

INSPECTION REPORT

Ford End Church of England Primary School

Chelmsford

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115115

Headteacher: Mr Stephen Hanscombe

Reporting inspector: Mr Brian Gosling
22453

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th April 2000

Inspection number: 189922

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Main Road Ford End Chelmsford
Postcode:	CM3 1LQ
Telephone number:	01245 237209
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Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Elizabeth Priestman
Date of previous inspection:	October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Brian Gosling	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Mathematics; Science; Information technology; Geography; History; Children under five; Equal opportunities.	The school's results and achievements; How well is the school led and managed?
Ron Ibbitson	<i>Lay inspector</i>		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?
Gerard Slamon	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Religious education; Art; Design and and technology; Music; Physical education; Special educational needs.	How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ford End Church of England Primary School is a small school built originally in 1872 and extended in the 1960's with the addition of a hall. It is situated in the village of Ford End to the north west of Chelmsford. There are 59 pupils on roll; 32 boys and 27 girls. They are organised in three classes. Nine pupils are on the register of special educational needs, which is below average, and one pupil has a statement of special educational needs, which is broadly average. Five pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well below the national average. No pupil comes from an ethnic minority. Children begin school the term in which they are five Levels of age. At the time of the inspection, there were no children under five in the reception class. The school makes an assessment of children's abilities shortly after they start school. These records show that the attainment of children is generally average when they begin school. Since the start of a local pre-school nursery recently, standards are improving and children's attainment in their personal and social development and creative development is now above average when they enter the school. The school is popular with parents and pupil numbers have been rising steadily from a low point of 23 pupils in 1994, and appear set to continue to rise.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Ford End Church of England Primary School is an effective school. Standards are rising and the quality of teaching, as well as the leadership and management of the school are good. Finances are well managed and the school continues to give satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards are rising, particularly in English, mathematics and information technology because of improvements in the quality of teaching.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good and these have a positive effect on their learning.
- The school is well led and managed. There is a clear understanding of its strengths and limitations and what can be done to improve the provision for pupils.
- The governing body is very supportive and has developed good methods to monitor the effectiveness of the school's work.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported.
- Teachers' good management of pupils results in the very good relationships in the school.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Pupils' achievements in writing are not high enough at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Co-ordinators do not monitor learning in their subjects effectively and assessment is not used sufficiently to plan pupils' learning.
- Marking is unsatisfactory and inconsistent across the school.
- Statutory requirements for swimming are not met.
- Unauthorised absence is well above the national average.

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 and required improvement in standards in information technology, art and design and technology; the planning of the curriculum; teachers' expectations of talented pupils; and opportunities for the cultural development of pupils. The school has effectively addressed each of these issues.

Policies and schemes of work have been provided for all subjects of the National Curriculum. These include extension tasks and work of a greater difficulty for gifted and talented pupils. The school benefits from the support of the Educational Psychologist in identifying gifted and talented pupils. The school has been represented on courses for curriculum management and teaching and learning to provide a greater understanding of the methods for matching tasks to the learning needs of pupils. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies has led to a greater focus on the use of ability groups in lessons that has in turn led to improvements in teaching.

At the time of the last inspection, standards were unsatisfactory in information technology, art and design and technology. These have improved and they are now good in information technology and art. This has resulted from professional development courses in the subjects and a significant improvement in the resources available for teaching and learning in these subjects. Curriculum planning for art, music, history and geography carefully considers the opportunities for cultural development, and this is now good.

The school has also identified other areas for improvement that have been addressed effectively. The leadership and management of the school have been improved through the commitment of the headteacher, governors and co-ordinators. The governing body has developed its strategic role well. Governors have undertaken training and specific roles have been identified, including the monitoring of the work in each key stage. Regular school visits are made with a focus agreed by the governing body. Written reports are shared with governors and this has significantly improved their understanding of the strengths and limitations of the school's provision. Governors now carefully monitor and evaluate school developments and financial spending. The role of the co-ordinators has been developed through courses for all teachers and through being given greater responsibility, including the management of budgets for each subject.

The school has secured effective improvements in the quality of teaching through the implementation of a policy for teaching and learning that is based on the school's careful consideration of the methods that best reflect effective teaching. Most importantly, the school has shown a commitment to introduce the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively. This has led to a greater use of different tasks for pupils of different abilities and a clear identification of the learning intentions of each lesson. Following the identification of the methods that had most effect on pupils' learning, teachers have begun to apply these methods in their teaching of other subjects. The school is well placed to secure further improvement.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 Level olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	-	C	-	-
Mathematics	-	C	-	-
Science	-	C	-	-

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

The table above has not been completed for the Levels 1997 and 1999, as there were fewer than 10 pupils who took the tests in these Levels. Consequently, the figures are unreliable and cannot be usefully compared with other schools. Although figures are included above for 1998, there were only 11 pupils in this Level and comparisons can be unreliable with so few pupils. There were only 10 pupils in Key Stage 1 in 1999 and results are similarly unreliable, particularly as the percentage of these pupils with special educational needs was well above the national average. However, standards have been rising over the last four Levels in English and mathematics. Again it is necessary to be cautious, as results fluctuate greatly year by year and, with a small number of pupils taking the national tests, a single pupil can make the difference between below the national average and above the national average.

The findings of the inspectors are that standards are above average in English, mathematics, information technology and art. Standards are average in all other subjects and are rising, particularly in English and mathematics, following the committed introduction of the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. This has led to improvements in teaching and learning in the school. However, standards of writing are unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 although writing is good by the time the pupils leave the school. The school has set appropriate targets for the next two years and is well placed to achieve them.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are keen to learn and they work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils are happy and their behaviour allows good co-operation, which makes a positive contribution to their learning.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils' relationships are very good and they show an awareness of the needs of other pupils.
Attendance	Satisfactory overall. However, the rate of unauthorised absence is well above the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	No Judgement Made	Good	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 good in both key stages. Fifty-two per cent of the lessons observed were good and a further 36 per cent were very good. Twelve per cent of lessons were satisfactory and no lessons were judged to be unsatisfactory. There were no children under five in school at the time of the inspection.

Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection mainly because the school has effectively introduced the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is good. Teachers apply many of the principles of these strategies, such as a greater use of ability groups and a carefully considered pace of work, in many other lessons. Standards are rising in English and mathematics because of these improvements in teaching. However, there remains a wide ability range in each learning group and teachers do not always make sufficiently detailed use of assessment to establish what pupils already know, understand and can do, to plan future learning tasks.

Teachers pay careful attention to the learning needs of pupils with special educational needs and many pupils work at higher levels of the National Curriculum than is nationally expected, particularly in some aspects of mathematics.

Significant strengths of the teaching are teachers' thorough planning, their good management of pupils, use of support staff and the very good relationships that teachers maintain in their classes. Teachers create a good learning atmosphere that gives pupils the confidence to attempt new work and to openly express their views. However, marking is often unsatisfactory and teachers do not sufficiently use marking to show pupils how they can improve their work and identify what pupils have learned. Teachers make effective use of homework.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the learning needs of pupils of this age. However, there is no provision for swimming.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. All members of staff are aware of the pupils' needs and these pupils receive effective support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is a strength of the curriculum. The opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures have been improved since the last inspection and this is now good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school cares for its pupils and looks after them well. Very good procedures ensure the school environment is healthy and safe.

The school benefits from a good partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides a clear direction for school development. The governing body and teaching staff share a commitment to improving the school's curriculum for pupils.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has developed good procedures to develop its strategic role that enable it to monitor school improvement effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The governors and teaching staff have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and limitations.
The strategic use of resources	The school's resources are deployed effectively. The new classroom will allow a greater use of the good resources for physical education.

