

INSPECTION REPORT

CHAPPEL CofE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL

Colchester

Essex

LEA: Essex

Unique reference number: 115073

Headteacher: Mr Richard Gregory

Reporting inspector: Mrs Patricia Davies
22460

Dates of inspection: 25th – 28th June, 2001

Inspection number: 192187

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:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	mixed
School address:	The Street Chappel Colchester Essex
Postcode:	CO6 2DD
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jean Harrison
Date of previous inspection:	17 th February, 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22460	Patricia Davies	<i>Registered inspector</i>	English; Mathematics; Art and design; Design and technology; Physical education	The school's results and achievements. How well pupils are taught. How effective the curricular and other opportunities are offered to pupils.
9537	Caroline Marden	<i>Lay inspector</i>		Attitudes, values and personal development. How well the school cares for its pupils. How well the school works in partnership with parents.
23354	Lyn Adams	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science; Geography; History; Information and communication technology; Music; Religious education; Areas of learning for the Foundation Stage; Provision for pupils with special educational needs.	How well the school is led and managed.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is much smaller than other primary schools, with 48 pupils attending, aged four to eleven years. Most year groups have only a very small number of pupils, and all pupils are taught in classes containing other year groups. Since the previous inspection, the school has contracted to two full-time classes, although it has recently created a third class in the mornings to teach Years 3 and 4. Those children at the Foundation Stage join a class with pupils in Years 1 and 2. During the afternoons, the class is also joined by Year 3 pupils. There are 12.5 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals, which is below the national average. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is also below the national average, at 15 per cent. All these pupils are at the lower stages of need and none has a statement. There is a significant movement of pupils in and out of the school, representing an overall figure of 38 per cent. About a third of the pupils live outside the village and are brought to school in transport provided by the local authority. The attainment of children varies considerably when they first enter the school in the reception class. Those children currently in the reception group are attaining levels above those expected of children of a similar age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Pupils at Chappel school benefit from the caring attention of committed, hard working staff, and receive a sound education. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. By the time pupils leave, at eleven years of age, standards are above national expectations in English, mathematics and art and design, and are close to national expectations in science. Pupils have good attitudes to learning. Behaviour and the quality of relationships are very good. The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although these aspects of the school's work are not supported well enough by a close analysis and evaluation of what is taking place. Taken overall, the school is satisfactorily led and managed, and gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils at the ends of Key Stages 1 and 2 are achieving standards above national expectations in English, mathematics and art and design;
- Caring pastoral support and good provision for moral and social development successfully support pupils' very good behaviour and the high quality of their relationships with others;
- Good extra-curricular activities and links between subjects make a valuable contribution towards pupils' enthusiasm for and involvement in their learning.

What could be improved

- The quality and extent of monitoring by the headteacher, key staff and governing body of all aspects of the curriculum, teaching and learning;
- The analysis of test and assessment information so that it focuses sharply on pupils' achievement, and the use of this information to inform and guide planning.

The school has already improved its assessment practices and is aware of the need to improve monitoring. The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS PREVIOUS INSPECTION

The school has made a satisfactory degree of improvement since it was last inspected in February 1997. Standards are now higher in English and mathematics, although more able pupils are not challenged enough at Key Stage 2 to achieve at the level higher than that expected in science. There has been good improvement to the teaching of information and communication technology, and standards now meet national expectations. There have been satisfactory improvements in religious education at Key Stage 1 and in design and technology. National guidance has been adopted for medium term planning for all subjects, but it has not been formally modified to meet the school's needs. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during this inspection. Good assessment systems have been developed for English and mathematics, and there is now a behaviour policy. Procedures for monitoring and increasing attendance have also been improved. Strengths relating to pupils' attitudes

have been maintained, and behaviour and the quality of relationships are now very good. Parents continue to have positive views about the school's work, with some increase in their overall satisfaction. The governing body has also extended its expertise and active role in the school's work, and strategic planning has improved. However, there has not been enough development to strategies for monitoring the quality of education, either through evaluating teaching or learning, or looking closely at pupils' achievements and using this information to improve the school's performance. The governing body, headteacher and staff understand the need to develop these areas further, and the capacity for future improvement is sound.

STANDARDS

In the national tests for eleven year-olds in 2000, pupils achieved standards well above the national average in mathematics and above average in English. They were broadly in line with national expectations for science. These results were close to the national average in comparison with similar schools for science, but were well above for English and mathematics. In the national tests for pupils aged seven in 2000, pupils achieved below national expectations in writing and well below in both reading and mathematics. These results were the same in comparison with similar schools. No pupil achieved the higher level (Level 3) in these tests. Teacher assessments for science were very low, in the bottom five per cent nationally. Test results year on year cannot be fairly compared because individual year groups contain only small numbers of pupils, so that the result of each pupil has a significant impact on percentages. Test results are also adversely affected by the proportion of pupils with special educational needs within each year group, and by pupils moving in and out of the school. These factors had an impact on last year's Year 2 and on the present Years 2 and 6. However, some trends are apparent. The school's overall trend in the test results in recent years for pupils in Year 6 has been above the national trend. However, during this time, pupils have never achieved as well in the national science test for eleven-year-olds as they have on occasions in the tests for English and mathematics. Additionally, boys have almost consistently performed better than girls in mathematics in the tests for seven-year-olds. Inspection evidence from lessons seen and from pupils' work shows pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 to be achieving standards above national expectations in English, mathematics and art and design. Standards are close to those expected of pupils of a similar age in science, information and communication technology, religious education, geography, history, music and in athletics at Key Stage 2. This means that standards are lower in science at Key Stage 2 than at the time of the previous inspection. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements about standards in design and technology or in physical education at Key Stage 1. The school's targets for the national tests for eleven-year-olds were exceeded in 2000. Targets for this year were raised, and those for 2002 have been based on more detailed information about the relative attainment of pupils in each subject. Unconfirmed results of national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001 indicate that a higher percentage of pupils have reached the higher level (Level 5) in all three subjects than was attained in 2000.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils concentrate well, work hard and take pride in what they produce. Only occasionally are pupils restless or inattentive.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in all aspects of school life.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good throughout the school. Pupils of different ages work and play together sensibly. Personal development is satisfactory. Pupils take on more responsibilities as they become older.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Unauthorised absence has fallen over the last year to below 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 evidence of pupils' work, in addition to the lessons seen during the inspection, shows the overall quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen during this inspection. Teaching and learning were good or better in 50 per cent of lessons seen, with 17 per cent very good. As at the previous inspection, there are strengths in planning, relationships between adults and pupils, and the use of resources. Planning is particularly detailed for pupils in different year groups in the reception and Key Stage 1 class. Learning support staff give good support, particularly to pupils with special educational needs and those of lower attainment. In the most successful lessons, challenging work is supported by teachers' good subject knowledge. Skilful questioning demonstrates high expectations of pupils' responses, and allows the teacher to assess the understanding of individual pupils. Within a quiet, work-focused atmosphere, pupils exert high levels of determined effort and make very good progress. However, the progress of children at the Foundation Stage, and other age groups within the class, is sometimes inhibited when they do not have enough opportunities to explore ideas independently. English, mathematics, and numeracy skills in other subjects are satisfactorily taught, whilst literacy and information and communication technology skills are promoted well in other subjects. There is now less difference between the quality teaching at Key Stages 1 and 2 than at the time of the previous inspection, but scrutiny of pupils' work shows that some differences in approach still exist, particularly in the teaching of English and mathematics. Additionally, teachers do not always use marking well enough to help pupils understand how they might improve their work. The Key Stage 2 curriculum for history and geography is not fully used in teaching pupils in Year 3, nor are more able older pupils at Key Stage 2 taught the higher level (Level 5) in science. These weaknesses in teaching contribute to the limitations on pupils' progress over time. There was not enough evidence to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching and learning in other subjects.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Broad and relevant, and enriched by effective links between subjects. Extra-curricular opportunities are good. However, pupils in different year groups or at different key stages do not always have the same quality of experience, particularly pupils in Year 3.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The specific targets in their individual education plans meet a range of needs, mostly related to literacy and behaviour.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Good provision for moral and social education is underpinned by the school's strong Christian ethos. Spiritual and cultural provision are satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	A caring ethos is established through the small, close-knit learning environment. Assessment procedures are sound overall, but the school has not been successful enough in looking closely at pupils' achievements and using this to influence and improve the planning of learning activities.

Links with parents and the quality of information they receive are satisfactory. Parents contribute well to their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Sound. The headteacher gives experienced and committed leadership and has created an ethos in which staff and pupils are valued as individuals. Staff are dedicated and hardworking, and fulfil their many roles and responsibilities conscientiously.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. Governors are fully supportive of the school and properly fulfil their roles and responsibilities. Strategic planning and their knowledge of and active involvement in the school's work have improved but need further development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Systems for monitoring the school's work and the quality of teaching and learning are underdeveloped.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Financial reserves have been set aside for extra staff and building improvements. The use of best value principles is satisfactory, and in the process of further development.

Staffing is satisfactory overall and meets the demands of the curriculum. Performance management has been established, but a programme of lesson observations has not been arranged. Accommodation is satisfactory. Space is well used, but some areas are cramped. Resources are good.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What some parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school has high expectations of what the pupils achieve. • Parents feel comfortable in approaching the school if they have a question or a problem. • Teaching is good. • Children like coming to school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of information they receive about how well their children are progressing.

Parents' satisfaction with the school has strengthened since the previous inspection. Inspection findings largely agree with parents' positive perceptions. However, although annual reports to parents were found to be good, formal opportunities for parents to speak with teachers about their children's progress were found to be limited.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Initial tests show that the attainment of children when they first enter the school into the reception group varies considerably from year to year. The attainment of the small group of children in the present reception year, however, is above what is expected for children of a similar age. These children are making satisfactory progress overall, with good progress in their personal, social and creative skills and their knowledge and understanding of the world. Consequently, most of these children will have reached or exceeded the levels expected of children of a similar age by the time they enter Year 1.

2. In the national tests for eleven year-olds in 2000, pupils achieved standards well above the national average in mathematics. Test results were also above the national average in English, while they were broadly average in science. The results in English and mathematics were well above the average for similar schools and close to it in science. In the national test results for seven year-olds in the same year, pupils achieved standards below national expectations in writing and well below them in reading and mathematics. The results were the same in comparison with similar schools. No pupils achieved the higher level (Level 3) in any of these tests. Teacher assessments for science showed pupils to be achieving standards that were very low against the national average, in the lowest five per cent nationally.

