

INSPECTION REPORT

GOSFIELD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Halstead

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114727

Headteacher: Mrs A Hicks

Reporting inspector: Mr L Lewin
22330

Dates of inspection: 22 - 24 April 2002

Inspection number: 194775

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	The Street Gosfield Halstead Essex
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs M James
Date of previous inspection:	2 June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22330	Mr L Lewin	Registered inspector	Equal opportunities Design and technology Information and communication technology Music Science	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
14347	Mrs J Lindsay	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with the parents?
15447	Ms Christine Glenis	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Geography History Physical education	
20003	Mrs Susan Metcalfe	Team inspector	Foundation stage Art Mathematics Religious education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Gosfield Community Primary School is situated in a small rural village in Essex. The village, which comprises mainly private housing, is spread over a wide area and many of the pupils come to school by car. With 139 pupils on roll, the school is smaller than the average size primary school nationally. The school roll has risen slightly over recent years. The boys and girls attending the school are between the ages of four to eleven. The school serves the rural village of Gosfield and its surrounding area, although a significant number of pupils come from the nearby towns – 52 per cent live outside the school's immediate catchment area. Pupils are taught in five classrooms by seven full-time and two part-time teachers. Seven pupils are currently eligible for free school meals. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs, at 23 per cent, is close to the national average. However, this figure varies from year to year and there is, overall, an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs entering the school. There are three pupils in the school with Statements of Special Educational Need, which is slightly above the national average, and no pupils who speak English as an additional language. Nearly all pupils in the school come from white ethnic backgrounds, with six pupils coming from other heritage backgrounds. The attainment of children on entry to school is broadly average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school that has a friendly and welcoming atmosphere. Very effective leadership by the headteacher combined with energetic and strong teamwork on the part of staff and governors help the school move forward at a good pace. Good teaching results in pupils achieving well by the time they leave Year 6. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher leads and manages the school very well and enables all members of staff to work together as a highly effective team.
- Governors provide very strong support for the school and work energetically to help the school move forward.
- Good teaching enables the pupils to achieve well by the time they leave the school.
- The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of interesting activities that includes an extensive range of extra-curricular activities and makes good provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs.
- Parents and the wider community are very successfully involved in enhancing pupils' education.
- Finances are very well managed and used to promote the quality of education.

What could be improved

The school has no significant weaknesses. However, within its action plan the school should address the following points for improvement:

- The consistency with which staff apply the strategies laid out in the school's policy for the behaviour management of pupils.
- The range and frequency of opportunities provided at Key Stage 1 to extend pupils' writing skills.
- The links between the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs and teachers' overall lesson planning.
- The range of reading books available especially for older pupils in the school.
- Assessment procedures in some subjects – where these have been implemented but not yet fully developed.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in June 1997. School improvements have proceeded at a good pace since that time. The issues raised in the last inspection – to improve pupils' progress, provide more chances for investigative work, provide more chances for pupils to develop responsibility and to introduce a programme of personal and social education – have all been thoroughly addressed. In addition, the school has moved ahead with a wide range of improvements to enhance the curriculum. Significant improvements have been made to the building and playground facilities with, in particular, the addition of a well-equipped computer suite. The school has increased the amount of time for and the number of support staff. Overall, standards have been maintained amongst eleven-year-olds and the school successfully addressed a drop in the levels achieved by seven-year-old pupils so that pupils' progress is now much improved in that area of the school. There is a high level of enthusiasm and commitment demonstrated by all members of the staff and governors and the school is now in a strong position to move forward.

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	A	A*	A	C
Mathematics	B	A	C	D
Science	B	C	A	B

Key

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

* performance in the top five per cent of schools nationally.

The above table shows that in 2001, the school's national test results for eleven-year-olds, compared to those for other schools nationally, were well above average in English and science, and average in mathematics. Compared to other ¹similar schools the results were average in English, below average in mathematics and above average in science. Much caution is needed in interpreting the performance data in small schools and no clear conclusions can be drawn about the differences in results compared nationally and compared to similar schools noted here. Overall the school's results in recent years have been improving in line with the national trend, but science results have improved at a faster rate than nationally. The school set itself challenging targets for pupils' attainment. Last year it was broadly successful in achieving the target for English but the results were not as good as expected in mathematics. However, inspection evidence shows the current Year 6 pupils to be well on course to attain the levels projected for their performance in this year's tests. Inspection evidence confirms the school's results and shows that pupils attain above average standards in English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology and art and average standards in all other subjects except music where not enough lessons were seen to judge standards. Nonetheless, the singing heard in lessons and assemblies was above average.

When children enter the reception class they show broadly average attainment. They are currently well on course to attain the expected levels in the areas of learning for children of this age by the end of the ²Foundation Stage. By the age of seven (Year 2) pupils attain above average standards in science, information and communication technology and art and average standards in all other subjects except music where it was only possible to observe singing – which was of an above average standard. The results in national tests for seven-year-olds dropped to well below average levels over the last two years partly due to the variations that tend to occur in small cohorts of pupils, but also due to the school having an influx of pupils with specific learning difficulties. The school has been very proactive in addressing the situations so that standards, as reported above, are now significantly better. Overall, as a result of good teaching, all groups of pupils including those with special educational needs achieve well by the age of seven.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils are usually enthusiastic and take pride in their achievements. A small number of pupils are occasionally less than positive and are uncooperative.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are mainly polite and behave well in and around the school. A small minority of pupils occasionally show poor behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Good relationships are seen throughout the school and pupils show good levels of respect for the feelings of others. Pupils readily take on responsibility and show initiative. Older pupils are very supportive of younger pupils.

¹ Similar schools are banded – for the purposes of comparison of test results - by the number of pupils deemed eligible to receive free school meals.

² The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

Attendance	Satisfactory. Pupils are usually punctual and enjoy coming to school.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching throughout the school is good. Teachers have a good rapport with their pupils and set a good working atmosphere in classrooms. Lessons are usually well planned and well prepared so that all resources are ready to hand and pupils therefore carry out activities without any unnecessary delays. Teachers often use resources well to 'spice up' the contents of lessons and to make work as interesting as possible. Lesson objectives are usually clearly set and explained to pupils at the start of lessons so that pupils have a clear idea of what they are expected to learn. Literacy and numeracy skills are usually well taught, with teachers showing a confident knowledge of and ability to use the national frameworks. Teachers generally teach all aspects of English and mathematics well and through careful planning they are adept at promoting English and mathematics in other subject areas. For five to seven year old pupils, not enough challenging opportunities are provided to extend pupils' ability to write at length. Teachers show confident subject knowledge in most areas that they teach and their explanations and directions are mostly succinct and clear. Teachers also show confidence in teaching and using information and communication technology. Teachers use a good range of strategies and vary these according to the needs of the lessons and, in this way, they ensure that all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given the fullest possible chance to be involved in discussion work and contribute to the lessons. Lessons move at a good pace and teachers generally ensure that pupils maintain their interest and motivation levels. Usually pupils are well managed and, in the best lessons seen, teachers set very clear expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. The school has established a clear behaviour management policy to guide staff in dealing with the very occasional cases of poor behaviour. However, staff do not always follow the laid down strategies closely enough. Learning support assistants in the school provide valuable support for the pupils and teachers. They are well briefed by the teachers and work well with individuals and groups. The overall quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school provides a wide range of interesting activities to enrich pupils' learning. Particularly good provision is made for children in the Foundation Stage. The school's extra-curricular activities programme is very extensive. Through visits made, and through visitors to the school, teachers make very full use of the community to broaden pupils' experiences.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs receive particularly good support from learning support assistants and the special educational needs co-ordinator. Pupils' individual education plans are not linked sufficiently to teachers' overall lesson planning.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development and very good provision for their social development. The school is a caring place where the principles of thought, care and respect for each other, the wider community and the world are promoted.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school has very good procedures for the care and welfare of its pupils. Staff have been trained in a wide range of areas to help promote the safety and security of pupils.

The school has established very strong links with the parents. Parent questionnaires show that the school is held in very high regard by the vast majority of parents who feel very well informed about and involved in their children's education.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is very well led and managed. The headteacher provides very good leadership and successfully promotes an atmosphere in which all staff feel valued and work together as a highly effective team. She works closely with and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. Teachers carry out their roles as subject coordinators well and with enthusiasm.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The school is fortunate in having a group of very active and enthusiastic governors who strongly support the headteacher and staff. They work well together as a group and are fully informed about and involved in all aspects of the school's management.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good systems have been developed for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and the curriculum. Teachers play a full part in the monitoring cycle. Governors are also effectively involved in this monitoring programme and visit the school on a regular basis. The school carefully analyses its test results in order to identify points for future improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Finances are very well managed. The headteacher, in particular, is very skilled in ensuring that all possible grants that may benefit the school are procured and in maximising the school's links with local businesses to help boost the budget where possible. The governors work hard with the headteacher to reduce school costs and to seek ways of getting the best value possible in all matters of spending. In this respect they have an excellent awareness of applying best value principles.

There are sufficient teaching staff and a good level of support staff. The increase in the number of support staff in recent times has had a positive impact upon raising standards and the quality of education. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall, but the Year 5/6 classroom is quite cramped and the lack of a suitable library limits independent research skills. The range of resources available to support pupils' learning is generally good. For seven to eleven-year-olds there is not enough choice of challenging books for average and higher attaining readers.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<p>Parent questionnaires indicate that parents have a very high regard for the school. In particular they feel that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching is good and the staff are approachable. • The school expects pupils to work hard and helps them become mature and responsible. • The school is well led and managed and works closely with the parents. • The school provides an interesting range of activities outside of lessons. 	<p>A very small number of parents do not agree that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Behaviour in the school is good. • That pupils get the right amount of homework.