The school's staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory. The principles of 'best value', such as comparison, challenge, consultation and competition, are rigorously applied to financial decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school.• The progress their children make.• The good quality of the teaching.• The school is approachable.• The high achievement of the pupils.• The close links with parents.• The leadership and management of the school.• Their children become mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The amount of homework provided.• The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors agree with parents' positive views about the school. The range of activities the school provides outside lessons is satisfactory although there is less provision for younger pupils. Inspectors consider that the amount of homework provided is appropriate for pupils of this age.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Children begin school the term in which they are five years of age. At the time of the inspection, there were no children under five in the reception class. The school makes an assessment of children's abilities shortly after they start school. These records show that the attainment of most children in the school was average when they began school. However, since the start of the local pre-school nursery recently, standards have risen and children now enter the school with above average attainment in personal and social development and creative development.
2. Although there were no children under five in the school at the time of the inspection, the available evidence suggests that children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes,¹ as recommended by the Curriculum and Qualifications Authority, by the time they start the National Curriculum. Observation of the youngest pupils in the school shows that they have settled into school routines well.
3. At the end of Key Stage 1, the percentage of pupils who attained Level 2² or above in the national assessments in 1999 was below both the national average and the average of similar schools in reading and writing, and very low in mathematics. The percentage of pupils who attained the higher, Level 3 in the national assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 was close to both the national average and the average of similar schools in reading, below in writing and well below in mathematics. However, only 10 pupils took the tests in 1999 and results can vary greatly between years when there are a small number of pupils. It is, therefore, necessary to be cautious when interpreting results for a single year. For example, three pupils were on the school's register of special educational needs, which is well above the national average. When these pupils are removed from the analysis, the school's results compare very favourably with the national average. The performance of a single pupil can change the comparison with other schools from below the average to above the average.
4. Another indicator of pupils' attainment is gained by considering results over a longer period. Taking the average of the results over the four years 1996-1999, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was above the national average in reading, below in writing and well below in mathematics. However, the school has shown significant improvement since the last

1. On Desirable Learning Outcomes: QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) formally SCAA (School Curriculum and Assessment Authority) has produced a set of 'Desirable Learning Outcomes for Children's Learning on Entering Compulsory Education.' These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of five in six areas of learning: language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development; physical development and personal and social development.

2. On Levels: By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are expected to attain Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects. Those who achieve Level 3 are therefore attaining above nationally expected levels. It is a national expectation that all pupils should reach Level 4 by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils who reach Level 5 are therefore attaining above the nationally expected level for their age.

inspection and the results attained four years ago may no longer be relevant. The trend of results at the end of Key Stage 1 over the years 1996-1999 is rising in reading, writing and mathematics, but there is considerable fluctuation from year to year.

5. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, there were only five pupils. Consequently, the results of the national assessments are not published. However, the average of pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 over the four years 1996-1999 is close to the national average in English and science, but below the national average in mathematics. The trend of results at the end of Key Stage 2 over the years 1996-1999 is rising in English and mathematics, and the trend for all core subjects is rising broadly in line with the national trend. The difference in the results for English and mathematics in 1999 was due to the earlier implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.

6. The findings of the inspection are that pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 currently is above the national average in English and mathematics. Pupils' attainment is close to the national average in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and science at the end of both key stages. This shows a significant improvement in English and mathematics since the last inspection. Standards are improving because the school has enthusiastically adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

7. The school has set appropriate targets for the next two years and is well placed to achieve these targets.

8. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their individual education plans. One indication of the success of the special needs provision is that pupils are regularly taken off the register of special educational needs as well as placed on it. Another is that some pupils on Stage 3 of the school's register of special educational needs reach the expected levels in the national tests. Standards of provision for pupils with special educational needs have improved since the last inspection.

9. Standards in speaking and listening meet national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and exceed national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are encouraged to express their ideas clearly throughout the school. They are keen to join in discussions and answer questions. By the time they leave the school, pupils develop their ideas thoughtfully, describing events and characters in stories, and conveying their opinions clearly. They make good contributions in lessons and ask questions that are responsive to other's ideas and views.

10. Standards in literacy are average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils make satisfactory progress in reading in Key Stage 1 through the systematic teaching of the relationship between letters and sounds. They learn to use phonics and contextual clues to read unfamiliar words and help them understand the meaning of the text. By the time they are seven, most pupils are reading confidently and independently. In Key Stage 2, pupils read a wide range of books. They name their favourite authors and they explain their views and preferences confidently. They develop sound research skills and use the contents and indexes well to find information. Pupils' writing is good at the end of Key Stage 2 and they write for a range of different purposes. They use word processing skills well to improve their writing and they write good stories, using a variety of effects to hold the reader's attention. However, standards of writing at the end of Key Stage 1 are below average and there is insufficient attention to developing handwriting with the younger pupils.

This limits progress throughout the school, and some pupils in Year 6 do not write in a consistently joined style. The school is aware of this situation and has identified writing in Key Stage 1 as an area for development.

11. Standards in numeracy are above average at the end of both key stages. Pupils' attainment is increasing since the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and improved teaching methods. Pupils develop a secure understanding of the number system. They initially gain a secure grasp of number facts to 10 and many work confidently with number facts to 20 before the end of Key Stage 1. They add and subtract numbers with two digits competently. By the time they leave school, pupils multiply numbers to two decimal places and work enthusiastically and confidently with negative numbers. Most pupils can compute addition and subtraction facts to 20 and multiplication facts to 10x10 in their heads. However, few pupils benefit from the quick mental recall of these facts because there is insufficient attention to this aspect of mathematics in lessons. The school has identified this limitation in pupils' mathematical abilities and plans to address the issue through regular practice in numeracy sessions.

12. Standards in science are close to the national average at the end of both key stages. Younger pupils develop a clear understanding of living and non-living things and the properties of light and sound, and they recognise and sort solids, liquids and gases. Older pupils develop this understanding through separating solids and liquids by filtering a variety of mixtures. They conduct an experiment to demonstrate the importance of light and water to plants and develop an understanding of the solar system. However, there is insufficient use of investigations and experiments in both key stages for pupils to develop a secure understanding of the importance of a fair test and to apply their scientific knowledge to everyday situations.

13. Standards in information technology are above national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory. The success of pupils' achievements in information technology is due to the systematic teaching of skills in using computers and computer programs. For example, in developing word processing skills, teachers ensure pupils' competence initially in the use of the keyboard and mouse. They progress to using functions, such as cut and paste, importing pictures to add to their text and then using a scanner to include photographs of themselves in their work.

14. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. Pupils learn about the major faiths of Christianity, Buddhism, Sikhism and Judaism and important religious leaders, such as Jesus, Moses and Guru Nanak. They know that holy texts, such as the Bible and the Torah, provide rules and examples for living.

15. In the non-core subjects, standards match those usually seen for pupils of this age in design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. Standards in art are better than those usually seen for pupils of this age and this demonstrates good improvement because standards in art, like those in design and technology and information technology, were judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Art is now a strong feature of the school and the good quality of artwork around the school enhances the environment and celebrates pupils' achievements in the subject. In design and technology, younger pupils design and make finger puppets whilst older pupils benefit from the design and technology

club where they develop their skills well.

16. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in science, religious education, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education in both key stages, and English and art in Key Stage 1. Achievement is good in English, mathematics and art in Key Stage 2, and information technology in both key stages.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

17. Pupils enjoy school and have very good attitudes to learning. All parents who replied to the parents' questionnaire said that their children liked coming to school. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers and are eager to answer questions and contribute to discussions. They are well motivated, interested in all classroom activities and keep working until their tasks are completed or the lesson ends. They co-operate well and help each other.

18. Pupils' behaviour in and around the school is very good. They know the school rules and adhere to them. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner and behave well in class and in assemblies. On the rare occasions when inappropriate behaviour occurs, it is dealt with firmly and fairly. There have been no exclusions. Pupils play well together and are enthusiastic and active, and there are no signs of bullying or other oppressive behaviour. The school sets high standards for behaviour and teachers are aware of the need for quick intervention should inappropriate behaviour occur. A pupil, who had spoken in an unkind way to a boy sitting next to her, was gently admonished by her teacher and the calmness of the class was resumed without fuss. During a very wet lunch time, children settled down well after lunch by chatting or reading in their classrooms, looked after by caring mid-day assistants.

19. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good and are a significant factor in pupils' personal development. Pupils listen respectfully to one another and recognise one another's efforts. In a design and technology lesson, a Year 1 boy admired the gluing technique of a classmate and agreed that it was superior to his own. In an art lesson, Year 6 pupils compared and discussed their work in a co-operative way. Children feel secure in the calm environment of the school and are confident in their dealings with classmates and adults. They readily enter into discussions with their teachers and other helpers. Adults in the school are friendly and trusted by the children and serve as good role models for pupils, who cheerfully greet visitors to the school and chat amiably to them about their work and school life. Respect for other's feelings, values and beliefs is high, and pupils are very supportive of those with special educational needs. All pupils have full and equal access to all areas of the school's activities.

20. Although most pupils attend school regularly and the overall attendance rate is satisfactory, the rate of unauthorised absence is much higher than the national average. The unauthorised absences are mainly caused by parents taking pupils out of school for holidays for more than the generally permitted two weeks in a school year. Apart from lowering the overall attendance rate, this has a deleterious effect on pupils' learning. Pupils are generally punctual for school, registers are marked promptly and lessons begin on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

21. The quality of teaching is good overall in each key stage and varies from satisfactory to very good. As a result of this good teaching, pupils are making good progress in their learning. Parents' views expressed during the meeting with inspectors, and returned questionnaires, show that parents agree with this judgement. Teaching was good or better in 88 per cent of lessons observed, of which 36 per cent were very good, and satisfactory in 12 per cent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is consistently good or better. The quality of teaching in the school represents a significant improvement since the last inspection when teaching was unsatisfactory in 12 per cent of the lessons observed. Teaching has improved due to improvements in teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum, better pace in most lessons, improved provision for pupils of different attainment, and the effective implementation of the national initiatives for literacy and numeracy. Examples of the impact of these initiatives on pupils' learning are the increased range of strategies pupils use for reading at a deeper level and the way pupils are getting better at solving mathematical problems.

22. Significant strengths of the teaching are teachers' knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum, religious education and the areas of learning for children under five years of age. Other strengths of the teaching are teachers' thorough planning, their good management of pupils, use of support staff and the very good relationships teachers establish in their classes. The development of pupils' self esteem and the recognition of the value of individuals underpins the ethos of the school. In this context, teachers create a comfortable learning atmosphere that gives pupils the confidence to attempt new work and to openly express their views. Teachers make effective use of homework to reinforce what is learned in school and to develop pupils' independent learning skills.

23. Although teachers know their pupils well, the absence of a whole school approach to assessing what pupils already know, understand and can do, and using that assessment to plan future learning, diminishes the impact of good teaching on pupils' learning as they move through the school. Although there is a marking policy, it is not used. The marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory and rarely shows pupils how they can improve. As a result of these weaknesses in assessment, teachers' expectations of what pupils are able to do are not always high enough.

24. The teaching of basic literacy and numeracy skills is good, except in the development of writing skills in Key Stage 1. All teachers are technically competent in teaching phonics and basic mathematical skills. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well planned and follow recommended structures. In literacy, teachers set good models of language in reading aloud expressively. Pupils are given many well-planned opportunities to speak in lessons and to take part in performances. In Key Stage 2, appropriate opportunities are provided for developing

pupils' extended writing skills in English and other subjects such as history. However, pupils' writing skills are not developed progressively at the end of Key Stage 1 and not enough is expected of pupils in this respect. In numeracy lessons, teachers make good use of questioning to check and extend pupils' mathematical understanding. Pupils are provided with a satisfactory range of opportunities to apply their mathematical skills in practical investigations. Their numeracy skills are promoted in other curriculum areas, such as design and technology, science and geography. However, teachers have not yet fully explored the contribution other subjects can make to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. Plenary sessions are generally well used by teachers to consolidate and review what has been learnt during lessons.

25. As only one science lesson was observed during the time of the inspection, no judgement can be made on teaching. Inspection evidence indicates that, although lessons are well planned, there are too few opportunities for pupils to organise their own resources, plan their own work and carry out practical investigations in science.

26. Teaching of information technology is good. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to use computers to draft and redraft their work and to use CD-ROM to find information. Teachers have secure knowledge of the subject and the increased range of resources is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning.

27. Religious education is well taught in accordance with the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus and teachers have a secure understanding of the subject. Lessons are well used to give pupils a clear understanding of Christianity and the diversity and richness of other major faiths.

28. The quality of teaching seen in other subjects is good. It is particularly good in art and physical education. Teachers successfully balance creativity and control in allowing pupils to develop their ideas independently, when creating works of art in a variety of media for example. Teaching in physical education was very good in the two lessons observed during the week of the inspection.

29. Teachers provide pupils who have special educational needs with good support and tasks that are matched to their needs. The dedicated support staff provide pupils with a good level of support in lessons, when their expertise is well used by teachers. Pupils' individual education plans have specific targets and these are used well by teachers in planning appropriate tasks in lessons. The teaching of these pupils ensures that they have full and equal access to the curriculum and to all aspects of school life.

30. There were no children under five during the inspection, and, therefore, there is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement of the teaching of the children under five.

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

31. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets most statutory requirements, including those for children under five, and for religious education. However, statutory requirements for swimming are not being met. The school uses effectively resources from within and outside the school to enrich the curriculum. Priority is given to developing pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, although the opportunities presented for these in other subjects have yet to be fully realised. Sex education is provided for pupils before they leave the school and drugs awareness is part of the health education programme. The school has appropriate links with the nursery and with the secondary school to which most pupils' transfer at the end of Year 6. Overall, pupils are well prepared socially and academically for the next stage of their education.

32. Curriculum planning is good, and weaknesses noted in the last inspection have been successfully addressed. Policies and schemes of work now guide planning and provide continuity in pupils' learning. Provision in English and mathematics has been strengthened by the successful implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. All classes have a lesson each day in literacy and numeracy. An area for development is to further develop pupils' literacy and numeracy skills across the curriculum. Provision for information technology has been developed through better resources and improved teaching. Pupils apply their information technology skills in most other subjects. Provision for art and information technology are strengths of the school and contribute strongly to the school's ethos. Religious education is soundly based on the Locally Agreed Syllabus.

33. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good, and for their spiritual, moral and social development it is very good. This represents a very significant improvement since the last inspection. The calm, peaceful atmosphere that exists in the school, assemblies, well planned acts of collective worship and the many opportunities for reflection and wonder throughout the school day, very effectively support pupils' spiritual development. Those new to the school report that they like the supportive, friendly atmosphere.

34. Pupils are actively taught the difference between right and wrong and are expected to show a high degree of respect for the differences between people and for their values and beliefs. The very good relationships, and the very good example set by all who work in the school, support pupils' moral development, which is underpinned by the school's aims and mission statement. The importance of truth and justice are communicated through the school's evident concern for these qualities. The behaviour policy is consistently applied throughout the school. Pupils' sense of citizenship is developed through opportunities to discuss and reflect upon environmental issues and to take part in activities such as tree planting.

35. Provision for pupils' personal and social development is a strong feature of the school. The school actively encourages good social skills. Pupils are provided with many opportunities to take responsibility and to show initiative within the life of the school. They are given many opportunities to appreciate and to contribute to the local community through local visits, singing in public and taking part in sporting events with other schools, for example. They also contribute to the wider community through collecting for charities, such as Dr Barnardos, New Life Appeal, and the Marie Curie Cancer Appeal. Parents report that

the older pupils are very caring in their response to the needs of younger pupils. They agree that their children are provided with very good opportunities to become mature, responsible and caring members of society. Inspection evidence supports parents' views.

36. Provision for pupils' cultural development was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. This is now good and has improved because of the inclusion of cultural opportunities in the school's planning. Good use is made of the local environment to develop pupils' understanding and to enrich the curriculum through well-planned visits, such as those to Colchester's Castle and Zoo. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and develop their knowledge of British culture and traditions. They also have planned opportunities to develop an understanding and appreciation of other cultures, faiths and traditions. The good provision for art strongly supports pupils' cultural development. A range of visitors, such as falcon display teams and the school cook, who talks about her life in India, helps to broaden pupils' awareness of the world. Opportunities, such as the 'BBC Experience' where pupils visited the studio and performed their own plays, further enhances this area of pupils' development and widens their experiences.