3. Test results vary considerably each year. It is difficult to compare results over time because year groups have only small numbers of pupils, and the results of individual pupils therefore have a considerable impact on overall percentages. So too does the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each group, which affected the results for those pupils in last year's Year 2. Another significant factor is the impact of pupils leaving or joining the school. This has affected all year groups currently in the school, and particularly the current Years 2 and 6. However, some trends do emerge. For example, girls aged seven have under-performed in mathematics compared with boys in almost every year since 1996. Over the same period, pupils have never achieved as well in the national science tests for eleven year-olds as they have on occasions in the tests for English and mathematics. However, test results for eleven year-old pupils have remained above the national trend over recent years, and unconfirmed results of the national tests in 2001 taken by these pupils indicate that a higher percentage have reached the higher level in all three subjects than was attained in 2000. The school's targets for the national tests for eleven year-olds were exceeded in 2000. Targets for this year were increased, and those for 2002 have been more accurately based on more detailed information about the relative attainment of pupils in each subject.

4. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, including those identified with having special educational needs. Inspection evidence, taken from pupils' attainment in lessons and from their work in books and on display, shows pupils in the current Years 2 and 6 to be achieving standards above national expectations in all aspects of English, and in mathematics. This is higher than was found at the time of the previous inspection. Since that time, the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been well established. Links across subjects have been maintained, which allows pupils to have good opportunities to write in other subjects, although there are fewer opportunities for pupils at Key Stage 1 to write during English lessons. This year, funds have also been targeted at creating a third class each morning for pupils in Years 3 and 4, to allow for smaller group teaching at Key Stage 2 and to help support the school's priority to raise standards further in literacy and numeracy. Standards of achievement are broadly similar to national expectations in science though they are lower at Key Stage 2 than was found at the time of the previous inspection. This is because subject planning inhibits more able pupils at Key Stage 2 from working at the higher level (Level 5). The school has successfully developed information and communication technology (ICT) since the previous inspection. Pupils are now meeting a good range and frequency of

experiences and standards are now in line with those expected nationally at the ends of both Key Stages 1 and 2. Standards in religious education have improved at Key Stage 1, where pupils are now meeting the objectives of the locally agreed syllabus, as they are at the end of Key Stage 2. Although there was not enough evidence to make a judgement about all aspects of design and technology, pupils now have regular experience of the subject and they complete their projects to a good standard.

5. Most pupils listen well and express clear and thoughtful ideas and opinions, although a minority are easily distracted. Attitudes to reading are good. Pupils in Year 2 read with accuracy and understanding, and generally have good phonic knowledge. More able pupils use a range of strategies to help them read words correctly. They talk enthusiastically about stories they have enjoyed and know how to find books in the library, using the school's colour and number systems. Pupils write interesting pieces of independent writing. Higher and middle attaining pupils join their handwriting and use full stops accurately, whilst the more able use some punctuation, such as apostrophes, within sentences. Most pupils in the current Year 6 refer to the text to give details about characters and how the story might develop. Some of this information they infer from hints and suggestions within the narrative. They are at ease with the use and meaning of subject terminology, such as simile, personification and alliteration. They use computers and video to research information. Their handwriting is joined and spelling is generally accurate. Higher and middle attainers organise their work into paragraphs, and pupils of all abilities use punctuation, such as speech marks, within sentences. More able pupils write in a variety of styles. The quality of their writing is lively, and higher and middle attainers give clear and detailed explanations in factual accounts. However, the work of lower attaining pupils is sometimes untidy.

6. Year 2 pupils calculate number confidently and accurately. Higher and middle attainers are working on numbers beyond 100 and have a good understanding of place value. Lower attainers calculate all four operations with numbers up to 100. Pupils in Year 6 use correct mathematical terms to explain their strategies, and work confidently within most aspects of the subject. More able pupils use decimal fractions, sometimes beyond two places, including their use within multiplication and division. They are beginning to use formulae for calculations involving volume and number patterns. Middle and lower attainers construct triangles and quadrilaterals, and calculate area and perimeter accurately. Within investigative activities, pupils make predictions and form hypotheses. At both Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils have regular opportunities to explore scientific knowledge and understanding and develop key scientific skills within practical investigations. Pupils in Year 2 conduct experiments on keeping warm as part of their study of materials. They find out about mini-beasts, seed dispersal and living things. By Year 6, pupils record their scientific findings in a variety of ways, using appropriate scientific vocabulary. They cover a suitable range of knowledge, such as reversible and irreversible changes, forces and resistance and the earth in space. However, little evidence was seen of work at the higher level (Level 5).

7. Standards are above those expected of pupils of a similar age in art and design. They are in line with those expected nationally of pupils of a similar age in geography, history, music and in athletics in physical education for those pupils in Year 6. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement about standards in physical education for those pupils in Year 2.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The strengths outlined in the previous inspection relating to pupils' attitudes to learning, their interest in school activities and the quality of their relationships with each other and with adults, have been maintained. Behaviour and relationships have improved, and are now very good. The views of parents, expressed at their meeting before the inspection and in the parents' questionnaire, endorse the findings of this inspection. They commented positively on pupils' polite and thoughtful behaviour and on how much their children enjoy coming to school. Children in the reception group, including those who have joined the class this term, readily respond to requests and directions. They take part in their work eagerly, although they are more compliant than enthusiastic when activities do not allow

them the opportunity to explore ideas for themselves. Relationships are very positive within this small group, and these children work together happily and co-operatively.

9. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, have good attitudes to school life and their learning. They come happily into school in the mornings and enjoy most lessons although, during discussion with pupils, some younger pupils expressed less positive attitudes to history and science. In lessons, they concentrate very well and listen attentively to the teacher. Only occasionally are pupils restless or inattentive. They work hard, and the quality of their written work shows a sense of pride in what they produce. For example, work in topic and workbooks is well presented, although handwriting is sometimes untidy. Pupils are keen participants in the many extra-curricular activities the school provides for them.

10. The behaviour of pupils is consistently very good in all aspects of school life. In the playground and in lessons, pupils of different ages work and play sensibly together. Pupils are polite to visitors and are happy to answer questions. In assemblies, pupils move in and out of the hall quietly and without fuss. During these occasions they listen respectfully and quietly to adults and during prayers. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

11. Relationships in the school community are very good. Pupils and parents report that there are very few incidents of bullying, and, when they do occur, the school deals with them swiftly and effectively. Pupils listen to each other's views with respect, including those of younger pupils in their class group. Personal development is satisfactory. Pupils adopt more responsibilities as they become older and take these duties seriously. They prepare the hall for assembly, organising the recorded music. Others take it in turns to be library monitors. As part of this role, they keep the area tidy and select books to be displayed on a chosen theme. Pupils also raise money for charities. They take part in local events within the village and as part of the 'cluster' of local schools.

12. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average. Unauthorised absence was previously above the national average but in the last year it has fallen to below the national average. Punctuality continues to be good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The evidence of pupils' work, in addition to the lessons seen during the inspection, shows the overall quality of teaching and learning to be satisfactory. In contrast to the previous inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen during this inspection, and all the teaching was satisfactory or better. It was good or better in 50 per cent of lessons, with 17 per cent very good. Strengths of teaching highlighted in the previous report included planning, relationships between adults and pupils and the use of resources, and they continue to be strengths. The disparity in teaching quality between Key Stages 1 and 2 found at the time of the previous inspection is now less pronounced, although some differences still exist, for example in aspects of the teaching of English and mathematics. The quality and quantity of pupils' work in information and communication technology (ICT) indicates this subject is taught well. Increased resources, staff training and the enthusiasm and good subject knowledge of the headteacher, who co-ordinates the subject, have had a significant impact on the quality of teaching in ICT, both of the subject itself and in its use to support learning in other subjects. English and mathematics are satisfactorily taught overall, as are numeracy skills in other subjects such as science. Literacy skills are well used and developed in other subjects, such as design and technology, history, geography, music and religious education. There was not enough evidence to give an overall judgement about the quality of teaching in all other subjects. Learning support assistants are well briefed and effectively deployed. They give valuable support in lessons, particularly to those pupils with special educational needs or lower attainment. However, scrutiny of pupils' work shows that marking is not always well used by teachers to help pupils understand how their work can be improved. Neither are the more able pupils encouraged to learn at a higher level in science as they reach the older year groups at Key Stage 2. Most significantly, the quality of teaching

is considerably challenged where planning for lesson activities has to meet a wider range of different needs during the afternoons, when Year 3 pupils join those at the Foundation Stage and in Years 1 and 2. Despite detailed planning to meet the needs of pupils in different year groups, the Key Stage 2 curriculum for history and geography is not fully addressed in the teaching of those pupils in Year 3. These disparities contribute to pupils' progress being no greater than satisfactory over time.

14. The quality of teaching and learning of children at the Foundation Stage seen were good in lessons during the inspection. Personal and social skills, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative skills are well taught over time. The teaching of language and literacy and mathematics is satisfactory. Lessons are meticulously planned and the teacher conscientiously seeks to ensure that work matches the required curriculum for children of this age. Support staff and other adults are used well to support this small group. Organisation in the class is strong and allows for all groups to have suitably modified activities and an equal share of the teacher's attention. Activities often move seamlessly from one to the next. Relationships are very positive and there are high expectations of behaviour. In this quiet and work-focused environment, these children respond with increasing confidence. Their reactions are enthusiastic and they make good progress in lessons where they are not over-dominated by adult support. Sometimes, however, children are not given enough opportunity to explore ideas for themselves. When this happens, progress is inhibited from being greater than satisfactory. This sometimes also affects the progress of pupils in Years 1 and 2 within the same class.

15. Where teaching and learning are very effective, challenging work is well supported by teachers' good subject knowledge. This was true of a mathematics lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6. High expectations were maintained through skilful discussion. Careful questioning, modified to meet the different needs and abilities of individual pupils, allowed the teacher to assess pupils' understanding. The correct use of mathematical vocabulary enabled pupils to clearly explain their strategies, and their responses were encouraged by high quality relationships. The whole ethos was quietly work-focused, and pupils showed high levels of determination and tenacity within this environment. Resources were well prepared and used effectively to support practical activities. There was also very good support for lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, which allowed them to successfully identify different shapes. These qualities were strongly in evidence in an art and design lesson for pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3, and often present within those lessons where teaching was good. It is clear from the accurate match of tasks and from comments in daily planning in the class for Years 3 and 4 that ongoing assessments are used well by some teachers to modify lesson content for the next day. Relative weaknesses in otherwise satisfactory lessons include the over-direction of tasks, a slowing of pace, and an under-confidence in subject knowledge, particularly in literacy. Those pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into lessons and receive good levels of support from teachers and other adults, either individually or as part of small groups. Activities are suitably modified to meet their needs.