Forty-eight per cent of all parents returned the questionnaire that was sent to them. Fifteen parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector. Inspectors agree with the positive views of the parents. Inspectors judge that, overall, behaviour in the school is good, although a small minority of pupils occasionally demonstrate inappropriate behaviour. Pupils are given appropriate amounts of homework and, for seven to eleven-year-old the homework provision is often very good.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children enter the class for reception children, their levels of attainment are broadly average. However, the range of attainment is wide and it also varies significantly from year to year. As a result of effective provision, children make good progress in their learning in the reception class so that by the end of the ³Foundation Stage, they reach the expected levels in all of the areas of learning for this age group.
2. In the national tests for seven-year-olds, the school's results, when compared to other schools nationally, were below average in reading and mathematics and well below average in mathematics. Compared to other ⁴similar schools, the results were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The results were also at similar levels in 2000, marking a significant downturn in standards attained over the last two years in comparison with previous years. The pace of learning amongst five to seven year old pupils has therefore been an area of much concern for the school, and rightly, has been the focus of considerable analysis to explain the reasons for the drop in standards. Based on the evidence of discussions with staff and a scrutiny of performance data, the inspection team agrees with the reasons for the drop in results identified by the school. These are as follows:
 - Below average attainment on entry to school shown by the cohort of pupils tested in 2000.
 - An influx of pupils with special educational needs into the 2001 cohort of pupils tested - several of these pupils displayed severe behavioural difficulties (one of the pupils has since been permanently excluded). Of this cohort (currently in Year 3), eleven are on the school's register of pupils with special educational needs.
 - Staff turbulence, which particularly affected the 2001 cohort of pupils tested. Also during 2000, the situation was further exacerbated by the need for the headteacher to take a six-month's leave of absence.
3. Considering the school's results for seven-year-olds, it is important to remember that the relatively small number of pupils in each year group in a school of this size means that much caution should be exercised when interpreting performance data. It is not uncommon for the results of small schools to vary significantly from one year to the next. Nonetheless, the school correctly moved to address this drop in the level of its results. For example, the number of learning support assistants was increased and staff have received much training to help deal with pupils experiencing behavioural difficulties. These initiatives are clearly making a positive impact, with inspection evidence showing that during the current academic year pupils have made good progress in science, information technology (ICT) and art – where they attain above average standards. Also, they have made satisfactory progress in English, mathematics, design and technology, history, geography, physical education and religious education – where most attain average standards. Insufficient opportunity to watch music lessons during the inspection means that it is not possible to judge standards in this subject although the standard of pupils' singing in assemblies was above average. This current 'snapshot' of pupils' attainment and progress marks a significant improvement in standards compared to those recorded over the last two years. This trend of improved progress is the result of good quality teaching and is clearly continuing, with pupils mostly making good progress with their work in the lessons observed during this inspection. Allied to this, discussions with staff, governors and parents indicate that the school has been successful in improving the behaviour of a small minority of pupils who were previously causing disruption to their own learning and the learning of other pupils.
4. Standards for the school's seven-year-old pupils are broadly similar to those reported during the school's last inspection, although particular improvement is noted with the current above average attainment in science and information and communication technology. However, as mentioned above, some variation each year is to be expected with low numbers of pupils in each year group – which is the most likely reason why the current average standards in mathematics, history and geography are not as good as reported last time. The improvement in standards brought about in *recent* times and the trend of further improvement in pupils' progress noted during lesson observations shows that the school is now well placed to further drive up standards in all subjects amongst five to seven year old pupils. Overall, five to seven year old pupils' levels of achievement are at least satisfactory and occasionally good.

³ The Foundation Stage applies to children from the age of three to the end of the reception year.

⁴ Similar schools are banded – for the purposes of comparison of test results - by the number of pupils deemed eligible to receive free school meals.

5. In 2001, the school's national test results for eleven-year-olds, compared to those for other schools nationally were well above average in English and science and average in mathematics. Compared to other similar schools the results were average in English, below average in mathematics and above average in science. Whilst the school's results appear to be lower when compared to other similar schools as opposed to the comparison to all schools nationally, much caution is needed in interpreting the performance data in small schools such as this one and no clear conclusions can be drawn about the differences noted here. However, one partial explanation is the fact that a significant minority of Year 6 pupils who were expected to achieve Level 5 in their writing test, failed to do so by a very small margin. Overall, the school's results in recent years have been improving in line with the national trend, but science results have improved at a faster rate than nationally.
6. The school's clear tracking of pupils' progress shows that the current Year 3 cohort of pupils, who experienced a range of difficulties and performed poorly in the national tests for seven-year-olds last year (see above), have mostly made sound progress during this academic year. The school notes that particular progress has been made in improving the attitudes to learning and behaviour of the small minority of pupils with behavioural problems in this class, but lessons observations show that, through their occasional bouts of inappropriate behaviour, these pupils still have a negative impact upon the pace of learning in the classroom. Throughout the rest of the key stage, inspection evidence shows that pupils generally progress well in English, mathematics, science, ICT and art and at the age of eleven they attain above average standards in these subjects. Although not enough music lessons were seen to judge standards overall, pupils showed above average attainment with singing in lessons and during assemblies. In all other subjects pupils have made satisfactory progress and attain standards that match the national expectations at the age of eleven. This reflects a broadly similar picture to that noted in the last inspection, except that pupils' work is now better in writing, science and information technology, but not as good in geography and history. Variations are to be expected in small schools such as this, but, nonetheless, the improvements in writing, science and ICT are the direct result of a significant amount of work by the school over recent times. Overall, as a result of good teaching, pupils achieve well by the age of eleven.
7. In terms of the number of pupils attaining the nationally expected levels or better in English, mathematics and science, the inspection findings for this year's cohort of Year 6 pupils broadly matches the picture reflected by last year's test results for eleven-year-olds, with the exception that this year, more pupils are on course to reach the upper levels in mathematics than was the case last year. However, such variations are to be expected from year to year, with the low number of pupils in each year group.
8. The school set itself challenging targets for the number of pupils who were expected to reach the nationally expected level or better in the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001. The target was achieved successfully in English, but the school recognises that results were not as good as expected in mathematics. However, inspection evidence shows the current Year 6 pupils to be well on course to attain the levels projected for their performance in this year's tests.
9. The school's relatively low numbers of pupils per year group and the significant variations of the boy/girl number balance in these groups mean it is not possible to clearly identify any patterns of variation between the performance of boys and girls in the end of key stage tests carried out over recent years. During the inspection, generally, no clear differences were noted between the performance of boys and girls. However, the small minority of pupils noted as showing poor behaviour at times were mainly boys and lesson observations showed that occasionally they did not achieve as well as other pupils. The school has clearly identified and is successfully addressing this problem. As a result, through specific teaching strategies and carefully targeted guidance from learning support assistants, these pupils make sound overall progress. Apart from the occasional difficulties experienced by this small minority of pupils, all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well by the time they reach the age of eleven.
10. Pupils' listening and speaking skills are in line with national expectations by the ages of seven and eleven. Most pupils listen attentively to staff and each other in whole class and group activities. A small minority do not always listen well and need much extra guidance.
11. By the age of seven, pupils' reading skills are in line with the national average. Most pupils read confidently and give reasons why particular poems are their favourites. By the age of eleven pupils' reading attainment is above average and most pupils read challenging texts independently, accurately and fluently.
12. By the age of seven, pupils show average attainment in writing. Pupils copy words and put them into sentences accurately and most are confident early writers. There is evidence of good written accounts in

other subjects; for example, pupils write good accounts of science investigations. Pupils do not have enough opportunities to produce extended pieces of creative writing and are not always sufficiently challenged by some of the writing tasks provided. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment in writing is above average. Pupils write well for different purposes and for different audiences. They gain a good knowledge of how to write in a persuasive style, appropriately using techniques such as alliteration and bullet points.

13. In spelling, pupils attain mainly average standards at the age of seven and most spell simple common words accurately or learn word patterns through copying a wider range of vocabulary. By the age of eleven, most pupils show above average attainment in spelling and spell unfamiliar and multi-syllable words accurately and independently.
14. By the ages of seven and eleven pupils show above average standards in their handwriting with good development of writing styles for these ages. However, while examples of well-presented work are seen, too often the presentation of work is untidy, especially work retained in writing folders.
15. In mathematics, seven-year-old pupils are developing good number skills. For example, they spot pairs of multiples of 5, know that the double of a 5 multiple is always even and count up to and back from 25 in 5's. They have worked problems across the four areas of number and know that addition and subtraction are the inverse of each other as are multiplication and division. They are learning the 2, 5 and 10 multiplication tables and successfully order numbers by tens and hundreds. Pupils recognise shapes and are aware of those that are symmetrical and know that shapes such as squares and circles can be divided into common fractions. Although the National Curriculum for younger pupils does not focus discretely upon data handling, pupils are producing graphs and pictographs from their problem solving work.
16. At the age of eleven, in mental/oral and written work, pupils confidently handle numbers to two decimal places in addition, subtraction and multiplication questions, and understand the links between fractions, percentages and decimals. They use these processes appropriately when solving problems. They know how to calculate the area of a shape and its perimeter, and through carrying out in-depth investigative work they gain an advanced understanding for their ages about the relationship between the radius and the circumference of a circle. They show good knowledge with data handling - working out probability, identifying the mode, mean, range and median and producing and reading line graphs accurately. Pupils use their mathematical skills well in information and communication technology, geography, design technology and science work.
17. Pupils engage in a wide range of interesting work in science. They gain a good understanding about the principles of scientific enquiry from the well-organised scientific investigations that they carry out. Key Stage 1 pupils discuss the principle of fair testing and, by the age of seven, pupils have a good basic understanding of this concept. At the age of eleven, pupils predict the outcomes of their investigations and provide thoughtful conclusions using previously acquired knowledge. Pupils acquire a good depth of knowledge and understanding in all of the science attainment targets. For example, seven-year-old pupils know which foods are healthy and unhealthy, they group materials according to their properties and understand the basic idea of air resistance. By the age of eleven, pupils gain a good level of understanding about how parts of the human body work, know the properties of solids liquids and gases and have a good knowledge of the Earth's atmosphere.
18. Pupils reach a good standard of work in ICT because teachers provide them with a wide range of opportunities to both develop and use their computer skills in supporting work in different subjects. As a result, there is much work carried on in the school using ICT. By the age of seven, pupils already have a good knowledge of saving and retrieving their work on the computers. They know how to write instructions on the computer to control the movement of an object on the screen, they frequently use the computer to draft their work and use art programs to design pictures. By the age of eleven, pupils use computers in a fairly sophisticated manner to support their work. For example, they use data logging equipment, research for information on the Internet, produce carefully designed Powerpoint displays for different audiences and frequently use facilities to present their work in an interesting and attractive way. For pupils in the Year 4/5 and Year 5/6 classes ICT facilities are very much an integral part of their ongoing work.
19. By the ages of seven and eleven pupils reach the expected levels in religious education. Year 2 pupils, for example, show a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different faiths in the topics that they study. By the age of eleven, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christianity - the key festivals such as Christmas and Easter; the Bible, including the differences between the old and new testaments; Jesus and his life and work and the disciples who followed him. At both key stages pupils produce a high standard of work in art. Work in pupils' sketch books shows good detail and drawing skills and pupils have a wide range of experiences in working with different types of media producing good quality pictures and models

