

INSPECTION REPORT

ELM HALL PRIMARY SCHOOL

Conrad Road, Witham, Essex

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114983

Headteacher: Mrs Hilary Allen

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Evans
20737

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th June 2001

Inspection number: 191814

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 4 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Conrad Road
Witham

Postcode: Essex
CM8 2SD

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Katrina Grounsell

Date of previous inspection: July 1999

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Paul Evans 20737	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Art Design and technology History Geography Special educational needs Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well is the school led and managed? How well are pupils taught?
Ann Taylor 19743	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Philip Mann 23219	Team inspector	Provision for children in the Foundation Stage English Science Physical education Religious education Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	12
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	19
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Elm Hall Primary School provides education for 85 full-time pupils, 39 girls and 46 boys, aged 4 to 11 years of age. The school is smaller than the average primary school. Pupils' levels of attainment on entry to the school are below average. The great majority of pupils live locally to the school where there are high levels of parental unemployment. Thirty-eight per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is well above the national average. There are 35 per cent of pupils on the school's special educational needs register, which is also well above the national average. Two pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need, which is broadly in line with the national average. No pupil attending Elm Hall has English as an additional language. There are no pupils from an ethnic background.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The overall effectiveness of the school is good. There has been good improvement since the last inspection and standards in literacy and numeracy have been raised for all pupils. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good, although the role of the governors in shaping the educational direction of the school is less than satisfactory.

When considering its context, the standards that it achieves, the quality of education that it offers to all its pupils and the money that it spends, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of the leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff is good.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school.
- All pupils are making good progress.
- The development of pupils' attitudes and behaviour is good.
- There is good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been well implemented.
- The school has developed a highly supportive and caring ethos.
- The school develops the use of pupils' skills and knowledge in a wide range of subjects across the curriculum.

What could be improved

- Standards in English are below average at the end of both key stages. Standards in two areas of music are below expectations in Key Stage 2, and the good assessment information is inconsistently used across the school.
- The level of pupils' attendance is poor.
- There is a health and safety problem related to lorries using the school's grounds for access to other premises.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

When the school was inspected in 1997 it was judged that Elm Hall Primary was a school requiring special measures. Her Majesty's Inspectors of Schools last inspected the school in July 1999 when it was felt that the school was no longer a school in need of special measures. The judgements of improvement since the last inspection in this report are made against the July 1999 report.

Since then standards have improved across the school in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Other key issues raised in that report included accelerating the progress of pupils with special educational needs and raising the level of contribution to management by senior staff. These issues have been dealt with well. The school has made good improvement since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	D	E	E*	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E *
Mathematics	E	E	E	D	
Science	E	E*	E*	E	

By the age of 11, standards as shown in national tests in mathematics were well below the national average and in English and science standards were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. The 2000 national test results in mathematics and science showed good improvement on the previous year. However, the school's overall results remain well below average when compared with all schools nationally. The results for English fell from well below average in 1999 to the lowest 5 per cent nationally in 2000. When compared with similar schools, Elm Hall's results were below average in mathematics and well below average in English and science. During the last four years the national trend has been one of steadily rising standards; although the school's trend over the same period has also been one of steady improvement, results still remain well below the national average. Inspection findings show that, although good progress has been made across the school and that most pupils are now in line with expectations, standards in the present Year 6 class remain below average.

The 2000 test results for 7-year-olds in reading and mathematics were well below the national average. In writing, results were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. The school's results were average in reading and well below average in mathematics and writing when compared to the results of similar schools. Over the past four years the school's results have shown satisfactory improvement in reading and writing and good improvement in mathematics, although standards overall remain well below the national average.

In art and design, standards are above expectations at the end of both key stages. In music, standards are in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. In all other subjects, standards are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are keen to attend school and are enthusiastic about the work they undertake.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are well behaved both in classrooms and when moving around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils learn to respect the values and feelings of others. They form good relationships with each other and with their teachers.
Attendance	Poor. Attendance is well below the national average. There is a significant minority of parents who do not respond to the school's initiatives.

Teachers and learning support assistants promote good attitudes to learning in all pupils. Their very good management of pupils encourages all pupils to behave well. Because of the consistently good examples that they are set by all adults in the school, pupils develop good relationships. Attendance is poor when compared to 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	good	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 school has implemented the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy well. These frameworks, together with a good level of training for all staff, have raised the quality of teaching in English and literacy and in mathematics and numeracy across the school. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding and the teaching of basic skills are good. The management of pupils by all members of staff is very good. The use of day-to-day assessment of what pupils learn is good. However, this good information is not consistently well used to carefully match future tasks to what pupils already know, understand and can do. The school meets the needs of all its pupils well, including those with special educational needs. The overall strength of teaching is accurately reflected in pupils' good levels of learning throughout the school. During the inspection, 25 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. The quality of teaching was very good or better in 36 per cent of lessons. It was good in a further 48 per cent and satisfactory in the remaining 16 per cent of lessons. Good and very good teaching was observed in all three stages of the school. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The curriculum in Key Stages 1 and 2 meets national requirements. There is a weakness in the planning of the Foundation Stage curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The support given to these pupils by learning support assistants is good. Not all targets in pupils' individual education plans are sufficiently well focused to enable progress to be easily measured.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is good. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Procedures for promoting good behaviour and eliminating oppressive behaviour are good. There is a weakness in the use of assessment information to advise future planning. The school's procedures for promoting attendance are not succeeding with a significant minority of parents.

The school's work in partnership with parents is satisfactory. The curriculum for children under five years of age is not planned to meet the requirements of the latest national guidance for the teaching of children in the Foundation Stage. Extra-curricular activities satisfactorily enhance the learning of pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. All areas of statutory requirement are met. The school cares for its pupils well, overall. The school gathers good assessment information about how well pupils are progressing. However, the use of this information to guide future lesson planning is not consistently well used throughout the school to match pupils' future work to their growing levels of ability.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff are good.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governors give good moral and pastoral support, but further training is required to equip them to play their full part in management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. Since the last inspection the school has made good progress because of its evaluation of weaknesses and setting targets to improve.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The use of all funding, including that which is intended for a specific purpose, is well managed.

The adequacy of the school's staffing, accommodation and learning resources is satisfactory overall. The headteacher has a clear educational vision for the school and is well supported by key members of staff. The governors have a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and give good moral and pastoral support. However, changes in the governing body have led to the governors not having sufficient training to fully play their part in shaping the direction of the school or in giving the proper level of management support to the headteacher. The application of the principles of best value is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The high expectations the school has for their children. • The fact that their children like school. • They are kept well informed about their children's progress. • The progress their child is making in school. • The fact that the school helps their child to mature and become responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of extra-curricular activities. • The amount of homework their child receives. • The behaviour within the school. • The quality of teaching within the school. • The school working closer with parents.

Twenty-eight per cent of the questionnaires sent to parents and carers were completed and returned. Twelve parents attended the meeting for parents with the registered inspector before the inspection began. The great majority of parents were pleased with the high expectations the school had for their children and the overall educational provision made by the school. Inspection evidence supports parents' views in these matters. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. The amount of homework grows as pupils move through the school and in Key Stage 2 this makes a good contribution to pupils learning. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, as is the behaviour of all pupils. In these areas, inspection evidence does not support the views of parents. The school does make real efforts to involve parents in the work of the school. The school knows that it could do more and intends to redouble its efforts. However, there is a significant minority of parents who simply do not respond to any of the school's initiatives. Inspection evidence shows that in this matter both parties have a certain responsibility to improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The level of pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average. When the last inspection was undertaken there were no children under the age of five attending the school. At the time of that inspection, in July 1999, the standards that pupils reached at the end of Key Stage 1 were judged to be in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. In Key Stage 2, although significant progress had been made, standards in English, mathematics and science were judged to be below average overall by the end of Year 6. In that inspection report, no individual judgements were made with regard to the standards that pupils were achieving in other subjects.
2. In the 2000 end of Key Stage 1 national tests in reading and mathematics, the percentage of pupils reaching Levels 2 and 3, the expected levels for seven-year-olds, was well below the national average. In writing, the percentage of pupils reaching Levels 2 and 3 was in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 3 was below the national average in reading, but well below average in writing and mathematics.
3. In Key Stage 1, since 1997 the school's trend of improvement has been good in reading, writing and mathematics, although there was a drop in the school's results in all three subjects in tests in 2000. This was due to the numbers of pupils with special educational needs, many of whom had emotional and behavioural difficulties.
4. The 2000 results of Elm Hall School were average in reading, but well below average in writing and mathematics when compared with the results of similar schools at Key Stage 1. When compared with the results of similar schools these results are very low. However, within the school, there is an above average number of pupils who have special educational needs. The present percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is 37 per cent, which is well above the national average. The level of pupils' movement in and out of the school is high. The combination of these factors means that comparisons with similar schools is unreliable and of little help to the school.
5. In the end of Key Stage 2 national tests in 2000 in mathematics, the percentage of pupils reaching Levels 4 and 5, the expected levels for 11-year-olds, was well below the national average. In English and science, the schools results were in the lowest 5 per cent nationally. The percentage reaching the higher Level 5 was close to the national average in mathematics, but well below the national average in English and science.
6. Since 1997 there has been a trend of steady improvement in all three subjects. Inspection evidence shows that this improvement is continuing and that the school will be approaching average standards in mathematics and science at the end of both key stages in 2002. When compared with the results of similar schools, the school's results for 2000 were well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics. The same factors apply in Key Stage 2 as in Key Stage 1 except that the level of pupils' movement is higher. Only six of the present 23 Year 6 pupils were attending the school at the end of Key Stage 1. The class has a high level of special educational needs pupils at 73 per cent. The class has also suffered from being taught by a high number of supply teachers. This has had the effect of disrupting the education of this group of pupils. Progress has been made but, because of the combined circumstances affecting the class, this has been at a slower pace than it should have been. This means that the comparison

with the results of similar schools does not reflect the good progress being made in the standards of Elm Hall School or its continued good levels of improvement.