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

16. The school gives its pupils a broad and relevant curriculum that is generally satisfactory overall, including the curriculum for those children at the Foundation Stage. There are some significant strengths. For example, extra-curricular activities are good and the curriculum is also enriched by effective links made between subjects. This is used particularly well to promote literacy and information and communication technology (ICT) skills. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed in other subjects, such as ICT and science. Considerable improvement has been made to ICT since the previous inspection, and pupils achieved well where teaching was seen during the inspection. The provision for religious education at Key Stage 1 and design and technology overall has also been improved. The skills and expertise of staff in art and design and music are successfully exploited to extend pupils' creative experiences. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy are well established, although opportunities for using and developing these skills across other subjects, is

stronger for literacy than for numeracy. Subject policies are in place for all subjects, although they are now due for review. Generally, the school copes well with the planning for different age groups within one class. However, due to weaknesses in curriculum planning, pupils in different year groups or at different key stages do not always have experiences of the same quality. This particularly affects pupils in Year 3, and the teaching of aspects of English and mathematics throughout the school. Additionally, science planning does not allow for more able pupils towards the end of Key Stage 2 to achieve at the higher level (Level 5).

17. The school's provision for personal and social education is satisfactory, including that for sex education. A programme related to drugs awareness is not established, but the school is working with other schools in the area to draw-up a scheme of work. Curriculum weaknesses have not been identified because systems for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning are under developed.

18. The amount of teaching time at Key Stage 2 has been extended since the previous inspection so that it is now above the nationally recommended level. Short periods of time between longer lessons are also well used for teaching music or information and communication technology skills. Establishing links between subjects, and using these to encourage learning, are particularly successful. For example, these opportunities allow pupils to write for a good range of purposes in subjects such as science, history, geography, religious education, music and design and technology. ICT also successfully supports learning in all subjects. Learning support staff and voluntary adults are deployed effectively. Their high levels of support for lower attainers and those with special educational needs make a significant contribution to enabling these pupils to take a full part in the curriculum. The wide range of year groups in each class has been eased during this year by the appointment of an extra teacher in the mornings to take Years 3 and 4 separately for English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology. This decision has targeted the school's priority to raise standards in literacy and numeracy, and also allowed the school to address the needs of some individual pupils within that group.

19. To help to ensure that National Curriculum expectations are fulfilled for each year group in each subject, the staff have worked together to draw up a long-term curriculum plan covering topic cycles of two or three years, as appropriate. National guidelines have been adopted as a basis for medium term planning, to ensure that skills and knowledge are developed systematically. In some cases, for example in mathematics at Key Stage 2, this has been enhanced with the addition of other material to ensure that the use and application of mathematical skills are woven into the mathematics curriculum. However, there is not enough liaison between class teachers at this stage of planning to ensure that effective approaches to the teaching of literacy and numeracy are used throughout the school. Consequently, pupils at Key Stage 1 do not receive the same opportunities to explore and investigate mathematics as an integral part of their other mathematical work, or have the same chance to write at length during literacy lessons, as do pupils at Key Stage 2. Where classes are shared by staff, these teachers plan together and modify medium term planning where necessary. However, these amendments are not recorded and brought together centrally in order to allow the school to build up a bank of planning that has been formally customised to meet the needs of its pupils. In order to balance numbers across the two classes remaining in the afternoons, pupils in Year 3 join the youngest class at this time and are taught alongside reception-aged children and pupils in Years 1 and 2. The class teacher produces highly detailed plans for each age group, and works unfailingly hard to accommodate the curriculum needs and requirements for each year group. However, Key Stage 2 curriculum requirements for history and geography are not fully addressed for pupils in Year 3, particularly in history where these pupils follow Key Stage 1 topics.

20. The quality of the curriculum for the small group of pupils at the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall. The teacher works hard to meet their needs within the demands of also providing the required curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 within the same class. This challenge is greater in the afternoons when Year 3 join the class. Planning is detailed and comprehensive, and classroom displays clearly illustrate interesting and imaginative activities. Although all the pupils in the class usually follow the same broad topics, including literacy and numeracy themes, work is carefully

modified to meet the expectations of the official Early Learning Goals for children of this age. Learning support staff and voluntary helpers are well deployed and briefed to work with these children when the class teacher is focusing on other groups. Sometimes, however, tasks are too over-directed and adults do not allow these children enough opportunity to explore ideas and activities for themselves. An outside play area is being developed as a whole school priority to extend the children's physical, creative and social experiences. To ensure that children benefit from this resource, specific time has been allocated to its use and supervision. Those pupils with special educational needs have specific targets in their individual education plans to meet their needs in a range of areas, mostly related to literacy and behaviour.

21. Extra-curricular activities are good, particularly for such a small school. After-school clubs include sporting activities, chess, music, French and needlework. First-hand experience is well used to support work in class. For example, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 visit Kentwell Hall as part of their study of the Tudor period. They dress in Tudor costume and make observational drawings of Tudor houses in the village to increase their knowledge of how these buildings were constructed. In alternate years, older pupils have a residential visit to Norfolk where they have the opportunity to extend their experience of physical education and ICT. Pupils are also encouraged to take part in more unusual events such as an engineering competition. The most notable feature of this area of the school's work is the links with other schools through a cluster group of small schools and a larger consortium group of schools. This allows pupils to meet those from other schools and take part in joint sporting and musical events. Other links with the community and secondary schools are satisfactory. The school uses the church for services, and the Christingle service is also attended by villagers. The Vicar regularly takes assembly in school. Although there are no local playgroups, a toddler club meets monthly at the school. Reciprocal visits between Chappel and the local secondary school are made to ease pupils' transition into the next phase of their education.

22. The school has maintained the good provision for pupils' social and moral development identified in the previous inspection. Opportunities for the pupils' spiritual and cultural development remain satisfactory.

23. The daily assemblies reflect the Christian ethos of the school, and during these assemblies pupils have the opportunities to pray or reflect on the theme for the week. Pupils' work shows that they reflect on their own feelings, for example pupils in Year 3 expressed how they might feel when they do something for the first time, such as starting in a new class. Teachers do not explicitly plan opportunities for spiritual experience in lessons, but they capitalise on incidences of spirituality when they occur. For example, when a spider was found in the overhead projector, pupils very sensibly discussed with the teacher how they could remove it without harming it. In a cookery session with the reception group, the adult dramatically used that final 'magic' spoonful of flour to make the children gasp with wonder when the scales balanced.

24. The school's Christian ethos underpins the informal but effective support for the pupils' moral and social development. The very good role models given by staff, and the very good relationships they have with the pupils, are particularly successful in this respect. The behaviour policy provides pupils with an appropriate moral code. The mixed-age organisation of the classes effectively promotes pupils' social skills, and this is apparent in the very good relationships between different age pupils.

25. Pupils learn about European and other cultures in a number of different subjects. In art, they mainly study western artists but in Year 6 they study Islamic art as part of their religious studies. In music, they listen to music from around the world. Pupils learn about different religions and cultures during religious education lessons. Pupils visit different places of worship, such as a local synagogue, read books from other cultures and study their own culture when they visit Kentwell Hall to role play "being a Tudor". The school has links with an African school that is supported by pupils' fund raising. The school is providing satisfactory opportunities to prepare pupils for living in a

multicultural society. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to study the lives of influential people from different ethnic cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

26. The school continues to promote a caring, welcoming Christian ethos. Parents appreciate the advantages of the school's small and close-knit learning environment, in which pupils are well known by all adults and informal relationships and communication are strong. The procedures for caring for the pupils have improved since the previous inspection. There are now sound formal policies for promoting good behaviour and for dealing with child protection concerns. Teachers supervise younger pupils at the end of the day and the pond is fenced. The monitoring of personal development has been enhanced through the development of a programme for personal and social education. This has been a whole school priority, and the school is now in the process of drawing up a scheme of work with other local schools for drugs' education, in order to extend this programme further.

27. Staff use their detailed knowledge of their pupils well to promote good behaviour and attendance. The school's more rigorous procedures for following up cases of un-notified absences has been effective in decreasing the number of unauthorised absences in the last year. Pupils and parents are confident that the school deals very well with any concerns over bullying.

28. The headteacher is the person responsible for child protection. All staff were trained in these procedures two years ago. Recently appointed staff have been satisfactorily made aware through documentation of how to deal with child protection issues. Health and safety procedures are also satisfactory. Designated governors visit the school site each term to identify any hazards. The school carries out risk assessments for school visits and the school secretary is a qualified first-aider.

29. The school has improved its systems for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic achievement since the previous inspection, and there are now sound procedures in place overall for assessing pupils' attainment and progress. It has not been successful enough, however, in looking closely enough at pupils' achievements, tracking pupils' progress and using this information to inform planning. This is due in part to inconsistencies within the use of some monitoring practices across the school. These weaknesses help to inhibit pupils' progress from being greater than satisfactory over time. Assessment systems for English and mathematics are good, and procedures are consistently followed from the Reception group through to Year 6 in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. Comprehensive portfolios of annotated work and other records of attainment, such as optional national test papers, provide a useful Record of Achievement for each pupil. Although National Curriculum checklists are satisfactorily in place for other subjects, assessment systems for geography, history and music are under-developed. Additionally, assessment criteria for science do not include those for the higher level (Level 5), and this has contributed to the lack of encouragement for more able pupils to learn at this higher level in the subject.

30. The school uses information from assessments taken when the children first enter the school to forecast what these children may achieve in national tests. Forecasts for individual pupils at Key Stage 1 are generally accurate, with pupils attaining their predicted levels in the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1. Given the very small number of children who join the school each year, early assessments portray significant variation year-on-year, so that the identification of trends over time is difficult. Staff have begun to analyse pupils' answers in national test papers to identify areas of weakness. For example, this information has been used to inform strategic planning in relation to handwriting and data handling in mathematics. However, a more detailed analysis of handwriting standards has not taken place and action has not yet been taken to address these weaknesses. Neither is the quality of this analysis sharply focused enough to identify trends in national results, such as the relative under-performance of girls in mathematics year-on-year. The headteacher has recently introduced a data-tracking computer program to review pupils' progress and set targets for future attainment in the core subjects. This has helped the school to set more accurately based national test

targets for the present Year 6 in English and mathematics. However, this initiative is new and is not yet fully developed. Additionally, consistent practices have not been established between classes with regard to on-going monitoring of pupils' achievements, individual target setting and the marking of pupils' work. In two classes, teachers set and regularly review individual learning targets with pupils. However, this is not a regular feature of the class containing the oldest pupils at Key Stage 2, although pupils in this older age group are able to say how they could improve their written work and recall the targets set in their last school report. Pupils' work is generally marked regularly. However, pupils do not consistently receive helpful feedback comments from teachers' marking that enable them to identify what they need to do to improve the quality of their work. This has been improved recently at Key Stage 1, where pupils' work is now helpfully marked against specific learning objectives. However, this practice has not been adopted at Key Stage 2. These inconsistencies contribute to the remaining disparities in teaching quality between Key Stages 1 and 2.

