing is relatively weaker than reading. It has also indicated where skills in parts of subjects, such as the control aspect in information technology, are not strong enough. The information also gives the school a broad picture of improvements as, for instance, pupils' reading scores increase year by year. The staff are not, however, able to use assessment data as a more precise tool to guide their planning and teaching. The information gathered does not consistently relate to what pupils need to learn as part of the programmes of study. As a result, it is less effective as a means for teachers to set necessary starting points for some lessons. It does not sufficiently guide the rate of progress which must be set within the medium term planning to enable the school to meet its core subject targets. Assessment data is not effectively used to identify the level of challenge needed for higher-attaining pupils to achieve their full potential. The policy for assessment is under review, with a new policy in preparation. Assessment is an urgent priority identified in the school development plan, with monitoring of the progress of this aspect laid out in detail.
39. Pupils' special needs are identified at an early stage in the reception class. Teachers monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs well, using the criteria for the successful achievement of targets specified in the pupils' individual education plans. The school has good relationships with specialist agencies, particularly the educational psychology service, which enable pupils to receive good support and guidance.
40. Pupils' personal development is not yet monitored satisfactorily. It is informal, relying on teachers' personal knowledge and discussion with parents. Many aspects of this system work adequately and teachers have good knowledge of their pupils. There is no formal assessment of pupils' attitudes, response or behaviour in class lessons. Therefore, teachers are unable to track developments in personal development that may become problems in the future. There are now procedures for setting personal targets with pupils, and positive achievement awards are given. However, these are also not recorded as part of a systematic monitoring of pupils' personal development. There is effective guidance and

support through circle time and assembly and parents feel that their children are encouraged to be confident.

41. The school has effective procedures to ensure the health, welfare and safety of its pupils. This was also the finding of the last inspection. The school environment is safe. Health and safety practices are good and appropriate security measures are in place. Regular inspections are made to ensure that any risks are identified and remedied. There are good arrangements for helping pupils with medical conditions. However, appropriate information is not attached to attendance registers, as a means to provide information quickly. Arrangements for pupils who become ill during the school day are good, although there is no medical room. A member of staff has been trained in first aid and all staff have had basic training. Appropriate records are kept of accidents, fire drills and of the checking of safety equipment.
42. The level of supervision at lunchtime is satisfactory. The role of supervisors is underdeveloped and there is little play equipment. The playground is cramped and the play designs are worn. However, the headteacher and pupils have collaborated to create new designs and funds have been obtained from a local trust to repaint and refurbish the area. "Dirk's Corner" (provided as a memorial to a past pupil) is to be refurbished as a community project. Training in positive play and traditional games is planned to assist in making lunchtimes increasingly productive.
43. Procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The school has adopted the county guidelines, the headteacher has been trained and all staff are vigilant. However, there are, as yet, no policy or guidelines for staff, although both are planned for this term. A programme of training for all staff is also planned. Within the classroom, there are satisfactory procedures for promoting good behaviour, including positive achievement awards. However, there is still no policy on bullying to guide teachers' identification and response to incidents.
44. Procedures to promote regular attendance and monitor patterns of lateness or absence are very good. Registration takes place promptly and ensures an orderly start to the day. Legal requirements regarding the publication of attendance figures in the prospectus and annual report to parents are now met. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The school's relationship with parents is good, as it was at the time of the last inspection. Parents' responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting are very positive about what the school does for their children. They value the strong family atmosphere of the school. They feel that the school listens to their views and acts on them, for example, on the induction of children into the school. Parents find teachers easy to approach and feel that they are informed very quickly of any concerns. Some parents expressed dissatisfaction with the range of extra-curricular activities. However, the inspection showed that the school provides a satisfactory range. Some activities have stopped as a result of recent staff changes but are due to be revived. Sports, information technology, and sewing are still provided. Some parents expressed concerns about the consistency of homework. Their concerns are appropriate and the school has recognised these. Plans have begun for a homework policy to be discussed with parents. Guidelines are to be sent to them together with home/school agreements and drop-in sessions on homework are planned.
46. The information provided for parents is good. The prospectus and governors' annual report to parents comply with requirements and are friendly in tone. There are weekly information letters, which include advance information on the curriculum. Home/school reading records provide a useful vehicle for dialogue with parents. There are consultation meetings each term for parents and there have been useful workshops on the National Numeracy and

Literacy Strategies. Annual reports to parents provide a good picture of the work and attainment of pupils. However, some are very bland in tone and concentrate more on what has been learned than on specific pupils' achievements. Some give helpful targets where pupils need to make improvements. In response to the questionnaire, most parents felt well informed about their children's progress. Home/school agreements have been issued and most have been signed.