37. There is a very good equal opportunities policy in place. The school provides effectively for pupils of all ages and gender. The curriculum provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils and the physical education programme, although limited because the hall is used as a classroom and there is no provision for swimming, is extended by adventurous activities on residential visits. A homework policy clearly sets out a programme to support the curriculum.

38. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early, and good provision is made for improving their learning skills, so that they retain self-esteem and confidence. Parents agree that the provision for these pupils is good. The requirements of the Code of Practice³ for pupils' with special educational needs are fully met.

39. The satisfactory provision for out-of-school activities involves many Key Stage 2 pupils. Teachers and parents give generously of their time. Sports activities include football, netball and tennis. The design and technology and information technology clubs further enhance the curriculum and support pupils' learning in these subjects. The satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 2 is not matched by similar provision for Key Stage 1 pupils, either at lunchtime or after school.

40. Governors are actively involved in curriculum development and there are named governors with special responsibility for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. This good practice is to be extended to cover all areas of the curriculum. Governors regularly visit the school and have a clear vision for future developments. The governing body has wisely set up a 'Curriculum 2000' working party to prepare for the introduction of the revised National Curriculum and the Early Learning Goals in September 2000.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

3. On special educational needs 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.

41. The school is successful in creating a calm and caring atmosphere in which pupils are well supported and can develop both academically and socially.
42. There are good procedures for ensuring the welfare of pupils. Health and Safety matters are well managed, risk assessments are effectively carried out and good records are maintained. The named person with responsibility for child protection issues has received appropriate training in this respect. Teachers are well aware of the school's child protection procedures. The school has procedures for contacting the relevant external agencies in child protection matters should assistance be necessary. There are two qualified first aiders in the school.
43. There are satisfactory procedures for promoting attendance by means of newsletters to parents and through discussions with parents. The school emphasises to parents the importance of regular attendance, particularly in cases of requests to take children out of school for holidays in term time. However, this is not entirely successful and unauthorised absence is well above the national average. All unexplained absences are recorded and investigated.
44. Members of staff have a very good knowledge of the pupils in their charge and, within the caring ethos of the school, give good support and guidance. Learning support assistants are clear about their contribution to the atmosphere of the school and give good support to pupils with special educational needs. The school follows a positive behaviour policy with rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for inappropriate conduct. Bullying and all forms of oppressive behaviour are actively discouraged.
45. There are satisfactory procedures for monitoring pupils' attainment and progress and these include regular assessments against national and school criteria from entry into school. However, the assessments made are insufficiently used to gauge the long-term progress of pupil development and to guide curriculum planning.
46. There is good use of assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator maintains a register of pupils with special educational needs and there are good procedures for identifying these pupils, keeping parents informed, and reviewing progress regularly. The school effectively supports them so that they meet targets set in their individual education plans.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

47. The school has established good relationships with parents. Requests for places at the school are now greater than the school is able to provide. Evidence from the parents' questionnaire and the parents' meeting shows that the majority of parents express satisfaction with the school and with the progress and development of their children. Some parents come into school regularly to help. For example, they listen to pupils read or give general assistance in the classroom. A parent runs the school's football club.
48. The quality of information available to parents is good. The headteacher sends frequent newsletters to advise parents of school events and other school matters. The school brochure is well presented, comprehensive and the governors' annual report to parents is very

informative and complies with statutory requirements except for minor omissions, such as the reporting of national test results (or reasons for their omission) and the school's targets for Key Stage 2 tests.

49. Two reports are sent each year to parents on their children's progress and development. One is a mid-year report and the other a full report at the end of the academic year. The reports meet statutory requirements and give sufficient information to allow parents to see how their children have progressed. Home/school agreements clarify responsibilities and are signed by the class teacher, parent and pupil. Apart from written information, the school ensures that members of staff are available to meet parents who have concerns about their children. There are formal opportunities to meet class teachers at the parent evenings held twice each year and appointments can be made at other times to talk to the headteacher or class teachers. In most cases, teachers are available daily to deal with serious concerns. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the reviews of their children's progress.

50. The school has an active friends association that raises funds for the school and has donated substantial sums for items, such as climbing frames and other equipment in the hall, and games equipment for use outside. In addition to fund raising, the events organised by the Friends of Ford End School provide opportunities for the school and parents to meet socially.

51. Some parents who replied to the parents' questionnaire expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of homework set for children, but the findings of the inspection are that the amount of homework is appropriate for the age of the pupils. A few parents feel that they are insufficiently informed about their children's progress at school, but it was found during the inspection that the quality of information given to parents meets requirements and is sufficient for parents to see the progress of their children. There was also dissatisfaction by some parents with the range of extra curricular activities offered by the school. The inspectors found that a good selection of suitable activities is offered to children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The leadership and management of the school are good and this shows significant improvement since the last inspection. The headteacher provides a clear direction for school development. He enjoys a good, working relationship with the chair of governors, who is very supportive of the work of the school. Together, with the governing body and the teaching staff, they share a firm commitment to school improvement.

53. The headteacher has led the school through an effective period of school improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum provided for the pupils has been improved and the school has written and implemented plans for the whole curriculum that give attention to the learning opportunities for pupils. This has resulted in a significant rise in standards,

particularly in information technology, art and design and technology, which were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. A planned programme of professional development has allowed the teaching staff to operate more effectively as a team, and the quality of teaching has improved.

54. The co-ordinators have written policies and schemes of work for all subjects of the national curriculum that contain useful guidance and they provide effective support for colleagues. They manage budgets for their subjects efficiently and ensure that there are suitable resources available despite the financial constraints of a small school. A number of good development plans aim to develop the curriculum. For example, the development plan for information technology gives careful consideration to the use of information technology across the curriculum. The monitoring of external events and control technology are linked to topics in science, data handling is linked to mathematics and word processing combining text and graphics is linked to the humanities. However, the role of the co-ordinators is not sufficiently developed to include the effective monitoring of learning.

55. The co-ordination of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school cares well for its pupils needing particular care and attention, and the additional support for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need is good. There is good and appropriate liaison between the special educational needs co-ordinator, classroom teachers, learning support assistants, outside agencies and the special needs governor.

56. Five members of the governing body are new appointments. They have each undertaken training in their new roles, which demonstrates their commitment to fulfil an active role as governors. The governing body has developed effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating school improvement. They have a clear strategic view of the school's strengths and limitations. Governors have been appointed with specific responsibilities for finance, health and safety, child protection, the curriculum, special educational needs, personnel, literacy and numeracy. A planned programme ensures that a governor visits the school at least once each month, with an agreed focus for the visit, usually a major initiative of the school development plan. Both a written and verbal report is given to the full governing body. This helps governors to make a fuller contribution to school development and allows them to monitor rigorously the progress of school development initiatives. Statutory requirements are met, except for those for swimming and a few minor omissions in reporting to parents.

57. The school development plan has improved since the last inspection and now provides a useful document that guides school development. It specifies priorities, time-scales, the personnel responsible, financial implications and success criteria. Governors are actively involved in deciding the priorities for school development and pupils are also encouraged to make contributions. For example, pupils proposed the improvements to the outside play area. Governors monitor the progress of school initiatives through their regular visits and they evaluate improvement by applying the success criteria rigorously to the headteacher's reports to the governors.

58. Financial planning is good and supports the priorities for school development. This is monitored closely by the governor with responsibility for finance and the governing body receives regular budget statements that show the school's financial position clearly. There has been no audit of the school's finances since the last inspection. The recommendations of the most recent audit have been fully addressed. Specific budgets, such as those for special educational needs and professional development, are spent appropriately. The principles of 'best value', such as comparison, challenge, consultation and competition, are rigorously applied to financial considerations. The school continues to provide satisfactory value for money.

59. Day-to-day financial management and control is good. The school administrator is efficient and effective. Computer records of the school's budget are well managed and she ensures that clear and regular information is provided for the headteacher and the governors. School funds are well managed and these are audited annually. The school administrator provides a welcoming reception for parents and visitors alike. She is very adaptable and provides a wide range of support for teachers and pupils that contributes effectively to the smooth running of the school.

