

INSPECTION REPORT

MARGARETTING CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Margaretting, Ingatestone

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115116

Headteacher: Miss F Mulligan

Reporting inspector: Mr D J Curtis
20893

Dates of inspection: 26th – 28th November 2001

Inspection number: 194691

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Penny's Lane Margaretting Ingatestone Essex
Postcode:	CM4 0HA
Telephone number:	01277 352114
Fax number:	01277 352114
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Harry Boulter
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D J Curtis 20893	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Art and design Design and technology Physical education Special educational needs	How high are standards? (The school's results and achievements) How well are pupils taught?
Mrs H Barter 9052	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (Attitudes, values and personal development) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mrs S Chesters 23196	Team inspector	English Geography History Music Religious education Foundation Stage Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd
5 Lakeside
Werrington
Peterborough
PE4 6QZ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	14
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Margaretting Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School is situated in the village of Margaretting in Essex. It is a much smaller than average primary school, with 59 pupils on roll aged from 4 to 11; there are three classes. No pupils come from ethnic minority families and none have English as an additional language; this is below average. There are 10 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs; as a proportion this is not significantly different from the national average. Three pupils are entitled to free school meals; as a proportion this is below average. Children enter school with standards that are average for the local education authority.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory standard of education for its pupils. Teaching is mainly good, although the teaching of literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory and results in pupils under-achieving in English and mathematics at the age of 11 years. Pupils enjoy school and behaviour is very good. The headteacher, who has been in post since September 2000, provides satisfactory leadership and management; she has a clear vision for the school's future development. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in art and design at the age of 11 are very good.
- At the age of 7, standards in reading, mathematics and science are above average.
- Pupils' behaviour is very good and relationships are good.
- The provision for and progress of pupils with special educational needs.
- The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

What could be improved

- Standards and teaching in literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6, especially for more-able pupils.
- The attitudes and learning of boys, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since its previous inspection in April 1997. It has addressed successfully the key issues of ensuring that there is now full coverage of the National Curriculum and religious education. The amount of teaching time in Years 3 to 6 (Key Stage 2) is now appropriate and the school development plan is more closely linked to improving the quality of education and improving standards. It has been less successful in addressing the key issue to raise standards for high achievers, especially by the age of 11 years. More-able pupils, particularly boys, underachieve in literacy and numeracy. Standards by the age of seven have improved and the school has closed the gap between the standards achieved by boys and girls. By the age of 11, girls continue to outperform boys by a significant margin.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6, based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	E	E
Mathematics	B	C	D	E
Science	B	C	D	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Caution is needed in interpreting the results of National Curriculum assessments because the number of pupils in each year group is small.

The table shows the results for pupils in Year 6 who have now left the school. Standards are below or well below average because the school is not getting the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 5 (the expectation is that pupils should achieve Level 4 or above) in the National Curriculum assessments that it should be doing. Inspection evidence confirms that pupils underachieve in English and mathematics, particularly boys.

Current inspection findings judge that, by the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are average, but that they are not high enough. Girls achieve much higher standards than boys do. There are significant weaknesses in the teaching of literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6. In science, although factual knowledge is good, pupils' written work is not of a high enough standard. Standards in art and design exceed expectations for pupils of this age. In information and communication technology, standards meet national expectations. In design and technology, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age. Standards in physical education are below expectations for pupils of this age because, in the past, they have not been taught the full requirements of the curriculum, particularly gymnastics. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in design and technology, geography and history meet expectations.

Current inspection findings judge that, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, mathematics and science are above average, with standards in writing average. In art and design, and in physical education, standards exceed expectations for pupils of this age. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in design and technology, geography, history and music meet expectations for pupils of this age.

By the end of the Foundation Stage, children meet the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory; they are strong in Years 1 to 4 but, particularly amongst boys, unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good; pupils behave well in lessons, in the playground and when moving around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good; pupils relate well to each other, their teachers and all adults whom they meet.
Attendance	Satisfactory, although punctuality is not as good as it should be.

The unsatisfactory attitudes to learning, particularly of older boys, have a negative impact on their learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Satisfactory

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.

During the inspection most of the lessons observed were good or very good. Where teaching is a strength, it contributes to improving standards and the good progress made from Years 1 to 4. However, inspection evidence indicates significant weaknesses in the teaching of literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6, with the result that pupils underachieve and standards are not high enough.

Where teaching is good or better, teachers show good subject knowledge, which is passed on to pupils with interest and enthusiasm. Lessons are planned carefully and activities matched closely to the individual learning needs of pupils. Resources are used effectively, including learning support assistants. In art and design, a learning support assistant makes a significant contribution to the high standards achieved.

The teaching of literacy in Years 1 to 4 is very good and has a significant impact on improving standards and the good progress made. Teachers implement the National Literacy Strategy effectively and pupils are challenged in their learning. In Years 5 and 6, teaching is unsatisfactory, with more-able pupils, especially boys, insufficiently challenged; pupils' application of literacy skills in other subjects is weak.

The teaching of numeracy is good in Years 1 to 4, with the result that standards are improving and good progress is made. Work is matched successfully to pupils' learning needs. In Years 5 and 6, teaching is unsatisfactory and this contributes to significant underachievement, particularly in mental arithmetic and amongst more-able pupils, especially boys.

The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good; they are supported effectively by the dedicated learning support assistants, who work successfully with teachers to support pupils' learning.

Teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was mostly sound with some good features. The teaching is particularly good in promoting children's personal and social development.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory, with strengths in the provision of extra-curricular activities and in links with the community to support pupils' learning.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good; the co-ordinator for special educational needs, the teachers and the learning support assistants work effectively to meet pupils' learning needs and as a result they make good progress. Individual education plans are good.
Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good provision in all aspects contributes significantly to pupils' very good behaviour and to their good relationships. Through the 'Multi-Cultural Week', the school makes very good provision for developing pupils' awareness of many different cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory, with strengths in the procedures to promote good behaviour.

The school works hard to involve parents in its day-to-day life. The headteacher is aware that some parents are concerned about changes she has made in the school, but is determined that these changes are to the benefit of pupils; inspection findings support this.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory; the headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school and recognises the need to improve standards. Subject leaders value the headteacher's initiative to give them much greater responsibility for managing their subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; the governors fulfil all statutory responsibilities. Although many are new to the governing body, they are hard working and supportive.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good; the school is aware of its strength and weaknesses and is taking effective action to address them.
The strategic use of resources	Good; specific funds, particularly for pupils with special educational needs, are used effectively to support pupils' learning.

The accommodation is unsatisfactory, especially with regard to the teaching of physical education. There are sufficient well-qualified staff to meet the learning needs of pupils. Resources are adequate; the ICT suite is proving beneficial in supporting pupils' progress in information and communication technology. The school applies successfully the principles of best value when making its spending decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • Teaching is good. • Behaviour is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children do not get the right amount of homework. • They are not well informed about their children's progress. • The range of activities outside lessons. • The school does not have high expectations.

Eighteen parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector before the inspection and 37 questionnaires were returned. Inspection findings support the positive views of parents although, whilst teaching is mainly good, it is unsatisfactory in literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6. Inspection evidence indicates that the provision of homework is inconsistent and that expectations, particularly in Years 5 and 6, are not high enough. Provision of extra-curricular activities is judged to be good for a school of this size.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements¹

Foundation Stage

1. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five. The initial assessment of children's abilities when they first enter school shows that most start school with average levels of attainment. The majority of children reach, and a good proportion exceed, the Early Learning Goals² set for the age group by the time they begin Year 1. At the time of the inspection, there was only one child in the Foundation Stage.