47. Parents make a very good contribution to pupils' learning in school. A large number of parents and other adults help in school on a regular basis. These are effectively used in classrooms and after-school clubs, and others help on school visits. A volunteer is currently doing effective work to improve the school's library facilities. Teachers value their work highly. Some parents and governors helped on School Book Day, acting as story characters. Governors also visit the school regularly in connection with aspects of the curriculum. The Fingringhoe Schools Association works closely with the school and runs a good programme of social and fund-raising events. These are well supported. Very good sums are raised each year to buy equipment to enhance children's learning, in particular, information technology resources.
48. Induction procedures for new pupils are good. In the term before the children start school there is a helpful meeting with the headteacher and staff. The "welcome pack" is a very useful publication, helping parents to introduce their children to school life.
49. The school has established good links with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress. They are invited to review meetings and kept well informed of any involvement with outside agencies. Some of the work that pupils have to complete is carried out at home, for instance using the computer. This has a good effect on pupils' learning. At present, pupils themselves are not involved in reviews, or in the framing of their own targets. This misses a useful opportunity for pupils to be clear about their learning needs to help them to improve.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

50. After a short but difficult period when the school had only a part-time acting headteacher, the school has good management. Purposeful leadership of the school is having a positive effect on the provision being made. The overall values and aims of the school are clear and are incorporated in all policies, which steer the work of the school effectively. A rigorous and effective programme of policy review is helping all staff to gain shared understanding of the way forward. Good relationships form the foundation of all interactions within the school and underpin all its work. All staff work effectively together and share their skills willingly. These factors are a significant improvement from the quality of leadership and management seen in the last inspection. Through this effective teamwork, the school is in a strong position to continue to make gains and improve further.
51. The headteacher's management is very good and she balances the roles of management and class teaching well. She has a clear and accurate view of the strengths of the school and provides strong and positive leadership. She demonstrates a commitment to good relationships, building and maintaining effective teamwork throughout the school. Her systems of monitoring teaching and pupils' work give good information and she shares her assessments thoroughly. Work done with individual teachers to improve the quality of their performances has been particularly effective in raising the quality of teaching. She is able to build a very secure picture of all the work of the school and use this in considering priorities for development and improvement. Subject co-ordinators have an appropriate range of responsibilities and clear action plans. They play an important and developing role in the

school's quest for further improvement. They have introduced a range of systems for

monitoring and evaluating planning, teaching and pupils' work.

52. The governing body is enthusiastic and increasingly knowledgeable. It meets often and regularly to consider appropriate matters regarding the development of the school. Governors are thoughtful in their approach to the pattern and frequency of meetings. This reflects their commitment to creating an effective governing body. Many governors take responsibility for overseeing parts of the curriculum, meeting subject co-ordinators regularly. Very good systems have been developed for governors to monitor the implementation of policies in the school, including the observation of lessons. Through this monitoring and good information from the headteacher and subject co-ordinators, the governing body develops a clear idea of the strengths and needs of the school. It meets all statutory requirements and has good systems to ensure that it remains aware of changing demands.
53. The school development plan includes appropriate priorities with effective systems to ensure the success of developments. The primary focus of the plan is to raise standards. Challenging targets are set with good allocation of resources and responsibilities. Sound financial planning supports the priorities identified in the school development plan. Careful monitoring of expenditure during the year ensures that funds are used appropriately. The governing body has an appropriately long-term view of the expenditure of the school and this is related realistically to the school's financial circumstances. The accounts currently show a surplus that is a little high. There are good plans to ensure that this is appropriately reduced in the next financial year. Financial control and administration are secure. The school has effective systems to ensure that value for money is obtained from all purchases. The governing body applies the principles of best value to the use of resources. The school's office is well organised and the secretary is welcoming and has a good professional partnership with the headteacher. Administration is efficient and ensures that the school is able to run smoothly, reducing the tasks of teaching staff.
54. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff match the demands of the curriculum. There are sufficient teachers to teach the number of pupils on the school roll. They are suitably qualified to teach the National Curriculum. All teachers have a number of curriculum responsibilities including co-ordinating special educational needs and children under five. The school effectively uses support staff and a large number of volunteer helpers to support pupils' learning. There is good teamwork between all in the school and mutual support, which enables teachers to plan the curriculum effectively and to know their pupils well.
55. There are very good arrangements for the professional development of all staff. There has been appropriate training for the implementation of the school's numeracy and literacy strategies. This has proved to be beneficial and has resulted in an improvement in the quality of teaching in these subjects. Effective use is made of staff meetings to allow teachers to determine ways of improving the school and sharing good practice.
56. The accommodation is satisfactory and allows the curriculum to be taught effectively. The reception classroom has a small but effective outside area with sufficient space to carry out an appropriate range of activities. There are good displays and pupil's work enhances the environment all around the building and in classrooms. The playground is restricted but the school is conveniently placed adjacent to the village green. The premises staff maintain the school to a high standard.
57. Learning resources are adequate for the delivery of the National Curriculum. There are ample books to support the development of pupils' reading skills and pupils benefit from a range of fiction and non-fiction books in their classrooms and the library. Many visitors to the school further enhance pupils' learning.