60. There are a suitable number of appropriately qualified teachers for the full provision of the National Curriculum. The headteacher will no longer have the responsibility for a class in September because of the rise in pupil numbers and it is planned for him to take a greater role in leading school improvement and monitoring the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. The number of learning support assistants is suitable for this size of school and they provide effective support for pupils.

61. The accommodation allows the national curriculum to be taught effectively. The classrooms are large and the stimulating displays in all classrooms and shared areas contribute significantly to the learning environment for pupils. The school benefits from a playing field and outdoor climbing equipment. However, the school hall is still used as a classroom and this restricts the opportunities for physical activity when inclement weather prevents lessons outdoors. However, the local education authority has committed itself to plans to build an additional classroom for the next academic year and thus improve the school's opportunities to provide a broad curriculum.

62. The school has secured resources for all areas of the curriculum that are at least satisfactory for all subjects, through the careful management of a limited budget. The provision for information technology and physical education is good. There are eight modern, multi-media computers in three classes available for pupils' use and a good variety of physical education equipment is now available in preparation for the full use of the school hall once the new classroom is available.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63. To continue to raise standards, particularly in English, mathematics and science, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- Raise expectations of pupils' writing in Key Stage 1.
(Paragraphs: 10, 24, 71)
- Develop the role of co-ordinators to monitor learning, particularly in literacy and numeracy, and improve the use of assessment to plan learning tasks for individual pupils by;
(Paragraphs: 23, 45, 54, 83, 92, 107, 118, 123)
 - * developing rigorous assessment procedures to identify clearly what pupils already know, understand and can do;
 - * using the knowledge gained through assessment to ensure that learning tasks are matched to individual pupils' learning needs;
 - * setting short-term learning goals for each pupil that are shared by teachers, pupils and parents.
- Ensure the marking of pupils' work identifies the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and informs pupils how they can improve their work.
(Paragraphs 23, 75, 86)
- Ensure that statutory requirements are met, particularly those for swimming.
(Paragraphs: 31, 48, 56)
- Devise procedures to improve attendance by reducing the rate of unauthorised absence.
(Paragraphs: 20, 43)

64. The following minor issues may be considered for inclusion in the governors' action plan:

- * Improve opportunities for experiments and investigations in science
(Paragraphs: 25, 91)
- * Consider the provision of extra-curricular activities for younger pupils
(Paragraph: 25)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	36	52	12	0	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	59
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	9

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	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.5
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.6
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	6	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	3	3	3
	Girls	5	5	3
	Total	8	8	6
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	80	80	60
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	2	3	2
	Girls	5	4	5
	Total	7	7	7
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	70	70	70
	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	2	3	5

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	0
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	0	0	0
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	0	0	0
	Girls	0	0	0
	Total	0	0	0
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	0	0	0
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

The table above has not been completed, as there were fewer than 10 pupils who took the tests in 1999. Consequently, the figures are unreliable and cannot usefully be compared with other schools.

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	59
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

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.

Teachers and classes

Ford End Church of England
Primary School

Financial information

**Qualified teachers and classes:
YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	20

**Education support staff:
YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	41

Financial year	1998/1999
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	£
Total income	149003.00
Total expenditure	150313.00
Expenditure per pupil	2349.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	4669.00
Balance carried forward to next year	3359.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	47
Number of questionnaires returned	26

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	35	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	77	23	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	35	11	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	27	27	8	8
The teaching is good.	65	35	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	38	8	4	11
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	92	8	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	27	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	42	42	4	0	12
The school is well led and managed.	62	38	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	50	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	37	19	8	15

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

65. Children begin school the term in which they are five years of age. At the time of the inspection, there were no children under five in the reception class. The school makes an assessment of children's abilities shortly after they start school. These records show that, when they began school, the attainment of most children in the school was generally average. However, since the recent opening of the local pre-school nursery recently, standards have risen and children now enter the school with above average attainment in personal and social development and creative development.

66. Although there were no children under five in the school at the time of the inspection, the available evidence suggests that children attain the Desirable Learning Outcomes as recommended by the Curriculum and Qualifications Authority by the time they start the National Curriculum. Observation of the youngest pupils in the school shows that they have settled into school routines well.

ENGLISH

67. At the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999 there were only five pupils. Consequently, the results of the national assessment tests are not published. Results can vary greatly between years when there are a small number of pupils. It is, therefore, necessary to be cautious when interpreting results for a single year. Over the four years 1996-1999, the trend of results is rising broadly in line with the national trend. Inspection evidence indicates that this is the case and standards have risen, with the attainment of pupils presently in Year 6 being above average in speaking, listening, reading and writing.

68. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for pupils' aged seven, the number reaching the expected level or higher in reading was close to the national average and the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. However, pupils' attainment in writing was well below the national average and very low in comparison to similar schools. These results relate to only ten pupils, three of who were on the special educational needs register, and so comparisons can be unreliable. Inspection evidence indicates that the attainment of present Year 2 pupils is average in speaking, listening and reading, but below average in writing.

69. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn to listen closely to their teachers and follow instructions. Most of them readily volunteer to join in discussions and to answer questions. In both key stages, when teaching is particularly effective, pupils' are encouraged to express their ideas clearly. Pupils throughout the school become progressively more confident in speaking to a range of audiences in a variety of contexts. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils develop their ideas thoughtfully, describing events and characters and conveying their opinions clearly. In discussion, they listen carefully, making contributions and asking questions that are responsive to other's ideas and views. Other subjects make a good contribution to developing speaking and listening skills.

70. Pupils in both key stages have very positive attitudes to reading. Reading development

is secured by the use of graded reading materials and by the careful monitoring of pupils' progress. Pupils are systematically taught the relationship of letters and sounds, so that they make steady progress. By the time they are seven, most pupils are independent in reading texts that are suitably graded to match their level of attainment. They use phonic and contextual clues, in reading unfamiliar words and establishing meaning. They read expressively in shared reading led by the teacher and are confident when reading to adults. Parents give good support by hearing their children read at home and by taking them to the local library.

71. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils read longer texts with good understanding. Many have an impressive range and depth of reading experiences, naming their favourite authors and explaining their views and preferences clearly. Pupils have developed sound research skills and make use of the contents and index pages to find information. More opportunities are required for pupils to develop research skills by using information books for independent study in other subjects, such as religious education.

72. Standards in writing at age seven are not high enough. Pupils make a good start in Year 1 and their skills develop well so that, by the end of Year 1, many write stories, such as those based on the story of Cinderella, confidently and accurately. These skills are not developed sufficiently in Year 2. Instruction in this basic skill is not guided by a sufficiently detailed scheme or closely monitored so as to secure consistent development over time. Writing tasks are not matched closely enough to different levels of need. An over-reliance on worksheets in English and other subjects limits opportunities for extended writing and for pupils to be able to assess the progress they are making in their writing. The school has identified writing as an area for development.

73. The weak start in developing handwriting in Key Stage 1 affects standards throughout the school, and some pupils in Year 6 do not write in a consistently joined style. However, in other aspects, pupils make good progress. A good feature of provision is the increasingly wide range of purposes for writing. Pupils learn the skills of writing through the study of good quality texts. Information technology is used effectively to improve the accuracy and quality of the writing. By age 11, many pupils write good stories, using a range of effects to hold the reader's attention. At the time of the inspection there was little evidence of poetry or play writing which would increase pupils' experiences of writing in a variety of forms. The higher attaining pupils have an impressive range of vocabulary, both technical and imaginative. Standards of spelling and punctuation are generally good, and regular homework supports spelling.

74. Pupils with special educational needs take a full part in lessons. Teachers plan suitable work for these pupils, guided by their personal targets, and they make good progress. Their learning is well supported by classroom support assistants. Expectations of higher attaining pupils are good in Key Stage 2, and pupils of average attainment and above respond well to challenging opportunities for extended writing. In Key Stage 1, pupils of higher and average attainment are not always challenged to work at a good pace and, as a consequence, they sometimes fail to produce much work and do not make the progress they should.