by the ages of seven and eleven. Not enough lessons were seen in music to enable judgements to be made about standards at the ages of seven and eleven. However, from the evidence of lessons seen and pupils' performances in assembly, the standard of singing in the school is clearly above average, with pupils producing melodic singing and able to sing in two parts. In all other subjects pupils attain average standards by the ages of seven and eleven.

20. The overall percentage of pupils having special educational needs across the school is similar to the national average, but there has been an increase in recent times in the number of pupils with special educational needs entering the school. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the learning targets on their individual education plans. As a result of the good support provision, pupils with statements of special educational need frequently attain average levels in many subjects.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

21. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good, as for the most part, is behaviour. Pupils of all ages have good attitudes to school although they are not considered to be at the very high level overall that was seen at the last inspection. This is because the school has had an influx of a small number of pupils over the last few years whose attitudes are occasionally less than positive, and these pupils are sometimes uncooperative. Staff have carried out much work to help these pupils cope better in the classrooms and these pupils now show much better attitudes than when they first entered the school. The great majority of pupils approach their work with good levels of enthusiasm and this is reflected in the fact that 96 per cent of parents who returned the pre-inspection questionnaire stated that their child liked coming to school. Pupils often show pride in their work. For example, in a Key Stage 1 art lesson seen, pupils were very proud of their finished pieces of work. Pupils also show a good level of interest in their learning, as was noted in the enthusiastic approach adopted by older pupils in a discussion about the Jewish festival of Passover and the meanings of the special foods eaten at that time. A small minority of pupils find it difficult to remain on task and this occasionally leads to some disruption or lost teaching time if the school's strategies are not applied consistently. Pupils also show a good level of interest in school life in general through the high numbers that attend the wide range of extra-curricular activities.
22. Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is good rather than very good noted in the last inspection. This difference is because a small minority of pupils (who have joined the school over the last two years) have specific behavioural problems. The occasional poor behaviour of these pupils is sometimes a disruptive element in lessons. Overall, however, staff manage the behaviour of these pupils effectively, especially when the strategies detailed in the school's well considered behaviour policy are applied consistently. The great majority of parents believe behaviour to be good although a minority do have some concerns, which are clearly related to the behaviour of the small minority of pupils mentioned above. Behaviour in the playground is good in general, with only very low levels of over boisterous behaviour seen. There was no evidence of intimidation or harassment during the inspection and pupils are confident that when any such incident does occur, the matter will be taken seriously and dealt with effectively.
23. The school has had cause recently to issue a small number of fixed term and one permanent exclusion. In all cases, the decision was taken after much support had been put in place for the pupils concerned and the correct procedures had been followed.
24. Good relationships are seen throughout the school and pupils continue to show good levels of respect for the feelings of others. For example, Year 6 pupils act as 'buddies' to the Reception children. They help them to settle into school and continue to ensure that they are happy at playtime, as well as reading with them. In addition, all adults treat the pupils in a caring manner and the effect of an individual's actions on others is emphasised throughout the school. For example, there is a whole school target to improve social skills. At the time of the inspection this was to 'share a smile' and this was emphasised in an assembly where the theme was 'actions speak louder than words'. Consequently, pupils show a good level of respect for the feelings of others. They relate well to each other regardless of special needs, age or background. When relationships do break down, the school encourages pupils to talk about the reasons through sessions such as the 'Circle of Friends' – where a group of friends sit together and discuss the problem.
25. Pupils are encouraged to show initiative and take on personal responsibilities and there are now more opportunities for them to do this. This is a specific improvement since the school's last inspection. A school council has been established since the last inspection and pupils in Year 6 are given more responsible roles as monitors. This includes the 'buddy' role mentioned above as well as providing cover in the office over lunchtime and helping to tidy up in class. The homework projects for older pupils offer opportunities to develop

skills in independent research. Younger pupils are also prepared to take on responsible roles. For example, a pupil in Key Stage 1 played the piano very confidently for the pupils' entry and exit to an assembly.

26. Attendance figures overall are satisfactory and are in line with national percentages although the school's unauthorised absence is minimal and therefore better than the average. Some holidays are taken during term time but very rarely for more than 10 days. When this does occur the extra days are marked as unauthorised. Although pupils attend the school from a wide catchment area, punctuality is good and there are few latecomers. The school has rectified the issue raised in the previous inspection report in relation to holding registers centrally and this is now well organised.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

27. Overall, teaching throughout the school is good. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed and 65 per cent of teaching was good or better; 27 per cent was very good. This marks an improvement in the teaching since the last inspection, with, in particular, an increase in the amount of very good teaching noted this time (14 per cent in the last inspection).
28. Teaching in the Foundation Stage and for English, mathematics, science and religious education is good. Although not enough lessons were seen to judge the overall quality of teaching in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and information and communication technology, the scrutiny of pupils' previous work gives strong indications that teaching and learning in these subjects are at least satisfactory. Not enough lessons in music and physical education were seen to enable inspectors to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching in these subjects.
29. Teachers have a good rapport with their pupils and set a good working atmosphere in classrooms so that most pupils enjoy the activities provided for them. Teachers know their pupils well and cater sensitively for their needs. Lessons are usually well planned and well prepared so that all resources are ready to hand and pupils therefore carry out activities without any unnecessary delays. This was noted in English and mathematics sessions in particular where teachers had all book resources, work sheets and equipment ready for use and the whole class teaching sessions flowed without pause into pupils' activities. For example, in a Year 5/6 numeracy lesson pupils were able to move quickly ahead with their work on constructing circles because compasses and paper were all close at hand. Teachers often use resources well to 'spice up' the contents of lessons and to make work as interesting as possible. This was the case in science work for the Year 4/5 class, where the teacher used a full size skeleton, charts, a model of the body's internal structure and x-ray pictures of bones to successfully develop pupils' learning. As a result, the pupils showed much enthusiasm and were keen to discuss the work.
30. Lesson objectives are usually clearly set and explained to pupils at the start of lessons so that they have a clear idea of what they are expected to learn. However, very occasionally, in the less successful lessons, activities set for pupils are not sufficiently challenging. Also, very occasionally pupils are not set clear enough expectations of what they should achieve in a session and the pace of their learning is therefore not as rapid as it should be.
31. Literacy and numeracy skills are usually well taught with teachers showing a confident knowledge of and ability to use the national frameworks for teaching in an effective and flexible manner. Specific points concerning grammar, phonics and number concepts are covered well so that pupils become confident in their learning and gain a solid grasp of the concepts taught. Teachers generally teach all aspects of English and mathematics well and through careful planning they are adept at promoting English and mathematics in other subject areas. For example, homework projects for older pupils were seen to contain detailed written accounts and these pupils were also fully involved in producing a detailed booklet about the school entitled 'Past and Present', which has just been published and in which pupils take a great deal of pride. Other projects on the weather also successfully utilise pupils' mathematical and scientific skills. Through such work the teachers are also successful in involving the pupils in much individual and group detailed research – developing skills above and beyond the basic requirements of the curriculum. At Key Stage 1, not enough challenging opportunities are provided to extend pupils' ability to write at length about their own ideas.
32. Teachers show confident subject knowledge in most other areas that they teach. As a result, explanations and directions given to pupils are mostly succinct and clear and teachers also demonstrate ideas and activities well. For example, in a reception class art lesson the teacher skilfully demonstrated the art techniques required. She carefully avoided completing the model that children were required to make so that pupils had plenty of opportunity to apply their own creative skills. This also enhanced the pupils' ability to work and learn independently. In another good example, the headteacher used her very good singing and

piano playing skills in a whole school singing practice to teach the pupils to sing a new school hymn, with two-part singing. This was successfully accomplished during the 20-minute session with pupils singing to a good standard. Teachers also show confidence in teaching and using ICT. Many examples were seen of teachers using ICT well to support learning in different subject areas. They use ICT particularly well to support work in literacy.