58. The school meets the recommendations of the Code of Practice² and the management of special educational needs is good. The organisation of the provision overall and of the training in the use of individual education plans has eradicated the weaknesses which were a key issue in the previous report. The administration of paperwork is thorough but not carried out in the most efficient way, being on paper format. The funds available to the school for special needs are used efficiently for the maximum benefit of the pupils.

² Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Substantial improvements have been recently made in the school's provision. These changes are having a positive effect on the quality of education provided, particularly teaching. As a result, pupils' standards are beginning to rise. In order to continue this improvement and consolidate the gains made so far, the headteacher, staff and governors should now:

- (1) Raise pupils' attainment in science by:
 - increasing the amount of time available for the subject;
 - ensuring that teachers give pupils opportunities to perform at appropriately high levels;
 - developing pupils' investigational skills consistently through the school. (paragraphs 8, 29, 78, 81, 82)

- (2) Improve teachers' expectations, particularly of higher-attaining pupils by:
 - matching tasks more carefully to pupils' prior attainment;
 - ensuring that lessons build effectively upon earlier learning;
 - making more effective use of the developing assessment systems in the school. (paragraphs 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 23, 38, 65, 66)

In addition, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. They relate to:

- Ensuring that pupils' personal development is formally monitored, (paragraph 40)
- Developing school policies for child protection and bullying. (paragraph 43)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	18

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4.8	42.8	47.6	4.8	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	54
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	3

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	12

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	4	2	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	4
	Girls	2	1	2
	Total	5	4	6
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (75)	67 (83)	100 (41)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	3	4	4
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	5	6	6
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (75)	100 (50)	100 (83)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	5	1	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	5	4
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	4	5	4
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (54)	83 (62)	67 (61)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Girls	N/A	N/A	N/A
	Total	N/A	N/A	N/A
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	N/A (84)	N/A (85)	N/A (92)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	54
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.4
Average class size	18

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	98/99
	£
Total income	166257
Total expenditure	162417
Expenditure per pupil	2499
Balance brought forward from previous year	13424
Balance carried forward to next year	17264

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	54
Number of questionnaires returned	18

Percentage of responses in each category³

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	17	5	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	44	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	17	78	0	5	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	55	5	5	5
The teaching is good.	72	22	0	5	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	44	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	78	22	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	44	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	50	39	5	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	65	29	6	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	41	0	6	6
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	17	55	22	0	5

³ Figures in each row may not add up exactly to 100 per cent due to rounding errors

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. Children under five are admitted to the reception class at three points in the school year. A sensitively planned induction programme allows the children to visit before the term in which they become five. The school aims to establish good links with home from the earliest days. The school has embarked on a programme of communication with feeder nursery settings, of mutual benefit, and of particular value in the settling process for new children.
60. Provision for children under five is good. The teacher has developed an effective curriculum where the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes are woven into the new Early Learning Goals that become operative in the next school year. These prepare reception children well for working towards the National Curriculum. The school is well placed to introduce the first foundation stage next September.
61. Children are assessed at a suitably early stage to identify attainment groupings. This includes the use of nursery baseline assessment records and in the first weeks in the reception class the use of the Local Authority system of assessment. The data from these systems for 1999 applies to only a few children but suggests that attainment on entry to the reception year is broadly average. Children with special educational needs are identified at this stage, to enable them to receive early and effective support. They are well catered for both academically and physically, and make good progress. Children's progress overall is well monitored in all key areas, to guide planning and to inform the reporting to parents. Children under five make good progress overall through the reception class, so that the only child technically under five at the time of the inspection had made sufficient progress to be taught within a Year 1 group. Therefore, little direct teaching of children under five was seen. The quantity and quality of children's work suggests that the teaching of under fives is at least sound in all the areas of learning.
62. Staffing levels are good given the small numbers of children, and the teacher assistant is well deployed in supervising the activities of the youngest children. Planning is good. Provision is built into all the class activities to give the under fives appropriate practical experience which is at the heart of the early learning goals. This was seen in mathematics, where younger children used apparatus for sorting and ordering. They make good progress and are beginning to achieve above average results. A practical emphasis is planned into literacy where the younger pupils have physical objects to look at and discuss. They thereby extend their vocabulary effectively. Children make sound progress and have average overall attainment. The children's social development is good. They socialise well, mix appropriately with older pupils and have a confident sense of belonging to the school community. They are able to sit still and listen when they share lesson introductions with the Year 1 pupils. Their progress in this aspect is good, and standards are above average.
63. Good levels of creativity were observed in an art lesson. Here children observed closely and made their own choices of colour, with good attention to the effect of texture and shade. The lively classroom display is evidence of the range of experiences provided. The classroom environment, filled with objects to stimulate curiosity and interest, effectively promotes the children's knowledge and understanding of the world. Good use is made of the unique aerial play balcony in the shadow of Fingringhoe's great oak. Though small, it is secure and contains much of the equipment to stimulate adventurous activities and physical investigation. There is easy access to the lower playground and a wider range of larger play equipment has been ordered. The children are agile and make good progress in physical development.