7. Inspection evidence shows that standards are satisfactory at the end of the Foundation Stage with children meeting the targets set in the Early Learning Goals in all six areas of learning¹. Evidence confirms that standards in English are below average at the end of both key stages, although good progress is being made in all areas of the subject except in reading. Standards are now average, at the end of Key Stage 1, in both mathematics and science. In both these subjects, standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, good progress has been made throughout the school and the low standards in the present Year 6 class have been influenced by high levels of special educational needs, pupils' movement and teacher changes. Inspection evidence shows that standards in the present Year 5 class and in all classes of younger pupils are now in line to meet average standards in English, mathematics and science, from the end of 2002. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress against the targets in their individual education plans.
8. Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are satisfactory at the end of both key stages. The school now has a purpose built information and communication technology suite, software provision has been consistently raised and standards in information and communication technology are continuing to rise. Standards in art and design are above expectations at the end of both key stages. Standards in design technology, physical education, religious education, history and geography are in line with expectations at the end of both stages. Standards in music are in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but below expectations at the end of Key Stage 2. However, the school has now employed a music specialist to teach all classes. This provision is raising standards throughout the school and is also providing good in-service training for all teachers. This is a good example of the application of the principles of best value.
9. The school has introduced a good system of tracking pupils' progress. This information, together with assessment data, is used to set realistic targets. The school has developed satisfactory strategies, including the good introduction of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, to meet these targets.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' attitudes are good and they enjoy coming to school. Their behaviour is good and relationships between all are positive and supportive. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes have improved considerably over recent years.
11. Pupils take a keen interest in lessons. Parents agree that their children enjoy school. Many willingly take part in class discussions and there is no shortage of hands up when teachers ask questions or want volunteers. They are well motivated and they respond well to their teachers. They enjoy collecting blue dots for good work and are eager to earn enough to receive certificates and have their name displayed on the Board of Achievement in the foyer. Most pupils sustain concentration and persevere well. A small number in Years 4 and 5 find concentrating for any length of time more difficult and are easily distracted.
12. These good attitudes were typified in an excellent science lesson with a lively class. Here, the teacher's skills in behaviour management and the planning of a host of practical activities to keep pupils interested and motivated were evident. Pupils were investigating

¹ [The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. Early learning goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.](#)

friction and the forces of push and pull, experimenting with elastic bands, coins and different lubricants, such as oil, washing up liquid and toothpaste. They were all completely absorbed in what they were doing, they demonstrated that they could work very well in groups and pairs and they were highly motivated as they were discovering for themselves what exactly friction is.

13. Overall, pupils behave well. Most understand and are familiar with the school rules 'be safe, be friendly, do the right thing' and they know the importance of making the right choices in the way they behave. Their good behaviour, both in and out of school, is having a positive impact on their learning. Pupils interviewed during the inspection about several aspects of school life said they wanted the school to do well and had tried hard to behave when inspectors visited their classrooms. They were clearly successful in this. Oppressive behaviour, bullying and racism are infrequent occurrences. There is a culture in the school of asking adults for help and pupils are happy doing this. There were no exclusions over the last year and this is an improvement on previous years.
14. Relationships in the school are supportive and friendly. Pupils who joined the school mid way through the year commented on how well they settled in and were made to feel welcome. Most pupils are learning to understand the impact of their actions on others; for instance, they will write a note of apology to staff as a way of saying sorry. Another pupil was seen counting to 10 as a way of controlling his anger. All pupils are more than willing to carry out routine jobs, such as taking cards for lunchtime, checking the computers are switched off and, for older pupils, acting as play leaders for the younger ones. They show themselves capable of a greater level of responsibility than they are currently given.
15. They are conscious of the needs of others and raise a good amount of money for charity. Recent events have included face painting for Red Nose Day and raising money for Action for Children.
16. Pupils' attendance rate is poor and has been falling in recent years. Figures for last year show a small increase, but attendance remains very low compared to national averages. The level of authorised absences is significant and very high compared to primary schools nationally. In welcome contrast, the level of unauthorised absence is extremely low as the school makes sure they know the reason why pupils are away. Poor attendance is attributed to the lack of importance a small but significant group of parents attach to primary education. This is shown in their willingness to keep pupils at home for family events, dental appointments or minor illnesses. The school makes full use of every minute of the day and timekeeping is good. A small number of pupils are sometimes late to school in the mornings.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school and is an important reason for the good progress that pupils are making in all stages of the school. There has been a significant improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection when teaching was satisfactory overall. Twenty-five lessons or parts of lessons were observed during the inspection and high quality teaching was seen in all three stages of the school. In the lessons observed, 36 per cent of the teaching was very good or excellent, a further 48 per cent was good and 16 per cent was satisfactory. There was no unsatisfactory teaching.
18. The school has been successful in improving the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection through a range of strategies. A very good teaching and learning policy is now in place and support has been provided for teachers' planning. Lessons have been observed and feedback given to teachers. Action planning and target setting have been developed with individual teachers and experienced staff have demonstrated

models of good practice. Support has also been developed and offered by curriculum leaders and all staff have attended a good range of courses. The choice of training provided has been guided by national priorities, the targets set in the school's action plan for development and by the needs of individual members of staff. There is a weakness in one area of teachers' planning and that is the planning of the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage. The school was not due to have any children in the Foundation Stage during this year. However, a late change in the local authority's requirements for the school meant that the admission of these children was brought forward. The planned training for the teacher of these young children has not yet taken place. The children in the Foundation Stage are making good progress, but the curriculum that they are offered does not meet the requirements of the latest guidance from the Department of Education and Employment for children of this age.

19. There has been good improvement in both literacy and numeracy throughout the school. A significant factor in this improvement is the school's good implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and the improvement in the quality of teaching that this has provided. The local education authority has given support through the link advisor and the literacy and numeracy consultants. A significant feature in the high quality of the teaching seen in the school is the commitment of staff to improving standards. This is also the view of those parents who offered an opinion, who feel that the teaching is good and that the school now has high expectations and caters for the individual needs of their children.
20. Quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is good. The quality of adult and teacher interaction with the children is good and activities are effectively organised according to the children's abilities. During the inspection five lessons were seen. The quality of teaching was good in four lessons and very good in the other one. This is a significant factor in the good progress that children make throughout the Foundation Stage.
21. The children are shown how to clear up at the end of the activity and to help each other to put things away tidily. Staff note how well children are doing in all areas of development and consider their progress carefully when planning the next stage of the work. This was seen very clearly as staff worked with individual children who had learnt to read the first three words in the reading programme and were ready for the next challenge. As a result, children feel confident and happy.
22. They are already learning to be independent as they take on responsibilities such as helping to take the register to the school office. There is a good balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Staff are very good at keeping their teaching focused when the whole class is involved. They spend just the right amount of time so that children do not lose interest or become fidgety. This was seen in a lesson on early handwriting skills, which demonstrated good direct teaching of letter formation and gave the children a range of opportunities to practise and achieve a good measure of success. Staff have very high expectations for all aspects of the children's learning and behaviour and there is very good management of these young children.
23. In both Key Stages 1 and 2, the overall quality of teaching is also good. In Key Stage 1, seven lessons were seen. The quality of teaching was very good in one of these lessons, good in four and satisfactory in the remaining two lessons. In Key Stage 2, 13 lessons were observed. The quality of teaching was excellent in one lesson, very good in six, good in four and satisfactory in the remaining two lessons seen. Teachers in both key stages are consistent in making sure that the pupils know exactly what they have to do in order to be successful. The learning objective is written out for the children to see and acts as a focus for the whole lesson. Some older pupils have their personal targets

permanently displayed on their desktop. Skilful use of the whole-class session at the end helps pupils to think about what they have learnt. Teachers take note of their responses in order to judge how well the pupils have understood the lessons, as a part of the good assessment of pupils learning. However, this good assessment information is not regularly or consistently used to match future tasks carefully to what pupils already know, understand and can do.

24. Teachers' subject knowledge and understanding is good across all subjects. There has been a significant improvement in information and communication technology (ICT) provision and standards are now in line with expectations at the end of both key stages. This good level of subject expertise allows teachers to explain new concepts clearly and answer pupils' questions effectively. In all of the information and communication technology lessons seen, teachers demonstrated good subject expertise, which enabled them to deal with any problems that arose. Older pupils now have skill levels that enable them to correct faults which occur due to computer operational errors. A good example of this was seen when information and communication technology was used in a geography lesson in Year 6. Pupils were working in pairs in the school's good information and communication technology suite. All except one pair of girls had successfully accessed the web site of the national meteorological office in their research into weather patterns. An operational fault meant that the computer station that the girls were working at had locked part way through the logging on procedure. Without any adult assistance, the two girls calmly took down and restarted the station, followed a procedure that they obviously knew very well, and succeeded in accessing the meteorological office web site only two minutes behind the rest of the class.
25. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge across all the subjects of the National Curriculum, and often use their knowledge to teach lessons that involve the use of knowledge and skills from more than one subject. For example, in a very good Year 6 science lesson, the teacher used good questioning skills to review pupils' learning from a previous lesson when they had made and experimented with a flying spinner. She then clearly outlined the task that pupils were to undertake, which was to record the results of their experiments in graphical form. The very good explanation resulted in pupils working well, both collaboratively and co-operatively in small groups. They used their mathematical knowledge of mode, median and mean to complete this task in the handling of scientific data.
26. There are examples of good or very good teaching, in both key stages, in some lessons in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In both key stages, teachers show good competence in the teaching of basic skills in sounding out words and in number work. This leads to good learning taking place in these aspects in most English and mathematics lessons. A major factor in the good progress being made in English and literacy by pupils in both key stages is the school's introduction of the Early Reading Research programme. This very good programme focuses on word and sentence patterns and is taught by well-trained learning support assistants to selected pupils three times a day. The good learning experiences enjoyed by pupils in these sessions contributes significantly to the good progress that they are making in English and literacy.
27. Teachers' planning is satisfactory overall. It is good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Clear links with previous lessons are often identified. As a result pupils are given good quality learning experiences, which help them build on their skills and knowledge and make good progress. However, in too many lessons seen, and from the evidence in pupils' past work, the good assessment information gathered by teachers and learning support assistants is not well used to carefully match tasks to the individual levels of attainment of pupils. Too much work is presented to all pupils at the same level with the expectation that more-able pupils will complete more work than others. There are

some examples of assessment information being used well to match tasks to pupils' ability, but they are too few and this area of teaching is less than satisfactory.