75. Teaching is good overall. Of the seven lessons observed, teaching was very good in three, good in three and satisfactory in one. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils in all classes increase pupils' confidence in discussions and their enjoyment of the subject. Lessons are well planned, activities are very well organised and the quality of explanations by teachers demonstrates their good knowledge of the subject. However, knowledge of how to teach writing and organise writing activities is generally weaker in Key Stage 1. Throughout the school, teachers set good models of language in reading aloud expressively. In a very good lesson in Year 1, pupils were challenged to provide alternatives for key words in the shared text, and in a lesson for older pupils, they were motivated to explore the feelings of different characters when reading Roald Dahl's autobiography. Pupil management is good in both key stages and support staff are generally effectively used to support pupils' learning. Marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory and is too dependent on the practice of individual teachers. In most cases, teachers do not clearly identify major weaknesses, set new targets, or ensure that mistakes are corrected.

76. Other factors that influence pupils' learning and achievement in English are their very good behaviour and attitudes to the subject. Most pupils in both key stages settle to work quickly, stay on task and work hard.

77. The management of the subject has a positive impact on pupils' learning and achievement. The co-ordinator, the supportive literacy governor and staff have worked very hard to implement the National Literacy Strategy, and planning is now effectively guided by the targets of the official framework. All classes have a literacy hour in their timetable each day, and teachers follow the recommended structure closely. The subject co-ordinator has a clear vision for the future development of the subject and is committed to raising standards of achievement. To this end she has identified the raising of standards in writing and the development of a whole school approach to assessment. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

78. At the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment in the national assessments was well below the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 2 or above was below the national average and the percentage attaining the higher, Level 3 was well below the national average. However, there were only 10 pupils in Key Stage 1 who took the tests in 1999 and the percentage of pupils with special educational needs was well above the national average. When these pupils are excluded from the analysis, pupils' attainment compares favourably with the national average.

79. There were only five pupils who took the tests at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999. Consequently, results are not published. Results can vary greatly between years when there are small cohorts and it is not possible to make secure comparisons based on a single year.

80. The trend of results over the period 1996-1999 is rising broadly in line with the national trend at the end of both key stages. Inspection findings are that attainment in mathematics is continuing to improve and is, currently, close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, this judgement is made in the context of only five pupils in Year 6 where the performance of one pupil makes a

difference of almost 20 percent. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The committed introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy this year is having a significant effect on standards, which are rising because of improved teaching methods and a better match of learning tasks to pupils' abilities.

81. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a good understanding of number facts to 10, and some pupils know number facts to 20. They confidently add and subtract numbers with 2 digits. They are developing their understanding of place value and use fractions, such as halves and quarters skilfully. However, although pupils are able to work out calculations mentally, they do not have a quick, mental recall of number facts because pupils do not practice these skills regularly. They recognise common two-dimensional shapes, such as circle, triangle, square and rectangle, and describe their properties including the number of sides. Pupils estimate and use non-standard measures, such as cubes.

82. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good understanding of the number system. They use a variety of methods, such as counting up and partitioning, to solve number problems. Pupils work with decimals to two places and many multiply these numbers confidently. They learn to order negative numbers and talented pupils add negative numbers, which exceeds national expectations for pupils of this age. They calculate multiplication facts well, but they lack a secure mental recall of these operations. Pupils work well with reflective and rotational symmetry and they draw mirror reflections of simple shapes. They confidently find the area and perimeter of shapes. Pupils have a good understanding of handling data and this is developed through a topic that is linked to information technology. They learn to gather data and represent their findings in a variety of graphs, which they interpret well.

83. Pupils' progress is erratic because work is not always sufficiently well planned to build their learning progressively. For example, pupils in Year 2 embark on work from the National Curriculum Programme of Study for Key Stage 2, such as data handling and symmetry, before they are secure with all elements of the Key Stage 1 Programme of Study. Nevertheless, pupils' work shows progression through the school, particularly in number work. The youngest pupils learn to count to 10 and, by the time they leave the school, they use the four operations of number confidently.

84. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is raising standards in mathematics. Teachers have undertaken appropriate training and this has improved teaching and learning in the subject. Curriculum planning has focused more carefully on the need to provide tasks that take account of the wide variety of age and ability in each class. Teachers' try hard to ensure that tasks provide an appropriate level of challenge and some pupils move between classes for mathematics lessons.

85. Pupils' attitudes are good. They are attentive in the oral sessions that begin each lesson and they settle quickly to their tasks. They have a clear understanding of the learning intentions of lessons. For example, pupils in Year 6 explained that they were adding negative numbers and confidently suggested that the next thing to learn would be how to subtract negative numbers. Behaviour is consistently very good and pupils work well together sharing ideas and resources well.

86. The quality of teaching is good. Classrooms are happy and productive learning environments built upon the very good relationships that are maintained effectively by teachers. They manage pupils well and use praise and encouragement to motivate pupils.

Teachers have adopted the National Numeracy Strategy enthusiastically. They plan lessons with careful attention to what they want the pupils to learn in each lesson. These learning intentions are shared with pupils at the beginnings of lessons and they are displayed on the board. Resources used during the inspection were carefully prepared and teachers designed a variety of work cards that were matched to the learning needs of groups of pupils with different abilities. However, the scrutiny of pupils' work showed that there is an over-reliance on photocopied worksheets that are often undated and too much pupils' work is not marked. The work of the older pupils in Key Stage 2 is contained in books, always dated and regularly marked with some encouraging comments to pupils that shows them how they can improve their work. This allows the teacher to assess pupils' progress over a period of time and should be a common practice in all classes.

SCIENCE

87. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and there was little pupils' work available, particularly for the older pupils in Key Stage 2, because pupils' work is commonly used for display. It is, therefore, not possible to make a secure judgement of teaching. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work and lengthy discussions with pupils, particularly those at the end of Key Stage 2.

88. Attainment in science is close to the national average at the end of both key stages and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

89. There were only five pupils in Year 6 in 1999. Consequently, the results of the national assessments are not published. However, the average of the results over the four years 1996-1999 is close to the national average at the end of Key Stage 2. The trend of results is rising broadly in line with the national trend.

90. In a topic on the body and the five senses, in Key Stage 1, pupils explore the sense of touch through feeling objects hidden in a bag, and they investigate a variety of materials to sort them into magnetic and non-magnetic. Pupils develop a good understanding of living and non-living things. They study the life cycle of the butterfly and visit Colchester Zoo to increase their understanding of the use that animals make of camouflage. Pupils recognise and sort solids, liquids and gases. In Year 2, pupils study light and sound. They look carefully at shadows in learning that light travels in straight lines and apply this knowledge when using mirrors to explore the reflection of different shapes. They know that sound can vary in pitch and loudness and they make simple instruments to demonstrate pitch.

91. In Key Stage 2, pupils increase their understanding of liquids, solids and gases. They conduct an experiment to separate solids, such as sand, rice, pasta and peas, by filtering. Pupils study the functions and parts of a plant. They identify the stigma, stamen, stem, leaves and roots and talk confidently of the function of each part. They learn that plants need light and water and conduct a controlled experiment in which they deprive plants of either light and water whilst providing both light and water for a third plant. The pupils who talked about their work have a good understanding of the solar system. They explain, after a moment's reflection, that the moon orbits the earth and the earth orbits the sun. They know that the moon orbits the earth each month and that the earth takes a year to orbit the sun. However, there are insufficient opportunities to carry out investigations and experiments to develop a

secure understanding of a fair test and to apply their scientific knowledge to everyday situations.

92. Although only one lesson was observed during the inspection, pupils' attitudes in this lesson were good. The teaching was also good. The teacher clearly explained the purpose of the lesson and had carefully prepared a good selection of resources that enabled tasks to be matched to different ability groups. However, too much work in science involves no written evidence. Consequently, there was very little pupils' work available in the school, particularly for the pupils in Key Stage 2. This does not allow teachers to monitor pupils' progress by assessing their work and use this information to ensure that the tasks match individual pupils' needs.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

93. Pupils' attainment in information technology exceeds national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were unsatisfactory. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress.