ENGLISH

64. Pupils' attainment at the end both key stages, represented by results of the national standard tests varies year by year, from above to below the national average. The small number of pupils involved in each group makes precise comparisons with national averages, and with the averages of similar schools, unreliable. There is no significant discernible trend, for instance between the performance of boys and girls. The results for 1999 overall were an improvement on those of 1998. Standards in reading are in general higher than in writing where, for example, no pupils in Year 2 achieved Level 3 in 1999. Early indications are that results in the standard tests for 2000 are an improvement on those of 1999.
65. This is supported by the inspection findings for both key stages. By the end of Year 2, pupils' standards in reading and writing are average although writing is relatively weaker. Pupils read with increasing enjoyment and tackle new words using one of a range of strategies. They show appropriate understanding of the text. Higher-attaining pupils have developed the fluency and expression needed to achieve Level 3. Most of the Year 2 pupils use a well-formed longhand script. They write narrative accounts of good length, structuring sentences accurately and sequencing them logically. Their spelling of common words is usually accurate and mostly they use correct punctuation. Higher-attaining pupils do not develop sufficient skills to select more varied and interesting vocabulary. They are not able to write in a wide enough range, suitable for different readers, to enable them to achieve the higher Level 3.
66. By the end of Year 6, pupils' overall standards are average. Their reading is slightly above the average. Pupils have advanced in reading skills and most are independent and fluent. They recognise most words by sight and use syllables confidently to decipher new words. They enjoy reading and willingly express opinions about the book and its author. Many pupils are beginning to look at the meaning below the surface of the text. Higher-attaining pupils make appropriate references to a wide range of texts when they compare different authors' styles. Pupils' handwriting has declined in consistency by Year 6. Pupils' particular strength lies in narrative writing. They use notes and planning boards well to structure their stories. Some sustain an account logically over several pages with reasonable spelling and quite accurate punctuation. They also use the drafting process well to modify and improve their text. On occasions, this involves the use of computer word processing. Higher-attaining pupils sometimes extend imaginative ideas to six or more pages. They do not, however, employ sufficiently complex sentences, including adventurous selection of vocabulary, to qualify for Level 5. For instance, the longest story in the pupils' books contained only three adjectives and little imagery. However, this is an improvement on the previous inspection, which recorded few opportunities for extended and creative writing.
67. Standards in speaking and listening are average. Formal opportunities to experience drama are given, and many informal opportunities exist for pupils to answer questions and discuss activities within lessons. However, there is no clear structure to define progression in these skills. Many pupils' responses are short, single word or partial sentences. A number of pupils also are more hesitant and do not take sufficient part in dialogue. Some Year 4 pupils, in particular, do not develop good listening skills. Most Year 6 pupils are articulate but they do not have enough opportunities to explore a range of speaking. Opportunities for formal and informal speaking, debate, persuasion and reaction to the listener are limited.
68. The progress pupils make is linked to improvements in provision for the subject overall. The headteacher and staff have adopted a particularly determined approach recently to overcome the weaknesses that were key issues in the last inspection. The National Literacy Strategy has been effectively established, together with the use of a commercial scheme of work. This has achieved a greater consistency in teaching and a stronger structure for progression, continuous through the school. The work in pupils' books shows generally

sound progress over the year, developing skills and their range of application, indicating sound teaching overall. Teachers have responded well to recent intensive monitoring and guidance, so that the matching of tasks to pupils' needs is becoming a consistent practice. This has particular benefits to pupils with special educational needs, who make good progress. Teachers use their good knowledge of pupils and informal assessment in lessons to move pupils forward. For example, teachers are often effective in pointing out details of letter formation, accurate spelling or improvements in style. The regular marking also takes this approach. Teachers have started to record evaluations of lessons, and use these to adjust following lesson content. The impact of this is to pick up on pupils' weaknesses to ensure they are eradicated.