Years 1 and 2

2. The results of the year 2001 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 2 were average in reading, writing and mathematics. In the three subjects, all pupils achieved the expected Level 2³ and above and this places the school in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 was well below average in reading and mathematics and below average in writing. As a result, the overall standards achieved are average. In comparison with those in similar schools⁴, the results were below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in writing. Although the school was in the top 5 per cent of similar schools in relation to the proportion achieving Level 2 and above, the proportion achieving the higher Level 3 was well below average in reading and writing and in the bottom 5 per cent of similar schools in mathematics. As a result, the overall standards are below the average for similar schools.
3. Taking the years 1999 to 2001 together, the trend shows standards in reading and mathematics to be above the national average, with those in writing below. Boys achieved higher standards than girls in reading and writing, which goes against the national trend. In mathematics, there was no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls.
4. Current inspection findings judge that, by the end of Year 2, standards in reading, mathematics and science were above average, with standards in writing average. Improvement is the result of good teaching and effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. In art and design and in physical education, standards exceed expectations for pupils of this age. Standards in information and communication technology meet national expectations. In religious education, standards meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in design and technology, geography, history and music meet expectations for pupils of this age.

Years 3 to 6

5. The results of the 2001 National Curriculum assessments for pupils in Year 6 were below the national average in mathematics and science, but well below average in English. The

¹ Throughout the report in all references to standards and trends, it must be noted that this is a very small primary school and the number of pupils within each year group is small.

² QCA (Qualifications and Curriculum Authority) has produced a set of 'Early Learning Goals' for children in this stage of education. These outcomes are a set of skills, knowledge and understanding that children might be expected to achieve by the age of six. There are six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

³ It is the national expectation that by the age of seven pupils should achieve Level 2 or above in the National Curriculum assessments.

⁴ Schools with up to eight per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals.

proportion achieving the expected Level 4⁵ and above was average in all three subjects, but the proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was average in mathematics, below average in science and well below average in English. As a result, overall standards are average. In comparison with those in similar schools, results were well below average in all three subjects. The proportion achieving Level 4 and above was well below average in English and mathematics and below average in science. At Level 5, the proportion was well below average in English and science and below average in mathematics. The school is not doing as well as similar schools because not enough pupils achieve the expected Level 4 and above or the higher Level 5. In English, there was a significant variation in standards achieved in reading and writing. In reading, 84 per cent achieved Level 4 and above, with 38 per cent achieving Level 5. In writing, 46 per cent achieved Level 4 and above, with 8 per cent achieving Level 5.

6. Taking the years 1997 to 2001 together, the trend shows standards in English to be marginally below the national average, with those in mathematics and science slightly above. However, there is a significant variation between the standards achieved by boys and girls. Girls have consistently outperformed boys in all three subjects.
7. Current inspection findings judge that, by the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science are average, but that they are not high enough. Girls achieve much higher standards than boys do. The factors contributing to standards not being high enough are:
 - evidence that the teaching of literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6 is unsatisfactory, particularly in low expectations and a lack of challenge for more-able boys;
 - in Years 5 and 6, pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy, particularly amongst boys, is unsatisfactory; they do not put sufficient effort into their work;
 - in literacy, standards in writing are significantly lower than those achieved in reading; writing skills are not applied consistently well in other subjects.
8. By the age of 11, standards in art and design exceed expectations for pupils of this age as the result of inspired teaching, particularly through the significant contribution of a learning support assistant. In information and communication technology, standards meet national expectations. In design and technology, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age. Standards in physical education are below expectations for pupils of this age because, in the past, pupils have not been taught the full requirements of the curriculum, particularly gymnastics. Although this issue has been addressed, pupils have too much work to catch up on in order to reach expected standards.

Across the school

9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning as measured against the targets set within their individual education plans. They are supported effectively in lessons by learning support assistants, who work in close partnership with class teachers to meet pupils' specific learning needs.
10. Although there are significant weaknesses in teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6, particularly in literacy and numeracy, the headteacher and governors are determined to raise standards. Inspection evidence is consistent with the school having the capacity to secure those improvements and to meet its future targets.

⁵ It is the national expectation that, by the age of 11, pupils should achieve Level 4 and above in the National Curriculum assessments.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. As reported at the last inspection, pupils are enthusiastic about school life, behave well and say that they enjoy coming to school. This confirms the positive views of those parents who responded to the questionnaire. In lessons, however, some pupils' attitudes towards their learning are less positive than previously reported. Pupils from the reception year to Year 4 are very well motivated and have very positive attitudes to work. However, in Years 5 and 6, many pupils, especially boys, are not well motivated and need clear instructions, focused tasks and set time limits before they begin to concentrate and apply themselves to their work. This has a detrimental impact on their learning and means that they do not always make as much progress in lessons as they should.
12. Where teaching is good or better, pupils are keen to put forward ideas, concentrate hard and achieve well. Pupils have particularly good attitudes to learning when they are involved in interesting activities that provide stimulation and challenge. For example, when looking at a skeleton, pupils in Years 3 and 4 are fascinated by the use of correct scientific vocabulary and a practical demonstration showing the location of bicep and tricep muscles. Younger pupils in the reception year and Years 1 and 2 apply themselves very well when making collages depicting the story of a boy lost in a toy shop. They use materials sensibly and discuss how to improve their work with others and with the teacher.
13. In Years 5 and 6, however, pupils only show this level of interest and involvement when teachers are clear about the need to listen carefully, to apply themselves to their work and to finish the tasks set for them. Although pupils appear to be behaving well, they often sit passively while teachers introduce the lesson. When they are required to start their individual work, they take too long to embark on anything purposeful and, as a result, their work output and pace of learning are slow. Pupils do not give sufficient attention to ensuring that their work is presented neatly, with correct spellings, and there is some graffiti in their exercise books.
14. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. They get on very well with each other and show very good respect for adults. They are clear about the school's expectations of behaviour and very few have to be reminded about the school's code of conduct. There is a happy, 'family' atmosphere when pupils are gathered together for assemblies, at lunchtime and in the playground. Pupils enjoy the extra-curricular activities provided for them. They have very positive attitudes and behave very well when taking part in lunchtime French lessons. Pupils say that there is no bullying because they are all friends with each other and everyone includes others in activities and at playtime. Exclusions from the school are very rare, although, in the past year, there has been one fixed-term exclusion, relating to one pupil who has now left the school.
15. Pupils make good progress in their personal development. The small school environment helps them to grow in confidence and to develop their relationships with one another and with adults. Most pupils develop good levels of independence in their work, although pupils in Years 5 and 6 are often passive and do not show very much initiative in their learning. Pupils respond very well to opportunities for taking responsibility, for example as house captains, and carry out their roles responsibly. They are willing to carry out small tasks for teachers when they arrive early in the morning. Pupils say that they can approach staff when they have any concerns, although they do not feel that they have much say in how the school operates.
16. Pupils' attendance at school is satisfactory. Since the last inspection the rate has risen in line with the national trend. There is very little unauthorised absence, although the school has identified a small group of pupils who are regularly late for school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The previous inspection report judged the quality of teaching to be 'satisfactory or better' in 90 per cent of lessons, although no lessons were judged to be very good. Ten per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, lessons proceeded at a slow pace, expectations were too low and there were unstimulating activities. Pupils were often distracted and wasted time.
18. Current inspection findings based on the lessons observed show a significant improvement in the quality of teaching. During the inspection, 76 per cent of lessons were good or better, including 48 per cent that were very good or excellent. This good and very good teaching is having a positive impact on improving standards in reception and Years 1 and 2. It contributes successfully to the good progress made in Years 3 and 4. However, in Years 5 and 6, inspection evidence, particularly from looking at pupils' previous work, indicates significant weaknesses in the teaching of literacy and numeracy, with the result that standards are not high enough. In addition, in Years 5 and 6, pupils do not build on the good progress made in literacy and numeracy from reception to Year 4. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' attitudes to learning in literacy and numeracy are not as positive as those shown by younger pupils.
19. Ninety per cent of parents agreed, through the questionnaire, that teaching in the school is good, and inspection findings largely confirm this. However, some parents are concerned by the large number of teachers who teach the Years 5 and 6 class during the week. Inspection findings support these concerns, not because of the number of teachers, but through there being inconsistency in the quality of teaching between them.
20. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage is good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was mostly sound with some good features. The teaching is particularly good in promoting children's personal and social development. Staff in the infant class are calm, patient and sensitive to the needs of young children. They interact with children enthusiastically and fully involve themselves in all activities. They make lessons fun.
21. Teaching of literacy is very good in Years 1 to 4, but unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6. In the younger classes, pupils are challenged to work hard and expectations of what they can achieve are high. Pupils enjoy learning and work hard in lessons. As a result, progress is good and standards are improving. In Years 5 and 6, work is not sufficiently demanding and there is little challenge; in particular, pupils are not encouraged to use their literacy skills in other subjects. Pupils' learning is unsatisfactory and they are under-achieving in their learning. Boys in particular work at a very slow pace in lessons and this contributes to their standards being below those of the girls.
22. The teaching of numeracy is good in Years 1 to 4. Teachers implement the National Numeracy Strategy effectively; this has a positive impact on improving standards and the good progress made. Expectations of what pupils should achieve in lessons are high and work is matched carefully to pupils' individual learning needs. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are not sufficiently challenged and their attitudes to and the amount of work covered in lessons are unsatisfactory. As a result, pupils, particularly the more able, are underachieving. Girls work harder than boys and this results in them achieving higher standards than boys do.
23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good across the school. Teachers work in effective partnership with learning support assistants to plan a good range of activities to meet pupils' specific learning needs. In lessons, learning support