33. Teachers use a good range of strategies and vary these according to the needs of the lessons. For example, in some lessons observed teachers strengthened classroom discussions by giving pupils the opportunity to discuss ideas with a partner or in a smaller group. The use of such a method shows that the school is properly addressing the idea of ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, are given the fullest possible chance to be involved in discussion work and contribute to the lessons. On other occasions pupils are given the chance to evaluate their own and other pupils' work; as was seen in a Year 5/6 lesson where pupils reviewed each other's worksheets and also in a Year 3/4 design and technology lessons where pupils evaluated each other's designs. Use of this particular strategy clearly helped pupils gain ideas from each other as well as giving them a clearer understanding of the quality of their own work.
34. Lessons move at a good pace with teachers injecting points of interest throughout the lesson to ensure that pupils maintain their interest and motivation levels. Such was the case in a good Year 1/2 science lesson where the teacher conducted a 'mini plenary' half way through the lesson to review what pupils had achieved and understood so far. This carefully focused pupils' ideas and enabled them to complete the work confidently.
35. Generally pupils are well managed in lessons and in the best lessons seen the teachers set very clear expectations for pupils' learning and behaviour. Where any behaviour discrepancies occur, these are swiftly addressed to make sure that pupils' learning is not disrupted. With the influx of a small number of pupils who display behavioural difficulties into the school over the last two years the headteacher and staff have wisely invested much energy into devising a good policy and strategy to guide the management of any incidents of unacceptable behaviour. However, observations during the inspection showed that not all teachers apply the policy and strategy with the same amount of rigour. In a few lessons seen where teachers and support staff did not follow the strategy closely or quickly enough, the poor behaviour of a few pupils disrupted learning and had a negative impact upon the classroom atmosphere.
36. Learning support assistants in the school provide valuable support for the pupils and teachers. They are well briefed by the teachers and work well with individuals and groups. The strategy of the school to increase the number of learning support assistants is successful in helping to improve the behaviour and attitudes of the small minority of pupils who sometimes show difficulties in this respect. The strategy has also been an effective part of the school's efforts to raise standards at Key Stage 1.
37. The overall quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has maintained the standards found at the time of the previous inspection. Targets on individual education plans are appropriate, but do not always sufficiently link up with teachers' overall lesson planning. When pupils have no specific support from a learning support assistant, it is not clear to what extent their needs are being met. Staff, including learning support assistants, support pupils with statements of special need well. Lessons seen taken by the special educational needs co-ordinator were of very good quality. Targets for learning were very precisely focused to help pupils progress and the co-ordinator set very high expectations for what these pupils should achieve in the lesson time. The special educational needs co-ordinator keeps up-to-date on-going records of work she does with individual pupils, which summarise attainment accurately, but do not always indicate what pupils or staff need to do next.
38. Overall, in the lessons seen, the quality of pupils' learning was good with the notable exceptions mentioned above when a few pupils did not always behave appropriately. The school has recently come through a phase where standards and the progress in pupils' learning had dropped, for a variety of different reasons (see section on the school's results and pupils' achievements). The difficulties have been confronted and dealt with appropriately as is reflected by the quality of learning currently reported.

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

39. The previous report found that the school curriculum was broad and mainly balanced for all pupils, promoting pupils' intellectual and physical education. This is still the case. The quality and range of learning opportunities is good and enriched by a very good range of extra-curricular activities, visits and visitors. The

curriculum meets the statutory requirements for teaching the National Curriculum and religious education. Overall, the school has carefully designed and implemented a good curriculum that is broad, balanced and relevant for all the pupils within the school, including those with special educational needs. The key points for action in the previous inspection – to develop and implement subject schemes of work, develop further the policy and scheme of work for personal and social education and provide more opportunities for pupils to exercise responsibility – have all been addressed.

40. The curriculum offered to the children in the Foundation Stage is very good: it covers fully all six nationally recommended areas of learning and includes relevant parts of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The good planning for these children and the effective procedures for assessing their attainment results in good progress. This equips them with a positive foundation for their learning at Key Stage 1. The curriculum provision is very well enhanced through the inclusion of a wide range of interesting activities that motivates the children and prepares them very well for Key Stage 1.
41. Curricular provision throughout Key Stage 1 and 2 is good with some very good features. A strong feature of the curriculum is its detailed planning for the development of skills necessary for each subject. There are suitable policies for all subjects. Because pupils are in mixed age classes, the curriculum is appropriately planned using a three-year rolling programme at Key Stage 1 and a four-year one at Key Stage 2, with teachers in each key stage planning together effectively to ensure a continuous and progressive development of skills, knowledge and understanding. The long-term plan for each class gives a clear overview and indications of which elements of the programmes of study are to be covered. Short-term planning includes suitable activities for the range of pupils' abilities within a class. Plans are detailed and identify clearly specific learning objectives and extension activities.
42. The school gives good support to developing and extending a range of artistic skills, knowledge and understanding in the physical and creative arts. Pupils have the opportunity to learn guitar and keyboards from peripatetic music teachers. A previous member of the school staff returns weekly to develop pupils' machine embroidery skills, while a previous headteacher gives older pupils the opportunity to work in acrylic paints during their art lessons. Sporting provision is well developed and extended through links with schools in the local area and the school's very extensive range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are given an appropriate amount of homework at Key Stage 1, which serves to enhance their classroom work. At Key Stage 2 homework provision is often very good with pupils provided with interesting projects that incorporate research and usefully link different curriculum areas.
43. The arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education are very good. The school has a very well planned and structured scheme to develop pupils' understanding that they can help support each other and resolve problems and conflicts through in-class discussions. Regular personal, social and health education sessions in the form of 'circle time' are held as part of this provision. Pupils are encouraged to share concerns and consider different responses. Sex education and the development of an awareness of the misuse of drugs and medicines to prepare pupils well for future life are included into these sessions as well as in the science curriculum. Strong links exist between the school and the local Member of Parliament, with older pupils having visited the Houses of Parliament and communicated with the Prime Minister's Office. Pupils have also worked with ⁵'Crucial Crew', spending a day being involved in and seeing how real life scenarios and virtual reality programmes are used to prepare the emergency services personnel for a response to different emergency and dangerous life threatening situations. Pupils are given good opportunities to develop their ability to handle responsibility. For instance, older pupils look after younger ones - reading together with them and supporting them at lunch-time and in the playground. The school behaviour strategy, with rewards outweighing sanctions, raises self-esteem; especially the opportunity to have achievement recorded in the 'Gold Book' or receive a head teacher award. The opportunity to make educational and residential visits, support community events, do jobs round the school and in class develops pupils' social skills and provides many good opportunities for pupils to use their personal initiative.
44. Throughout the school, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been fully implemented. Numeracy skills are very well used and promoted within other subjects such as history, geography and science. The effective strategies for teaching literacy skills also give strong support for all curriculum areas.
45. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Their needs are carefully identified and individual educational plans, with focused targets for English, mathematics and, if necessary, emotional and behavioural support, specifically planned. Pupils with special educational needs have the opportunity to work individually with the special educational needs teacher as well as within groups in their classes with

⁵ Project run by the district council in collaboration with drug awareness and emergency services
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specifically trained support assistants. Pupils are sometimes withdrawn from class sessions to work individually with the special educational needs co-ordinator, especially for English and mathematical activities. The school tries to do this during whole class literacy or numeracy sessions but this is not always possible and pupils have to sometimes miss other curriculum areas. The school is careful to monitor the balance between pupils' needs and what they are missing.

46. The school fully promotes the equality of opportunities and full inclusion of all groups of pupils including those with special educational needs. The school's current system for withdrawing pupils for support is clearly necessary – especially for the pupils in need of emotional and behavioural support. The work carried out by pupils in these sessions is clearly targeted at enhancing their access to the full curriculum and to promote the skills they need to work better in the classroom. When pupils are withdrawn for music and other activities this is usually on a rolling timetable so that the same session is not missed every week and teachers ensure that these pupils quickly catch up with any areas missed. Teachers plan very closely together to ensure that year groups split between classes are given the same curricular provision. Pupils are also provided with an insight into issues surrounding racial equality and older pupils discuss the difficulties that were encountered in certain periods of history in this respect.
47. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good. The clubs, held nearly every day after school, are well attended and cater for a variety of interests such as netball, drama, gymnastics and computers. Pupils also have the opportunity to have musical instrument lessons. Learning opportunities are also enhanced through a wide range of special events such as an African Arts Week and visits, including a residential stay for older pupils. Visitors to the school have usefully included African drummers and Indian dancers.
48. The local community makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning and this aspect is even more effective than at the time of the last inspection when it was considered to be good. Local visits are undertaken, for example, the supermarket where younger pupils have the chance to see 'behind the scenes', and to Gosfield Hall to enhance the Tudor topic being undertaken. The school is very much a part of village life and pupils participate in events such as horticultural shows and fêtes. This gives a sense of community to the school and enhances the curriculum well for pupils.
49. Very constructive, mutually beneficial links have also been established with other institutions and the school frequently offers places to trainee teachers, work placement students and nursery nurse trainees. Also, the local consortium of 12 schools, the Colne Valley Consortium, enables joint activities such as sport and performing arts to take place that greatly enrich learning and enhance social skills and a sense of community. In addition, the pooled resources of the schools allows for joint staff training days and for subject and key stage co-ordinators to meet regularly to share experience and knowledge.
50. As at the time of the last inspection, the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development. The provision for social development was judged to be good during the last inspection but is now very good. The school is a caring place where the principles of thought, care and respect for each other; the wider community and the world are promoted. The care with which pupils' work is displayed shows how the school takes pride in pupils' achievements. The aims and objectives of the school encourage the spiritual, moral, social and cultural education of pupils.
51. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. When the whole school comes together for assembly, collective worship contains a good blend of spiritual, moral, social and cultural themes and opportunities are provided for reflection and prayer. Appropriate use is made of moral stories, music and singing. Themes are well presented in assembly to get pupils thinking in depth about different aspects of every day life. For example, the theme for the week of the inspection was that of 'smiles' and pupils were suitably encouraged with the advice ...'if you see someone without a smile, give them one of yours'. Pupils have many opportunities to gain knowledge and insights into spiritual matters. The school has close links with the local church and pupils frequently visit and worship there. On a recent visit, pupils had the opportunity to ring the bells. The awe and wonder generated by the opportunity to pull the rope and listen to a sound that echoed around the village during times of celebration and war had a profound spiritual effect on the pupils involved. The school has a policy to help teachers identify and plan for spiritual opportunities in their lessons. This was seen to be well promoted in work in science on gravity for instance and in religious education when investigating 'celebrations' where some mothers brought in their wedding dresses and talked of that special day in their lives. The supportive atmosphere in the school, with the promotion of a strong sense of moral values by all staff, gives pupils a positive attitude to life. This is shown in the respect pupils give to their environment and the school's and other's property and in the good relationships that pupils form with staff and each other. Other curriculum areas implicitly promote a sense of spirituality. Art, music and science provide opportunities for pupils to use their imagination in observing, creating and expressing individual ideas. Pupils

explore colour in paint through their work with acrylics in the style of artists such as Monet. Also, pupils listen to how different composers use patterns and moods to express mood and atmosphere in music and are given appropriate opportunities to experiment with musical ideas in a similar way.