69. The long-term structure has given teachers a clearer view of lesson objectives. In each lesson teachers share with the pupils what they will learn. This means they have a clearer idea of the context of the work and of the kind of result they are aiming for in the lesson. Teachers guide pupils in the framing of personal targets, which focus on their own needs and priorities. This process gives pupils an awareness of, and responsibility for, aspects of their own progress. One interesting approach at the beginning of a lesson was to show how selected pupils were achieving their targets. The pupils concerned appreciated the applause that celebrated their efforts to maintain good finger spaces in writing. Teachers sit with older pupils to discuss their work and prepare an evaluation sheet. This helps pupils to get a good insight into self-evaluation and standards generally. These factors are good practice and contribute to stronger learning conditions and to the good teaching observed during the period of the inspection. Teachers do not yet explain to pupils how they are able to improve their work and achieve the next National Curriculum attainment level.
70. The staff have recently introduced a comprehensive package of measures to gauge pupils' attainment and to track their progress. Starting with a record of baseline information for the under fives, tests in reading and spelling, together with profiles for reading and writing over the years are building up a detailed picture of pupils' achievements. Teachers are not yet using this valuable information strategically to identify the level at which work should be pitched. This is linked to a lowered expectation of what pupils can and ought to achieve. For instance, the small portfolio of Year 1 pupils' work is much more accurately levelled than in 1998 and shows that pupils have reached Level 1. However, it is not being used to guide planning to achieve higher levels. Similarly, assessment data is not being effectively used to promote the progress of higher-attaining older pupils to higher levels of attainment.
71. The development of literacy within other subjects is at an early stage of planning. The potential to use other subjects as a means to extend the range of writing styles is not fully exploited. The school recognises this and the action plan for English plots the stages by which literacy is to be expanded. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to use computers in their work. They develop sound word-processing skills and use these to redraft their work. The weaknesses in book provision stated in the previous report have been rapidly addressed. An attractive range of reading scheme books holds pupils' interest and contributes to their progress. Many parents support this progress by voluntary help in school to hear readers. A volunteer librarian leads the cataloguing of the library. This is expanding as a valuable resource to enhance pupils' already sound research skills.

MATHEMATICS

72. There have been variations in the year-on-year National Curriculum results in both key stages. These have primarily related to the attainments of the different cohorts involved. Some variations also arise from the very small numbers of pupils taking the tests. Results of the national tests in 1999 at Key Stage 1 show attainment to be above the national average for all schools. It is in line with that achieved by pupils in similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, the results of national tests in 1999 show attainment well above the national average for all schools and well above that of similar schools. The inspection confirms that

pupils' attainment is above the national averages by the end of both key stages. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs reach levels of attainment appropriate to their levels of ability. This is an improvement on the standards described in the last inspection report.

73. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have good knowledge of simple addition facts. They use this effectively when, for example, they add three numbers together. They set out their work carefully and are accurate in their computations. They identify the correct operations required to solve problems and have good knowledge of mathematical terms when talking about their work. They are familiar with the measurement of time and length and confidently approach problems that deal with these. They know the properties of two- and some three-dimensional shapes and display data in a variety of ways including simple graphs.
74. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have well-developed understanding of number operations and use large numbers with confidence. They successfully use decimals, fractions and percentages. They use a good range of different strategies for approaching problems. Pupils understand how to find the area and perimeter of complex shapes and calculate these correctly. Pupils collect information systematically in realistic problems. They group and use the data to create and read graphs in order to make predictions and draw conclusions.
75. The quality of teaching in both key stages is good. Pupils learn effectively in both key stages, brought about by the good quality planning that teachers make. Teachers make sound use of the National Numeracy Strategy to help their planning. Schemes of work are detailed and give teachers clear guidance upon which to base their plans. Activities take satisfactory account of the different abilities within classes. This enables pupils to engage in appropriate but challenging work. Teachers consistently provide work that extends the understanding and experience of their pupils. Pupils make good progress in their ability to make mental calculations as teachers provide them with the skills and opportunities to practise them. Year 2 pupils, for example, practise simple additions in a "bingo" game and apply this knowledge to more complex questions.
76. Pupils' learning is considerably enhanced by the interest generated by their teachers through effective introductions. In these, teachers set out clearly what pupils will learn in the lesson. Enthusiasm is sustained through the good match of work provided for pupils of different levels of attainment. Pupils with special educational needs, for example, are given appropriate opportunities to join in and receive praise for their contributions. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 are given some good opportunities to tackle challenging material from the Key Stage 3 programmes of study. This helps them to make good gains in their learning.
77. Teachers build good relationships with their pupils and maintain good discipline and levels of behaviour. They make good use of challenging but well-focused questions. These help pupils come to understand the points being made. Although the development of numeracy skills is given predominance in teachers' planning, other areas of mathematics are adequately covered. Pupils benefit from the provision of opportunities in other curriculum areas in order to develop their knowledge and understanding. They apply their numeracy skills well, for example, when handling data and representing it in graphs. They measure accurately in design and technology, making appropriate calculations. Some effective use is made of mathematical games and programs on the computer.

SCIENCE

78. Pupils' attainment in science is below national averages by the end of both key stages. National Curriculum assessment results indicate consistently lower than average achievement by the time pupils leave the school. The weaknesses in achievement relate to

a lack of concentration on the subject and lower than average time allocation. In addition, some low expectations by teachers, particularly of higher-attaining pupils, restrict attainment. The 1999 Key Stage 1 teacher assessments, for example, indicate that all pupils achieve the national standard Level 2. However, no pupils attain the higher Level 3. This is due, in part, to pupils' lack of opportunities to achieve at the higher levels. Key Stage 2 results show similar weaknesses in achievement in the higher levels. The inspection generally confirms the National Curriculum results and the below average levels of pupils' overall attainment. Pupils' overall progress, in both key stages, is unsatisfactory. They have too few opportunities to make effective progress in all aspects of the subject. They have had, for example, limited opportunities to develop a full range of investigative skills. The last report indicated similar weaknesses in provision, although the attainment of pupils was satisfactory overall. Little development in the subject has taken place since that report and standards have fallen.