assistants work effectively with pupils by helping them with their work and concentrating on what has to be achieved. In most lessons, pupils make good progress in their learning. In a literacy lesson in Years 5 and 6 on writing a 'reflective poem', pupils with special educational needs worked harder and achieved more in the lesson than most of their classmates because of the effective support they received.

24. Where teaching is good or better, the lesson objective is shared with pupils and this helps them understand what they are expected to do. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 numeracy lesson, the main objective was 'to recognise fractions and use these to find fractions of shapes'. The lesson was planned effectively, including the use of the learning support assistant to work with pupils in Year 3. Work was matched carefully to pupils' learning needs, with pupils in Year 3 given a task to shade in fractions of shapes, for example $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$. In Year 4, pupils, especially the more able, were given the task of finding, for example, ' $\frac{3}{4}$ of 16'. As a result of detailed planning all pupils made progress in the lesson and gained in their understanding of fractions.
25. The final or plenary part of the lesson is used effectively in the best lessons. For example, at the end of a science lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher asked, 'What have you learned today?' There was an enthusiastic response in which pupils explained to the teacher how muscles contract and what a tendon is. The teacher was able to assess the gains in knowledge and understanding that the pupils made in the lesson.
26. Relationships between pupils and teachers are good; this contributes to them being happy and secure in the school. In a 'Circle Time'⁶ discussion in the reception/Year 1 and 2 class, the teacher's very close and warm relationship with the pupils was evident and this contributed to the pupils being very confident in their speaking and listening. Through the teacher talking about accidents that had happened to her, pupils were motivated to discuss things that had happened to them.
27. The use of homework to support pupils' learning is inconsistent and reflects the pattern of teaching in the school. In Years 5 and 6, it is not set as consistently or marked as rigorously as it is in the younger classes; parental concerns about this are supported by inspection findings.

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

28. The quality and range of the curriculum are satisfactory for the Foundation Stage and for Years 1 to 6. The school provides a broadly based and relevant curriculum. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are taught. All statutory requirements are met. The school has satisfactorily implemented the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, which are beginning to impact positively on standards. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection, when the curriculum was neither broad nor balanced.
29. The school now has detailed schemes of work for all subjects. These are based on the guidelines provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and are currently being tailored to the needs of the school. They give guidance to teachers, which enables them to teach all subjects in a progressive and methodical way. This ensures that the pupils learn in a structured manner and cover all the requirements of the National Curriculum. Topic work, including science, history and geography, is planned in a two-year cycle to ensure that pupils in mixed-aged classes cover all subjects without undue repetition. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when there were no

⁶ In these lessons, pupils sit in a circle and, through agreed rules, have the opportunity to speak and listen to each other, talking about issues which touch them all.

schemes of work in place to ensure the systematic development of pupils' skills and knowledge.

30. The school provides satisfactorily for pupils' physical and personal development. It considers carefully opportunities to develop pupils' personal, social and health education. There is a suitable policy for sex education, agreed by the governors. Arrangements for physical education have improved significantly since the last inspection. The school has acquired the use of a neighbouring school's hall for physical education lessons. This enables it to meet fully the requirements of the National Curriculum. The time allocation for all subjects is satisfactory. This is an improvement, since at the time of the last inspection the teaching time available in Key Stage 2 was highlighted as inadequate.
31. The school has satisfactorily introduced the National Literacy Strategy. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' writing and language skills. However, writing skills are not well developed in any subject, particularly in Years 5 and 6, where writing is unsatisfactory. The school has focused on this and made additional time available for pupils to practise their writing skills and use them in subjects such as geography, history and religious education. This is already beginning to impact on standards in Years 1 and 2, where writing showed improvement in the 2001 national test results. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is proving satisfactory in raising pupils' attainment in mathematics, although it has not been in place for long enough to show a significant impact in Years 5 and 6. Homework is set and gives a satisfactory level of support to the work that pupils do in lessons.
32. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is good. They include aerobics, recorders, a family computer-use group, football, netball and French. There is also a toddlers reading club in the library one afternoon a week. These activities are well supported and much appreciated by pupils and parents. The curriculum is also greatly enriched by the number of educational visits made and the good number of visitors who come to the school. Visits are made to museums, art galleries and such places of interest as the local Records Office. These add to the quality of the art and history work that pupils accomplish. Visitors include a book designer, who came to talk to Years 3 to 6 when they made books, and speakers from various charities that are supported by the school.
33. The community contributes very positively to the life of the school. Visitors from the community include the fire service, the school nurse and the Bishop of Chelmsford. These visits successfully broaden and enrich pupils' experiences. They bring an important dimension to the life of the school. Pupils join in community events such as the Village Fete and they hold regular services in the local church. Pupils enjoy all of these activities and benefit greatly from them. The school has very good relationships with other schools. For example, the local secondary school provides a teacher to run the French club. The school prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.
34. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Planning for these young children effectively incorporates the early learning goals for the age group. Children have access to a satisfactory range of suitable activities and learning experiences. These prepare them satisfactorily for the National Curriculum, from Year 1 onwards.
35. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and the school complies fully with the requirements of the Code of Practice⁷. The part-time co-ordinator for special educational needs works effectively with teachers and learning support assistants to

⁷ Code of Practice: This gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

ensure that pupils' individual education plans are of good quality and contain detailed and realistic targets.