31. Pupils with special educational needs are identified and given additional help from early in their school career. These pupils have detailed individual education programmes and receive a good level of appropriate help from support staff and teachers. Teaching and learning support staff keep informative notes about pupils' achievements and carry out regular reviews of their progress against the targets, with good parental involvement. These factors contribute to the sound progress made by pupils with special educational needs.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

32. Analysis of parents' views, expressed through the inspection questionnaire, shows that parental satisfaction with the school has improved since the previous inspection. The most common comment in letters from parents spoke warmly of the school's caring and dedicated ethos and staff. Parents feel the school has high expectations of their children's achievement. They are appreciative of the school's response to any questions or problems they might have. They are happy with the range of activities the school offers pupils outside lessons and their children's enjoyment of school life. At their meeting before the inspection, parents felt there had been conspicuous improvement to the quality of the curriculum for information and communication technology. However, a significant proportion of parents who completed the questionnaire did not feel they were well informed about their children's progress, and this also reflects the findings of the previous inspection report. Evidence from this inspection supports this view in the extent to which parents have formal opportunities to talk with staff about their children's achievement, but not in relation to annual reports.

33. Overall, parents receive satisfactory information from the school. Parents appreciate the weekly newsletter telling them about events in school. The school prospectus and governors' annual report give good quality information in a clear format. Governors have also drawn-up an information pack which is posted through the door of new families to the village. Annual reports are good, giving parents clear information about what their children know and can do. These include targets to guide pupils in improving the standard of their work. Induction meetings are held for parents when their children first start school, and these are usefully followed up with a meeting after a few weeks to check that children have settled in well to school life. This same opportunity is offered to parents of pupils who join the school at other times. However, there is only one formal occasion each year on which parents may visit the school to talk about their children's achievement. This happens at the end of the academic year when it is too late to address any concerns or anxieties. Parents who are familiar with the school know that staff are happy to make formal appointments at other times, although very occasionally newer parents are not always aware of this practice. There is also limited information about the curriculum or about what pupils are learning during the year, although there are occasional evenings to inform parents about issues such as the National Numeracy Strategy. This also reflects the findings of the previous report.

34. Parents are appropriately involved in the life of the school and have some opportunities to influence its work. The school encourages them to be involved in the life of the school and they are

keen to help on school trips. Regular help in lessons has declined as both parents work in many families. The parents' association (PTA) is very committed and raises significant amounts of money. The school uses these funds to improve the resources and also to pay an instructor to teach the recorder. Parents were closely involved in drawing up the home-school contract, and they also had the opportunity to comment on the draft behaviour policy. Parents are very supportive of the work pupils are expected to do at home, and use the home-school diaries well to maintain contact with their children's teachers.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

35. The school is soundly led and managed by a long-serving, experienced headteacher, who continues to be committed to the well-being of the school and its pupils. He has established a welcoming, caring ethos in the school, within its Christian foundation, in which staff and pupils are valued as individuals. It is clear from the positive responses to the parents' questionnaire and at their meeting that the school has the confidence of its parents. With dedicated support from key teachers and the governing body, the school has established a broad curriculum and a strong emphasis on the safety and well-being of all children.

36. As a result, the school successfully fulfils its central aim of caring for pupils within a Christian ethos. Pupils generally enjoy coming to school and respond well to the learning opportunities they receive. Their behaviour and the quality of relationships are very good. All pupils generally progress satisfactorily in their learning as they move through the school, and standards are now above national expectations in English and mathematics for pupils in the current Year 6. There has been satisfactory progress overall since the previous inspection, and the capacity for future improvement is sound. Priorities are suitably matched to the school's current needs. Schemes of work have been established for all subjects and there are now satisfactory assessment procedures, with good assessment systems for English and mathematics. There has also been good improvement to the curriculum for information and communication technology. A focus on improving standards in literacy and numeracy has resulted in the appointment of an extra part-time member of staff to take Years 3 and 4 each morning for English, mathematics and science. However, not enough progress has been made in relation to the analysis and use of assessment information to influence planning, or to systems and opportunities for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, not all pupils have the same quality of experiences. This is particularly true for pupils in Year 3, who are not fully meeting the curriculum expectations for history and geography. The school is therefore not fully meeting its aim of ensuring that all pupils fulfil their potential.

37. All members of staff are dedicated and hardworking. Within this very small staff, all have responsibility for several curriculum areas, including the core subjects of English, mathematics, information and communication technology and religious education. They fulfil these roles conscientiously. For example, one teacher with specialist expertise has a significant effect on the music curriculum, and information and communication technology is well led. The teacher of the youngest class is enthusiastically involved in developing the Foundation Stage curriculum. Responsibility for special educational needs is satisfactorily shared. When other subjects currently without an identified co-ordinator are highlighted as a priority for development, staff adopt a temporary leadership and management role. The progressive development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding has been improved by the introduction of national guidance material and by staff planning together the longer-term arrangement of the curriculum. Other consistent whole-school approaches have been established for assessing and tracking pupils' achievement and progress. Informal networks of communication are strong, but formal systems are not sufficiently well developed and, as a result, there is not enough liaison between the two main classes. This results in respective teachers not knowing enough about discrepancies in approach, for example in the teaching of mathematics and English. Although weekly planning is checked, there is little monitoring of the impact of planning on teaching and learning. This, together with the lack of co-ordination of the subject, has particularly affected attainment in science for more able pupils in recent years, and has

failed to address the lack of opportunity for Year 3 pupils to fully receive the curriculum to which they are entitled.

38. The governing body is equally committed and supportive. Many are newly appointed since the previous inspection, including the chairperson. They have undertaken appropriate training, and sessions on how to critically assess the school's performance are planned for the future. They are keenly aware of their roles and responsibilities, which they fulfil satisfactorily, and they have a developing understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are also taking a fuller part in planning the educational direction of the school than was found at the time of the previous inspection. Smaller committees now look more closely at the school's work, including national test information and the impact on standards of the extra teacher for Years 3 and 4. In order to extend their monitoring role and their knowledge of the school's work, a system of visits to school has been established and some governors give weekly support in lessons. Reports on these visits are made at full governing body meetings. Governors have taken an active part in seeking to increase the numbers of pupils attending the school by leafleting homes in the area and developing a welcome pack for new inhabitants. They have reviewed the school's aims, and discussed and modified the school's development plan. There has been a good improvement to the development plan since the previous inspection. Planning now takes place over a three-year period, with detailed planning for the current year and criteria by which to judge the success of initiatives. However, the governor's monitoring role is still in need of further development. This is partly because they do not receive enough sharply focused information or analysis of teaching and learning in order to allow them to ask challenging questions or suggest alternative approaches.

39. There are satisfactory systems for financial planning, monitoring expenditure and checking the success of financial initiatives. Financial systems and day-to-day checks and balances are also satisfactory, although there are sometimes too few staff involved. Co-ordinators, for example, do not have responsibility for managing a budget for their subject or for ordering and checking in purchases. The administrative officer is efficient and effective and gives freely of her time. The school also benefits from being part of a financial consortium of schools, and this allows it regular access to good financial expertise and advice. Reserves have been kept aside to fund extra teaching staff and finance future building improvements, such as cloakroom facilities and fencing for the Foundation Stage outside area. There has been no recent auditor's report but the governors have appointed a responsible officer to maintain an over view of the school's financial management. New technology is used well both for educational and administrative purposes. The use of the principles of best value is satisfactory and in the process of further development.

40. There is a sound match of teaching staff to the demands of the curriculum, particularly bearing in mind the small size of the school. Learning support staff are well-briefed and effectively deployed, enabling them to give invaluable learning support. A high standard of cleanliness and maintenance is in evidence throughout the school. There are satisfactory arrangements for the induction of new staff. They are well supported informally and made to feel welcomed. There has been training for staff for all national initiatives, except where staff are very new and planned support has not been fully implemented. The school has established a policy for performance management, but has not yet drawn up a programme of lesson observations.

41. Accommodation is satisfactory. Classrooms are bright and spacious, enhanced by good quality displays of pupils' work. Space is used well. There are two library areas, one also housing a small suite of computers. A small art area houses tools and a kiln, now caged and locked. This area allows pupils to have ease of access to tools, equipment and materials. The hall allows for indoor physical education and whole-school gatherings. However, the office space is cramped and there is no separate area for private meetings, for example with parents. The school grounds are spacious and offer a range of learning opportunities. Resources are good and well used to support learning in lessons. This is particularly so for information and communication technology.

42. The school provides satisfactory value for money. Unit costs are relatively high, reflecting the financial demands of a very small school. However, pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Standards of attainment are above the national average in English and mathematics and in line with national expectations in science at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils are well behaved and have good attitudes towards their school and learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To raise standards of achievement in all subjects and for all pupils, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- Improve the quality and extent of monitoring by the headteacher, key staff and governing body of all aspects of the curriculum and teaching and learning, by:
 - giving co-ordinators regular and frequent planned opportunities to examine the quality of the curriculum and teaching and learning in their subjects across the school, and ensuring that:
 - they have a full understanding of how their subject is taught in all classes in order to address any discrepancies;
 - appropriate planning is fully in place for all year groups in all subjects, particularly for geography and history in Year 3;
 - more able pupils have suitably challenging work in all subjects, especially science;
 - all pupils receive the same good quality of experiences, particularly in English and mathematics;
 - regular liaison between class teachers at Key Stages 1 and 2 to ensure there are consistent approaches to teaching and learning;
 - putting in place a timetable of planned lesson observations within the performance management programme;
 - giving the governing body more detailed information about standards, achievement and the quality of teaching and learning, to enable them to ask more closely focused questions about the school's work and make alternative suggestions about its strategic direction.
- Further develop the analysis of test and assessment information so that it focuses sharply on pupils' achievement, and that this information is used to inform and guide planning, by:
 - looking more closely at this information to identify and track trends over time for individuals and groups of pupils, and using this to influence whole-school curriculum planning in the medium and shorter term;
 - continuing to develop the use of computerised programs to follow pupils' attainment and progress;
 - ensuring that monitoring practices are consistent across the school;
 - ensuring that pupils' work is marked in such a way that they are consistently clear about how they can improve.