94. High standards are attained as a result of the good teaching and learning in the subject. Teachers plan work carefully to ensure that pupils develop their skills effectively. Learning is focused on a particular skill that is initially taught in a whole class lesson. Pupils then practice this skill in activities designed by the teacher. For example, in the use of a graphics program, the youngest pupils develop their skill in controlling the mouse and learn to change both the size and the colour of the 'brush'. In Year 3, pupils cut, copy and paste rectangular shapes, as well as changing the scale of their drawings. In Year 4, pupils learn to transfer their drawings to a word processor where they combine their pictures with text.

95. Pupils' skills in word processing are well developed. The youngest pupils are carefully taught the use of a keyboard and they quickly learn to use the spacebar and 'caps lock', as well as different methods for amending their work. For example, they use the backspace key and move the cursor using the mouse as appropriate. Pupils' work demonstrates their enthusiasm in using the word processor. The work of the youngest pupils on display shows a developing expertise in writing short sentences. One pupil in the reception group explored the shape that the letters made and was pleased to learn how to print his work. The teacher respected his efforts and, although his 'writing' could not be read, it was displayed along with other pupils' work. The oldest pupils use drafting and re-drafting skills to word-process work on 'The Iron Man'. They use a desktop publishing program to create newspaper reports for which they design the layout and combine text and pictures. They also use a scanner to include photographs of themselves that they combine with their work.

96. Data handling skills are also developed effectively. Pupils gather data on paper initially, and understand the difficulty of sorting this information when they try to organise all their pieces of paper. The teacher builds on this understanding by showing how a database can make the task far more manageable. In a lesson observed, the teacher demonstrated how to sort and search a database of the information that the pupils had entered earlier. They explored different kinds of graphical representation and considered which was best for certain tasks. They develop a clear understanding of 'interrogating' a database.

97. The youngest pupils use a programmable toy to explore control technology. They skilfully programme the toy to move forwards and backwards and to turn. In a lesson observed, pupils linked their work to their understanding of number and estimated the distance the toy would have to move to reach a specified target. Older pupils develop these skills in their use of logo. They design the movement required to move from home to school or from start to finish in a board game and then draw the route using logo. Although the use of computers to monitor external events, such as temperature, has yet to be developed as effectively, the co-ordinator has clear plans for this aspect of the subject which has been closely linked with work in science.

98. The co-ordinator has worked enthusiastically to improve standards in the subject. She has held sessions in the school on the effective teaching of information technology skills. This has clearly had a positive effect on the good teaching observed and the significant improvement in standards since the last inspection. Teachers are confident in using information technology and plan lessons with a clear focus on the skill to be developed. The co-ordinator has produced very effective guidance notes for using computers and software, such as how to combine text and graphics that can be understood easily by teachers and the talented pupils. There is also a comprehensive assessment folder to track individual pupils' progress in each aspect of information technology, although these are not used fully by every teacher.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

99. It was only possible to see two lessons during the inspection. Further information was gathered from pupils' previous work, from teachers' planning and from talking to groups of pupils about their experiences. Evidence indicates that standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. Teaching is guided by the scheme of work, which is linked, to the Agreed Syllabus and there is appropriate coverage. Throughout the school, pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and other faiths. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils display basic knowledge of some features of Christianity and other faiths, such as Hinduism. They know that a major element in many faiths is that of caring for one another and for the environment. Pupils know about significant events in the life of St Francis of Assisi and how he modelled himself on Jesus in his concern for the poor, the sick and the needy and in his relationship with the natural world. They have a good understanding of the nature of human relationships and this is reflected in their behaviour towards each other.

100. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils relate some of the concepts of different faiths to their own experiences and go beyond this to discover more about religious beliefs, ideas and structures. They know about the main faiths in Britain such as Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism, and that each has important leaders such as Jesus, Moses and Guru Nanak. Pupils also know that each faith has a Holy Text, such as the Bible and the Torah, and that each gives rules and examples for living. However, their recall of these facts is not very secure and this indicates that pupils require further opportunities to use their personal research and writing skills so as to give them a deeper understanding of the activities, rituals, literature and activities of the range of religious communities studied. Pupils develop a sound understanding that religions share some common features; for example, the role of festivals such as Christmas, Harvest and Diwali, and the importance of giving as well as receiving, are well understood. Pupils throughout the key stage consider basic religious concepts and ways in which they have been expressed in sacred books, daily living and rituals.

101. The quality of learning is supported by sound teaching and by pupils' satisfactory attitudes to the subject. The quality of teaching seen in the two lessons observed during the inspection was good in one and satisfactory in the other. This, together with other evidence gathered, indicates that teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers, through their own personal research and recent in-service training, are confident in teaching the subject and they motivate the pupils through interesting discussion and planned questioning. A good example of this was seen where pupils were being effectively challenged to consider the reasons for the plagues of Egypt. The good quality support provided by the school for pupils with special educational needs gives them full and equal access in lessons and allows them to achieve appropriately. Pupils' learning and understanding is well supported by the sensitivity with which teachers' approach Christianity, other faiths and issues raised in lessons. Teachers reinforce moral values and recognise pupils' own value as individuals. Pupils' learning is also well supported by their very good behaviour and attitudes to learning. They show real interest and listen attentively to teachers and to each other. They work well together and show confidence when speaking to the class as a whole and to the school in assemblies. They are keen to answer and ask relevant questions and they take part in discussions and role-play activities.

102. The headteacher effectively promotes religious education throughout the school and ensures that it contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The importance of equality of opportunity and the need to encourage respect for, and understanding of, other faiths and cultures is emphasised appropriately in lessons. The teaching of religious education is supported by assemblies, visiting speakers and visits to the local parish church. There is a developing range of stimulating artefacts, which is supplemented through a loan scheme to which the school contributes.

ART

103. Standards achieved by pupils in art are similar to those usually seen for pupils of this age at the end of Key Stage 1, and above those standards at the end of Key Stage 2. At the time of the last inspection, standards were unsatisfactory; the subsequent improvement has come about because of teachers' increased confidence in teaching the subject. Art is now a strong feature of the school. Pupils are taught a wide range of skills and are given the opportunities to put them into practice through interesting, challenging tasks and effective cross-curricular

links. The subject makes a valuable contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development, as they convey mood and feeling in their work and study the works of famous artists, such as Matisse. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills as they develop the correct vocabulary relevant to the subject and write reports on the procedures that they have followed. The good quality of artwork around the school enhances the environment and celebrates pupils' attainment in the subject.

104. Throughout the school pupils have many opportunities for independent decision making in their work. Pupils in Year 1 make collage pictures choosing small pieces of material showing a developing ability to represent what is seen and touched. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 use sponges to make a textured background on which to print with templates they make themselves. They choose materials for their visual and tactile qualities to stimulate and develop ideas for their work. In Key Stage 2, pupils study the styles of famous artists and recognise differences and similarities in art from different times and places. A very good example of this is the way Year 6 pupils, having made a study of the 'Blue Lady', make three-dimensional models of the human form using pipe cleaners, straws, newspaper and modroc. This, combined with pupils' growing expertise with the materials provided for them, results in work of good quality. In both key stages, pupils evaluate their work thoughtfully, and make modifications when necessary. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils present their work practically and imaginatively with materials, tools and techniques, and present their work in two and three dimensions. They represent chosen features of the surrounding world with increasing accuracy and attention to detail, and evaluate their own and other's work in the light of what was intended.

105. Although only two lessons, both at Key Stage 2, were observed during the inspection, the good teaching in these lessons and other evidence indicates that the teaching of art is good throughout the school. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection as teachers have increased their confidence through in-service training. This good quality teaching enables good learning and high achievement. Work currently displayed around the school indicates that teachers consistently reinforce the skills and techniques learnt during art lessons. Teachers' knowledge is secure; planning is clear with good emphasis on teaching the identified skills and resources for lessons are carefully chosen and well prepared. They provide pupils with good opportunities to develop a range of skills so that they learn effectively to convey their own feelings and ideas through their work. Lessons are well organised and teachers have high expectations of their pupils. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in lessons and this enables them to make good progress. In the lessons observed, the teacher introduced the tasks and lesson objectives very precisely and continued to promote pupils' skills as they worked.