36. In Years 5 and 6, the school is not providing a consistently high set of expectations for the boys and, as a result, they fall behind the girls in the standards achieved by a significant margin. This is a trend in the school and the gap is not being closed. Expectations, particularly in relation to their attitudes to learning, are not rigorous enough and this contributes to their underachievement.
37. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when spiritual and cultural provision were sound.
38. The good provision for pupils' spiritual development is seen in the effective way in which pupils use the reflection time in assemblies to consider how their actions affect other people. For example, in the assembly led by the local vicar on the theme of selfishness, the notion of why it is good to be unselfish was brought home to the pupils through the story of the Good Samaritan. The pupils reflected quietly, and with obvious feeling, as they focused on the floodlit cross while they prayed. Teachers plan opportunities in lessons and in 'Circle Time' sessions for pupils to consider their place in the world. For example, in a very good 'Circle Time', Years 3 and 4 learned through practical games and discussion that at times people have to rely on each other for help.
39. Staff provide good opportunities for pupils to develop good moral standards. They encourage good behaviour through the school's code of conduct. They teach pupils to distinguish right from wrong and encourage them to take responsibility for their own actions. Chances to discuss moral issues arise in 'Circle Time' sessions. The 'seven golden rules', celebrated by the awarding of 'Golden Time' on Friday afternoons when pupils choose their favourite activities, consistently underpin teachers' efforts to explain to them the effects of their actions on others. Staff are good role models. They treat each other with respect and value each other's work. Thus, relationships are very good and this influences successfully the pupils' ideas.
40. The good provision for pupils' social development is seen in the way in which the school provides many opportunities for them to take responsibility for routine jobs. Pupils are encouraged, from Year 1, to take charge of delivering the registers back to the office. Older pupils are house captains and lead by example. They have a variety of responsibilities; for instance, they help younger pupils at lunch times and show visitors around school. Social education permeates all aspects of school life, as exemplified by the very good relationships that exist throughout the school. It is further enhanced by the active support that the school receives from the parish priest and the governors. They regularly participate in the daily life of the school and this has a significant impact upon pupils' social development.
41. Provision for cultural education is good. Throughout the curriculum, there are occasions when the pupils learn about their own backgrounds and about cultures that are different from their own. They learn about their own locality and its traditions; for example, through visits to Braintree Museum and through the good links it has with the local church. From this secure beginning the pupils begin to develop an awareness of different cultures and beliefs. They celebrate diversity through activities such as the multi-cultural week, when they study art, dance and traditional stories from a wide range of cultures. For example, they make African masks, become skilled at Indian dancing and learn about the Chinese New Year celebrations. In this way, the pupils learn about a range of customs and beliefs that they are likely to come across as they grow up. Pupils are well prepared for living in a diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The quality of educational and personal support and guidance that is provided for pupils is good because teachers and other staff know and care for pupils' individual needs very well. This helps pupils to grow in confidence and provides a good foundation for their learning. Parents appreciate the pastoral care that is provided for their children that helps them to feel safe and secure, and most feel that they can approach the school if they have any concerns.
43. The school makes satisfactory arrangements to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. The newly-formed governing body's premises committee is to take responsibility for ensuring that checks and risk assessments take place. The school's procedures for child protection are satisfactory. The staff know the pupils and families very well and are aware of any difficulties that may have an impact on pupils' lives at school. During the week of inspection, the member of staff newly responsible for child protection was to undertake training and she is aware that the child protection policy will need to be reviewed once this has taken place. There are suitable arrangements for first aid and for administering pupils' medication. All staff are very caring when pupils are unwell or hurt themselves.
44. Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory and comply with statutory requirements. The school has identified that a small group of pupils are regularly late for school and intends to make the required time of arrival clearer for parents.
45. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting behaviour are good and are consistently applied. The school is calm and well disciplined because of the clear expectations of staff, the inclusive atmosphere of the school and the quality of relationships between all members of the school community. Pupils say that there is no bullying, but they know that staff will help them if they have any worries.
46. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and personal development is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, the school has satisfactorily resolved the key issue concerning the lack of formal assessment procedures by introducing a range of assessment procedures to provide information about pupils' progress. In addition to testing for the youngest children when they start school and regular reading tests for all pupils, it has started a regular programme of termly testing in English, mathematics and science. It has begun to use this to predict pupils' eventual levels in the national tests in Years 2 and 6. Assessment in foundation subjects⁸ at the end of each topic is being developed in line with the schemes of work, although these are not fully in use. This is reflected in the weaker quality of reporting in subjects other than English, mathematics and science in pupils' end-of-year reports.
47. Support for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school works successfully with outside agencies, for example the education psychologist, to identify pupils' specific learning needs. The special educational needs co-ordinator, in close partnership with class teachers, monitors carefully the progress pupils make towards achieving the targets set in their individual education plans.
48. The use made of assessment information is satisfactory. An analysis of last year's tests is being used to identify subject areas in need of development; currently, pupils' achievement in writing in Year 6. However, this has not yet been reflected in an improvement in standards. As a result of testing, teachers now match pupils' work more accurately against National Curriculum requirements, although this is not carried out

⁸ [Art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education](#)

consistently by all teachers. The school is developing the use of literacy targets for pupils, although their quality and their relevance to pupils' learning have not been monitored or evaluated.

49. The quality of teachers' marking using the school's 'Key To Success' annotation system varies from class to class but, when used well, helps pupils to understand how well they achieved and where they need to make improvements. Although the school's systems for monitoring personal development remain informal, teachers and classroom assistants know all the pupils very well and give good guidance and support in lessons and around the school. The systems of reward, such as stars and house points, are well understood and valued by pupils and teachers ensure that all pupils are included in the celebration of achievement over the school year.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. As reported at the last inspection, the quality of the partnership that the school has with parents is satisfactory. Parents are particularly positive about:
- the fact that their children like coming to school;
 - their children's good behaviour;
 - the friendly, 'family' atmosphere which is a strong feature of the school.
- Most parents think that teaching is good in the school, although some are concerned about the quality of teaching for pupils in Years 5 and 6.
51. A significant minority of those parents who completed the questionnaire were critical of:
- the amount of homework that pupils receive;
 - the information that they receive about their children's progress;
 - the range of activities provided outside lessons;
 - the way in which the school is led and managed;
 - the expectations that the school has of pupils.
52. The inspection team agrees that pupils enjoy school and behave well and that this makes a significant contribution to the happy school environment. For a small school there is a good range of activities provided for pupils outside lessons, including lunchtime clubs. Inspectors recognise that the quality of teaching and expectations in Years 5 and 6 are of some concern to parents and that it is reflected in their opinion of the leadership and management of the school. The headteacher is now taking steps to improve teaching in Years 5 and 6, particularly literacy and numeracy. The school attempts to work closely with all parents and teachers are readily available to speak to them about their children's progress. Inspectors find that the range of homework provided is satisfactory overall, although there is inconsistency in its provision in Years 5 and 6. Pupils themselves say that sometimes there is none 'and then there is loads and it's all jumbled about'.
53. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. There is good verbal communication and regular contact with parents at the start and end of the day. In addition to parents' evenings, teachers offer weekly appointments for parents to discuss their children's progress, although not many regularly take up this opportunity. Parents receive regular newsletters and communications about school events, and notices are clearly displayed outside the school. The school now provides parents with termly curriculum information and summarises this with the end-of-year reports. It plans to hold a science curriculum evening led by the headteacher. Opportunities have previously been provided to explain literacy and numeracy to parents.
54. The quality of reporting in pupils' end-of-year reports is satisfactory. Reporting in English, mathematics and science has improved as a result of regular testing and assessment procedures. However, reporting in other subjects is variable because the school has not

developed regular assessments to help staff report in more detail about what pupils know, understand and can do. Parents mostly feel that reports are a good guide, although they would like to see their children contributing some commentary and some parents do not like the fact that comments about pupils working within the same grouping are very similar.

55. There is good involvement of most parents in children's learning and school life. Most parents support homework activities and many hear their children read. The introduction of a 'Family ICT Club' is a good initiative and encourages parents to work alongside their children. Attendance at parents' evenings, the governing body's annual meetings and concerts, sports events and church services is good. Although some staff are still reluctant to accept parental help in the classroom, parents are welcomed to help with activities such as swimming and school visits. There is a very active and supportive 'Friends of Margaretting School' association, which holds fundraising and social events and encourages all parents to support the school and to get involved with its activities. The school recognises that it now needs to review its home-school agreement to consider how to further develop its partnership with parents and to make links even more effective.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

56. The school is satisfactorily led and managed. The headteacher provides positive leadership, promoting a clear sense of direction for the school. She is ably supported by the committed, hard-working staff and by a governing body which is becoming increasingly knowledgeable, active and effective. Together, they share a vision for the future of the school and are committed to the further raising of standards. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection, when there were limitations in the role of the headteacher and the governing body was not fully involved in all aspects of school life.
57. All members of the teaching staff have delegated responsibilities, which they carry out conscientiously. Since the arrival of the new headteacher, teachers say that they feel empowered to fulfil their roles as subject leaders and are enthusiastic about their new responsibilities. Staff and governors now share the work of monitoring the curriculum and its effect on standards. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when this was highlighted as a key issue.
58. The school has taken satisfactory steps to address the issues raised in the last report. The school development and financial planning are now clearly linked to raising standards. The headteacher successfully monitors teaching and learning and there is a clear focus on raising standards across the school. She has identified weaknesses in teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6 and is carefully monitoring the progress that pupils make in that class. The headteacher also provides classroom support so that subject leaders can monitor the planning of their subject. They are becoming increasingly involved in analysing standards and using the information gained to promote further development in their respective areas of responsibility. This is beginning to have a positive effect on pupils' learning, particularly in science and information and communication technology.
59. The governing body makes a good contribution to the work of the school. Several governors are regular visitors to school and keep themselves well informed about day-to-day issues and problems that arise. A few are very new to their role, but it is clear from discussions and documentation that, over the last few years, governors have proved themselves to be loyal and supportive. They meet all the statutory requirements and are aware of their duties. They apply their specialist professional skills effectively in support of the small management team. With the headteacher, they are closely involved in

prudent financial management and planning over the medium and long term. They provide effective support for educational initiatives designed to raise standards. In the main, the governing body has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and is a valuable, critical friend to the headteacher.