52. The provision for pupils' moral development is good, while that for their social development is very good. The positive relationships between all members of the school community enable pupils to grow into mature individuals. Teachers and assistants make good role models, promoting the school's values of honesty and fairness. Teachers work hard to ensure that being in the classroom is enjoyable and exciting. The school's code of conduct is well promoted throughout the school. Pupils work well together. Each week in assembly, pupils' names are added to the 'Gold Book' with pupils receiving certificates for a range of good work and behaviour. Individuals have the opportunity to hold the 'courtesy cup' for the week. Pupils also strive to receive a 'headteacher award' and teachers create a range of good opportunities for pupils to show initiative and to exercise responsibility. Pupils take responsibility for resources in lessons, they work as monitors, older pupils help younger pupils and they organise resources for assembly. The school has established a 'school council', with each year group electing members who have the opportunity of meeting together to discuss issues of importance. Pupils help those less fortunate than themselves through a variety of charitable activities both local and national. Opportunities for social contact outside the classroom, such as extra-curricular activities and visits including residential visits, further encourage and support moral and social development. The school benefits greatly from the support it receives from parents and the wider community and this has a significant impact upon pupils' social development. Pupils see their parents and members of the community supporting the school practically; for example, with parents hearing pupils read at home, assisting teachers with activities and on outings, providing resources and artefacts from home, coming into the school to talk of special events and raising money to provide the school with additional resources.
53. Arrangements for pupils' cultural development including preparing pupils to live in a multicultural society are good. Pupils learn about and participate in the richness of British and western culture through art, geography and history. Pupils make visits to museums, to Gosfield Hall in their work on the Tudors, the National Gallery, the local church and environmental areas. Pupils have good opportunities to make residential visits and undertake adventurous outdoor activities. Theatre groups, musicians and artists visit the school including those celebrating different ethnic music and art. Photographs about the visit of six artists celebrating African art and music show the enjoyment and enthusiasm of pupils. Pupils work in the style of famous artists such as Van Gogh and Monet, using the colours, textures and shapes within their own work. Younger pupils in class 1 have enjoyed their work on the colours, textures, arts, fruits and life in the Caribbean as supported by artefacts brought back by a pupil's family following a visit to Barbados. Homework projects encourage pupils to research using the Internet across a wide range of themes including investigations into health and food, especially considering the diets of people around the world. The study of faiths, such as Judaism and Hinduism, introduces pupils to the religious festivals of different ethnic groups living in Britain while their studies about Christianity remind pupils of how the festivals of Christmas and Easter are celebrated round the world. Many of the elements in the activities listed above give pupils a good awareness of the cultural diversity of the multicultural society in which they live.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

54. As noted at the time of the last inspection, the school has very good procedures for the care and welfare of its pupils. The child protection arrangements are particularly good, as all staff, including non-teaching staff, have been involved in training related to physical intervention and how to recognise signs of abuse. The headteacher, who is the designated co-ordinator, has had additional multi-agency training. The policy is clear and is based on local authority guidelines.
55. There is now a new medical room, an improvement since the last inspection, and all support staff have had some basic first aid training. Appropriate first aid boxes are kept and records are maintained of any accidents and the treatment given as well as any particular medical problems pupils may have. A good health and safety policy is in place and a recent health and safety audit was conducted, which identified that the school has a positive health and safety culture. The caretaker makes regular checks of the grounds and premises.
56. Overall, the educational support and guidance given to pupils are good. There are good procedures in place to monitor and improve attendance. For example, a new holiday request form has been introduced requiring parents to give reasons for the need to take their child out of school. A running total is kept so that days over and above the allowed 10 are marked as unauthorised unless there are very exceptional circumstances. Parents have been made very aware of the school's procedures and contact the school promptly when their

child is absent. As a result, the unauthorised absence rate is minimal. The education welfare officer visits the school each term to check registers and discuss any attendance issues.

57. The school has very effective procedures to monitor and promote good behaviour. The behaviour policy was recently revised following an in-depth review of behaviour and discipline. It is clear, informative and effective when applied consistently. Very detailed records are kept of any serious incidents, covering the run-up to the incident as well as what happened afterwards and any action taken. This information is used to identify what support, for example, from outside agencies, can be put in place for pupils with challenging behaviour. Training sessions have been arranged for staff and the school also held two workshops for parents on 'Managing Children's Behaviour'. Staff use rewards such as stickers and privileges as well as positive phrases, such as 'I like the way you are sitting', to encourage good behaviour. In addition, there is a weekly assembly to present the 'Courtesy Cup' and 'Gold Book' awards to publicly celebrate and promote co-operative behaviour.
58. The school is also effective in monitoring oppressive behaviour such as bullying or intimidation and recently revised its anti-bullying policy. Action is taken quickly to resolve situations, for example through discussion groups such as the 'Circle of Friends' - where pupils are brought together for weekly sessions to identify the issues and try to resolve their differences. Procedures are in place to record any racist incidents that may occur.
59. Procedures are also good for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development, although the system is largely informal. It is successful because staff, including the headteacher, are very caring, know the pupils well and communicate effectively amongst themselves. The school now has a clear programme for personal, social and health education, an improvement since the last inspection, and this, along with the use of regular circle time, gives further opportunities to monitor and support pupils' personal development. The annual written progress report that parents receive also has a section reporting on personal, social and health education and this is a further useful means of monitoring the way that individuals mature socially during their time in the school. Nearly all of the parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire believe that the school is helping their child to become mature and responsible.
60. The identification strategies for pupils with special education needs, including test results, are appropriate. Staff identify needs mainly in relation to literacy, although a few pupils have numeracy targets, while others have behavioural, emotional and social targets. Individual education plans are comprehensive and records and documentation relating to the progress of pupils with special educational needs are generally of good quality. Staff are given time to work with the special needs co-ordinator to review individual education plans; this is good practice. Annual reviews of pupils with statements of special educational need are recorded comprehensively and all parties are involved in discussing these. The stages of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs are implemented appropriately and the special educational needs co-ordinator has taken positive steps to implement the revised Code of Practice.
61. The school is developing good systems for assessing the attainment and progress of pupils. As pupils progress through the school, national and optional tests, other tests and teachers' assessments in English, mathematics and science are carried out and staff record these carefully. The development of assessment systems is well co-ordinated by the deputy headteacher. Staff have begun to track pupils' performance from assessments made when children enter the reception class. They have carefully analysed the below average results for seven-year-olds in 2001 national tests and have monitored these pupils' progress since then. In English a detailed analysis of the results for eleven-year-olds tested in 2001 has informed staff how to strengthen the weaker areas of the curriculum. There is also tracking information about the progress of pupils currently in Year 6 in reading, writing, science and mathematics since Year 4. The school makes good use of the assessment information. For example, the science provision was reviewed and improved as a result of a diagnosis of earlier low attainment and a revision programme is now in use.
62. The school has introduced a good system for providing pupils with individual writing targets. Reading records are kept throughout the school and some provide detailed assessment and information. The school has clearly made much progress with developing assessment systems. However, the school has identified rightly that assessment procedures introduced for religious education, art, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education need further development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

63. The pre-inspection questionnaire and the comments made at the parents' meeting before the inspection show that parents have very positive views of the school and the links with parents have improved even further from the good levels seen at the last inspection. They are now considered to be very strong. Ninety-nine percent of parents feel that the school works closely with them and it is clear that the headteacher and her staff are very accessible and prepared to discuss any issues or concerns that arise. A small minority of parents have some concern about standards of behaviour and the school acknowledges this and has tried to work with parents through workshops on behaviour and consulting them in relation to the recently revised behaviour policy. Also, some parents feel that the right amount of homework is not given but inspection evidence shows that overall, the use of homework is good and very good at Key Stage 2.
64. The school has made efforts to find out the views of parents, such as through questionnaires, most recently related to the Essex Award Scheme. There is a very good response to such requests for information, which reflects the high level of interest parents have in their children's education. This is also seen in the amount of practical help given to the school such as assisting in the recent removal of an air raid shelter, helping at after school clubs and during lessons, such as art and information communication technology. In addition, the great majority of parents have signed the school's home-school agreement. The Friends of Gosfield Primary School, although not long formally established, has organised some very successful social and fund-raising events and often is a means to involve the wider community in events such as an Auction of Promises. Pupils benefit greatly from the very good contribution parents make to their learning and the very positive impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school. This is not only because of the funds raised that enable extra items to be purchased such as a kiln and a digital camera, but also because parents regularly support homework tasks, as well as hearing their children read at home.
65. The quality of information provided for parents is very good. There is a weekly newsletter as well as curriculum information that is given out each term. Strong links with parents are very firmly established from the outset as the school has devised an induction pack for new parents and arranges information sessions before the child starts school. The prospectus and Governors' Annual Report are both of a very high standard being very informative as well as user-friendly. The annual written pupil progress report received by parents is satisfactory overall. Some targets are given, mainly for English, and there is a section, even for the youngest children, to comment on what they have done well and what could be improved. There is no space for a written comment from parents however. In addition to the written information, parents have the opportunity to attend regular consultation evenings as well as termly workshops, for example on 'Thinking About Thinking'.
66. Liaison by the special educational needs co-ordinator with parents and carers of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. She is not there for most of the week and it is not always easy for parents and carers to meet with her, although she makes herself readily available when in school. Parents and carers can see the headteacher when the special educational needs co-ordinator is not in school. There are very good arrangements for the special educational needs co-ordinator to meet with parents and carers during parent consultation evenings. Liaison with families is appropriately recorded. Liaison with external agencies is well recorded and good links are maintained with support agencies.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