Other areas in need of development, which the governors should consider for inclusion in the school's action plan for improvement, are:

- allowing pupils at the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 to have more opportunities to work independently and explore ideas for themselves;
- reviewing current arrangements for the placement of Year 3 pupils;
- recording amendments to medium term planning so that the school builds up a bank of planning that has been customised to meet the needs of its pupils;
- involving more staff members in the process of ordering and checking of purchases, particularly where staff are responsible for co-ordinating subjects.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons or parts of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	43

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
	17	33	50			

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	48
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	7

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.6
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	2	3	5

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	3	3	3
	Total	4	4	4
Percentage of pupils At NC Level 2 or above	School	80 (100)	80 (100)	80 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	3	2	2
	Total	4	3	3
Percentage of pupils At NC Level 2 or above	School	80 (100)	60 (100)	60 (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	2	2	4

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	1	2	2
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	3	4	4
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	75 (100)	100 (71)	100 (100)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	1	1	1
	Girls	2	2	2
	Total	3	3	3
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	75 (71)	75 (57)	75 (71)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	43
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR–Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15:1
Average class size	16

Education support staff: : YR–Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	68

Financial information

Financial year	2001/2002
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	£
Total income	200357
Total expenditure	205971
Expenditure per pupil	5281
Balance brought forward from previous year	26546
Balance carried forward to next year	20932

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	48
Number of questionnaires returned	33

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	55	39	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	42	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	39	3	0	15
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	36	9	6	6
The teaching is good.	67	27	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	33	33	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	27	3	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	30	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	45	15	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	45	45	0	3	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	45	52	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	24	9	3	3

Other issues raised by parents

Written comments from parents were mostly positive, particularly about the caring and dedicated nature of the school and its staff. Few concerns were expressed and none consistently.

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

43. In line with local arrangements, children enter the school at the beginning of the term before their fifth birthday and attend full time. Children whose birthdays fall during the summer term enter the school at Easter, and spend one term at the Foundation Stage, also attending full time. They join a class that also has pupils in Years 1 and 2. During each afternoon, the class also accommodates pupils in Year 3. At the time of the inspection, there were six pupils in the reception age group, two of whom had started in that term.

44. Most children have some pre-school experience in voluntary local pre-schools and play groups or in private day nurseries. As these providers are spread over a wide geographical area, it is difficult for the school to have regular close contact with them. Some children only attend the monthly Mother and Toddler Club, held in the school, before coming to school, and a few children have no pre-school experience at all. The class teacher is conscientious in planning carefully and thoroughly for each age group, and ensuring that the tasks and activities for children in the Foundation Stage are appropriate and relevant. The classroom is a stimulating and attractive learning environment, and children's work is clearly celebrated and valued in the bright and colourful displays. However, the wide spread of ages and needs within the one class is challenging, particularly during the afternoons when this range is increased to include pupils from three key stages. To overcome these demands, the teacher uses learning support assistants and voluntary helpers effectively to ensure that Foundation Stage children are well supervised and have access to their entitlement to the full Foundation Stage curriculum. Given the very small number of children who enter the school each year, assessments on entry to school vary significantly each year, but, for those children in the present reception group, they are generally above expectations for children of a similar age. This is particularly the case for speaking and listening, personal, and social skills, and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They make satisfactory progress during their time as reception age children so that, by the time they enter Year 1, their attainment will have reached or exceeded that expected for their age.

Personal, social and emotional development

45. Given the organisational challenges of the class in which children in the Foundation Stage are taught, this area of the curriculum is a strength and is well taught. The teacher has very high expectations of these young children, and they are expected from the start to sit and listen attentively to adults and to each other, and learn to share, take turns and put up their hands before speaking. They are polite and show respect for others' thoughts and feelings. They treat each other kindly and there are very few conflicts. When playing games, they share equipment well, sort out the rules sensibly and maturely, and enjoy playing co-operatively together. When playing alone, they display a high level of interest and concentration and become absorbed in the activity, even singing along to themselves, oblivious of outsiders. The teacher and other adults in the class are very good role models as they consistently display patience, care and attention to the safety and well-being of each child. Adults speak kindly to the children but consistently demonstrate high expectations that support the child's learning at the same time as challenging their thinking and other skills. Sometimes, however, this support can be too close and does not allow children enough opportunity to explore and experiment independently.

Communication, language and literacy

46. This area of development is satisfactorily taught. When children are given the opportunity to speak more freely, they show a high level of speaking skills and a wide vocabulary. For example, when making fantasy mini-beasts in the outdoor area, children spoke confidently about colours, pairs of wings and eyes, antennae and numbers of legs. They began to make up their own stories about the mini-beasts they were constructing, using imaginative but plausible ideas. They use talk to organise

games and activities, clarify their thinking and convey their needs and feelings. These children have a literacy session each day, when they are taught basic phonics, new words and meet a wide range of stories and poems. They remain with the older Year 1 and 2 pupils during the first part of the whole-group session and then leave to pursue language and literacy activities more suitable to their needs. This group work is led by teaching assistants, voluntary helpers or the teacher herself. The work is very well planned, with clear learning objectives and a range of activities for the children to undertake. The work is challenging, but most children are able to rise to the high expectations and make good progress in their reading skills. They read a range of familiar and common words, retell stories in the correct sequence and answer questions about characters and events in the text. However, these sessions are sometimes too long and some children begin to lose focus and concentration as they sit still and listen for significant periods of time. Some parts of these sessions are overly adult-directed, and children are discouraged from speaking or responding to questions spontaneously by being reminded to be quiet and put up their hands. Writing skills are also well developed. During a small group literacy session, children identified capital and lower case letters and question marks.

Mathematical development

47. This area of learning is satisfactorily taught overall, with the main focus falling on the development of number. The mathematical work planned for children at the Foundation Stage is appropriate for their age and stage of development. The work is largely practical, enjoyable and achievable for the youngest children. Many count up to and beyond 10, and recognise and use numerals nought to nine. In their play, they regularly use vocabulary that involves adding and subtracting, and demonstrate a growing understanding of basic mathematical concepts and ideas. For example, when undertaking activities related to telling the time, the children used toy clocks and snap cards confidently when playing a time 'snap' game. They identified 'o'clock' times on the snap cards and matched the time shown on the card by moving the hands on the toy clock. The youngest children in this group enjoyed and successfully completed a time jigsaw puzzle. During this activity, they had the opportunity to discuss their work with the teacher and talk about what they were doing using appropriate mathematical vocabulary.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

48. This area is well taught, and overall children make good progress in gaining knowledge and understanding of the world. The class undertook a topic on mini-beasts during the week of the inspection. Many good cross-curricular links were made within this topic and the children were able to gain much scientific knowledge about insects and small creatures. They identified the number of legs of different mini-beasts and confidently used and explained the meaning of the word 'antenna'. Pupils regularly have access to sand and water play and have opportunities to undertake their own informal scientific investigations using these materials. The teacher uses information and communication technology almost daily to enhance and support children's learning. The children are confident and competent at using the computer, and talk about their favourite web-sites. They have used the Eric Carle web-site in relation to their work on "The Very Hungry Caterpillar" and regularly visit a nature web-site. A cookery session with a voluntary helper was seen during the week of the inspection. The children enthusiastically participated in this activity and demonstrated a high level of knowledge and understanding about the process of cooking, including the importance of washing hands. There was a moment of awe and wonder on the children's faces when the 'magic spoonful' of flour made the scales balance.

Physical development

49. No physical development sessions or lessons were observed during the week of the inspection, although the children benefit from some sessions in the hall and access to their own outdoor area on several afternoons, where they use wheeled vehicles under adult supervision. This outside area has been prioritised for further development, including a fence to separate it from other outdoor areas. However, they do not at present have opportunities on a daily basis to practice and develop skills such as throwing and catching, balancing and climbing and riding wheeled vehicles. Children display a

high level of development when using fine motor skills, such as writing, cutting out and using other equipment and materials.

Creative development

50. The quality of teaching in this area is satisfactory. Children have regular opportunities for creative activities, including painting, drawing, singing, dancing and making music. During the week of the inspection, the whole class looked at Monet's 'Water Lilies'. The teacher skilfully modified the activities, and these children completed good quality finger paintings to represent the water lily scene. During a literacy lesson, the children had the opportunity to use musical instruments to represent various descriptions of weather conditions from the story of "The Bear Hunt". Although this gave the children the opportunity to use the musical instruments in a systematic way, it did not allow them the opportunity to explore the sounds of the instruments themselves and make their own suggestions as to how the weather descriptions could be represented by the music. When children have supervised access to the outdoor area for less structured activities, they display imagination and creativity in their own play.

ENGLISH

51. In the national tests in 2000 for eleven year-olds, pupils attained standards in English that were above the national average and well above average in comparison with similar schools. In the national tests for pupils aged seven, results were below the national average in writing and well below in reading. These results were the same in comparison with similar schools. No pupils achieved the higher level (Level 3) in reading or writing. Year-on-year results vary considerably because few pupils take these tests each year and therefore the relative performance of each individual pupil makes a significant impact on overall percentages. This is particularly so where pupils have special educational needs, as was the case for the very small group of seven year old pupils taking the tests in 2000. Another significant factor is the movement of pupils in and out of the school. This has affected all year groups, including the present Years 2 and 6. Nevertheless, unconfirmed results of national tests taken this term show a higher percentage of pupils achieving at the higher levels at both Key Stages 1 and 2, and particularly at Key Stage 2, where 80 per cent of pupils gained the higher level (Level 5).

52. Inspection evidence from lessons, together with pupils' work in books and on display, shows pupils currently in Years 6 and 2 to be achieving standards above national expectations in all aspects of the subject. This is better than was found at the time of the previous inspection. Taken overall, pupils make satisfactory progress over time. This includes pupils with special educational needs, who are given close support from learning support staff in literacy lessons. Work arising from the successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy is well supported by the use and development of literacy in other subjects, particularly through opportunities to write independently for a range of purposes and through the use of information and communication technology. Pupils at Key Stage 1, however, do not write enough at length in English. Assessment systems have been developed well and the analysis of information has begun to focus the school's attention more closely on possible areas for development and on tracking the progress of individual pupils. In response to the school's priority to raise literacy standards further, money has been committed to employing an extra teacher in the mornings. This allows the larger groups in Years 5 and 6 to be taught as a separate class, and for the school to tackle the particular needs of pupils within the current Years 3 and 4.