60. The school's plan for development is fully costed and is a helpful working document. It provides a clear perspective on educational priorities, including areas for curriculum development and the continuing professional development of staff. The criteria for monitoring progress against the established priorities are satisfactorily defined. The procedures for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching are good and proving to be effective in identifying strengths and weaknesses. There are satisfactory strategies to enable the staff and the governing body to monitor and review the performance of the school, and to take suitable action when needed. The arrangements for appraisal and performance management are satisfactory and linked to the needs of the school.
61. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides good leadership and the provision is well managed. She works closely with the local education authority and with designated learning support workers in school. The work of pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored. They make good progress in their time at school.
62. Financial management in the school is efficient. The governors keep a tight rein on financial expenditure. They are familiar with the principles of best value and are at pains to ensure that the school's resources are spent prudently. In consultation with the governors, the headteacher makes effective and proper use of specific grants, such as the Standards Fund, and is able to account in detail for any expenditure. The most recent audit of the school's accounting procedures raised no issues. Currently, there is a large underspend in the budget. This is designated for a planned programme of building work, part of which is to improve the provision for the children in the Foundation Stage. Satisfactory use is made of new technology for school administration, for the maintenance of pupils' records and to support teaching and learning across the curriculum. The impact of the careful financial management is seen in the improvements to resources and building, such as the new information and communication technology suite.
63. The school has a good number of staff to teach the National Curriculum. Teachers are properly qualified and possess appropriate subject expertise. They are effectively assisted in their teaching by skilled and enthusiastic support staff. All understand their role and make valuable contributions to the quality of education provided by the school. All staff work closely together to improve the standards of pupils in the school.
64. The accommodation is unsatisfactory. The hall is large enough for the whole-school assemblies and for group or class work, such as music and 'Circle Time', but it is inadequate for the teaching of physical education. The school overcomes this difficulty by using the hall of a neighbouring school. This enables it to provide the full curriculum for physical education for all pupils. Foundation Stage children have no dedicated, secure outdoor area. This restricts their opportunities for outdoor learning and play. There is no staffroom and administration areas are cramped. Although these aspects of the accommodation are unsatisfactory, there are also some good features. For example, there is a well-positioned information and communication technology suite and a good-sized library. The library is satisfactorily stocked with good fiction and non-fiction books. Both of these facilities are used regularly and are enjoyed by staff and pupils. Learning resources are satisfactory. They are good for music, art and information and communication technology.

65. This is an effective school which gives satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to improve the standards achieved and the quality of education, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) improve the quality of teaching and the standards achieved in literacy and numeracy in Years 5 and 6 by raising the expectations of both staff and pupils in relation to high achievement; improve pupils' use of literacy skills, particularly in writing both in English and in other subjects; improve pupils' mental arithmetic skills; improve pupils' use and application of literacy and numeracy in their science work (paragraphs 5-7, 9, 17, 20-21, 30, 35, 51, 73, 75-76, 78-79, 81, 85, 88, 100-101);
- (2) improve the attitudes to learning of older boys in Years 5 and 6 by ensuring that they are consistently challenged and extended in their learning in all lessons, particularly literacy and numeracy (paragraphs 6-7, 10, 12, 14, 17, 21, 85, 88).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

21

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	2	8	6	5	0	0	0
Percentage	8	38	29	24	0	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than five percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	59
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	3
Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	10
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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)⁹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001			12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (83)	100 (83)	100 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	12	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	100 (83)	100 (100)	100 (92)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001			13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	10	9	12
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	77 (71)	69 (79)	92 (93)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	8	8	11
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	62 (79)	62 (79)	85 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

⁹ [The existing guidance from OFSTED is that test and examination data should be excluded from inspection reports if the year group is 10 or fewer. This also applies to year groups of boys and girls separately.](#)

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	58
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	1	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)	4.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	256,857
Total expenditure	238,964
Expenditure per pupil	2,747
Balance brought forward from previous year	45,230 ¹⁰

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

¹⁰ [The reasons for the large budget surplus are explained in paragraph 59.](#)

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 62.7%

Number of questionnaires sent out	59
Number of questionnaires returned	37

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	40	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	26	57	14	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	37	54	6	3	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	31	35	11	3
The teaching is good.	35	55	7	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	17	51	23	6	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	37	11	0	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	18	24	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	34	46	17	3	0
The school is well led and managed.	26	43	17	11	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	40	11	0	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	42	23	6	3

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

67. Children enter the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five. They settle quickly into school routines, alongside the pupils in Years 1 and 2. The initial assessment of children's abilities when they first enter school shows that most start school with average levels of attainment. This has been the pattern for several years. Children make good progress in their first weeks in school, particularly in their personal and communication skills. Traditionally, the majority of children reach, and a good proportion exceed, the early learning goals set for the age group, by the time they begin Year 1. At the time of the inspection there was only one child in the Foundation Stage.
68. The curriculum is satisfactory. Standards have been maintained since the time of the last inspection. The new Foundation Stage curriculum has been successfully implemented and tailored satisfactorily to the needs of the dual reception and Years 1 and 2 class. However, the facilities for outside structured play are limited. There is no discreet secure area in which the reception children can play as an extension to the classroom activities. The school has recognised this deficiency and has already begun a project to address the issue. Opportunities in all areas of learning are linked closely to the National Curriculum requirements for pupils in Year 1. Thus, currently, the reception child works alongside pupils in Year 1 at tasks particularly suited to her needs and which match the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage.
69. The quality of teaching is good and results in good learning in all areas. Frequently, the teaching in lessons is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching was 'mostly sound with some good features'. The teaching is particularly good in promoting children's personal and social development. Staff in the infant class are calm, patient and sensitive to the needs of young children. They interact with children enthusiastically and fully involve themselves in all activities. They make lessons fun. This results in very good relationships and a great degree of trust between adults and children. The classroom is stimulating, interesting and welcoming. This adds to the enjoyment of the school day and promotes good learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

70. Staff promote children's personal and social behaviour very well, through all areas of learning. They provide consistent, positive and encouraging role models, treating children politely and courteously. As a result, children trust staff and feel confident about what they can achieve. They have a good understanding of what is right and wrong because staff give them very good advice and guidance. Consequently, they become sensible members of the school community and quickly learn to work and play together.

All other areas of learning¹¹

71. Opportunities given to children in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory in all areas of learning. In *communication, language and literacy*, there are opportunities for children to listen to stories and to begin to recognise key words in text. Writing skills are practised regularly. *Mathematical development* is promoted successfully through practical counting activities, such as sorting coins and 'buying sweets'. Children's *knowledge and understanding of the world* are developed through a range of activities. These include working on computers, learning about how things change by looking at toys 'now and then', and exploring different media and materials through constructive play. Although

¹¹ Areas of learning include: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development and creative development.

the lack of a secure outdoor play area and suitable equipment restricts children's *physical development*, the school ensures that ample opportunities are given for them to run, jump, balance and climb satisfactorily. Children have access to, and use proficiently, a suitably wide range of tools, such as pencils, crayons, scissors and glue, to make pictures and models. They also use paints and crayons to produce different effects in their pictures for their *creative development*. To enhance this creative area, there are opportunities to learn a good variety of rhymes and songs. Children have access to instruments on which to try out their musical ideas. They make good progress in each area of learning and, by the start of Year 1, most pupils exceed the goals set for the Foundation Stage.