67. As noted at the time of the last inspection, the school is very well led and managed. The headteacher provides very good leadership and successfully promotes an atmosphere in which all staff feel valued and work together as a highly effective team. She works closely with and is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. The headteacher has a very clear vision for the future educational direction of the school and this vision is effectively communicated through the school's high quality and comprehensive development plan. The very good leadership and clear vision are fully focused upon the need to continuously strive to improve standards and the quality of education. As a result, the rate of school improvement is good and standards that pupils attain by the time they leave the school continue to rise in line with the national trend and at a faster rate than the national trend in science. The clear management systems and strong teamwork are also the keystones in helping the teachers teach well throughout the school. All of the school's priorities are carefully laid out in the school's development plan with full detail as to how each initiative will be achieved. The school is making good progress in achieving the actions in its development plan. All conversations and discussions with staff and governors confirm this view of strong teamwork. This is especially true for the teaching staff who continually liaise with each other and support each other wherever possible. The aims of the school are clear and suitable and the staff work hard to achieve them.
68. Teachers carry out their roles as subject co-ordinators well and with enthusiasm. They work hard to promote and improve the areas for which they are responsible. Along with the governors they are fully involved in the

formulation of and monitoring of actions in the school development plan. The school has a very experienced special educational needs co-ordinator who manages the provision for pupils with special educational needs effectively. The headteacher who is experienced in this area also ably assists the management of the provision where necessary.

69. The school is fortunate in having a group of very active and enthusiastic governors who strongly support the headteacher and staff. They work well together as a group, are fully informed about and involved in all aspects of the school's management and they ensure that all statutory requirements are met. Many of them visit the school on a regular basis and provide lots of extra help where it is required. For example, they were especially active in helping with a major project to remove an air raid shelter and improve the school playground. Through the help and connections of the governors, the school was able to reduce what could have been a very costly operation to one that was achieved at a very low cost. This reflects the proactive approach of the governing body who, together with the headteacher, are highly effective in reducing school costs and seeking to get the best value possible in all matters of spending. In this respect the governors have an excellent awareness of applying best value principles. Financial matters are very well managed. The headteacher, in particular, is very skilled in ensuring that all possible grants that may benefit the school are procured and in maximising the school's links with local businesses to help boost the budget where possible. All spending is carefully linked to the school development plan where appropriate, and the governors maintain a clear overview of the school's financial position.
70. Good systems have been developed for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning and the curriculum. Teachers play a full part in the monitoring cycle, which is linked up to the priority areas in the school development plan. Governors are also effectively involved in this monitoring programme. The school has well-developed systems for recording and feeding back the outcomes of monitoring visits and makes full use of the information acquired to inform future developments.
71. The governing body and senior management team keep a close scrutiny on the school's performance and consider ways in which it can be improved. Governors and senior managers suitably involve themselves in an analysis of pupils' performances in tests and weaknesses of the curriculum and take appropriate action to improve areas as necessary.
72. There are sufficient teaching staff to meet the needs of the National Curriculum and they are appropriately deployed throughout the school. The school has taken care to match staff's strengths to their curricular responsibilities. The programme of staff development is matched to the school's priorities. All staff, including administration staff and lunchtime supervisory staff, have received a wide range of in-service training which they appreciate and from which they benefit. Performance management has been effectively instigated and is suitably dovetailed into the school development plan. There is a good number of support staff who work with teachers. Most are experienced and have relevant qualifications for their roles. Lunchtime assistants and learning support assistants are dedicated, hard working and very positive about their work in the school. They feel a valued part of the school team.
73. The school's accommodation is satisfactory overall. The school has addressed the issue raised at the last inspection in relation to the need to provide a medical room and one has now been established that includes a shower facility. Another major improvement has been the addition of an information communication technology suite. However, the Year 5/6 classroom is quite cramped and the lack of a suitable library limits independent research skills. Because of current pupil numbers in the reception class and the lack of an additional classroom to accommodate the higher numbers, the hall has to be used as an occasional teaching area for the youngest pupils. This leads to time lost during transfer and the setting is not ideal for this age group.
74. The pupils benefit from pleasant outdoor facilities. The grounds have also been enhanced through the removal of an air raid shelter. This has provided extra play space, as well as the opportunity to further develop the attractive gardens. Pupils benefit from a large playing field as well as a small wooded area. The grounds and buildings are well maintained, cleaned to a high standard and very attractively enhanced by colourful high-quality displays of pupils' work.
75. The range of resources available to support pupils' learning is generally good. Resources are usually stored well and are accessible. At Key Stage 2, there is not enough choice of challenging books for average and higher attaining readers, many of whom supplement the school's choice by reading books brought from home. The library is not fully operational and this has a negative impact on pupils' learning.
76. The school has a relatively high cost of expenditure per pupil compared to other schools, but this is partly as a result of significant extra income from donations, money raised through the school's business links and very

Careful running of the budget by the headteacher and governors. The teaching is good, pupils achieve well by the time they leave the school and there are significant strengths noted in the school's curricular provision and its provision for supporting and guiding pupils. Considering all of these factors it is clear that the school provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

77. The school has no significant weaknesses, but the staff and governors should address the following points for improvement, for inclusion in its action plan:

- (1) Ensure that all staff adopt a consistent approach towards applying the strategies laid out in the school's policy for the behaviour management of pupils. *(Paragraphs 35, 103, 122, 131, and 140)*
- (2) *Provide more opportunities for pupils at Key Stage 1 to undertake challenging writing tasks. *(Paragraphs 12, 31 and 98)*
- (3) Ensure that individual education plans are reviewed in a consistent way and that teachers link these closely to their overall class planning. *(Paragraph 37)*
- (4) Improve the range of reading books available especially for older pupils in the school. *(Paragraph 75)*
- (5) *Develop further the assessment procedures that have been introduced for religious education, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. *(62, 132, 138, 142, 148, 151 and 157)*

* *Already identified by the school as an area for development within the school development plan.*

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	10	14	13	0	0	0
Percentage	0	27	38	35	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 two 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)	139
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	32

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	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

*N.B. When the number of boys or girls is less than 10 – the results are not published in reports.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2001	9	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	*Boys			
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	15	17	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	71 (93)	81 (64)	86 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	*Boys			
	Girls	9	12	12
	Total	13	18	18
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	62 (71)	86 (71)	86 (64)
	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	11	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	10
	*Girls			
	Total	18	15	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (100)	75 (85)	95 (95)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	11	11
	*Girls			
	Total	18	20	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (100)	100 (100)	100 (100)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	133
Any other minority ethnic group	6

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	3	1
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)	7.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.5
Average class size	27.8

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	130

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
	£
Total income	328,826
Total expenditure	326,047
*Expenditure per pupil	2,219
Balance brought forward from previous year	20,183
Balance carried forward to next year	22,962

** Based on a roll of 147 pupils when the budget was set.*

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	139
Number of questionnaires returned	67

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	63	31	3	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	54	9	3	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	39	48	12	1	0
The teaching is good.	67	27	1	0	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	57	33	9	0	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	13	0	0	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	72	25	1	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	66	33	1	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	66	33	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	67	30	1	0	1
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	33	4	0	1

N.B. line totals do not always add up to 100 per cent to due some questionnaires returned containing no response to some questions.

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

78. The arrangements for children in the Foundation Stage of their education are good. Children are given a positive start in the reception class and the quality of learning is good. Children make good progress overall because of good quality teaching. Attainment upon entry to the reception class is average in most areas of the foundation curriculum and below average in some aspects of communication, language and literacy. Most children are on course to attain the nationally expected levels by the end of the year, although in speaking and areas of personal and social development a small minority of children show below average attainment. Children are excited by their work and have positive attitudes and good relationships with adults and each other. At the time of the previous inspection there were no children under five in the school and no issues raised. It is therefore not possible to comment on improvement since the last inspection.
79. Children enter the school at one of three points in the school year, starting their full time education in the term in which they are five years old. Children born in the summer have the opportunity to attend part time from January before joining the school full time after Easter. Not all parents take up this offer depending on maturity, domestic and pre-school arrangements. By the beginning of the summer term all children are full time students. The majority of the children have nursery or pre-school playgroup experience prior to entry into formal education. On entry to school, although most children show broadly average attainment, a few pupils have below average speaking and interpersonal skills. The quality and range of learning opportunities provided are very good with a curriculum that is enriched by a wide range of activities that includes visits and visitors.
80. The classroom is stimulating and safe, though when all pupils and adults are working on practical activities space is tight. The outdoor area has been very well designed to support all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum, especially knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development. There is grass and a garden beyond the paved area for children to investigate different habitats and grow a range of vegetables and flowers as well as play together, further developing their communication and social skills. Resources are used well. Foundation Stage staff have received full training in the implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum as well as in the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.
81. Children in the Foundation Stage are taught in a mixed age class alongside pupils from Year 1 and the curriculum is well planned to support the learning of both groups. The Foundation Stage teacher and the Year 1 teacher work effectively alongside each other in the same room.
82. The quality of teaching for Foundation Stage children is good. The teacher and supporting adults know the children well and plan a curriculum that gives them the opportunity to develop fully. The teacher has very good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and ensures that all the activities planned for younger children will support and give a good foundation for work in the future. The Foundation Stage teacher successfully promotes children's language and social skills by stimulating their interest and encouraging discussion. Children are motivated well through the provision of interesting activities; for example, designing and creating planes, balloons and kites; investigating flying creatures such as bees, butterflies and other insects and using their creative and physical abilities to paint, print and make collage mobiles. The role-play area is an airport scene with an 'X ray machine', check in and luggage conveyor belt and passport control. The Foundation Stage and Year 1 teacher have good knowledge and understanding both of the curriculum and the range of children's abilities. Both hold high expectations that children will behave well, think and listen as well as work hard at all they are given to do. Adults form a strong and supportive team, all ensuring that children enjoy their tasks, concentrate and persevere. The management of children is good. Children are encouraged to be independent while given support to build confidence to be so. Children are actively involved with their learning. Not only are learning objectives shared at the beginning of each session with children, but also, as children complete a piece of work, they discuss that work with the teacher and critically examine what they have done. Children therefore have good knowledge of their own learning, are acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding across a wide curriculum and put some considerable effort into their work. Supportive adults track behaviour, attitudes and progress when children are engaged on both whole class and practical activities and this information contributes to planning a broad and rich curriculum. As a result of this careful planning, monitoring and assessment, children with special educational needs are identified quickly and targeted support planned to ensure learning for these children is good.
83. The school day is well organised to support and develop basic skills. Each morning children undertake activities linked to the literacy strategy and numeracy projects. These are adult directed and supported