79. Pupils in Key Stage 1 make progress in all aspects of the subject although the depth of their work is often limited. They develop understanding of life processes and aspects of a healthy lifestyle. They make sound references to healthy food and the correct use of drugs. They know how to keep teeth clean and undertake some limited investigations to replicate the action of fizzy drinks on teeth. Through these, they begin to recognise aspects of fair testing. They begin, for example, to make simple predictions. Pupils identify a number of natural and artificial materials and their properties.
80. In Key Stage 2, pupils describe the physical processes at play in the movement of planets and the Moon. They develop increasing understanding of some scientific processes such as the use of filtration to separate water and soil. They use a secure range of scientific terms when explaining processes such as evaporation and condensation. When given appropriate opportunities, such as a very good lesson investigating solutions, pupils show good understanding of aspects of fair testing. Here pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 take good opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding substantially. Year 6 pupils, for example, begin to examine their own work critically and identify ways in which the investigation could be improved. Pupils' past work, however, indicates that these opportunities have not been given consistently and this has limited progress.
81. Teaching during the inspection was satisfactory with some particularly effective teaching in Key Stage 2. This standard is not consistently shown in pupils' past work. Pupils' overall development in the subject is restricted by the unsatisfactory range of opportunities that teachers have given them. Pupils often achieve confidently at levels around the national standards of Level 2 and Level 4. Teachers do not, however, give pupils sufficient opportunities to achieve at higher levels. Too frequently, for example, all pupils have the same tasks and there are no extension activities for higher-attaining pupils. Teachers' lessons are carefully planned and make good use of clear indications of what pupils need to learn. These are explained carefully to pupils and they focus their attention well. These also help both teachers and pupils to judge the success of learning in discussion sessions at the end of lessons. Teachers too often, however, plan work that is too simple and does not challenge pupils sufficiently. For example, in a class of Year 2 and Year 3 pupils, work was clearly targeted at achievement at Level 2. Many of the pupils were well beyond this point and needed further activities to raise their levels of attainment.
82. Teachers have good relationships with pupils and use these effectively to promote good atmospheres for learning. Their knowledge and understanding of the subject is often good and they indicate this well through their thoughtful questioning. Pupils listen carefully and are eager to answer questions. They give appropriate explanations of their thinking. Pupils with special educational needs are thoughtfully supported in order for them to make sound progress. Teachers' planning includes some appropriate emphasis on practical tasks. Pupils are interested in the subject and respond well when they are given good challenges. Pupils make some effective progress in developing investigative skills but this is not consistent

through the school. Pupils generally have too few opportunities to use their developing investigative and experimental skills.

ART

83. Pupils make sound progress through both key stages and by the time they leave the school, achieve average standards. This is similar to that found in the last inspection. Older pupils are good at working in the style of established artists, for instance, the Year 6 pupils' sensitive interpretation of Kathe Kollwitz. They draw on a wide repertoire of techniques such as control of form and space or the mixing effects of pastels. They are not as good at expressing their interpretations of art because they lack some of the technical vocabulary to do this.
84. Only two lessons were observed. From evidence of work displayed and teachers' planning, teaching is generally satisfactory. The youngest pupils are introduced to techniques of colour mixing in paint. They are taught to use their senses and observe closely. Reception pupils, for example, match colours and shades of cereals and pulses to parts of a crab they want to represent. Observational skills are extended in Years 2 and 3. Here pupils are encouraged to observe form and line when studying the landscape outside the school. They compare their views to those in Monet's paintings. Older pupils make pastel drawings, in response to pieces of music, using appropriate techniques to blend colours. They shape and join clay and look at a range of sculptors including Henry Moore, Rodin and Andy Galsworthy. However, pupils have produced a limited range, quantity and quality of work. This has been the result of a period of staffing changes. For instance, pupils use sketchbooks but their content does not show planning and testing of projects through different stages to completion. The computer art packages which are effective for the younger pupils are not developed as much as they might be for older pupils, as art media in their own right.
85. The sketchbooks reflect a generally low expectation of what pupils can and should achieve at various ages. This is linked to teachers' limited level of specialist subject knowledge. The adoption of the national guidance to be the basis of a scheme of work is already having a good impact on the range and depth of teachers' planning. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. Teachers create sound practical learning conditions where pupils can explore materials and effects imaginatively. Pupils usually respond well in art lessons. Though they have positive attitudes, they do not automatically respect each other's work. They behave well in the sometimes crowded conditions. Teachers, assistants and parent helpers give particular support to pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make a good progress.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