53. At both key stages, discussion during lessons gives pupils sound opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills, although sometimes at Key Stage 1 they are not encouraged enough to fully explain or explore their ideas. Throughout the school, the majority of pupils listen well to adults and each other. They respond with interest to questions and discussion, explaining ideas and opinions clearly and thoughtfully. At Key Stage 2, some formal drama experiences extend these skills further. However, a minority of pupils at Key Stage 2 are easily distracted, and adults sometimes have to work hard at keeping their attention.

54. Attitudes to reading are good. The reading diaries of pupils in Year 2 show them to have read and enjoyed many books. Pupils in the present Year 2 all know how to find a book in the school library, using both the number and colour coding systems, and they use dictionaries confidently. They name books they enjoy and read with accuracy and understanding. Phonic knowledge is generally good. More able pupils use a range of strategies to identify unfamiliar words, although they are inhibited when they do not know the meaning of more sophisticated vocabulary. All pupils are able to retell familiar stories and predict what might happen next, with lower attainers using the illustrations to help them in doing this. Older pupils study more challenging classic children's novels, such as 'The Railway Children', with enthusiasm. Most pupils in the current Year 6 are using the text to find information about characters or predict how events will unfold. Some of this detail they infer from hints and suggestions within the narrative. They are at ease with the use and meaning of subject terminology such as simile, personification and alliteration, and picked out examples of these strategies used in a poem by John Masefield. During their first encounter with this challenging poem, pupils began to explore the links between the poet's ideas and his use of language. Pupils use video material and computers to research information, for example in their current work on the Tudors.

55. Higher and middle attaining pupils in the present Year 2 join their handwriting. These pupils use full stops accurately, and more able pupils show an awareness of other punctuation, such as the apostrophe. Spelling is accurate or phonetically plausible. The handwriting of lower attainers is legible but not always well or confidently formed. Writing is completed in simple sentences, although full stops are occasionally misplaced. A good range of interesting independent extended writing is completed in other subjects, such as science, geography, history, music and religious education. However, in contrast to Key Stage 2, English work books show that pupils are given only limited opportunities to write at length within the subject itself. Written work is valued and celebrated by being collected together in individual pupil topic books or class anthologies. Pupils at Year 6 have a good range of opportunities to draft and complete extended pieces of writing. In literacy lessons, they settle quickly to their written tasks and finish a good quantity of work during group activities. Handwriting is joined and spelling is generally accurate. Higher and middle attainers organise their work into paragraphs, and pupils of all abilities use punctuation, such as speech marks, within sentences. More able pupils write in a variety of styles, opening their sentences in interesting ways and using punctuation for effect. The quality of work is lively, and higher and middle attainers give clear and detailed explanations in factual accounts. Sometimes, the work of lower attaining pupils, however, is untidy. Following a recent analysis of national test results, the school has identified handwriting as a possible area for improvement, although it has yet to complete a scrutiny of pupils' work to assess the extent of the problem.

56. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support and promote literacy skills. Written work is often word-processed, and sometimes used as an exercise to reinforce formal writing skills, such as correcting punctuation mistakes. As part of their work on letter writing, pupils in Years 3 and 4 sent e-mail messages to the headteacher. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 e-mailed the Eric Carle web site to ask questions about his work as an author. Software programs are used to support pupils' work in literacy lessons, and information on the Internet is explored to develop research skills. Other subjects are used effectively to allow pupils to experience many different types of writing. For example, retelling stories in religious education or giving instructions for making a jelly or the chassis for a vehicle in design and technology.

57. Evidence from lessons and pupils' work shows the overall quality of the teaching of English to be satisfactory. Teaching and learning were satisfactory or better in all the lessons seen during the inspection. They were good in 40 per cent, and all the good teaching was seen at Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned and activities are modified to meet the needs of different ability groups or year groups as appropriate. Learning objectives are clearly shared with pupils and good links are made with previous work. Supporting adults are well briefed and used very successfully to support individuals and groups of pupils. Although other adults do not always play an active part in whole group sessions, they are sometimes effectively used during these sessions to observe and record pupils' responses. All these factors help to ensure that learning is purposeful and well organised.

Where teaching is good, there are high expectations of pupils' achievement. In a literacy lesson for Years 5 and 6 pupils, for example, the teacher insisted on pupils giving clear reasons and explanations for their predictions about events in an extract from 'The Railway Children'. This prepared pupils well for their subsequent writing activities, which they tackled with sustained concentration. They discussed possibilities with each other, asked the teacher for clarification, and persevered even when ideas did not come easily. In the other good lesson, with pupils in Years 3 and 4, pupils' interest and attention were held by lively teaching and gentle humour. Good examples of onomatopoeia and alliteration inspired the pupils' own efforts, which were imaginatively chosen. Throughout this lesson, adults gave unflagging and enthusiastic support and, as a result, pupils worked hard and made good progress. Positive attitudes to literature were encouraged in almost every lesson by the choice of good quality texts, expressively read. This was particularly so in another literacy lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, when the teacher's sensitive reading of John Masefield's poem 'Up on the Downs' created a powerful sense of stillness. Another good feature of this particular lesson was the way in which the teacher listened carefully to pupils' ideas, clearly showing they were valued. Opportunities for homework are good and support work taking place in lessons.

58. Sometimes, however, otherwise satisfactory lessons lose pace, particularly when the level of challenge falters or text is not explored in enough depth. Neither is the final whole group session always used effectively to reinforce or celebrate learning. Inspection evidence from pupils' work shows that there are weaknesses or inconsistencies in the quality of teaching. For example, although work is marked regularly in all classes, some teachers comment more fully on pupils' work and indicate how it could be improved. At Key Stage 1, work is now usefully marked against specific learning objectives. Additionally, there are more opportunities for pupils to develop independent writing habits within the group activities in literacy lessons at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1.

59. Comprehensive and helpful assessment systems have been developed to cover all aspects of the subject. These are consistently well maintained in all classes. There are good examples of tracking pupils' progress over time, for example in reading at Key Stage 1. The co-ordinator has also begun to look at national and optional test questions to identify areas of strength and weaknesses. Evaluations on lesson planning in the Years 3 and 4 class clearly indicate that pupils' achievement is being assessed on a daily basis and that this information is being used to modify lesson planning for the next day. Pupils in this class also have individual targets for improvement that they help to track for themselves. However, the analysis and use of test and assessment information are not established practices across the school, although a computer program has been introduced this year which will enable staff to track the achievement of individual pupils as they move through the school and predict likely attainment. The co-ordinator has made a valuable contribution to the subject in terms of developing the curriculum, assessment and resources. Library areas have been enlivened, and older pupils act as monitors to keep the areas tidy and create displays of books. She has also sought to support new staff. However, although she looks at planning, the co-ordinator has no time made available to her to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and learning, and so has limited knowledge of the work taking place in English at Key Stage 2.

MATHEMATICS

60. Pupils aged eleven achieved very well in the national tests for mathematics in 2000. Their results were well above national averages and the average of similar schools. In the national tests for seven year-olds in 2000, pupils achieved standards well below the national average and that of similar schools. No pupils gained the higher level (Level 3). Results in mathematics have varied considerably each year in both tests, largely because each year group contains only a small number of pupils. Within this context, the result of each child makes a significant impact on the overall percentages reaching each National Curriculum level. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is also an influential factor, as was the case with the Year 2 group taking the tests in 2000. So too is the movement of pupils in and out of the school. This affects all year groups, including the current Years 2 and 6. However, although it is therefore difficult to compare one year's

results with another, the relative under-performance of girls in mathematics in the tests for seven year-olds has been almost consistent since 1996.

61. Inspection evidence shows pupils in the present Year 6 to be achieving standards above national expectations. This is better than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils in the present Year 2 are also reaching standards above national expectations, largely in relation to number work. The school chose to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy early, and the co-ordinator feels that this has raised standards of achievement, particularly in mental calculation. Planning within the strategy at Key Stage 2 has been helpfully supplemented by the use of other schemed material, introduced specifically to ensure that pupils develop investigative skills in mathematics. This approach has not been adopted, however, at Key Stage 1. Assessment systems are good, and a valuable addition is the recent use of a computer program to track the achievement of individual pupils. The use of this information to focus more carefully on areas needing improvement has yet to be fully developed. This is also true of the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning to ensure that all pupils across the school are receiving consistently good quality experiences in all aspects of the subject. However, unconfirmed results of national tests taken this summer by pupils in Years 2 and 6 show an increased proportion of pupils achieving at the higher levels, particularly at Key Stage 2 where 50 per cent of pupils have achieved the higher level (Level 5).

62. Pupils in the current Year 2 are confident and accurate with number. Higher and middle attainers calculate numbers beyond 100 and have a good understanding of place value. They work with multiples of five and ten and find more complex fractions of groups of objects, such as three fifths and two thirds. Lower attainers calculate all four operations with numbers up to 100, count in groups of threes and fives and double multiples of five. In a mathematics lesson during the inspection, pupils used an analogue clock to calculate flight arrival times and record their findings on a chart. Higher and middle attaining pupils make some mental calculations first. Pupils in Year 6 have a good level of mathematical knowledge. They use correct mathematical terms to explain their strategies, such as *product*, *multiple* and *squared* during a lesson on shape. During this lesson, pupils used drawings of two-dimensional shapes to produce accurate and careful drawings of three-dimensional shapes on isometric paper. These pupils cover a good range of work in all aspects of the subject, although recorded work in pupils' books suggests that data handling is less comprehensively covered than other areas. More able pupils work confidently with decimal fractions, sometimes beyond two places, including their use within multiplication and division. They are beginning to use formulae for calculations involving volume and number patterns. Middle and lower attainers construct triangles and quadrilaterals, calculate area and perimeter accurately, and multiply three digits by two. Pupils make predictions and form hypotheses within investigative activities.