28. Teachers' expectations of what pupils can achieve are very good in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage2 and good in Key Stage1. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high throughout the school and all members of staff manage the behaviour of pupils very well. All staff set good examples as role models, in the courteous and patient way in which they deal with pupils and help them to negotiate over problems. This was seen in a design and technology lesson in Year 5. The lesson had to begin early because of pupils' poor behaviour in a soccer skills lesson with a visiting coach. The class teacher was faced with a badly behaved group of pupils who showed no interest in learning, at the beginning of the lesson. The teacher used very high-level teaching skills to insist that pupils became involved in the design of a Second World War gas mask. She used a wide range of teaching strategies combined with very good procedures from the school's behaviour management policy. The result was that pupils were steadily drawn into the lesson and became enthused about what they would be making in the next design and technology lesson.
29. All teachers are aware of pupils in their classes who have special educational needs. They have received training in the use of individual education plans. The headteacher is presently undertaking the role of special educational needs co-ordinator and the school's procedures meet all the requirements of the national Code of Practice². The school has good working relationships with outside agencies, for example the educational psychologist. Classroom assistants are used effectively in the classrooms to support pupils. They write evaluations on the progress, or otherwise, pupils make during lessons, noting any problems that may have arisen. Each class teacher plans work for pupils with special educational needs. Teachers also ensure that the learning support assistant is fully prepared for each lesson. Individual education plans are detailed, inform lesson planning and are reviewed regularly. The great majority of targets, set in these plans, are short-term and well focused. However, there are some which are not of this high quality. These do not enable good progress and because of their vague nature make pupils' progress difficult to assess.
30. Teachers make good use of a wide range of teaching methods to ensure that pupils make good progress in their learning. They use a mixture of teaching approaches that include whole-class, group and individual teaching. For example, in a physical education lesson with pupils from Years 2 and 3, the teacher used good strategies to support individuals in their bat and ball work, showing good coaching skills. At appropriate times throughout the lesson she used her coaching skills, or the progress of individual pupils, to demonstrate good practice to the whole class. Teachers almost always make good use of the end of lesson review to summarise key facts and to sort out misconceptions. Opportunities are often provided for pupils to use this time to share their work with the class, by presenting and explaining what they have done. A good example of this was seen in a Years 1 and 2 mathematics lesson when the teacher used open and closed questions well to assess what pupils had learned. More-able pupils were challenged at a higher level than they had been working at during the lesson to put their learning to the test. When end of lesson reviews are at this very good level they have the effect of enabling pupils to learn from each other.
31. All teachers manage pupils very well. They expect pupils to pay attention to direct instructions. Clear rules of behaviour are established in all classes and pupils are expected to treat each other with consideration and respect. Teachers are firm and fair in

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

their dealings with pupils and develop good relationships with them. They listen carefully to what pupils have to say and respond to their comments in a positive and receptive manner. This encourages the development of pupils' self-confidence. Teachers are patient with pupils and quietly insist on compliance with classroom conventions.

32. Teachers' use of support staff and the resources of the school are also good. There is good teamwork between teachers and support staff, as seen in a Year 3 science lesson when the teacher and the learning support assistant worked well together to maintain good learning throughout the lesson. The learning support assistant was very well prepared, demonstrating very good teaching skills when questioning and guiding pupils who were investigating the reaction of different materials to light. There was a good level of partnership between the classroom teacher and the learning support assistant. All support staff are familiar with the plans and learning intentions for the children they work with, so that they are active partners in the learning process.
33. Good assessment takes place during lessons where teachers make positive and constructive comments to pupils to help them increase their learning. The quality of marking is satisfactory overall. All work is marked. However, while some marking gives pupils clear guidance on how to improve their work, not all is to this high standard. Some written comments by teachers do not focus on how the pupil can improve their work, but are one-word instructions or criticisms because pupils have misunderstood or not followed instructions. The assessment of pupils' work is generally of a good standard, particularly in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Teachers record their assessment of pupils' progress in a portfolio of tests and assessments for each individual. However, there is insufficient use of this good information to carefully match pupils' future tasks to what they already know, understand and can do.
34. Teachers set homework that is appropriate for the ages of the children in their class and relevant to the work going on in the classroom. The level of homework set in the Foundation Stage and in Key Stage 1 makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. The use and level of homework increases as pupils move through Key Stage 2. The range of subjects set increases as does the expectation that pupils will undertake research at home. This makes a good contribution to pupils' learning.

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

35. The quality and range of learning opportunities at Key Stages 1 and 2 are satisfactory and the overall balance between the subjects is appropriate. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and these pupils are provided with rewarding learning opportunities across the school. The curriculum complies with statutory requirements. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught effectively in the school as a result of the consistent implementation of both national strategies for these subjects. The overall provision for personal development and pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and is a strength of the school.
36. The breadth and balance of activities in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory, but curriculum planning does not fully comply with the government's recent guidance for children in the Foundation Stage. The early years policy for the education of these children has not yet been updated. This has been recognised by the school and efforts are now being made to provide a range of activities focused on directed play and child-initiated activities that match this guidance. There is, however, a good focus on the encouragement of high achievement and this is especially so in communication, language

and literacy skills and mathematical development. As a result all these children, including those with special educational needs, are making good progress

37. The breadth and balance of the curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 are satisfactory and there is a strong emphasis on cross-curricular work in information and communication technology, history, geography mathematics and English. Teachers also provide many opportunities for extended writing to further reinforce literacy skills. Curriculum planning in these key stages is good. Policy statements for core subjects at both key stages are well established, but in need of some review in line with the school improvement plan. The scope of the curriculum is good and very many children find it stimulating and the curriculum encourages high achievement. The time allocated to the teaching of all subjects is appropriate and the curriculum is relevant to the circumstances of the school and its pupils. Appropriate schemes of work are well established and this is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. The school is making a conscious effort to ensure that pupils of different age groups in each class are taught the appropriate units of work as identified in the long term curriculum plans. The exception is for a small minority of pupils in Year 2, who are currently not receiving their full entitlement to the planned curriculum. This is because they are in a separate class with younger pupils and the topics covered have been different from those taught to the older Year 2 pupils in the other class. This weakness in curriculum planning has been recognised by the school and is being addressed using a range of organisational strategies in readiness for the start of the next school year.
38. There is good provision for pupils' personal and social development. Sex education is taught appropriately within science lessons and there is good provision for health education. This is supported with the effective use of Circle Time to provide good opportunities for pupils to discuss topics and any concerns they may have that are relevant to them. This good provision is having a positive impact on the quality of learning and the very positive relationships around the school between pupils and staff and pupils themselves.
39. The overall provision for spiritual development is good and a strong feature of the school. Pupils are given many opportunities to consider the beliefs of others in assemblies and religious education lessons. Time for pupils to reflect on their experiences is well established and the opportunity for reflection helps pupils to develop spiritual awareness. The daily act of collective worship complies with statutory requirements and assemblies are well planned and contribute to the overall level of provision.
40. The provision for pupils' moral development is good, and very many pupils know right from wrong. The school promotes honesty, fairness and tolerance very well, and very many pupils understand the importance of being truthful and caring. For example, the concept of sharing with others was developed well as part of the weekly assembly theme during the inspection week. Moral development is well planned and all pupils are fully aware of the school's code of conduct and respond very well to it.
41. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Pupils are accustomed to taking responsibility for their own actions. When given the opportunity, very many pupils show initiative and this can be often seen when they embark on investigative activities in science or partner work in English lessons, when they review their own writing targets. School and classroom rules have been developed with the co-operation of pupils and, as a result, most pupils exhibit good self-discipline. The good relationships within the school make a considerable contribution to the school's positive atmosphere for learning.
42. The provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory overall. Pupils are aware of the importance of their own cultural traditions, but this is still underdeveloped. A

satisfactory range of activities ensures that pupils appreciate the cultural diversity of British society. Pupils have a good awareness of other cultures and beliefs. For example, pupils in Year 2 have learnt about the Hindu faith and pupils in Year 6 have studied a North American Indian legend in some detail and used it as a stimulus for three-dimensional artwork. The school has placed a considerable emphasis on developing pupils' cultural experiences and this is a current target for school improvement. The links with the adjacent secondary school are good, and the school is developing a programme of inclusion with the special school that occupies a separate part of the same complex. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory and the school has clear policies for the teaching of drugs awareness.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school is successful in providing pupils with a good level of support, in an environment where teaching and learning can flourish.
44. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is good and much has been achieved since the previous inspection in this area. Consequently, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are now well established. They are particularly good in the assessment of pupils' progress in reading. The use of assessment information to guide curricular planning is sound overall, but inconsistent across all the subjects taught. For instance, some teachers do not always use this information to effectively plan for individual pupils during some lessons. Individual targets, however, are used well to monitor and support pupils' academic progress and this is especially so in writing. The school has developed a strong policy and practice in using the skills that pupils develop in one subject in a range of other subjects. This is clearly seen in pupils' work that includes elements of several subjects in one study.
45. Arrangements for child protection, safety and welfare are satisfactory overall. The named person for child protection has gained experience whilst at the school and staff are vigilant in reporting any concerns. Formal training to update her in all areas of child protection, together with the bringing together of current practice into a whole-school policy, is an area for improvement.
46. Health and safety procedures are satisfactory and there are regular checks on the premises, with the governor responsible being conscientious in reporting concerns. There is a good number of staff trained in first-aid. Whilst the school follows the local education authority's health and safety policy, there is no whole-school policy to guide its own day-to-day practice. Current arrangements whereby a variety of vehicles gain access to the neighbouring school by driving through the school grounds is a cause for concern in the interest of pupils' safety.
47. The school has very good procedures for encouraging pupils to behave well. There is an effective climate that is helping to promote good behaviour and the headteacher provides good support for teachers and pupils. Staff have worked hard over the years to improve their skills in behaviour management, to good effect. They are consistent in their approach when pupils' behaviour starts to deteriorate; they maintain a calm non-confrontational stance and use praise well to encourage pupils in the right path to follow. An effective reward system, based upon blue dots, is working well by encouraging pupils to behave and work hard. Most parents who replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire agree that the school is helping their child become mature and responsible.
48. The school rules 'be safe, be friendly, do the right thing' are constantly reinforced in assemblies and classes know their own rules, which they have discussed and agreed to. In one class, pictures of pupils doing the correct thing, such as working happily in a group,

are being used as a reminder of how to behave. This is an innovative approach. There are good records kept of pupils whose behaviour is causing concern and staff know their pupils well. Any instances of bullying are firmly dealt with and pupils confirmed that this is the case.

49. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory. However, there is a clear commitment to improving this picture. This is a key issue for the school as attendance rates are currently well below the national average. The school has been without the services of an educational welfare officer since Christmas. The action plan agreed between the school and the educational welfare officer is not being carried out. There are no systems in place to reward good attendance and a limited approach to encouraging a more positive undertaking from parents and pupils, although a first day of absence call system, introduced some time ago, has helped.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Parents have a satisfactory view of the school. This is based upon the wide range of differing views expressed at the parents' meeting and the differing responses to the parents' questionnaire.
51. A small number of parents attended the meeting with inspectors and just over a quarter of all parents returned their questionnaires. Most were generally happy with the school, but had concerns about the levels of communication, especially in relation to parents' evenings. They raised problems resulting from the difficulties in getting supply teaching staff and the effect upon the children. This is now being resolved with the appointment of a highly skilled teacher until the end of term.
52. Most parents who replied to the pre-inspection questionnaire are pleased that their child likes school, they agree the teaching is good and that teachers have high expectations of the work pupils do. Most agree that their children make good progress, they are kept well informed about how their child is progressing, that the school is well led and managed and that teachers are helping their child to become mature and responsible.
53. Inspectors agree with all parents' positive views with one exception. They find the school needs to be more active in promoting parents' evenings and in encouraging parents to attend. This is an area for the school to improve. Currently, attendance at parent's evenings is extremely low. Parents do have opportunities to speak to teachers before and after school, but many parents at the meeting did not realise that the school holds parents' evenings each term. This is mostly due to a lack of positive marketing and encouragement on the school's behalf.
54. A significant minority of parents are not happy with the range of extra-curricular activities, the levels of homework, the quality of pupils' behaviour and the extent to which the school is working closely with parents. They do not feel well informed about their child's progress or comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems. The inspection team does not agree with these views, as explained below.
55. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory, taking into account the size of the school. Homework is regular, teachers encourage pupils to complete it and the school's arrangements are satisfactory. Behaviour in the school is good and has improved over the years. Any incidents involving pupils who misbehave are handled well and do not disrupt the learning of others.
56. The school has satisfactory links with parents and friendly newsletters encourage parents to become more involved in school life. The headteacher spends much time in talking to

individual parents and helping to support them in times of crisis. The school has identified the need to provide more information about the curriculum so they can help parents to support their child at home. This is an entirely appropriate development. Previously, curriculum presentations were combined with coffee mornings and the uptake from parents at that time was encouraging.

57. The quality of pupils' annual reports is good. There are clear comments on the progress pupils are making in English, mathematics and science, with areas highlighted that pupils need to focus on to improve. An overview of pupils' general, emotional and social development is testimony to the fact that staff know their pupils well.
58. The Friends of Elm Hall comprises a loyal group of parents who work hard to raise money for the school. They hold regular cake stalls selling produce given by parents. The money they raise is important in helping to pay for school visits and trips out. A few parents help in class and listen to children read. This is beneficial in terms of providing extra help for those who need it. Parents are encouraged to come to the school's Open Assemblies and attendance is growing.
59. Parents provide a satisfactory level of support for the work pupils bring to do at home. Some parents listen to their children read and also help them with other homework, such as spellings. There are others who, due to a range of external and social pressures, find this kind of support very difficult to provide.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

60. The good quality of leadership and strong management by the headteacher and key staff are characteristics of the school. This leadership provides good, clear educational direction for the school. A very high priority is given to school improvement. The development of a high-performing team of teachers is a leadership aim that has been achieved, the quality of teaching seen during the inspection being good in all areas of the school. A high priority is placed on the inspiration and motivation of staff. The leadership of the headteacher and senior staff helps provide a good example for others to follow, and the leadership reflects the explicit aims and values of the school well. There is a good level of shared commitment to school improvement. All members of the management team have positive expectations for improvement. They maintain a constant awareness of the school's priorities for further development and the delegation of responsibilities to management staff is well done.
61. The governing body is satisfactory in the way that it discharges its duties to best effect. They make satisfactory use of specialist skills and expertise. The governing body ensures that it fulfils its legal responsibilities. However, the governors play a limited role in shaping the strategic direction of the school and this element of their work is less than satisfactory. There is a positive relationship between the headteacher and the governors. Governors periodically set targets for, and appraise, the headteacher. Their understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school is satisfactory, and governors set targets for school development and improvement and monitor them satisfactorily. The majority of the key issues from the previous inspection have been addressed. The majority of governors maintain frequent contact with the school and some undertake classroom monitoring of subjects for which they have accepted responsibility, for example in geography.
62. Governors and staff monitor and evaluate the school's performance regularly. The development of teaching is monitored and evaluated well by the headteacher and subject co-ordinators. Good teachers are used to support others and develop their expertise, and those areas where teaching is weakest are addressed well. The school's procedures for

appraisal and performance management are good, and all teachers have clear performance targets. Teachers and support staff work very well together. The priorities for staff development are matched well to the needs of staff and pupils. The steps taken to meet the school's targets for improvement are good. All members of the management team share a significant commitment to improvement and demonstrate a good capacity to succeed. The procedures for the induction of new staff are good and the improvement in staff development since the previous inspection is significant.

63. The strategic use of resources, grants and other funding is good. Educational priorities are supported through the school's good financial planning. The financial administration systems are efficient and effective, and the school has reacted satisfactorily to the most recent auditor's report. The management and the governors are well informed about the school finances by the very good budget manager. All staff are aware of and familiar with new information and communication technology, and the school makes good use of new technology to support administration and pupils' learning. Specific grants are used effectively for their designated purpose to improve the quality of learning. The school monitors the effectiveness of its spending satisfactorily and governors are kept fully informed, and the school measures the outcome of expenditure against its planned objectives satisfactorily.
64. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily in this school to further the opportunities open to the pupils. The school usually compares its costs with those of other schools. Members of staff are required to justify their use of resources and identify further needs for their subjects. The school usually engages in competitive tendering. It consults widely on further improvements and major expenditure decisions. One example of the school's application of the principles of best value is seen in the employment of a music specialist. This teacher not only teaches all classes in the school to a high level, but also provides good quality in-service training for all the school's teachers. She also provides exemplar lesson plans and music on CDs/tapes for teachers to use when they undertake music teaching with their own classes.
65. There is an appropriate number of suitably qualified staff to meet the demands of the curriculum and a good number of talented classroom assistants, who make a positive contribution to children's learning. Arrangements whereby a music specialist is employed in the school are working well by providing good quality lessons and help for teachers in improving their own musical skills. The school now has the potential to be an effective provider of initial teacher training.
66. Overall, the school's accommodation is satisfactorily matched to meet current demands. The quality and condition of the indoor and outdoor accommodation is satisfactory after a recent period of considerable upheaval when the school was re-roofed. Classrooms are bright and interesting and wall displays show the value the school places on pupils' work. Current arrangements for vehicular access to the neighbouring school, whereby a variety of vehicles pass through the schools grounds and over the field, is unsatisfactory and a cause for concern in the interests of pupils' health and safety.
67. Resources for learning are satisfactory overall, with strengths in the provision for information and communication technology. There are plenty of new books in the library, especially those related to the teaching of literacy and numeracy.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to further raise standards the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- further raise the standards that pupils achieve in English at the end of both key stages, and the areas of composition and appraising and listening to music by:
 - I. continuing to target specific pupils and providing them with regular, high quality support through the Early Reading Research programme;
 - II. implementing strategies to use the school's library and information and communication technology regularly to develop pupils' research skills, particularly in Key Stage 2;
 - III. developing policies, with the visiting music specialist, to ensure that all areas of the music curriculum are taught in sufficient depth;
 - IV. developing rigorous and regular monitoring of pupils' work to ensure that the good assessment information gathered is used to carefully match future tasks to pupils' developing levels of ability;
 - V. ensuring, through this monitoring system, that the quality of marking of all teachers is raised to the highest standards already in place in one class in the school;
(paragraphs 9, 23, 27, 33, 43, 70, 83-85, 87, 95, 103, 117, 123, 137, 141, 152)

- develop and implement strategies to promote pupils' regular attendance and communicate to parents the importance of regular attendance and its effect on pupils' levels of achievement;
(paragraphs 16, 49)

- rectify the danger to the health and safety of pupils caused by lorries using the school's driveway to gain access to another establishment.
(paragraphs 46, 65)

The governors may also wish to include the following minor issues in their action plan.