106. Pupils' positive attitudes to art contribute strongly to the quality of learning. They work consistently well with good levels of interest and application to complete the tasks. They enjoy the practical experience and sustain concentration and good behaviour to achieve their best results. In the lessons observed, pupils shared resources, worked very well together and showed responsibility in handling the materials. They listen carefully to instructions and show pride in their finished work.

107. The subject co-ordinator has good knowledge of the subject and has a clear vision for its future development. A good policy is in place and an effective scheme of work is being developed. The range and quality of resources are satisfactory to support teaching and learning. The co-ordinator has identified the need for more rigorous assessment procedures to guide teachers' planning for pupils of all abilities.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. Only one lesson in design and technology was observed during the inspection and so no judgement on the quality of teaching is possible. Scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with pupils and staff form the basis of judgements made. The evidence shows that pupils achieve standards that are similar to those usually seen for pupils of this age, at the end of both key stages. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are now making satisfactory progress in developing their designing and making skills in both key stages.

109. Pupils in both key stages design and plan before making and they evaluate their work, suggesting improvements in the light of their increased experiences. The subject enhances work in history as, for example, when Key Stage 2 pupils plan the steps to be taken before weaving in the Viking style.

110. In the very good Year 1 lesson observed, pupils were working from their designs for finger puppets suggested by a familiar nursery rhyme. They were generating ideas through shaping, assembling and rearranging materials and components. By the end of the key stage, pupils use models and pictures to develop and communicate designs. They manipulate tools safely and assemble and join materials in a variety of ways.

111. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils measure, mark out and cut simple forms in a variety of materials, including wood, and join them using a range of techniques. This is evident from the picture frames they have made. In the design and technology club, which many older pupils attend, pupils were working from detailed plans when painting designs on bottles. They were effectively evaluating their work as it developed, bearing in mind the purpose for which it was intended. The number of pupils attending the club is evidence of their enthusiasm for the subject. They work with good concentration, paying attention to detail and finish. The very good behaviour of pupils and their good attitudes have a strong impact on their learning.

112. Teacher's confidence in teaching the subject has increased since the last inspection as a result of improved planning and in-service training. The scheme of work clearly identifies the skills to be developed and provides good ideas to support teaching. The subject co-ordinator gives enthusiastic leadership and has a clear vision for future development.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

113. Geography and history are taught in alternate terms. During the inspection, two lessons in history were observed but it was not possible to observe any lessons in geography. Judgements are based on the work seen in these lessons, a scrutiny of pupils' work and talking to pupils about their work.

114. Pupils' attainment in geography and history generally match the standards usually seen for pupils of this age in both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

115. In Key Stage 1, pupils develop their understanding of simple maps. They know that Ford End is a village that it is near a town (Chelmsford), and is in the county of Essex. Pupils develop their historical understanding of change over time through considering evidence in photographs. For example, in one lesson they look carefully at pictures of their teacher taken over many years from a baby to the present day. They discuss the clues that tell them which photographs were taken before others and then they develop their understanding of chronology by sequencing sets of these photographs.

116. In Key Stage 2, pupils compare the Indian village of Chembakolli with their own village. They recognise that the Indian village is less developed, although they note that Chembakolli has a cinema. They contrast Indian food with their own and consider the different influence of religion on the two villages. Pupils study different historical periods including the Victorians and the Vikings. In the lesson observed, pupils considered Viking burials. They are keen to explain that good and brave Vikings who die in battle would go to Valhalla. They recognise that Vikings believed in an afterlife and that slaves, food and weapons were placed in the burial boat for them to use in the next life.

117. Pupils' attitudes are good. They settle quickly to their tasks and maintain concentration throughout the lesson. They benefit from very good relationships and their behaviour is consistently very good.

118. Teaching is satisfactory, overall. In the lessons observed, teachers planned the lesson well. Good resources are prepared and learning tasks are organised in various groups to accommodate the learning needs of different groups of pupils. Explanations and instructions are clear and the maintenance of good relationships promotes pupils' learning. However, insufficient evidence is kept in a way that allows teachers to assess pupils' learning.

MUSIC

119. Pupils' standards of achievement are satisfactory and attainment is similar to that usually seen for pupils of this age in Key Stage 1. Pupils sing tunefully and play simple pieces and accompaniments with confidence and awareness of pulse. They explore, select and order sounds, making compositions that have a simple structure and make expressive use of some of the musical elements including dynamics and timbre.

120. In Key Stage 2, pupils' standards of achievement are also satisfactory and attainment is similar to that usually seen for pupils of this age. Pupils sing with enthusiasm, enjoyment, and sustained effort to maintain a sound level of control. Their diction is clear and pupils respond appropriately to hand signals to vary the dynamics of the singing. They perform accurately and confidently, making expressive use of the musical elements and showing awareness of phrase.

121. Pupils are provided with regular opportunities to compose. They select and combine instruments, make expressive use of musical elements and achieve a planned effect. They make effective use of symbols when performing and communicating musical ideas. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils evaluate their own work and that of others very effectively, identifying ways in which it can be improved. Through their music lessons, pupils are developing a sound musical vocabulary and use terms such as dynamics, forte, crescendo and diminuendo appropriately.

122. The quality of teaching and learning observed during the inspection was good in one lesson and very good in the other. Lessons are timetabled regularly and there is sufficient time allowed to pursue fully the content of the planned lesson. The subject co-ordinator has a good knowledge of the subject and teaches music throughout the school. This motivates pupils to participate fully and to sustain an interest in the activities. Very good management of pupils ensures an environment in which all are encouraged to make a contribution, which they know will be valued. Pupils readily and sensitively evaluate their own work and that of others. They work together co-operatively to create instrumental rhythm patterns which they perform to each other. In both key stages, lessons are planned as part of a series of lessons that develop pupils' skills and knowledge systematically.

123. There are no assessment procedures to help ensure a greater rate of progress for all pupils. Resources are adequate and are well used in lessons. Opportunities for pupils to perform both within the school and for the local community enhance the curriculum and enrich their experiences. The standards identified at the time of the last inspection have been maintained. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. Although the school's outdoor facilities allow good provision of games and athletics, the school hall is used as a classroom and this limits opportunities for dance and gymnastics. Statutory requirements for swimming are not met and governors are considering this issue. Evidence from the limited number of lessons observed, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions indicate that, at the end of each key stage, pupils are achieving similar standards to those usually seen for pupils of this age in games skills, dance and gymnastics.

125. In the dance lesson observed in Key Stage 1, pupils used the limited classroom space very well. They show good body control, co-ordination, balance, poise and elevation in the basic actions of travelling, turning, gesture and stillness. They effectively explore moods and feelings in their response to music by contrasting speed, shape, direction and level.

126. In the Key Stage 2 outdoor games' lesson observed, pupils showed a good

understanding of the principles of attack and defence and applied these in small-sided versions of team games. They send, receive and travel with a ball with increasing control and accuracy.

127. The quality of teaching and learning was very good in the two lessons observed. Despite the limitations placed upon them by the accommodation, teachers' work hard to provide pupils with an interesting range of activities. Pupils' excellent behaviour in these lessons is a direct result of the very good, supportive relationships that exist between all members of the school community, and the school's high expectations of its pupils. The outstanding attitudes of pupils allow them to work safely and effectively in a confined space. They have a very good understanding of the need for fair play and work together very well. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject, plan their lessons well to ensure a good warm-up session followed by a stimulating range of activities. Teachers are aware of the needs of less able pupils and they are encouraged to play a full part in lessons. They allow enough time for free practise as well as direction to establish the qualities needed to complete the tasks.

128. The school provides pupils in Key Stage 2 with a range of learning experiences during extra-curricular activities and at a residential trip for those in Year 5 and Year 6. Teachers have benefited from recent inservice training in dance and gymnastics. The school will have a new classroom in September. This will release the hall to be used throughout the day for physical education and drama. The co-ordinator and her colleagues are planning a new scheme of work and parents have been generous in providing equipment to support the school's changing circumstances in relation to this subject.