86. Only one technology lesson was observed. However, the school has taken the trouble to display pupils' work effectively. Pupils, too, could explain what they have been doing. From these sources, it is clear that they make sound progress. By the time they leave the school, their work is of the nationally expected standard. From the displayed work, it is evident that teaching is at least sound. Lessons often make good links with other aspects of pupils' work, such as their investigation of the Indus Valley civilisations. In the lesson seen, teaching was good and contributed significantly to the good progress made. Pupils gained good understanding of the need for materials to be appropriate for the project. They tackle a design brief effectively, responding to their understanding of the needs of the user. Teachers and assistants give good support to pupils with special educational needs, and they build up considerable confidence. Their work is at least as good as, and often better than, their peers, and they make good progress.
87. Skills are gradually but methodically extended. The simple but effective use of paper

structures in Year 1 pupils' deckchairs develops into working mechanisms based on wooden frameworks in Year 2 and a wide variety of applications by the end of Year 6. Older pupils are particularly good at drawing on the repertoire of ideas and skills learned. They take a good methodical approach to problem solving. They can see what is needed from their plans and use considerable independence in choosing and testing the materials they need. They are not quite so good at measuring accurately or using precise finishing techniques to get the best results.

88. Provision for the subject has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers use the new national guidance as a basis for their planning. This gives them precise objectives for their lessons and they explain these clearly to the pupils. Teachers create effective practical learning conditions where pupils have to do most of the thinking for themselves.
89. Technology lessons are often used effectively for learning more about mathematics in a practical situation. Good links are established with science lessons, such as recognising the forces involved in moving vehicles that the pupils have made. Older pupils expand their language skills by discussion and explaining the reasons for their choices in writing evaluations, but teachers do not explore the full potential of this aspect. Information technology is not used as much as it could be as a medium for drawing up designs.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

90. A limited number of lessons were seen in these subjects during the inspection. Pupils' past work and teachers' planning indicate that an appropriate range of activities is given to all pupils. They make satisfactory progress through the school in gaining suitable skills and understanding. They achieve at levels similar to those expected for children of their age. This is generally in line with the last report. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, develop enthusiasm for the subjects. This is particularly evident when they are involved in practical activities such as giving a performance based on the Victorians. Pupils make some effective use of computers, for example in finding information about Gambia from a CD-ROM. However, their use of information technology to improve their learning in history and geography is generally limited.
91. Pupils in Key Stage 1 learn about people and events of the past. Provision for the younger pupils is effectively made through a topic approach. Pupils identify similarities and differences, for example, between the seaside of the present with that of Edwardian Britain. Their understanding is appropriately enhanced through singing period songs and looking at photographs and artefacts. Older Key Stage 1 pupils find out about the Great Fire of London and look at pictures and maps from the time. They learn about famous people such as Grace Darling and link this work with greater understanding of the role of lifeboat men. In Key Stage 2, pupils look at Victorians and place them on timelines. They identify a number of famous people and find out about them using reference materials and computers. Pupils recognise significant changes, for example in hygiene standards, between then and now. Their studies are enhanced when they act out roles as Victorians in a simulated classroom and in school productions. Teachers have not effectively used pupils' enthusiasm for their studies in history to promote writing and the range is somewhat limited.
92. Pupils in Key Stage 1 develop increased understanding of places through comparing their own village with other places. In Year 2, for example, pupils identify differences between Fingringhoe and the Island of Struay from the Katie Morag stories. Pupils point out important physical and human characteristics of the places and begin to use some simple geographical terms. They describe different types of weather and learn some symbols for them. In Key Stage 2, pupils find out about water and how it influences weather. They identify a number of geographical features, making correct use of terms such as valley and rivers. They understand how water erodes rock to form riverbeds. They gain increasing understanding of how proximity to water is an important factor in the location of places.

Through links with a school in Gambia, pupils gain greater understanding of life there. Good attention is paid to the development of understanding of how we can protect our local environment.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