although children have suitable opportunities to work independently and in small groups, managing their own pace of learning. Children also have good opportunities to work at their own pace and develop independent study skills through structured play, including in the classroom 'airport'.

Personal, social and emotional development

84. Staff place an emphasis on the children's personal, social and emotional development and this, along with developing communication skills, underpins all the work in the Foundation Stage. Teaching is good and the children make good progress. As a result most of the children by the end of the Foundation Stage achieve the goals expected for five-year-olds nationally. Teaching and support staff create an environment where respect, understanding and the recognition and appreciation that we are all different, but have something to contribute underpins all the work. This helps the children to settle quickly into class routines and they develop a sense of belonging to the school community. All staff are good role models and, as a result, children develop a positive self-image and recognise that everyone has something special to offer. Children clearly enjoy their work and the majority co-operate happily with each other and adults. Staff constantly reinforce good habits such as reminding children to put up their hands before answering a question or by making a comment and ensuring that children tidy up after activities. The teachers, usefully, often make such areas class targets for the week. Children generally select activities thoughtfully and work with care and with consideration for others. Independence is encouraged as children change themselves for physical activities and tidy up after practical activities. Afternoon activities, frequently involving practical creative or physical work, enable children to work together in pairs and in small or larger mixed age groups. The children co-operate over resources, take turns and develop their social skills further.

Communication, language and literacy

85. The development of children's communication, language and literacy skills is good. Due to the good quality of teaching most children progress well. As a result, by the end of the Foundation Stage many are likely to reach standards expected for children of this age and be well into transition into Key Stage 1 work, though for some, speaking and listening skills are weaker. Children know that pictures and print convey meaning, that books have an order and that text can be a story, a poem or give information. Stories are a regular feature of the day and large print books are well used to focus children's attention on the text. There is a strong emphasis on the enjoyment of reading. Books are regularly sent home so that parents can support this element of children's learning. The teacher uses the literacy strategy well to meet the developing needs of these young readers and this effectively enhances their listening, speaking and reading skills. The formal teaching of phonics with the sounding of the phonemes, the identification of syllables and the match of developing handwriting skills to their phonic work, encourages children to consolidate and develop their early writing skills. By the end of the Foundation Stage, children write their names and are recording their thoughts in simple but accurately constructed sentences. All staff use precise and clear diction to assist children's speech and encourage them to reply in clear sentences, a skill which children take over into their writing as nearly half attempt to start a sentence with a capital and end with a full stop. From their earliest days in the school children are encouraged to join in discussions and to give their opinions. They are involved well in class discussion and informal talk is encouraged when children are involved with independent activities, especially in the 'airport'. Although the timetable has specific literacy times, language development underpins all the work in the class. While carrying out work to investigate growth, plants and living creatures that fly, the children investigate information texts and copy required words to annotate their work. They name their creatures and describe their characteristics.

Mathematical development

86. Children's mathematical development is good. All children are on course to meet the goals set at the end of the Foundation Stage and a significant minority of children are on course to attain above the expected level. Children are consolidating and developing their number skills through effective teaching. The use of the national numeracy project is supported by number reinforcement across the curriculum. Children count the number of pupils in registration and into groups for activities. When moving round the school children use positional order and, when contributing to group work, take turns, understanding what is meant by working with a partner or as one of a pair. Songs and rhymes are used to reinforce number so that not only are all children able to count back from 5, but more than half can also do so from 10. Over half of the children can identify a number position in a number line by the shape of the number, but all can find a missing number by counting up to that position. Children are aware of number operations such as adding and subtracting in 1's, with higher attaining pupils doing so in 2's. Children name shapes such as squares, circles, rectangles and triangles as well as cubes and cones. They are able to use them to make patterns and pictures and know which can fill a space and which cannot fit together in a tessellating pattern. Children have an early

understanding of capacity and measure appropriately using sand and water. Children show a basic understanding of the calendar and, for example, successfully count on the days and answer questions such as, ... 'if yesterday was the 22nd, what is today?'... with most aware that the answer involves adding 1 to the previous total.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

87. Most children are on course to meet the goals set for the end of the Foundation Stage, with a significant minority on course to exceed the expected level. Teaching is good and adults provide many exciting activities to promote this area of development. The children have many opportunities to explore the natural and man-made world in the development of their scientific skills. Children investigate different environments and they ask and suggest answers to questions concerning what a plant needs in order to grow properly. In their work on flight children have considered planes, balloons and kites and during the inspection investigated and learned about the features of different creatures that fly. They develop their design and making skills well through building, for instance, using interlocking plastic bricks and other construction toys. They use the computer with confidence and independence and handle the mouse with appropriate dexterity to select items on the screen. The children know the way around the school through their use of the hall for physical education, lunch and assemblies and they know how to find the playground, the school field and the computer suite. Children know about relationships within their families, knowing that grandparents are older than their mother or father. They understand that in order to keep healthy, they must clean their teeth, wash their hands and brush their hair. The children know that people have different celebrations and festivals linked to their religion, and they have, in particular, a suitable knowledge about how Christmas and Easter are celebrated in this country.

Physical development

88. Children's physical development is good and most are on course to the expected level in this area of learning, with a significant minority on course to exceed this level. Skills are well taught. The children have access to and use proficiently a wide range of tools such as pencils, crayons, scissors and glue to write, make pictures and models. The children are able to manipulate pencils to make close observational drawings and they use brushes with appropriate dexterity when painting. For example, they paint the stripes on a bee - alternating yellow and black - without smudging each strip. They develop their physical skills indoors as well as during outdoor activities and are well co-ordinated and agile. Children use a range of constructive equipment appropriately, fitting blocks together to make a building out of small construction kits. They move around the classroom carefully and without bumping or knocking things over. In physical education work they develop the eye/hand co-ordination necessary for teams games. Children climb and balance safely on climbing apparatus. They manipulate the mouse and keyboard of a computer carefully to control programmes and practise recording skills, especially when typing in their names using the space and enter keys.

Creative development

89. Children have the opportunity to experience a range of creative experiences: to sing; play a range of percussion instruments; draw, paint and crayon; cut and stick and make models and collage both big and small. Most children are on course to achieve the expected level in this area of learning by the time they begin Year 1, with a significant minority on course to exceed this level. Children hold brushes correctly and apply paint to paper with confidence, accuracy and good awareness of shape, pattern and colour. They are able to mix a range of colours. Collages are made using a range of papers, cards and plastics and different joins such as glues, staples, tapes and pins. In the role-play area they imagine that they are in the airport while on the carpet area they successfully use the puppets to compose and perform their own plays. Children sing a range of songs from memory, especially during music sessions and during assemblies, joining in well with the chorus even though not particularly sure of the verse. As part of their work in knowledge and understanding of the world they manipulate malleable materials to make models of flying creatures. In all of their work they concentrate hard and make good progress in developing their physical skills as well as their concepts of colour, shape and size.

ENGLISH

90. The number of seven-year-old pupils reaching the nationally expected level (Level 2) or above in the 2001 end of key stage national reading test was below the national average for all schools and well below the national average for similar schools. The percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 or above in the 2001 writing test was well below the national average for all schools and very low in comparison with similar schools. The number of

eleven-year-old pupils reaching the nationally expected level (Level 4) or above in the 2001 tests was well above the national average for all schools and in line with the average for similar schools.