- I. Enable staff to undertake training in child protection procedures and formalise the present good practice being undertaken into an up-to-date official school policy. (paragraph 45)
- II. Implement a positive and encouraging policy to improve parents' attendance at consultation evenings. (paragraph 53)
- III. Update a curriculum policy for the Foundation Stage that meets the requirements of the latest Department for Education and Employment guidance for the teaching of these young children. (paragraphs 18, 36)
- IV. Develop a rigorous programme of training to enable governors to undertake their full part in the management of the school and to give the appropriate level of support to the headteacher in shaping the direction of the school. (paragraph 61)

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
4	32	48	16	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)	85
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	33

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	35

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	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	10.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
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
	2000			14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Total	10	8	11
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	71 (88)	57 (75)	79 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Total	10	13	13
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	71 (75)	93 (75)	93 (100)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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
	2000			17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Total	10	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	59 (40)	59 (40)	59 (40)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Total	8	8	8
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	47 (40)	47 (55)	47 (40)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

The existing guidance from OFSTED is that test and examination data should be excluded from inspection reports if the year group is 10 or fewer. This also applies to year groups of boys and girls separately.

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	72
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.3
Average class size	21.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	86

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	270,650
Total expenditure	267,172
Expenditure per pupil	2,936
Balance brought forward from previous year	68,804
Balance carried forward to next year	72,282

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 27.7%

Number of questionnaires sent out	83
Number of questionnaires returned	23

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	35	56	9	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	48	9	0	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	39	18	13	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	39	26	9	0
The teaching is good.	43	43	13	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	57	8	9	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	43	39	9	9	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	26	9	4	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	44	17	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	35	48	9	4	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	26	57	4	13	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	35	17	35	13	0

Other issues raised by parents

Twelve parents attended the meeting for parents with the registered inspector before the inspection began. The great majority of parents were pleased with the high expectations the school had for their children and the overall educational provision made by the school. Inspection evidence supports parents' views in these matters. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. The amount of homework grows as pupils move through the school and in Key Stage 2 this makes a good contribution to pupils' learning. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school, as is the behaviour of all pupils. In these areas, inspection evidence does not support the views of parents. The school does make real efforts to involve parents in the work of the school. The school knows that it could do more and intends to re-double its efforts. However, there is a significant minority of parents who simply do not respond to any of the school's initiatives. Inspection evidence shows that in this matter both parties have a certain responsibility to improve.

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

68. Children join the reception class at the start of the term before the term of their fifth birthday. The children, including those with special educational needs, make a good start in all aspects of school life. Assessment on admission to school shows that most children have knowledge, skills and understanding in all areas of learning that are below that normally expected for children of a similar age.
69. Evidence gathered during the inspection demonstrates that these children make good progress in all areas of learning. Progress is particularly good in communication, language and literacy. This good progress is ensuring that overall attainment by the end of the Foundation Stage is in line with that normally expected. Most children are on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning in readiness to start the National Curriculum in Year 1.
70. **The quality of teaching and learning is good. The quality of adult and teacher interaction with the children is good and activities are effectively organised according to the children's abilities. Good teaching, by the class teacher and support assistant, ensures that there is a good balance between direct teaching and child-initiated activity. The classroom is managed well and time is allocated at the start of the day to provide opportunities for learning through play. Questions are used well to challenge children in their thinking and assess their understanding of new concepts. The planning is imaginative and firmly based on children's interests, but it is not linked with the government's latest guidance for children of this age. The school's current early years policy for the education of children in the Foundation Stage does not include up-to-date procedures for assessing the children's progress against the 'Stepping Stones' for each area of learning. This has been recognised by the school and the class teacher is working in close liaison with the local authority's advisory service to ensure that provision complies with this guidance and that planning is directly linked with the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage.**
71. **The current planning does, however, cater for the needs of the reception children except in the area of physical development. Consequently, the secure outside play area is not being used to its full potential. The teacher's planning ensures focused activities promote specific learning in language and mathematical development. For instance, there is a strong focus on sounding words out and, as a result, these children are making good progress in their early reading skills. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the teaching of these children. They work carefully with focus groups or move around the activities providing support as required. This is especially so for activities with the computers. This good teamwork is ensuring basic skills are taught well and all children of all abilities within the class make good progress.**
72. The staff have put much care and thought into providing a stimulating classroom environment. Resources are good and used effectively to motivate the children. Induction arrangements are effective. The children have several opportunities to visit the reception class before they start school and appropriate meetings are held with parents. There are satisfactory links with the neighbouring early years providers.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. **The teacher and classroom assistant ensure that the emotional needs of the children are being effectively met. Relationships between the staff and the children are good. Children, especially those with special educational needs, feel secure and this has a positive effect on progress.**
74. As a result of this good provision, the children's attitudes to learning are good. Children raise their hands to answer the teacher's questions and the listen to what others have to say. Children work very well together in pairs and small groups. They all share equipment, for example, when using the 'rollerball' mouse to control animations on the computer. Children are developing a sense of responsibility, for instance, when putting their jigsaws away at the end of a structured play session. Most children are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year in readiness for work within the National Curriculum.

Communication, language and literacy

75. The quality of teaching is good in this area of learning and, as a result, all children are making good progress in all aspects of communication, language and literacy. Many children are in line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year in readiness for work within the National Curriculum. Lessons are well planned and there is a good balance between direct teaching and group activity. These lessons include a wide range of activities for children to use and apply their developing speaking and listening, reading and writing skills. The skills of handwriting are being taught well. For example, the teacher worked closely with less able children to assist them in the use of a large pen to write the letter 'j' on a small whiteboard. Good opportunities for speaking and listening in other lessons ensure that all children make good progress in communication skills. For instance, they discussed the concept of concern about others after listening to a story about 'Jesus and the Blind Man'.
76. There are also good opportunities for extending speaking and listening skills through role-play activities. Children enjoy books. They talk enthusiastically about the stories and turn the pages carefully. Some children are beginning to pick out letters and words in books based on the beginning sound and picture clues. Most children recognise their name and the more mature know several sounds and some simple words. Most children hold pencils correctly and can independently write their first name. Letters are always correctly formed. It is very evident that children enjoy writing and their efforts are valued in displays showing their first attempts.

Mathematical development

77. The quality of teaching in the one lesson seen was very good. The teacher plans a variety of tasks for children to experience and picks up on spontaneous opportunities to develop children's numeracy skills. As a result, the children are making good progress in this area of learning. All children can count to 10 and some can count confidently to 20. They can re-order these numbers on a 'number line'. Children can match numbers of objects and colours up to five using computer programs. Most children are on schedule to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year in readiness for work within the National Curriculum.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78. No overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching in this area of learning, but children are making good progress. This is particularly so in the skills of information and communication technology, with the result that most children are confident in using the mouse to play a range of simple games. For instance, children can confidently choose a mathematics game using the screen menu and activate the program with a mouse click. They can use the mouse effectively to activate simple animations on the screen in

response to the prompts. Design and technology skills are appropriately developed. An appropriate range of skills is developed in geography and history by studying the world around them and looking at old and new toys. Most children are in line to meet the requirements of the Early Learning Goals by the time that they enter Year 1.

Creative development

79. A broad range of well-planned activities is ensuring that these children are developing their creative skills effectively. All children can sing familiar songs satisfactorily and they sing enthusiastically with the teacher. Their singing and use of untuned percussion instruments is stimulating the children's musical awareness.
80. The children are making satisfactory progress in their art skills. Drawings and pictures are colourful and painted with care. Activities using modelling clay provide opportunities for creating simple sculptures and improving dexterity. Most children are in line to meet the targets in the Early Learning Goals by the time that they enter Year 1.

Physical development

81. No overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching in this area. Children are, however, developing their skills in cutting and sticking through a range of suitable activities. Children sit, kneel or stand when working with 'small world' toys, construction sets and in the role-play area. They develop manipulative skills when pouring water into containers during water play. The children play outside at playtime and have good opportunities for physical activity during timetabled lessons in the hall. Opportunities for physical play outdoors in the secure play area are not sufficiently planned for. There are no large toys or climbing equipment for children to develop their skills further. This has been recognised by the school and it is hoped that suitable equipment will be purchased in the near future. Children are not meeting all the targets in the Early Learning Goals by the time that they enter Year 1.

ENGLISH

82. **Standards in English have improved since the time of the previous inspection and this is particularly so in Key Stage 1, where the implementation of a reading recovery programme is having a very positive impact on pupils' achievement in Key Stage 1 and the beginning of Key Stage 2.**
83. **In the national tests and assessments in 2000, pupils' attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was among the bottom 5 per cent. In comparison with schools of a similar context, the school's results were well below average. There were no pupils who attained the higher Level 5 in these assessments and this is well below average. Her Majesty's Inspectors commented in their last report that some improvement had been made on standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. They reported that there had been significant improvement in the performance of pupils in Key Stage 1.**
84. **Standards in reading were well below average and in the lowest 5 per cent nationally in writing at the end of Key Stage 1 in the 2000 national assessments. Average standards in reading and well below average standards in writing were achieved when comparisons are made with schools of similar circumstances. Girls achieve much better than boys in reading and spelling at Key Stage 1, but this trend is reversed in Key Stage 2. The year groups are quite small and fluctuate in size and, therefore, these results need to be treated with some caution when making direct comparisons with other schools of similar size. The school has set appropriate targets for pupils' attainment in English at 11 and it is making good progress towards achieving them.**