ENGLISH

72. Standards are average for the 7 and 11-year-olds. They have been maintained since the last inspection, when they were at nationally expected levels. Over time, and in lessons, pupils in Years 1 to 4 make good progress. This progress declines in Years 5 and 6 because there is insufficient challenge in much of their work. Throughout the school, pupils with specific learning difficulties make good progress because they are well supported by knowledgeable teaching assistants.
73. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good. The youngest pupils start school with an average level of vocabulary and listen satisfactorily. Staff encourage them to listen carefully and to answer questions, using complete sentences. This results in the pupils quickly and confidently joining in class discussions. For example, Year 2 pupils, in a 'Circle Time' session, were very articulate and confident when describing the dangers that they could see represented in the pictures that their teacher showed to them. Most older pupils build on these skills well and, by Year 6, contribute enthusiastically to discussions in lessons. For example, in a literacy lesson pupils spoke clearly and vociferously when presenting their ideas of how to convey feelings through poetry. However, a few less motivated pupils choose not to use their speaking and listening skills reliably in all lessons.
74. Standards in reading vary across the school. The current Year 2 read at above average levels. They enjoy books and know how to use the contents and index pages to find their way around fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 read text with great expression, using different voices for different characters. For example, groups read play scripts with very good understanding. They used very good intonation and expression to present the characters. When the teacher asked them to improvise dialogue in the role of the characters, they proceeded to stay in character and to use the voices and dialects that they had chosen to represent them. This was very well done and great fun. Pupils' confidence grew during the session and the quality of their learning was very good. In Year 6, reading is average. Pupils read text with expression and understanding. However, their skills of skimming and scanning text for information are less advanced. Pupils use the library satisfactorily and are becoming familiar with the newly introduced Dewey Decimal system of cataloguing books. Pupils in Year 5 say that this is a useful technique and that they enjoyed learning how it works. Less-able pupils achieve satisfactorily with their reading because they receive good support from teachers and support staff.
75. Writing is not such a positive picture. Standards seen during the inspection in the Years 1 to 4 were average. This is borne out by a survey of the pupils' previous work in a cross-section of their books. However, in Years 5 and 6 both the written work accomplished in lessons and that seen in pupils' books from previous occasions are unsatisfactory. Writing tasks for the most able Year 6 pupils are similar to those given to the rest of the class and, as a consequence, the work produced by them is not as good as it should be. Often, the handwriting and presentation of the work are careless and the spelling and

punctuation are below average. The school has recognised this weakness and is addressing the issue through extra writing lessons. These focus on improving spelling and punctuation techniques and handwriting.

76. Younger pupils, in Years 1 and 2, begin to write in a legible, well-formed style, using capital letters and full stops correctly. They practise their spellings by, for example, suggesting words that contain the 'ur' sound. They then write the words on white boards. The teacher checks that the spelling is correct and also that they form the letters correctly as they write. Several Year 2 pupils are adept at this and recognise the 'ur' sound in more complex words such as 'curse' and 'Thursday'. Years 3 and 4 build on this work by extending their grammatical knowledge and their vocabulary. For example, they use conjunctions correctly to join sentences and embellish their story writing with mostly correctly spelt phrases, such as 'because it was spooky'.
77. In Years 5 and 6, pupils continue to extend their skills and write in different styles, but progress is less marked. Pupils write reports describing their art day and instructional writing, for example how to do batik. They plan stories, but often these are unfinished or cursory attempts. The resulting story is not thought through and so does not interest the reader. There is insufficient progression seen between the writing of pupils in Year 5 and Year 6, and most tasks set are the same for all pupils. Thus, the more-able pupils are not challenged sufficiently and often lose interest in the lesson. This is reflected in the quality and quantity of the work that they do, neither of which is at an acceptable level. However, when challenged and interested in the task set, they rise to the occasion and present work at a good level. For example, in a piece of empathetic writing one pupil wrote a moving letter to the President of the United States of America expressing concern over September 11th, which ended 'Yours in loving sorrow'.
78. The quality of teaching and learning seen in lessons during the inspection was good. Teachers plan and organise their lessons well. They have good subject knowledge and use the National Literacy Strategy satisfactorily to promote good learning. Teachers explain very clearly at the beginning of each lesson what they want pupils to learn. As a result, all pupils are included in the lesson, understand exactly what they are to do and know what is expected of them. Relationships throughout the school are very good and so pupils are not afraid to ask for help and say when they do not understand. However, the work seen in pupils' books in Years 5 and 6 indicates that teaching and learning in these year groups are often unsatisfactory. This is reflected in the standards achieved by pupils, which should be better.
79. Teachers plan satisfactory opportunities for pupils to practise their literacy skills in other subjects. For example, in religious education and history they encourage pupils to find information from texts and research their own ideas. They use big books to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of other cultures. For example, Years 1 and 2 read about a Hindu wedding ceremony in a 'big book'. Pupils have good opportunities in literacy lessons to use their information and communication technology skills. They enjoy this and work hard, thus learning at a good rate. For example, Year 2 used a word bank to pull out the key points of a story and write their own text. They did this enthusiastically and achieved to a good level.

MATHEMATICS

80. By the age of 7, standards are above average and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls; the school has improved the achievement of boys over recent years. Pupils continue to make good progress in Years 3 and 4 because teaching is good.
81. By the age of 11, standards are average, but are not high enough. Pupils underachieve because the teaching of numeracy is unsatisfactory; girls achieve higher standards than boys do because they show much better attitudes to learning. The school is not closing the gap in the standards achieved by boys and girls; boys year-on-year achieve lower standards. In addition, more-able pupils, especially boys, are not challenged sufficiently. Mental arithmetic skills are weak.
82. Pupils apply their literacy skills successfully, particularly when reading mathematical problems; they show good understanding. In Years 5 and 6, when pupils are writing problems or recording written answers, spelling is often careless and work is not presented to the highest standards of which they are capable. Through the effective teaching of a part-time teacher for information and communication technology, pupils use computers successfully to support their learning, particularly in data handling. For example, there are good links with geography where pupils collect rainfall statistics on a spreadsheet and then convert these into graphs.
83. Progress in the use and application of mathematics in investigations and problem solving is good across the school. It is good in Years 5 and 6 because, currently, the class have a specific lesson each week on this area of mathematics taught by a part-time teacher and the teaching is good. By the end of Year 2, pupils carry out good investigations to find the coins they need to make amounts of money up to five pounds. They are confident in exploring and finding number sequences by counting backwards and forwards in twos, threes and tens. In Year 4, pupils carry out a good investigation into 'Is our arm span as long as our height?' and they show good application of their measuring skills. By Year 6, pupils carry out detailed investigations in which they explore successfully patterns in pentominoes and hexominoes.
84. Progress in number work, including mental arithmetic, is good in Years 1 to 4; it is unsatisfactory in Years 5 and 6. By the end of Year 2, pupils read, write and order numbers to 100, with more-able pupils confident to 1,000. They understand how to compare numbers to 1,000 by using 'greater than' or 'less than'. They apply their knowledge of timetables when, for example, they calculate that 24p is made by '4x5p+2x2p'. By Year 4, pupils read, write and order numbers to 9,999 and solve problems with numbers to 1,000. They are accurate in 'rounding off' numbers to the nearest thousand, hundred and ten. Pupils' mental skills are good; for example, they recall quickly that '100-8=92' and that '16 divided by 4 is 4'. In Year 6, mental arithmetic skills are weak; pupils' recall of number in problems is both slow and inadequate. For example, many struggle to find the answers to subtraction problems involving small amounts of money. Most show a satisfactory understanding of numbers to one million and they apply successfully their knowledge of decimals to money problems.
85. In work on shape, space and measures, progress is good in Years 1 to 4 and satisfactory in Years 5 and 6. By the end of Year 2, pupils recognise and name accurately two-dimensional shapes, including hexagons and octagons. In measurement, they estimate accurately objects which are 'more than', 'the same as' or 'less than' a metre. By Year 4, pupils name and know the properties of many three-dimensional shapes, including cubes, cuboids and cylinders. They measure accurately the area and perimeter of shapes and

they are confident in reading scales. By Year 6, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of the 12- and 24-hour clocks.