63. Evidence taken from pupils' work, in addition to the lessons seen during the inspection, shows the quality of mathematics teaching to be satisfactory overall. Teaching and learning in lessons was never less than satisfactory. It was good or better in 66 per cent and very good in 33 per cent. All the good and very good teaching was at Key Stage 2. Whilst the use and application of mathematical knowledge is an integral part of all the mathematical activities at Key Stage 2, this is not the case at Key Stage 1, where problem-solving activities are tackled more in isolation. Work recorded in books for pupils in Years 1 and 2 show very limited evidence of other aspects of mathematics beyond number work. Where shape and data-handling work takes place, it is recorded on paper, although, during the week of the inspection, work in these aspects was not promoted through displays of the pupils' work. Where teaching is most effective, as it was in a numeracy lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6, pupils are well challenged, particularly the more able. The classroom ethos was quiet and work focused. Resources had been well prepared and were used effectively. Over time, the teacher had clearly established the expectation that pupils use correct subject vocabulary and explain their strategies, and there was ongoing support during the lesson through the use of skilful questioning and assessment of progress. Within this environment, pupils made very good progress in consolidating previously learned knowledge and extending their understanding further. This progress was enhanced by pupils' own high levels of determination and tenacity, and reflected the excellent relationships established with these pupils by the adults working with them. Where teaching has relative

weaknesses, pupils are too closely supervised by adults during activities and are not given enough chance to develop independent working habits or mathematical strategies. Homework opportunities are satisfactory. Pupils at Key Stage 1 are given the chance through their homework activities to solve mathematical problems.

64. There is detailed planning for mathematics, and work is varied to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily used in other subjects, such as science and information and communication technology. The co-ordinator teaches mathematics well and is enthusiastic about the subject's development. The targeting of funds during this year for an extra teacher has allowed for smaller group teaching of the subject for pupils at Key Stage 2. However, the quality of teaching and learning is not being monitored across the school, and the co-ordinator does not have enough knowledge of work in mathematics at Key Stage 1. He has therefore not been able to identify and address discrepancies in the approach to teaching mathematics.

SCIENCE

65. In the national tests for eleven year-olds in 2000, pupils attained standards that were broadly in line with the national average and the average of similar schools. National test results in science have varied each year because year groups are so small. However, although it is therefore difficult to identify trends over time, pupils have never achieved as well in science as they have on occasions in the tests for English and mathematics. Teacher assessments of science for seven year-olds in 2000, identified pupils' attainment as very low compared with the national average, and in the lowest five per cent nationally. However, unconfirmed results of national science tests taken this summer by Year 6 pupils show a greater proportion of pupils achieving the higher level (Level 5) than last year. Inspection evidence shows pupils are at present achieving standards that are close to national expectations at the ends of both Key Stages 1 and 2. This is lower at Key Stage 2 than was found at the time of the previous inspection, when standards were found to be above national expectations for those pupils in Year 6. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, generally make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, but achievement at the end of Key Stage 2 is inhibited by curriculum planning which does not include work beyond the expected level (Level 4).

66. Across both key stages, pupils have regular opportunities to explore and extend their scientific knowledge and understanding and develop key scientific skills. By Year 2, pupils have investigated how seeds are dispersed, as part of their study of plants as living things. They conduct practical experiments and make observations in connection with their work on materials, for instance in order to find those materials most likely to keep them warm. Most recently, they have gathered information and written about different types of mini-beasts. They made careful observations of the differing physical characteristics of each creature, its habitat and the impact of natural camouflage. By Year 6, pupils cover a suitable range of topics, including reversible and irreversible changes, forces and resistance and the earth in space. Within these topics, pupils take part in scientific investigations and fair testing to gather evidence. They record their findings in a variety of ways using scientific language. They complete correctly labelled diagrams and record their information on graphs and charts, some of which are computer generated. Pupils read and interpret their graphs and scales, write up their experiments clearly and succinctly, and are beginning to relate their findings to scientific concepts and knowledge. However, little evidence was seen of pupils working at the higher level (Level 5).

67. Evidence largely taken from pupils' work shows the overall quality of teaching to be satisfactory. Lesson planning has clear and appropriate learning objectives and a sound range of practical activities. A Key Stage 2 lesson on the earth, moon and sun was acted out in the school hall, before pupils returned to their classrooms to explore the scientific concepts behind what they had been doing and write up their findings. Learning support assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs during science lessons. Very good use is made of information and communication technology in science, with evidence of computer-generated graphs, charts and photographs using a

digital camera. Good curriculum links are also made with mathematics and English. Lessons in Key Stage 1 are appropriately modified to cater for the needs of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. Work in pupils' books is marked with ticks and praise, but there is little developmental comment to help pupils to understand how to improve their work. Pupils' progress is enhanced by their own good attitudes to the subject, shown in their generally well presented work

68. Since the previous inspection, the school has usefully adopted, and begun to adapt, national guidance material for science. This ensures that there is a clear and systematic development of knowledge, skills and understanding as pupils move through the school. Pupils at Key Stage 2 benefit from being taught in smaller groups for science, with Years 3 and 4 being taught separately. Assessment systems are satisfactory, and the progress of each pupil is recorded against National Curriculum expectations. However, neither planning nor assessment criteria extend into the higher levels for the subject. Despite satisfactory improvements to the science curriculum, the quality of teaching and learning is not monitored in enough detail to identify any weaknesses and influence future curriculum planning and further development of the subject.

ART AND DESIGN and DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

69. Pupils aged both seven and eleven years achieve standards in art and design above those expected nationally for pupils of a similar age. At Key Stage 1, this is better than was found at the time of the previous inspection. The skill and enthusiasm of staff are used well to promote the subject, and pupils complete an interesting range of two- and three-dimensional work and meet the work of other artists.

70. The curriculum for design and technology has been improved since the previous inspection. There was not enough evidence to make an overall judgement about standards in the subject, but it is clear from work on display that pupils are now completing finished products to a good standard. Work is also suitably modified, through the use of national guidance material, to meet the needs and requirements of pupils in different year groups. Both subjects are usefully linked to work taking place in other subjects, and pupils sometimes use computer art programs to create designs. However, scrutiny of pupils' work does not give enough evidence of how far pupils are encouraged to take part in the whole design process for design and technology. No member of staff currently has an identified responsibility for co-ordinating either subject.

71. At Key Stage 1, pupils paint colourful portraits of themselves. They look carefully at camouflage during their studies of mini-beasts and paint backgrounds against which different insects can hide. They mix shades of green to make leaves, and pattern butterflies with symmetrical designs. Pupils in Year 2 extend this work into making large three-dimensional fantastical insects from wire and tissue paper. These are brightly coloured, original and individual designs and finished to a good standard. In contrast to the findings of the previous inspection, pupils at Key Stage 1 now have the opportunity to study the work of other artists. For example, pupils in Year 2 sketched from a contemporary portrait of Samuel Pepys as part of their studies in history, making careful observations. In an art lesson during the inspection, pupils in Years 2, together with others in Year 3, studied a painting by Monet of waterlilies. They used this painting to develop their own ideas through finger painting, observational painting, weaving and collage. They made very good progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of collage techniques and made independent choices about their materials. This quality of work is also reflected in design and technology. Pupils in Year 1 move the mini beasts within their pictures with the use of levers, whilst Year 2 pupils use pneumatic energy. These projects show good attention to the quality of the final finish of the work.

72. Pupils in Year 6 have studied paintings by a range of artists such as Van Eck, Gainsborough and Hockney. They have produced their own original compositions of pairs of people sitting or standing together. They look at Islamic art as part of their work in religious education and complete detailed observational work, for example, of Tudor houses in the village as part of their work in history. A computerised art program has been used to create repeating patterns and designs. Pupils also make

ceramic work to a good standard. For example, pupils moulded and glazed letter racks from clay as gifts for Father's Day, and these were then fired in the school kiln. These pupils make electric powered vehicles in design and technology. They first learned how to make a wooden chassis and wrote detailed explanations of how these are constructed. Each vehicle is entirely individual, and many show considerable imagination.

73. There was not enough evidence to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in either subject. However, where the teaching of art and design was observed with pupils in Years 2 and 3, it was of a very good standard. The learning support assistant who worked with this small group had very good subject knowledge. Planning was clear, and ensured that each age group had an appropriate level of challenge and support. There was a good range of materials, and resources included real water lilies. Due regard was given to health and safety as pupils handled tools. An excellent relationship with the pupils, praise and encouragement and advice and guidance, all contributed to the pupils' very good progress in this lesson.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

74. In history, pupils aged seven and eleven are achieving standards in line with national expectations for pupils of a similar age. Inspection evidence taken from teachers' planning and pupils' work in geography indicates that pupils also reach standards in line with national expectations. The school has adopted national guidance material to support planning, and appropriately established three-yearly cycles of topics to accommodate pupils in mixed age classes. In the Foundation and Key Stage 1 class, the teacher conscientiously varies activities to meet the needs of pupils of different ages, particularly in relation to geographical and historical skills. However, the Key Stage 2 curriculum is not being fully addressed for those pupils in Year 3 who join this class in the afternoon. This affects history in particular, where Year 3 pupils follow National Curriculum topics for Key Stage 1 rather than for Key Stage 2. Planning for geography in this class indicates that pupils look at places beyond their local area during the three-year cycle of topics, for example at weather around the world and at an island home. With the exception of Year 3, progress is satisfactory for pupils as they move through the school in both history and geography.

75. There is satisfactory coverage of both subjects for all year groups except Year 3. Both subjects are also enhanced by links with each other, and with other subjects, such as art and design, information and communication technology with history, and science and mathematics with geography. History also gives pupils opportunities to write at length. Scrutiny of pupils' work in the class containing pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 showed pupils developing mapping skills and their knowledge of the immediate vicinity as part of their study of the village. They devised map symbols and drew maps to show how to get to the school from the village post office. Expectations of the sophistication of mapping symbols were varied for pupils in each of Years 1, 2 and 3. In history, they study and write about famous historical figures, such as Florence Nightingale and Samuel Pepys. They learn about the Great Fire of London and write about a day at the seaside in Victorian times. Resources are well used as sources of information and to help pupils develop historical research skills. Pupils use pictures of a Victorian seaside scene to comment on particular features. During the inspection, Year 2 pupils completed pencil drawings of Samuel Pepys from a contemporary portrait. During the same lesson, these pupils watched a video about the Fire of London and, in a subsequent activity, pupils in Year 1 matched questions to answers about what they had seen. Pupils in Year 3 were expected to complete extended pieces of independent writing.