85. Inspection findings generally reflect the test results at both key stages, but there has been some noticeable improvement in standards across the school and especially in Key Stage 1. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations at both key stages. Standards in reading and writing are below average at the end of Key Stage 2. There is a good proportion of 11-year-old pupils achieving the expected standards in reading and writing at Level 4, but no pupils at the higher Level 5. This is because pupils in Year 6 have not yet developed sufficient skills in reading overall and their library skills are still underdeveloped. Standards in handwriting are quite good and many of these pupils are using a consistent and neat style. Standards are average in reading and below average in writing at Key Stage 1. The high proportion of pupils with special educational needs is limiting the number of pupils writing at Level 3 standard in this key stage and this is having an adverse impact on pupils' attainment overall. These pupils are, however, making good progress in developing their writing skills through effective implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and good provision for writing in other subjects, such as history, geography and religious education.
86. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 2. Skills in speaking and listening are being developed satisfactorily across the school through a range of activities in the literacy hours and other lessons. Teachers use every opportunity to involve pupils in reading aloud from a range of texts in these lessons, either as individuals or as a class. Pupils in a Year 6 class provided a very good example of this when they effectively read aloud from a passage illustrating the dangers of working in a Victorian factory. Opportunities are also provided for speaking and listening in activities such as Circle Time; for example, when pupils in a class for Years 4 and 5 pupils clearly expressed their thoughts in response to a dramatic picture. This also provided good opportunities for personal and social development.
87. Attainment in reading at the end of Key Stage 2 is still below average, but pupils are making good progress in Key Stage 1 and in Years 3, 4 and 5 as a result of a clear focus by the school to improve standards and pupils' attitudes to reading. Progress is satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 2, but there has been insufficient focus on developing the pupils' library skills and the pupils' knowledge of the famous authors is a little limited. As a consequence, there are no pupils reading at the higher Level 5 in this year group. A significant feature has been the implementation of a reading recovery programme throughout Key Stage 1 and in Years 3, 4 and 5 for pupils with reading difficulties. The sounds and names of letters are being very effectively taught by staff to specific individuals three times a day and this is providing these pupils with the necessary confidence to read unfamiliar words accurately. Teachers also openly encourage pupils to take books home to read in all classes. Large charts record the individual pupil's response to this and certificates are awarded to them on a regular basis to recognise their achievements. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are developing their research skills and the gathering of information very effectively through access to the Internet in the computer suite.
88. Attainment in writing is below average at the end of both key stages. The quality of pupils' writing has been a school improvement target and several strategies have been implemented. As a result, progress is now good across the school. For example, there has been a strong focus to develop a consistent handwriting style. The success of this can be seen through the overall quality of work and the neatness of pupils' writing in their books. Information and communication technology is also providing a range of good opportunities for pupils to extend their writing skills through using the word-processor. The quality of pupils' spelling is developing well as a result of good marking by the teachers and a strong focus on letter names and sounds in literacy lessons. Many pupils in Key Stage 2 can use simple dictionaries to check the spellings of words used in their

writing and pupils in Year 2 are beginning to develop this skill well. A very successful strategy has been the involvement of all Key Stage 2 pupils in the review of their own writing and the setting of future targets with their class teacher for improvement. Writing review sheets are clearly highlighting the national expectations for these pupils to refer to. This has raised their expectations and provided a good focus for improvement.

89. Pupils' achievements reflect the good quality of teaching seen in English. Pupils respond well to and enjoy the literacy lessons. They show great enthusiasm for the introductory text work at the beginning of lessons and listen carefully to the teachers. Many pupils display a level of independence when working individually on their writing tasks. Presentation skills are developing well and pupils take a pride in their work and wish to improve. Most pupils respond well to the high quality marking of the teachers and corrections are undertaken with diligence.
90. Teaching is good across the school and literacy lessons are being taught well. Teachers have a good understanding of how to teach reading and writing and they provide a varied range of opportunities to extend pupils' speaking and listening skills. The effective implementation of the literacy hour is providing a good platform for the further improvement of pupils' literacy skills. In a class for Years 2 and 3 pupils, the teacher made very good use of visual aids. For example, the flip chart was used well to illustrate the structuring of the pupils' research on a topic of their choice. All teachers ensure that the learning objectives for each lesson are clearly understood by all the pupils and displayed in language they understand. This was clearly illustrated in the Year 6 class where the teacher made these explicit on the board. Teachers display good subject knowledge. They introduce lessons confidently and display a range of strategies and styles to teach concepts effectively, as seen in a lesson for Years 4 and 5 pupils to develop their use of poetry writing. In this lesson, the teacher talked with confidence and ensured that the lesson moved on at a good pace. As a result, pupils were keen to start their writing and produced some good work by the end of the lesson
91. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported either in lessons or in small groups withdrawn from the class for reading recovery work. Individual education plans are used appropriately to provide a clear programme of work for these pupils, but some individual targets are too general in nature.
92. Subject leadership is good and the co-ordinator is very aware of the areas of the curriculum that need to be improved. She has been involved in the monitoring of teachers' plans and the observation of some teaching and learning. The resources are satisfactory overall and the quality and range of the reading scheme material is good. The library has recently been refurbished and the number of books has been increased. The range of non-fiction books available for individual research is now good and effectively enhanced by the pupils' ease of access to research information over the Internet, in the new computer suite.

MATHEMATICS

93. At the time of the last inspection standards were judged to be average in Key Stage 1, but below average in Key Stage 2. Standards in mathematics remain average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2. However, inspection evidence shows that the effects of the school's good introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, together with a whole-school focus on raising the level of achievement in mathematics, have promoted good progress in all classes. The overall standards of all classes in both key stages, with the exception of the present Year 6 class, are now average. Progress since the last inspection is good.

94. The present Year 6 class has a high level of pupils with special educational needs, at 73 per cent. The class has also experienced a high level of pupil movement; only six out of the present 23 pupils were attending Elm Hall School at the end of Key Stage 1. This class has also been disadvantaged by being taught by a large number of supply teachers. Although they have received the same, improved mathematical teaching as other pupils in the school, they have received it for a shorter time. The result of these factors is that their education has been disrupted and, although good progress has been made, the standards of this group, in mathematics, remain below average.
95. In the 2000 end of key stage national tests in mathematics, the school's results were well below the national average at the end of both key stages. When compared to the results of similar schools, these results were well below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and below average at the end of Key Stage 2.
96. The trends over time show that in Key Stage 1 standards in mathematics rose significantly in both the 1998 and 1999 national tests to levels that were well above the national average. There was a fallback in the 2000 tests mainly because of the composition of the class that took the tests. During the last three years the overall trend has been one of good progression. Inspection evidence confirms this good progress and standards are now average.
97. In Key Stage 2, standards in mathematics have improved steadily each year since 1997. The overall trend in Key Stage 2 over the past three years has been one of consistent improvement in line with the improvements made in standards nationally. In spite of this improvement, standards have remained well below the national average in national tests.
98. In both key stages, the use and application of mathematics and the teaching of mental strategies are good.
99. The good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has enabled good progress in the area of using and applying mathematics, in both key stages. There has been good progress in the teaching of mental strategies of calculation. In numeracy lessons, pupils enjoy mental calculation in a good range of number and mathematical processes. When pupils are asked, in lessons, to explain their strategies, they do so clearly. This enables pupils to learn from each other. The range of different methods which pupils use also shows that teachers are not limiting the range of strategies used. In both key stages, the majority of work presented to pupils in the areas of investigation, data collection and graphical representation is good.
100. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils count to 20 in twos. They understand odd and even numbers develop sequences up to 50 and count on and back to and from 20, 10p and £10. Pupils understand digital and analogue time to quarter-hours. They recognise reflective symmetry, name two-dimensional shapes and use non-standard units to measure length, weight and capacity. The very high level information gathered from the assessment of pupils' progress is well used to modify these tasks for less able and more able pupils. Pupils understand that data can be collected and represented in graphical form. They collect information about shoes from their classmates and draw a block graph of the results.
101. At the end of Key Stage 2, average pupils use all four rules of number to hundreds, tens and units, add and subtract proper fractions and decimals to two places. They work with standard measures in weight, distance, measure and capacity. They use regular and irregular shapes in tessellation, recognise and draw a good range of angles, identify two- and three-dimensional shapes by their properties and calculate the volume of three-dimensional figures. Pupils investigate problems in number, shape, money and distance.

Tally charts and frequency charts are used to collect data and the graphical representation of this data takes the form of Venn diagrams, line and block graphs and bar charts.

102. Work in number and shape, space and measure is often modified to suit the abilities of less able and more able pupils. However, the very good level of information, which is collected from the assessment of pupils' work, is not consistently used to carefully match future work to pupils' levels of ability in these areas or in mathematical investigations or in data handling. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. This is mainly due to the very good, well-focused support given to all these pupils.
103. The quality of teaching is good overall in both key stages. Of the four lessons observed during the inspection, one in each class, the quality of teaching in two lessons was very good, in one lesson it was good and in the other it was sound. Teaching of good quality was observed in both key stages. Teachers' good quality planning, which is linked to the framework of the National Numeracy Strategy, is thorough and modified to match the abilities of less able and more able pupils. However, the scrutiny of pupils' past work shows that too much work is presented to all pupils at the same level and that the good assessment information that is gathered is not consistently used to match future tasks to pupils' levels of developing ability.
104. Teachers use very good classroom management skills to ensure pupils' close attention and good behaviour. In the best lessons, teachers involve pupils in their studies to such a high level that pupils become totally involved in their quest to solve problems. In one very good lesson in Years 4 and 5, the whole class became thoroughly involved in an investigation of the rules of multiplication. The teacher used a wide range of behaviour management skills, high pace and regular use of 'time out' to enable pairs of pupils to discuss strategies for problem solving. Pupils learned well because they were offered a high-paced investigation using all four rules of number.
105. Pupils in both key stages thoroughly enjoy their work in mathematics, particularly when they are challenged to use and explain their mental strategies. Almost all pay close attention to their teachers, join readily in all discussions and are confident when offering opinions. Most pupils complete a good quantity of work during lessons.
106. The very good capability of the subject co-ordinator is a good model of teaching practice and there is a good commitment to improving the standards attained by pupils. She is fully aware of the need to maintain the good progress that is now in place in order to raise standards even further. Resources for the support of teaching and learning in mathematics are good.