86. Progress in handling data is satisfactory and there are good links with information and communication technology. In Year 4, pupils carry out a detailed investigation in which they sort and measure rubbish by its weight. This information is then presented on well-constructed graphs using computer skills. By Year 6, pupils understand the 'range', 'mean' and 'mode' when interpreting data. Although they use computers to record the results of a scientific investigation on a graph, few remembered that a graph should have a title; this is below expectations for pupils in Year 6.
87. There is a significant variation in the quality of learning within the school. In Years 1 to 4, pupils enjoy numeracy lessons and work hard; the evidence from previous work confirms this. In lessons, pupils listen attentively, concentrate well and respond to the teacher's challenge, for example 'You have 20 minutes to do this work'. As a result, pupils make good progress, with boys and girls achieving equally well. In Years 5 and 6, evidence from pupils' previous work indicates unsatisfactory attitudes to learning. The amount of work covered in numeracy is insufficient and all pupils have more or less identical work in their exercise books. Boys do not work as hard as girls do, nor do they take as much care or pride in their work. These factors contribute to their underachievement.
88. Teaching is good in Years 1 to 4 and has a significant impact on improving standards and the good progress made. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy effectively, with a strong emphasis on developing pupils' mental arithmetic skills. Lessons are planned well, with activities matched carefully to pupils' learning needs. In a lesson in Years 3 and 4, pupils in Year 3 were given the task of shading in given fractions to consolidate their understanding, whilst pupils in Year 4 were given the task of finding, for example, 'one sixth of 24'. In Years 5 and 6, pupils' previous work indicates a lack of challenge and low expectations, which contribute to standards not being high enough and the underachievement of boys. Work is not marked consistently and pupils have insufficient motivation to improve. However, when teaching is good in Years 5 and 6, particularly in the weekly lesson on mathematical investigations, pupils show their true capabilities and boys achieve as well as girls.
89. The management of the subject is satisfactory; the co-ordinator is aware of and the headteacher recognises, from monitoring of teaching, the weaknesses in Years 5 and 6, and the school has plans to address this issue. Resources are adequate and computers are used effectively to support pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

90. By the end of Year 2, standards are above average and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in their learning. Progress from Year 3 to Year 6 is satisfactory and, by the end of Year 6, standards are average. Pupils' factual knowledge is good, but their written work is not of a good enough standard, particularly in their presentation skills. Girls achieve higher standards than boys do because their attitudes to learning are more positive.
91. In Years 1 and 2, pupils apply their literacy skills successfully when reading for information and presenting written findings. In Years 3 to 6, reading skills are applied effectively when pupils carry out research; for example, in Year 4 when pupils used a CD-ROM to discover how muscles work. However, writing skills are not used as well, with pupils showing insufficient care, particularly in spelling. Pupils use computers successfully to support their learning. CD-ROMs are used to research information and, in Year 4, pupils use their word-processing skills effectively in planning menus for an active

person and one who is overweight. In Year 6, pupils apply their data-handling skills when they use graphs to present the findings of an investigation. However, many fail to give the graph a title, which makes it difficult for other readers to interpret the information shown.

92. By the end of Year 2, pupils understand the effects of exercise on the body. They name accurately the main parts of the body, including 'hand', 'neck' and 'knee'. They understand and explain which animals give milk to their young and which do not. Pupils show a good awareness of the dangers of medicines and know that, 'They should always be given by an adult'. By Year 4, pupils have a good understanding of the skeleton and how muscles work and function. They know and identify from work on teeth, 'incisor', 'canine' and 'molar' and the function of each. By Year 6, pupils understand the differences between physical and chemical change and that some changes are reversible whilst others are irreversible.
93. Teaching is very good and makes a significant contribution to pupils making good progress, particularly in their factual knowledge and understanding. All classes are taught by the headteacher, who has a scientific background; pupils clearly benefit from her expertise. In a lesson in Years 3 and 4, planning was very good, including the use of a learning support assistant and a volunteer helper. During the afternoon, pupils rotated through three groups and benefited from the support of the three adults. The learning support assistant worked effectively with groups when they used the CD-ROM to investigate how muscles work. The volunteer helper worked successfully with the group who were making models to show how the muscles in the arm work; pupils applied their making skills from design and technology successfully. The teacher worked exceptionally well with the groups who were learning about tendons. The imaginative use of a turkey leg enthralled the pupils and gave them a clear understanding of the function of the tendon. Health and safety issues were addressed through pupils wearing disposable gloves when they handled the turkey leg.
94. Resources are adequate for the teaching of science. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively and assessment procedures are good. However, there is insufficient attention paid to improving pupils' presentation skills and this contributes to standards not being high enough.

ART AND DESIGN

95. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards are very good and well above expectations for pupils of this age. Boys and girls, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in their learning. The subject makes a significant contribution to pupils' spiritual development and to their cultural, including their multi-cultural, awareness. Standards are very good because of very effective teaching, particularly through the support pupils receive from a very talented learning support assistant.
96. Much of the work on display was linked to the school having recently held a 'Multi-Cultural Week' in which pupils from all three classes worked together to produce some very high quality work. The collage of a 'Chinese Dragon' is particularly impressive. Three-dimensional work is of a good standard, as shown in the African masks made from clay. The quality of 'Indian Collages' inspired by Indian-style cushion covers is exceptional. In Year 6, still-life works completed in paint, pastels and charcoal and inspired by Picasso, Cezanne and Van Gogh are inspirational, as are the excellent drawings of three-dimensional shapes in Years 3 and 4.
97. No teaching was observed during the inspection, but the evidence indicates that teaching is very good and pupils benefit from the very effective teamwork between teachers and

the learning support assistant. Planning is thorough and detailed, and pupils are taught skills and techniques exceptionally well. Very good use is made of a wide range of resources to support pupils' learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards meet expectations for pupils of this age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in their learning. There is evidence that pupils apply successfully their literacy skills when planning and evaluating their work. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the use of numeracy and information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. No lessons were observed during the inspection, as classes were not timetabled for the subject during the inspection period.
99. Evidence from the inspection shows that by the end of Year 2, pupils show satisfactory skills in designing and making. They choose appropriate materials and show good skills in joining techniques, for example, in making models of vehicles with axles. They use their literacy skills successfully when they write recipes for making banana bread. In Year 4, there was evidence of a finished product of a 'photo frame', which showed good evidence of construction skills. However, there was no evidence to show pupils' designs or evaluations. Pupils used their literacy skills effectively when they made books with a variety of starts, middles and ends. In Year 6, there is evidence that pupils used their skills satisfactorily when they designed and made shelters.
100. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching and learning. Resources are adequate and pupils are taught the necessary knowledge, skills and understanding as they move up through the school.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

101. When the school was last inspected, standards in geography and history met the expectations of the National Curriculum. These standards have been maintained since then. Standards in both geography and history are in line with expectations for 7- and 11-year-olds.
102. Pupils have good knowledge and understanding of both subjects and talk confidently about their work. However, many do not have sufficiently developed literacy skills to write competently in either of the subjects. This means that the standards obtained do not necessarily reflect accurately the extent of their knowledge, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Progress over time is satisfactory and learning in the lessons seen during the inspection was good. Pupils with specific learning difficulties are supported well in lessons and so make good progress in both subjects.
103. In geography, younger pupils learn about their own environment. They consider the dangers present in the park and how it could be made safer. Teachers plan activities carefully to include practical work in and around the school. For example, pupils use maps of the locality to familiarise themselves with the keys and symbols used in map making. Older pupils extend their work on the environment and look at ways of reducing, reusing or recycling rubbish to improve their surroundings. Years 5 and 6 take this topic further still. In their study of rivers, they begin to appreciate the problems of pollution and how this affects wild life. In an exciting and purposeful lesson, they experimented to see the effect of mixing oil with water. The teacher then challenged them further to see whether they could find a method of removing the pollutant. By the end of the session they had a very good understanding of the problems affecting wild life when rivers become polluted. They discussed their findings sensibly and realistically. This highly

practical task successfully challenged them and, thus, they learned rapidly and to a good level. However, their poor writing skills let them down when they came to record their findings. The quality of their writing did not allow them to reflect accurately the amount that they had learned during the lesson.