76. By Year 6, pupils have considered ecological and environmental issues in geography. They have explored, for example, issues about increasing traffic and pollution in the village. They also completed graphs about the amount of rubbish found around the village. The use of first and second hand source material to learn about other historical periods is developed further. During the inspection, for example, a small group of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 watched a video about the construction of Tudor houses. They had already looked at buildings in the village from this period

and, as a result, identified some main features and characteristics both of how these houses were constructed and the differences between the homes of the wealthy and the poor. Additionally, a group went out to sketch a nearby building and returned with detailed observational drawings of a good quality. A visit to a Tudor manor house and displays of Tudor costume and artefacts also enhanced their knowledge and understanding. Additionally, pupils develop their research skills by searching the Internet for further information, and select adjectives to describe what the interior of a poor person's house might have been like. History topic books are well presented. The discovery of a thirty year-old School Year Book has been seized by the school as an opportunity to give pupils a powerful example of the passing of time, particularly as some past pupils are parents of present pupils. All the pupils in the school have contributed to a contemporary version. They have written accounts of their time at the school, drawn pictures and included photographs of themselves taken, this time, with a digital camera. However, pupils in Year 3 have not taken part in current Tudor studies or joined the visit to the Tudor manor house.

77. Some teaching of history was seen during the inspection. Teaching was good in the one lesson seen for the small group of pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6. The lesson was well prepared. Primary and secondary sources of information were well used throughout the lesson to reinforce and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. The teacher also made effective reference to the ways in which historians learn about the past. Good links were established with previous mathematical knowledge about the strength of triangular shapes and their use in Tudor construction. All these strategies successfully engaged the attention of pupils. They were attentive and responsive, sometimes voluntarily offering comments or asking questions to clarify their understanding. The strengths of the learning support assistant were put to good use by taking out a group of pupils to complete observational drawings, and they produced accurate, detailed sketches. No teaching of geography was seen at either key stage as the school is focusing on history during this term, rather than geography. Currently, no staff member has responsibility for developing or monitoring either subject, and assessment systems are under-developed.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

78. A good level of improvement has been made to the curriculum for information and communication technology since the previous inspection, when the subject was significantly underdeveloped and pupils were not systematically increasing their skills and knowledge as they moved through the school. This was acknowledged by parents, at their meeting before the inspection, as a significant improvement. As a result of these developments, pupils are now making good progress in the subject and are reaching standards expected nationally of pupils of a similar age at both Years 2 and 6. Evidence taken from a scrutiny of pupils' work and teaching seen during this inspection shows that the subject now has a strong place in the school's curriculum, and is well represented and used in other subjects. This is largely due to the headteacher's good leadership and management of the subject. His knowledge of and enthusiasm for information and communication technology has been effectively communicated to other members of staff, who have embraced the teaching and development of the subject with interest, skill and imagination. The school has adopted national planning material to cover all aspects of the subject. There is now a clear development of skills from the beginning of Key Stage 1 to the end of Key Stage 2 and regular opportunities for pupils to use computers. A useful checklist of skills has been introduced at both Key Stages 1 and 2 to track pupils' progress. Resources have been considerably increased and improved, and a small computer suite established in the Key Stage 2 library in addition to computers in classrooms.

79. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to use e-mail as a natural means of communication. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 devised simple questions to ask of the author Eric Carle at his web-site as part of their work on his book, 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar'. All pupils have also used e-mail to send ideas to the headteacher about improvements to playtimes. This activity has valuably reinforced work in literacy on letter writing for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Pupils at Key Stage 1 word process their writing in history, for example about a day at the seaside in Victorian times, and their

study of mini-beasts in science. They create bar graphs on the computer during work on time in mathematics. They also use word-processed text to correct punctuation errors during literacy. During a literacy lesson, pupils in Year 1 used the mouse to highlight words in a poem that expressed feelings or movement. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 confidently and competently delete, cut, paste and overwrite text in their literacy work, to change the mood of a piece of writing. By Year 6, pupils use the Internet to research information about Tudor houses or North American Indians. Within the school's careful arrangements for supervised access, they log on independently after a swift reminder from the class teacher. Work on display shows more advanced word processing, and extended pieces of writing are accurately and confidently word-processed. An art program is used to generate colourful repeating designs. They generate more complex charts and graphs in data handling and also learn how to use a digital camera, for example to take pictures of each other for the school Year Book or of themselves at work on a science challenge. Activities on biennial residential trips give these pupils further opportunities to develop their skills.

80. It is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching and learning in information and communication technology. However, pupils' work, in addition to the small amount of direct teaching seen during the inspection, indicate that teachers have good subject knowledge, which they communicate well. Pockets of time are effectively used throughout the school day to teach the subject. This was true for a lesson for pupils in Years 3 and 4, where teaching was good. This had been usefully placed in a short time slot at the end of the morning. Planning had clear learning objectives, and activities were suitably modified to meet the needs of pupils in different year groups. Pupils made good progress during this lesson because instructions were clearly given and reinforced with written reminders. Time and the use of resources were very well organised within the lesson through a rota system, which allowed all pupils to practice what they had learned. Bright, lively displays of pupils' work served a dual purpose of celebrating their achievements and reminding them of skills. During a history lesson for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6, the teacher quickly and competently refreshed the pupils' memories of how to log on to the Internet. There was then a good level of challenge for these pupils to search for facts about Tudor houses in the remainder of the lesson.

81. Pupils benefit from formal teaching of skills and knowledge each week and the chance to practice what they have learnt during lessons. Teachers record and monitor pupils' sessions on the computer through a rota system in each class.

MUSIC

82. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are generally in line with national expectations for pupils in Years 2 and 6, and that pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. This reflects the findings of the previous report. Pupils sing tunefully and with enjoyment during assemblies. They listen attentively to music played to them and sometimes give a personal response. During one music lesson, at Key Stage 1, standards of attainment were above those expected of pupils of a similar age. In this lesson, there were high expectations of what pupils could achieve, supported by the teacher's good subject knowledge. Pupils were skilfully questioned to draw out descriptive explanations of why they chose particular instruments to represent different weather noises. The story was convincingly told, activities were varied and the performance was well conducted. As a result, instruments were used imaginatively by the pupils, who remained happily focused on their activities for a sustained period of time. They made good progress during this lesson in the development of their musical skills, and gained much personally and socially from the opportunity to work and play together. A short period of time at the start of an afternoon was well used for pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 to listen carefully to Mike Oldfield's 'Tubular Bells' for pitch and texture. The teacher's good subject knowledge successfully encouraged pupils' knowledge of musical language, which they could use and explain. This knowledge and understanding was reinforced the following day at the start of assembly.

83. This subject is enthusiastically and skilfully promoted by a co-ordinator with specialist expertise. The music policy has been recently reviewed, and schemes of work have been implemented throughout the school. The Parents' Association also funds an adult to teach pupils how to play the recorder. However, the co-ordinator has no allocated time to monitor teaching and learning in music, other than through assemblies or concerts. Assessment in music is underdeveloped and not used well enough to inform strategic or curriculum planning. There is no designated budget for the maintenance or development of music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

84. Whilst it was not possible to make an overall judgement about attainment in physical education for pupils aged seven, standards are broadly in line with those nationally expected for pupils aged eleven in athletics, and pupils make satisfactory progress in this aspect of the subject. This largely reflects the findings of the previous report. National guidance material is used to support the curriculum, and very detailed planning indicates that all areas of the subject are appropriately covered for pupils in all year groups. Pupils in Years 3 and 5 swim at a local pool throughout the summer term. Last year, all Year 5 pupils were able to swim at least 25 metres. A biennial residential trip for pupils in Years 5 and 6 allows these pupils to take part in adventurous activities. The subject is particularly enhanced by good links with other schools in the area. Those with the local cluster group of small schools and the larger consortium group of schools allow pupils to take part in sporting activities and team games, both with and against pupils from other schools. This makes an important contribution to their personal and social development. During the week of the inspection and in the week following it, pupils were taking part in games tournaments and athletics events with other schools, both during and after school hours.

85. Facilities for the subject are generally satisfactory. There is a fair-sized hall with climbing resources and a hard core netball court. The school also benefits from a good-sized field area. This allowed pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 to practice athletics skills during the inspection, in preparation for an area event. Different techniques for throwing the quoit, javelin and shot were satisfactorily demonstrated by the teacher and subsequently practised by pupils in smaller groups. All adults and pupils were suitably dressed, and equipment had been well prepared beforehand. There was a suitable warm-up that allowed pupils to prepare for the main activities. Pupils had made sound progress by the end of the lesson in improving their throwing skills and mastering the different techniques. However, too much time was spent in small groups waiting to take a turn with the equipment, and few of the activities gave pupils the chance to take part in vigorous exercise.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

86. Inspection evidence taken from pupils' work indicates that pupils aged seven and eleven meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection, when pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 did not meet the expected standards. The subject has been developed in a number of ways since that time. Religious education is now incorporated into curriculum plans across the school. Evidence from pupils' work indicates that pupils are receiving a sound range of experiences and opportunities to learn about world religions, such as Christianity, Judaism, Hinduism and Islam. This is strongly supported by the school's Christian ethos, which underpins the work of the whole school. Within lessons, work is suitably modified for pupils in different year groups. There are good opportunities to use and develop literacy skills. Pupils write independently and at length, and effective use is made of information and communication technology to research information. Pupils visit web sites and use CD-Rom material to increase their knowledge and understanding, for instance by making 'virtual' tours of synagogues and temples. Assemblies are valuably used to support pupils' work in religious education and to promote thought-provoking ideas. During the inspection, for example, an assembly theme explored the concept of human life as a journey. Pupils learned something about John Bunyan's life and

background, as well as being introduced to his depiction of the religious journey of a lifetime, in his book 'Pilgrim's Progress'. This was skilfully linked with pupils' own experience of change at the end of the school year, as they prepared for new schools or teaching groups in the coming year.

87. The school also has a good range of artefacts that are used well to support learning. Pupils look closely at religious artefacts; they understand and respect the special significance of these objects and treat them with reverence. Year 2 pupils study special books and religious festivals, and write individual accounts about significant religious objects of different world religions. They accurately retell religious stories, for example those told by Jesus, such as 'The Prodigal Son' and 'The Lost Sheep'. They also explore some simple arguments for and against vegetarianism when they consider the beauty and mystery of the natural world. Pupils in Year 6 explore challenging themes, such as racism, during their study of Judaism. Their independent writing is thoughtful and reflective. As part of this work, they have recently visited a local synagogue. Their written work and letters of thanks to the person who organised and conducted the tour show that this visit effectively extended their appreciation, knowledge and understanding of the Jewish faith.

88. The co-ordinator for religious education is efficient and enthusiastic. She has re-written the policy this year and gives staff useful informal support. More explicit links are now being established with the school's curriculum for personal, social and health education, and this improvement is part of the school's strategic planning. Assessment systems are satisfactory.