SCIENCE

107. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are below average, but pupils are making satisfactory progress in relation to their prior attainment. There are a high number of pupils with special educational needs within this year group and this restricts the level of achievement overall. This is a similar position as reported in the most recent report from Her Majesty's Inspectors (July 1999). Standards are better at the end of Key Stage 1 and are now in line with national expectations. This is because the overall improvements in the teaching of science across the school have had a more immediate impact on the standards achieved.
108. Standards were well below average in the 2000 tests for 11-year-olds, with an above average number of pupils attaining below Level 3. The number of girls performing at these low levels was significantly lower than the number of boys. Only one pupil attained

the higher Level 5 and this is well below the national average for this age group. Teacher assessment at the end of Key Stage 1 in the national assessments in 2000 indicated that nearly all pupils attained the expected Level 2. There were no pupils who attained the higher Level 3. There has, however, been a trend of overall improvement at both key stages over the last three years. The year groups are quite small and fluctuate in size from year to year; therefore, these results do need to be treated with some caution.

109. By the time pupils are in Year 6, most have satisfactorily developed their skills of investigation; for instance, they effectively plan their own investigations and record their results as seen in an investigation of a simple flying spinner. They are beginning to predict and hypothesise about the likely outcomes of their investigations. Most can use their knowledge of mean and mode to interpret their results. They can effectively record their results in simple charts and look for any patterns in the results. Analysis of these pupils' books indicates that the majority of pupils are developing a sound understanding of other areas of study, such as healthy living, the human body and solubility. Most pupils in Year 2 can name the basic parts of a flower and know how to make a simple circuit to make a bulb light. They can investigate the various properties of common materials and record their results in a simple table.
110. The response of pupils to scientific enquiry is good. They work effectively together in pairs and small groups, sharing equipment with each other. All pupils enjoy investigative work and this is especially beneficial to pupils with special educational needs, who receive good quality support from classroom assistants and other pupils in the class.
111. The quality of teaching is good overall with no unsatisfactory lessons observed. In one lesson for pupils in the Years 4 and 5 class, the quality of teaching was excellent. The quality of teachers' planning in all lessons is good and this ensures that learning objectives are clearly understood by pupils. Subject expertise is secure across the school and this enables teachers to ask questions that challenge and probe pupils' understanding. Teachers encourage pupils to explain their findings and this was very clearly demonstrated in a Year 6 lesson to investigate a flying spinner. Plenty of opportunity was provided for the pupils to investigate their data and the use of calculators provided good opportunities to practise numeracy skills. In the challenging lesson for pupils in the Years 4 and 5 class, the teacher used a wide range of strategies to stimulate and motivate the pupils in their investigations on friction. This resulted in very good progress being made and a sense of achievement amongst the pupils.
112. The curriculum is well planned and there is good provision for practical investigations in all classes throughout the school. This ensures that pupils are given sufficient opportunity to show initiative and a sense of responsibility in undertaking this work. This represents good improvement on the findings of the previous inspection where it was found that these opportunities were quite limited. The co-ordinator has provided good support for other members of staff, but is currently absent due to illness. She has provided the school with a clear view of what needs to be developed further. The quality and range of resources are good and they are stored effectively in a central area.

ART AND DESIGN

113. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection. The quality of teaching in this lesson was satisfactory. However, evidence from displays, work that pupils have completed and from talking to pupils and staff enable the judgements that, overall, the quality of teaching is good and that standards are above expectations at the end of both key stages.

114. In Key Stage 1, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning, especially in sketching and painting. They cover all aspects of the curriculum using a good range of media. Pupils use their artistic skills in a good range of subjects in the wider curriculum. For example, a large collage picture, which pupils made, is well displayed in a geographical study of Victorian heirlooms. Pupils have also drawn and painted good quality pictures of Greek pottery in history lessons. Younger pupils have made three-dimensional picture of lambs, foals and flowers, which are combined with some writing and some good word-processing, in a study of spring. The school fosters the use of art and design in many other subjects. There are good displays of art and design work in history, geography, mathematics, science and religious education. Pupils develop sound skills in mixing colours, their observational and sketching skills are well developed and there are sufficient experiences in three-dimensional art to develop a good level of ability. In the one lesson observed in Key Stage 1, pupils demonstrated good fabric joining skills and clear knowledge and understanding of the properties of the fabrics they were using. Throughout Key Stage 1 pupils study the work of famous artists and use their learning in their own work.
115. All pupils in Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. They build on their earlier skills and there is good extension of their knowledge and understanding. For instance, pupils in Year 6 have made good quality masks based on their study of a myth from the Tungit Indians of Canada, which the class had read. This is a good cross-curricular study in art and design and history, which also extends pupils' cultural learning well. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have used information and communication technology to access their favourite pictures of Van Gogh and Monet. They have used this research to paint good quality pictures in the styles of both artists. Pupils make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the artists' work. Pupils in both key stages show real interest in their art activities. They are proud of what they achieve.
116. Art and design are fully integrated into the wider curriculum and are well used as tools to aid learning in other subjects. The detail in some pictures and the use of fine brushes is sometimes very good. The results of a Key Stage 1 painting lesson were seen where pupils had produced high quality pictures based on the patterns found in flowers. The colour mixing and the accuracy of pupils' observations shown in some pictures were very good.
117. The art policy has been reviewed and will shortly be ratified by all staff. The assessment of pupils' progress is satisfactory and records of pupils' improving skills, knowledge and understanding are kept. However, this information is not well used to carefully match future tasks to what pupils already know, understand and can do. All the required aspects of the subject are covered and this is confirmed from talking to pupils about the range of artwork that they undertake. The new art co-ordinator is creative and thoughtful about developing art for enjoyment and pleasure and is a good source of inspiration for the whole staff. Teaching resources cover a good range of painting media, brushes and applicators, and paper and fabrics.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

118. Standards in design technology are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages. Progress throughout the school, including for those pupils with special educational needs, is satisfactory. By the time that they leave the school, pupils work with an appropriate range of media and have the opportunity of using saws, drills and files, and can make structures with reinforced corners. They have dealt with a variety of textiles and foodstuffs and are well aware of hygiene rules. By the time the pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they are attaining standards in line with national expectations

for pupils of their age. The chassis and bodywork of model vans showed good design skills and that pupils measure, cut and join a good range of materials, including timber. The school's good attitude to cross-curricular work is evident again here as electric motors were being used to drive these vehicles, which were then to be used as a part of a study in forces.

119. In Key Stage 1, pupils are taught the elements of design and as they progress into Key Stage 2 their designs develop from sketches into clearly drawn designs later showing measures and detailed design features.
120. All aspects of the subject are covered in the school's curriculum, including food technology. Pupils make clear links between the foodstuffs that they make and their studies in science of a healthy diet.
121. Teaching was very good in the one lesson seen during the inspection. From examining the models that pupils have made it is clear that teachers make good links with other subjects, particularly mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make satisfactory progress.
122. All pupils take great pleasure in their work in design and technology. They take care both with their designs and when making artefacts. Their attitudes to the subject are good.
123. Since the last inspection, assessment and record keeping procedures have now been implemented and assessment information is well recorded. However, this information is not well used to match future tasks carefully to what pupils already know, understand and can do. The school has improved the resources and pupils are now able to choose from a better range. There is a good provision of tools. The school does not have a member of staff responsible for co-ordinating the subject as design and technology is not currently one of the school's priorities. The policy is a good document fully covering the requirements of the National Curriculum. The school is trialling the latest national guidance for design and technology and noting where some aspects need to be adapted or changed as each unit of work is tackled.

GEOGRAPHY

124. The previous inspection found that attainment at the end of both key stages was in line with national expectations. Inspection evidence indicates that the school has maintained this level of achievement. The progress of pupils overall is satisfactory.
125. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils have an understanding of the geographical position of the British Isles and their own locality in relation to it. Pupils can use atlases to find information that they then enter on to blank maps. They are aware of the important role of our major rivers in the provision of drinking water. In their studies about Benin in India, they have become aware of the differences between their lifestyle and that of the Indian people. They know that the climate is different and have an understanding of some of the geographical features of India, such as its rivers, surrounding seas and bordering countries. They understand that in India there are extremes of poverty and that many people live their lives at a basic level. Pupils with special educational needs progress at the same rate as their classmates.
126. Inspection evidence indicates that the teaching of the subject is at least satisfactory. Teachers plan their lessons well, with clearly stated lesson objectives. In the two lessons observed, good pace was maintained and teachers demonstrated enthusiasm for the subject. Teachers give good explanations of what the pupils are to do during lessons and intervene well to keep them on task. During group discussions they give good support

and guidance to the pupils. Pupils are well behaved in lessons and listen carefully to their teachers and they work well in co-operation with others. This is the result of the high-level behaviour management skills and the enthusiasm that teachers and learning support assistants exhibit.

127. There are clear links between geography and other subjects of the curriculum. For example, the pupils use their literacy skills to write extended stories and descriptions. The use of detailed, well-drawn maps is a feature of their historical study of ancient Egypt. In a good geography lesson in Year 6, pupils showed their good skills in the use of the Internet. They logged on in pairs and accessed the web site of the meteorological office to support their study of weather patterns. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are developed through discussion and working in co-operation with others. Pupils' attitudes to geography are satisfactory in both key stages.
128. A member of the teaching staff is designated as the subject co-ordinator. She monitors teachers' planning for subject coverage. Resources for the subject are satisfactory and there is a development plan that includes in-service training for staff, the monitoring of teaching and the development of resources.