93. By the end of Year 2, standards are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils nearing the end of Year 6 are in line to achieve the expected standards in most of the strands. This is a weaker position than in the previous inspection when attainment in information technology was judged good. Although there are improved resources, teaching support has reduced since 1996. This has led to an overall decline in standards. Most Year 2 pupils are competent at locating the software they need from the computer's menus, and can explain how they use the data handling program to enter information and what the graphs mean. They can word-process their language work and describe the pictures they have made with an art package. They have fewer skills in controlling devices by writing short programs of instructions. Most Year 6 pupils are particularly good at finding information using CD-ROM or the Internet, for instance in their research on the Gambia. They are reasonably competent with data handling and interrogating the computer files. They know how a database is built up of fields and records. They possess more detailed editing skills in word processing than Year 2, and can explain how to import pictures from clip-art files into their text, but do not know how to cut and paste. They are less certain about simulation software, where they have to make decisions about on-screen situations that model real world events. They do not have opportunity to use the computer in geography and science for the measuring and analysing of data.
94. No lessons were observed for pupils up to Year 3, but discussions with pupils and scrutiny of teachers' planning, displays and pupils' work folders show that pupils make satisfactory progress. Each item introduced in Year 1 is developed at a higher level in successive years. Pupils go to the computer on a rota basis, and their turns are recorded on a record sheet. This is a sound strategy, but there are parts of the day when the computer is not in use. Useful opportunities to support pupils' learning in other subjects are therefore lost. Some effective use is made of information technology, for example to support learning in mathematics. Teachers do not, in general, make fully effective use of computers to aid pupils learning across the whole curriculum.
95. Pupils are interested in the technology and eager to use it in their work. Many use their own facilities at home to record homework, and develop research projects. Some valuable applications in school extend pupils learning in English, art, mathematics, geography and science, but the precise planning of information technology across the curriculum is at an early stage. Teachers and teacher assistants make good use of the computer to enhance, for instance, the spelling skills of pupils with special educational needs. This allows these pupils to make good progress in both language and information technology skills.
96. Insufficient teaching of the older pupils was observed to make an overall judgement of the quality of teaching. Recent changes of teacher for this group have affected the consistency of progress. It has delayed the development of some skills and created some gaps in learning, for instance in control technology. However, the school is aware of this. The new national guidance for information technology has been incorporated into an appropriate scheme of work. This promotes pupils' learning systematically through the years, identifying the essential skills to be built and suitable depth of study. The headteacher's action plan sets out a clear plan for improving provision in information technology. This is backed by a rigorous timetable of monitoring and by the adoption of a valuable support service from the Local Education Authority. This is assisting the school to make best value choices in strategic planning for the expansion of hardware and the training of staff.

MUSIC

97. Only one formal music lesson took place during the inspection. Teachers' planning and other observations of pupils show that satisfactory provision is made. All pupils gain skills and knowledge at an appropriate rate through the school. By the time they leave the school, their overall attainment is average. Some pupils who are involved in instrumental tuition achieve standards above those expected nationally. This position is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection.
98. Pupils throughout the school have appropriate opportunities to listen to music and talk about their responses. Pupils in Key Stage 1 increase the range of their descriptive language and gain confidence in expressing their feelings about music. Sometimes these experiences are used effectively by teachers to promote other activities. An example is the paintings done in Key Stage 2 in response to a piece of Viking music. Pupils use a good range of percussion instruments, handling them with care. Pupils in Key Stage 1 perform from a graphic score devised by them on the theme of seaside. They play together with improving sense of timing. Effective use is made of parent support to help a pupil whose enthusiasm outstrips his technique. In this way, a reasonable performance is made and pupils rightly feel proud of their efforts. Singing in assemblies is enthusiastic and pupils show evident enjoyment of hymns that include actions.
99. A significant number of pupils, around 30 per cent of the school, have instrumental tuition in violin and woodwind. The organisation of these lessons is good and the peripatetic music teachers are well prepared. As a result, little time is lost in these lessons or from the curriculum as a whole. Effective use is made of resources, for example when pre-recorded tapes provide appropriate accompaniment to pupils. Good relationships give pupils confidence in their learning and they make good progress.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

100. The school has made improvements in the provision for physical education since the previous inspection. The curriculum is more suitably balanced and the disproportionate amount of time given to swimming in 1996 has been reduced. However, all Year 6 pupils are able to achieve the standard of swimming expected for their age. Pupils' gains in skills and techniques through the school are satisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and in both key stages, although there are weaknesses in the teaching of the oldest pupils.
101. The youngest pupils develop greater independence in getting changed and they make their way sensibly to the playground. Teachers' planning is thorough and the necessary equipment is organised well. The teachers' instructions are clear and good questioning enables pupils to recall earlier work effectively. As a result, the lesson proceeds at a good pace and pupils make good progress in their learning. They throw balls and beanbags with increasing accuracy. They apply their developing skills well to a simple defending game. Pupils enjoy their lessons and are appreciative of the skills shown by others, encouraged effectively by the teachers and other adults. Some simple but effective recording of pupils' achievements enables teachers to keep records of progress and target future teaching.
102. Pupils in the early part of Key Stage 2 improve their ball control soundly. They gain skills in throwing, catching and striking a ball in rounders games. The teachers' creation of a supportive atmosphere encourages pupils to try hard and make good efforts. They listen carefully to the teacher and respond well to her praise and encouragement. Pupils use equipment responsibly and pay good attention to safety matters. Over recent terms, frequent changes of teacher have given older pupils an unsatisfactory range of experiences, leading to limited progress. Most pupils achieve standards of fielding and ball skills that are in line with national expectations. However, the teachers' unsatisfactory attention to organisation and timing in their lesson leads to limited progress by the pupils. The unsatisfactory way that some pupils respond to the lesson means that too much time is

spent on disciplinary matters. As a result, pupils' achievement is limited. Effective use is made, however, of talented support workers to promote sound gains in skills with groups of pupils.