104. In history, younger pupils study famous events and people from the past who have influenced our lives today. For example, they learn about the life and times of Florence Nightingale and how times have changed since then. Older pupils study the cultures and traditions of the Ancient Greeks and the Ancient Egyptians. They learn about life in Victorian times and compare it with the way we live today. Teachers plan visits to local museums and to the local Records Office to put pupils' learning into context. This enhances very effectively the history curriculum and makes the past come alive for the pupils. Through this work, pupils begin to understand satisfactorily how things change over time and to grasp the notion of chronology. They recognise how past events influence our lives today, and learn to ask questions and interpret different sources of information to find out about the past.
105. The quality of teaching in both subjects is good. Teachers ensure that all pupils participate fully in lessons and thus learning is good. They make good links with other subjects, such as science, for example using practical experiments to enhance learning in geography. Teachers plan occasions in lessons for pupils to use their literacy and numeracy skills to support learning, although this is less successful in Years 5 and 6. They give pupils ample opportunity to use their information and communication technology skills. For example, in a lesson in Years 1 and 2, pupils used a talking word bank to recall and extend their knowledge of Florence Nightingale. Informative and stimulating visits suitably enhance the curriculum in both subjects. Visitors also make important contributions to pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

106. By the end of Year 2 and Year 6, standards meet national expectations. Progress in learning is satisfactory for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils benefit from the use of the school's ICT suite and specialist teaching from a part-time teacher.
107. Pupils have good opportunities to apply their literacy and numeracy skills when working with computers. For example, in Year 2, pupils used their literacy skills when they wrote about Florence Nightingale. In Year 4, pupils write imaginative word-processed story beginnings in the style of *James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl. In Year 6, pupils link successfully numeracy, geography and information and communication technology when they create spreadsheets showing rainfall in Great Britain and convert this information into graphs. Pupils show good skills in combining text and 'clip-art' in their colourful and imaginative poems on 'Rainbows'.
108. As the result of good teaching, pupils are, by the end of Year 2, confident in loading, saving and printing their work. The use of the keyboard and mouse is good. As they move up through the school, pupils build successfully on these skills and by Year 6 show a satisfactory understanding of the use of spreadsheets and the effects that can be used in word-processing to present interesting and imaginative pieces of work.
109. Resources are good; the ICT suite is having a positive impact on pupils' learning.

MUSIC

110. Standards for 7- and 11-year-olds meet the expectations of the National Curriculum. They have been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
111. A satisfactory range of opportunities is planned for pupils to compose and to experiment with musical ideas and to perform their compositions. All pupils take a full part in lessons. This enables them, including those with special educational needs, to make good progress. Music plays an important part in the life of the school, for instance in setting the mood for assemblies. This enhances the spiritual life in school. For example, at the beginning of one assembly, beautiful, solemn choral music greeted the pupils as they entered the hall. Pupils and staff immediately settled into a reflective mood and quietly prepared themselves for the assembly. This set a peaceful, yet joyous, tone to the proceedings. All pupils in Years 3 and 4 are taught recorders and to read notation; this is continued in Years 5 and 6 through the recorder club.
112. Throughout the school, pupils sing with enjoyment and gusto. They sing with clear diction, holding the tune and rhythm well. Pupils use a variety of percussion instruments to accompany their singing. They name instruments, such as tambourines and triangles, and describe the sounds that they make. The pupils listen to a good variety of music and begin to form their own likes and dislikes. Teachers carefully select music from a variety of styles and cultures to interest pupils.
113. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Pupils make good progress in developing their musical skills. They make good progress in singing. Teachers adopt an enthusiastic approach, encouraging the pupils to participate. This means that pupils enjoy success and gain the confidence to perform. There is a wide range of musical instruments and a good selection of different styles of recorded music. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural development because they listen to music from other traditions and they use, and become familiar with, instruments from around the world.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

114. By the end of Year 2, standards are good and pupils make good progress in their learning. They benefit from the specialist teaching of the headteacher and the opportunity to use a hall in a neighbouring school for lessons in dance and gymnastics. The use of this hall is a very recent initiative and is having a very positive impact on raising standards. Pupils in Year 6 swim during the current term and have not had the benefit of lessons in the hall. Standards, therefore, at the end of Year 6 are below expectations because the accommodation in the school is totally inadequate for the teaching of physical education and pupils have had few previous lessons in gymnastics or dance. Although pupils in Year 6 will be taught in the hall from next term, they are too far behind in the development of skills to be able to catch up with the requirements of the subject. By the end of Year 6, the majority of pupils meet the national expectation of being able to swim 25 metres unaided.
115. By the end of Year 2, pupils show very good skills in gymnastics. They understand the importance of a warm-up at the start of lessons. Pupils show a good awareness of space when moving around the hall and know the importance for their own health and safety of responding immediately to the teacher's 'stop' command. In floorwork, pupils plan, perform and refine sequences involving a run, a jump and a clear finish. They transfer successfully these sequences to work on the apparatus. Pupils are confident in getting the apparatus out and putting it away sensibly and correctly; for example, they know that 'Four people carry a mat, with one at each corner'.

116. Pupils in Year 4 benefit from the use of the neighbouring hall for lessons in dance. However, during the inspection week the bus failed to turn up on time, but the teacher confidently decided to teach the lesson in the playground as the weather was suitable. Pupils enjoyed the lesson and worked with total concentration; neither they nor the teacher were 'thrown' by the change in venue. Pupils enjoy dance, and boys and girls took part with equal concentration and enjoyment. They plan and perform good sequences involving making symmetrical shapes to music. As the result of very good discussion, planning, performing and refining, pupils produce very impressive dance movements.
117. Teaching in both lessons observed during the inspection was excellent. Teachers show very strong subject knowledge, which they pass on to pupils with interest and enthusiasm. There is a strong emphasis on improving skills; for example, in the Years 1 and 2 lesson, the teacher constantly encouraged pupils with 'Think about pointing your toes to improve your sequence' or 'Improve that ending, hold that tension shape'. When on the apparatus, pupils were reminded, 'Find an interesting way of getting out of your balance to move to another shape without standing up'. Through such encouragement, pupils work hard to improve their performance and make good progress.
118. The accommodation is totally inadequate for the teaching of physical education. However, the school is now using another local school, but this involves funding a coach and that coach being reliable if pupils are to maintain the standards they are now achieving in Years 1 and 2 and in Years 3 and 4. In summer, the school has access to a local field for the teaching of games. The headteacher is planning to organise a residential visit, which would allow pupils to take part in outdoor activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

119. Pupils at the ages of 7 and 11 achieve standards that meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
120. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are introduced to the Bible and learn of its significance as a special holy book through stories, such as those of Joseph and his brothers and of The Good Samaritan. They study the significance of celebrations and ceremonies, such as birthdays and weddings. They compare Christian and Hindu wedding ceremonies, thus increasing their understanding of religions other than Christianity and of customs and traditions other than their own. Teachers encourage the pupils to begin to consider their inner thoughts and feelings, and to develop a caring approach to life. They do this through discussions about good and bad deeds and through 'Circle Times', when pupils express their own thoughts and worries.
121. Older pupils build on the knowledge and skills learned in the infants. They extend their understanding of the traditions of different religions through topics such as 'journeys'. They learn about celebrations such as the Jewish Sukkot and Hindu Diwali, and participate in Christian festivals, such as Harvest Festival and Christmas. Pupils gain a good knowledge of the Bible and talk about the books of the Old and New Testament with increasing accuracy. In a lesson in Years 5 and 6, pupils used the Bible as a source to find out who built the Ark of the Covenant, why it was built and what it was built from. This involved good opportunities to use their reading and research skills. They worked enthusiastically and acquired a good deal of useful information. However, their writing skills did not reflect the amount of learning that had taken place.
122. The quality of teaching seen in 'Circle Times' was good, effectively enhancing the learning in religious education. Teachers encourage pupils to discuss their views on life and to listen to and respect the views of others. All pupils are included in discussions and encouraged to participate fully in lessons. As a result, they form good relationships with

each other, based on mutual respect and understanding. In lessons, teachers explain precisely what they expect the pupils to achieve and make clear what the pupils are to do. Thus pupils understand the tasks and acquire satisfactory skills and knowledge. The subject contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The knowledge and understanding that they gain of other cultures and religions enable them to make sense of the diverse society in which they live.