HISTORY

129. Standards in history are in line with expectations at the end of both key stages. Due to the pressures of timetabling, no history lessons were seen during the inspection. Evidence for judgements was gathered from scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, teachers' planning and discussions with staff and pupils. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress in history in both key stages. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, their work is at a level expected for pupils of this age.
130. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing an awareness of time scale by comparing then and now. For example, in their study of the England of the past, they understand how people travelled from place to place by wagon or coach and they are gaining an understanding of how things change over time by talking with their teacher about the changes to transport.
131. Pupils in Year 6 have a good recall of the history topics they studied last year in Year 5. They described their Victorian studies with enthusiasm. They were able to draw comparisons between a Victorian school and their own present day experiences. Pupils also demonstrated good factual knowledge about life in Ancient Egypt, as they described some of the main events, people and changes. The work they had done on the Egyptians' concept of the afterlife made a good contribution towards their spiritual development. The work on display demonstrates that they can use a range of sources to find information, but they are less secure in explaining how history may be represented and interpreted in different ways.
132. Based on the available evidence, it is possible to say that the quality of teaching is satisfactory. In a Key Stage 2 lesson in literacy, the subject matter was based on the novel *Goodnight Mr. Tom*, which linked well with the class studies of the Second World War. Later, in a design technology lesson, pupils designed a Second World War gas mask. This shows, yet again, the school's commitment to the cross-curricular links between different subjects.
133. Pupils enjoy history. Older pupils who were interviewed about their work also demonstrated a keen enthusiasm for the subject.
134. There has been a good level of improvement since the last inspection. There is now an effective and up-to-date policy. The school has adopted the national scheme of work and

is monitoring its implementation so that any necessary changes can be made. Resources have been improved, but more are needed. The co-ordinator is reviewing the resource provision against the requirements of the new scheme.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

135. At the time of the last inspection, it was reported that inadequate time and attention were given to the development of information and communication technology. In the interim period between that report (July 1999) and the present inspection the school has made very good progress in its provision for the subject. This is reflected in the overall satisfactory level of attainment and teaching now in place. That so much has been achieved in such a relatively short time is in the main due to the very good management of the subject by the co-ordinator. She and the headteacher have focused clearly on what needed to be done, working to a detailed development plan. There is a structured scheme of work based on published guidelines, but adapted to the needs of the school. Emphasis has been put on the development of staff knowledge and, perhaps just as important, staff confidence. Further staff training is planned. The new information and communication technology suite has been an important element in the development of both pupils' attainment and teaching. The school community has worked hard to raise money for equipment and the subject is now well resourced.
136. At the ages of 7 and 11 all pupils, including those with special educational needs, reach levels of attainment that are in line with national expectations. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are progressing well in their ability to switch on the computer, open and close programs, draw pictures, save or delete their work and change the appearance of text. These pupils can use a mouse; they can, for example, click and drag. Pupils in Key Stage 2 are developing their ability to use e-mail and the Internet. They are developing their skills in using spreadsheets with varying degrees of competence and are able to make predictions about what will happen if they carry out certain actions. The good teaching, good long and short term planning and access to well organised new equipment are all factors which are having a positive effect on pupils' progress, which is good overall. Pupils' enthusiasm for the subject is also an important factor in their progress. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
137. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and often good. While only one information and communication technology lesson was observed during the inspection, the use of the school's information and communication technology suite was observed in other lessons, such as geography in Year 6. When using computers with their classes, teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge both when teaching whole classes and when dealing with individual problems. The activities that the pupils are given are well prepared and suitable for their age and ability. Teachers intervene well in lessons, picking up on common problems and answering questions. All teachers and learning support assistants show good class control and maintain good relationships with their pupils. They ensure that pupils are quite clear about the objectives of lessons. Support staff are used efficiently to support less able pupils and those having problems. Each pupil has an individual record on which they record the skills they have learned and the point at which they become independent. However, the good assessment information collected is not well used to carefully guide the progress of pupils as their levels of skill improve.
138. The subject has been well linked to other subjects; for example, literacy, art, history and geography. In literacy, pupils have used word-processing to develop their writing skills. Pupils are given the opportunity to study the work of artists such as Van Gogh and Monet. Using computers, pupils have produced some good examples of work in their respective styles.

139. Pupils are enthusiastic in their approach to the subject and work well with both their teachers and each other. They are well behaved despite the excitement generated by the activities they are given. They listen carefully to instructions and try hard to please their teachers. Pupils are quick to answer questions and take part in lessons.
140. The school has worked hard to remedy the problems identified by the last report and has been very successful in its efforts. The co-ordinator is well aware that there is still work to do if the attainment of pupils is to be raised even further, particularly in the range of experiences offered in computer modelling and control technology.

MUSIC

141. There is currently a lack of subject expertise within the school. However, a group of local primary schools has been successful in attracting extra funding for small schools. Elm Hall School has used this money to employ a peripatetic teacher to provide expert teaching for all classes in the school. As a result, progress is good for all pupils and as a consequence standards are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. This high quality provision is ensuring good progress is being made in Key Stage 2, but the ability of pupils using a range of instruments and composing their own music is still very limited. As a result, standards are below national expectations for 11-year-olds. There are currently no pupils receiving extra tuition in playing an instrument, apart from in an extra-curricular recorder club.
142. The overall quality of teaching and learning is very good across the school and pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in lessons. This very high quality teaching is providing much needed inspiration and confidence to pupils. Class teachers work alongside the pupils in their class and so also benefit from being part of these very good lessons as part of the school's planned staff development for music. A good example of this was seen in a lesson for Year 6 pupils aimed at developing their sense of rhythm while playing an untuned percussion instrument. The specialist teacher organised the lesson very well. She fully involved members of staff in supporting pupils in their interpretation of a simple score as they accompanied a well-known song from a London musical. Singing throughout the school is satisfactory and all pupils sing with enthusiasm and gusto in lessons.
143. The curriculum co-ordinator has a clear view of what needs to be done to improve standards in music making, but the monitoring of teaching and learning is underdeveloped. The school is making satisfactory use of visiting musicians to develop the pupils' knowledge of other instruments. There are, however, missed opportunities to develop the pupils' appreciation of music in assemblies because the composers and instruments being played on the music system are not being brought to the pupils' attention. The quality and range of resources within the school are good and they are stored effectively in dedicated trolleys.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

144. Standards are in line at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 with those normally expected nationally. Pupils' attainment in swimming is satisfactory and most achieve the standard expected nationally at the end of Year 6.
145. Pupils in Year 6 are making good progress in a range of physical skills. They stretch and warm up and know why vigorous exercise is important. They can catch and dribble a basketball when on the move. This is because the effective demonstration of skills by the teacher is ensuring that the development of skills is a key aim and, consequently, their achievement is high. For instance, they can use these skills to approach the basket to

complete a recognised technique to score a basket. Higher-attaining pupils dribble with considerable control and apply this skill effectively in a competitive game. All these pupils have developed good attitudes to physical activity and all pupils work enthusiastically in small teams. Pupils' behaviour is good as a result of good management of activities by the teacher. At Key Stage 1, pupils respond quickly to their teacher's instructions and show confidence and enthusiasm for physical activity. The youngest pupils in Key Stage 1 display satisfactory levels of control when running and jumping and in balancing on the floor and simple apparatus. The oldest pupils can use a racquet with confidence to propel a small ball towards a partner. Most can field and catch a small ball and throw it carefully for their partner to strike again with their racquet.

146. The quality of teaching is good overall and best in Key Stage 2. Planning is detailed and clearly linked to the schemes of work. Teachers dress very appropriately for physical education. They provide good opportunities for warm up and cool down at the beginning and end of lessons. All teachers demonstrate exercises effectively to the pupils during lessons and, consequently, pupils are able to improve their own skills. Teachers are aware of pupils' abilities and monitor their progress accordingly. The teacher of a class of Year 6 pupils effectively reviewed the work from a previous lesson and demonstrated the skills of catching and dribbling a basketball confidently. A very good rapport has been established with these pupils and, as a result, the teacher manages these pupils very well and maintains good levels of discipline and control. Good use is made of pupils to demonstrate skills learnt and assess progress. Very good opportunities are provided for the pupils to appraise the work of others and, as a result, pupils are fully involved in assessing their own learning. Good pace is ensured in Key Stage 2 lessons and, as a result, pupils display a high level of motivation.
147. The subject is effectively led by the co-ordinator. The quality and range of resources are good and effective use is made of facilities at the neighbouring secondary school. There is appropriate provision for competitive sport and the school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities with the assistance of commercial organisations.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

148. Very little teaching was observed during the week of the inspection. Judgements are based on the analysis of pupils' work, scrutiny of teachers' plans and the observation of one lesson. Standards are broadly in line with local expectations at both key stages and pupils' learning fully meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
149. At the end of Key Stage 2, many pupils are familiar with several stories from the Bible, such as those from the Old Testament, and they retell them carefully in their books. Pupils demonstrate that their knowledge of Christian places of worship and those of other faiths is satisfactory. This is because lessons include a good range of work on all the major faiths identified within the locally agreed syllabus. As a result, most pupils have developed a satisfactory knowledge of these faiths, such as Judaism and Hinduism. Good displays around the school, such as that depicting Hindu deities, further support this good work. Pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactorily developing their understanding of religious issues and the nominated faiths through listening to stories and taking part in class discussions, such as right and wrong and helping at home. Teachers make good use of these occasions to provide opportunities for reflection on a range of spiritual issues contained within stories from the Bible. For example, the teacher of pupils at the beginning of Key Stage 1 effectively used the story of 'Jesus healing the blind man' to illustrate the feelings of sadness and concern for the plight of others.
150. Regular teaching, combined with opportunities for pupils to record and reflect on the stories told, is developing the pupils' understanding that all people are of value and that

there are several other faiths other than Christianity. As a result, the pupils' attitudes to learning are good at both key stages and pupils listen with interest to teachers, making sensitive comments about the stories and issues discussed. Most pupils complete their written work with care and thoughtfulness.

151. No overall judgement can be made on the quality of teaching throughout the school, but in the one lesson seen it was good. The teacher told the story well, creating the appropriate atmosphere for pupils to reflect on what it might feel like to be blind. As a result, these pupils responded well to the teacher's good questioning and they were keen to contribute to the overall discussions. The pupils' books clearly indicate that teachers provide good opportunities for the development of literacy skills in religious education lessons.
152. The curriculum is satisfactory and there is appropriate guidance to inform teachers' planning based on the locally agreed syllabus. Procedures for assessment are underdeveloped, with the result that teachers are unable to accurately gauge pupils' progress overtime and measure standards against the locally agreed syllabus. Management of the subject is satisfactory overall. The subject co-ordinator has made a useful start in planning for improvement and there has been some useful monitoring of teaching and learning within the school. The quality and range of curriculum resources are satisfactory and there are good collections of Bibles for pupils to refer to in lessons.