91. Inspection evidence indicates that at the ages of seven and eleven pupils attain the nationally expected levels in listening and speaking. Seven-year-old pupils attain the nationally expected levels in reading, writing and spelling while eleven-year-olds attain above average levels. Handwriting is above the national average at both key stages although the presentation of work is occasionally unsatisfactory. The school has improved standards of handwriting throughout the school and in writing at Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection. It has maintained standards of reading at Key Stage 2 and in speaking and writing at Key Stage 1. Reading standards at Key Stage 1 are not as high as reported in the last inspection. However, there has been an improvement in the performance of seven-year-olds since the 2001 national tests, notably in writing but also in reading.
92. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is good in relation to the targets in their individual education plans.
93. Pupils' listening skills are in line with national expectations by the ages of seven and eleven. Most pupils listen attentively to staff and each other in whole class and group activities; for example, when listening to, or discussing, stories or poems they have written. A small minority do not always listen properly and need much extra guidance and prompting in this respect. In most lessons, pupils focus well in group-reading or writing activities. Older pupils show good understanding of a wide range of vocabulary.
94. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils' speaking skills are in line with the national average. Individuals are accomplished speakers. They are articulate, fluent and can expand their answers confidently; for example, when younger pupils speak about reading at home or older pupils present work in assemblies or speak in class about the use of persuasive language in advertisements. Sometimes pupils act as 'talk partners' or work in groups to discuss topics together. On occasions, boys dominate these groups and not all views are represented. Teachers often plan valuable opportunities for pupils to review and comment on each other's work – pupils often do this well and make good gains in their learning as a result.
95. By the age of seven, pupils' reading skills are in line with the national average. Year 1 pupils recognise basic words in texts and out of context. Higher attaining pupils read a simple non-fiction book about owls accurately with support from a learning assistant. Year 2 pupils read 'big books', accurately as a class and follow the text well. Individual readers are confident and give reasons why particular poems are their favourites. A few pupils lack confidence in speaking about their favourite books or stories.
96. Home-school reading records are good and show that parents and carers make a significant contribution to pupils' progress throughout the school. Year 2 records are very comprehensive. Staff contributions to Key Stage 2 records are inconsistent although some inform pupils and families about pupils' progress.
97. By the age of eleven, pupils' reading attainment is above average. Most pupils read challenging texts independently, accurately and fluently. They recall earlier parts of a story well and talk confidently about favourite books and authors. A significant minority of pupils are very good readers. However many pupils spoken to were not confident about the distinction between fiction and non-fiction books. The school library is small and located in the school entrance; this is unsatisfactory provision and limits the development of pupils' library and reference skills. Year 5 pupils read fluently using good expression when interpreting dialogue, and recap what they have read fluently. Year 4 pupils develop expression in reading, self-correct and attempt challenging texts. There is a wide range of attainment in Year 3, where some pupils have good reading strategies, but others still need to use sounds (phonics) to build unknown words.
98. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment in writing is in line with national expectations. Higher attaining Year 2 pupils learn to write notes. This is a challenging activity and they understand the principle, but are not yet able to do this successfully. Pupils copy words and put them into sentences accurately and most are confident early writers. There is evidence of good written accounts in science. Higher attaining pupils in Year 1 use information and vocabulary found in a simple text independently or with support from a learning assistant to write about topics they study. A scrutiny of work indicates that Key Stage 1 pupils are given some suitable opportunities to write freely and, on these occasions, a few pupils show good extended writing skills. However, not enough opportunities are provided in this area and occasionally writing tasks are not sufficiently challenging.
99. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment in writing is above average. Year 5 and 6 pupils write for different purposes and for different audiences confidently. They study persuasive writing such as advertisements and

learn to use ideas such as alliteration and bullet points. They also successfully learn to evaluate each other's writing and useful opportunities are provided for them to tape a reading of their writing to judge its effectiveness. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 learn to use apostrophes whilst writing interesting and imaginative poems. Year 3 pupils produce a range of vocabulary to describe a character's feeling, matching correct prefixes to the words provided. Some classes produce whole-class books showing good quality stories or poems. Projects in other subjects frequently include good writing. Throughout the school, staff provide individual writing targets for pupils, which are helpful in monitoring progress. Group writing targets are also set, but do not always show a sufficiently clear focus.

100. In spelling, pupils attain mainly average standards at the age of seven and above average standards at the age of eleven. By the age of seven, most pupils spell simple common words accurately or are learning word patterns through copying a wider range of vocabulary. Some make good attempts at more complex unfamiliar words. By the age of eleven most pupils spell unfamiliar and multi-syllable word accurately and independently.
101. Standards of handwriting are above average by the ages of seven and eleven. Seven-year-old pupils form letters accurately and their joined writing is developing well. By the age of eleven, pupils' handwriting is fluent and many of them write with an attractive style. Although examples of well-presented work are seen, too often the presentation of work is untidy, especially work retained in writing folders.
102. Staff and pupils use information and communication technology frequently and competently in English. The national strategies for literacy, additional literacy, early literacy and the local education authority 'Early Reading Research' strategy are implemented well and having a positive impact upon supporting pupils' progress and raising standards.
103. Teaching is good overall at both key stages. Teachers are well-prepared, handle whole class sessions well, focus well on features of texts and frequently plan challenging activities. They show confident subject knowledge and provide clear explanations and instructions for pupils. They have a good rapport with pupils and provide them with encouragement so that pupils mainly adopt an interested and enthusiastic approach to their work. Occasionally teachers' writing on worksheets given to pupils is not sufficiently clear and easy to read. On a few occasions in lessons seen, pupils did not achieve as well as they should due to the poor behaviour of a small minority of pupils. This behaviour was mainly managed effectively, but in a few instances inappropriate behaviour from a few pupils slowed the pace of the lessons because teachers and support staff did not apply the school's carefully worked out behaviour management strategy rigorously enough.
104. Teachers' approach to marking, throughout the school, varies from good to occasionally unsatisfactory. Sometimes useful comments are written on work to guide pupils' improvement, but at other times very little correction is made to work. Learning support assistants support pupils well in whole class and group sessions and teachers provide them with good written and oral guidance to enable them to work effectively with the pupils.
105. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory overall. They generally listen well and respond well to their teachers. On a few occasions in lessons seen, pupils did not achieve as well as they should due to the poor behaviour of a small minority of pupils.
106. The subject area is well managed. Planning is suitably monitored. The monitoring of teaching is carried out effectively and contributes significantly to enhancing the good teaching in the school. The school has a mainly adequate range of resources to support teaching and learning. However, the range of reading available for pupils at Key Stage 2 is too limited.

MATHEMATICS

107. Inspection evidence shows that most seven-year-old pupils attain levels that match the national expectation while at the age of eleven most pupils attain levels that exceed the national expectation.
108. In the national tests in 2001, while standards for seven-year-old pupils were comparable to other schools nationally, in comparison with schools with a similar context there was a drop to well below average. As the numbers of pupils taking the tests was smaller than in the past and with higher numbers of pupils with special educational needs identified at a 'level of concern' in the year group, the results are not a true picture of standards achieved across the school. In the tests for eleven-year-old pupils, results were average when compared to other schools nationally and below average when compared to other similar schools. The low

numbers of pupils in each year group mean that much caution needs to be exercised when interpreting the data from these results. Nonetheless, the school rightly moved to address the situation of low results for seven-year-olds and lower than expected results for eleven-year-olds. The mathematics co-ordinator produced an action plan that contained a broad range of initiatives to tackle the problem and, simultaneously, the school increased the level of learning support assistants in classrooms and introduced appropriate measures to help promote better learning of the small minority of pupils who had entered the school showing severe emotional and behavioural difficulties. The improved standards noted in this inspection compared to last year's test results for seven-year-olds is clear evidence of the success of the school's strategies. However, the full impact of these strategies is yet to be realised.

109. At the time of the previous inspection standards for pupils at the age of age seven and eleven were judged to be above average, though weaknesses included the use of mathematics in different areas and investigations using number in particular. While standards have been maintained for pupils at the age of eleven, they are not as high as reported last time for pupils at the age of seven. There have been good improvements in the use of mathematics in different curriculum areas. Also the development of pupils' problem-solving skills has been addressed through full implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. The main reason for the difference between standards for pupils at the age of seven noted now and those noted at the time of the last inspection is linked to the typical variations that occur with low numbers of pupils in each year group.
110. Seven-year-old pupils develop good number skills. They spot pairs of multiples of 5, know that the double of a 5 multiple is always even and competently count up to and back from 25 in 5's. Their samples of work show that they have worked problems across the four areas of number and know that addition and subtraction are the inverse of each other as are multiplication and division. They learn the 2, 5 and 10 multiplication tables and competently order numbers by tens and hundreds. Pupils are aware of the value of coins, identifying those that make 25p and the change expected from that sum. They recognise shapes and the language of those shapes, are aware of those that are symmetrical and know that shapes such as squares and circles can be divided into common fractions. Pupils produce graphs and pictographs from their problem solving work, and work out how to produce tables to record the findings of their investigations. The skills of average and lower attaining pupils are well developed, but sometimes there is a lack of challenge for those capable of working at a higher level.
111. At the age of eleven, pupils play mental games such as 'fractions bingo'. In their mental/oral and written work, they confidently handle numbers to two decimal places in addition, subtraction and multiplication questions; understand the fraction-percentage-decimal link when equating fractions; use brackets to problem solve and use calculators appropriately as required. By the end of Year 6, most pupils understand how to calculate the area of a shape and its perimeter. Through their investigations, older Key Stage 2 pupils have an above average understanding for their ages of the relationship between the radius and the circumference of a circle and show a good knowledge of the properties of a circle. In the lesson seen concerning this work pupils were very well taught. Through very precise questioning and carefully prepared activities the teacher successfully engaged the pupils in carrying out in-depth investigative work. Samples of work scrutinised show that older pupils are provided with a wide range of mathematical experiences. Pupils consider the properties of a range of two and three-dimensional shapes; competently read positive and negative co-ordinates; conserve money and gain a full understanding of reflective and rotational symmetry. Data handling is developed via a range of interesting investigations, with pupils working out probability, identifying the mode, mean, range and median and producing and reading line graphs. Good links are made to information and communication technology, geography, design technology and science. For instance, pupils planning a party, collected information about favourite foods and recorded these on tally charts. They produced graphs and then used a data-processing package to cost out expenditure and identify healthy foods from pupils' selections.
112. Most pupils have positive attitudes towards mathematics. This is because most teaching is stimulating and lessons move at a good pace. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour within classes and suitably delegate responsibility to pupils for managing their own learning. A small number of pupils, mainly boys at Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 slow the learning of others in their class by their occasionally disruptive behaviour, but the majority of pupils across the school like their mathematical work, work hard and have positive relationships with teachers and each other, taking pleasure at the success of others.
113. Teaching is good at both key stages. The National Numeracy Strategy is used well by all teachers. Teachers plan well using the subject guidance and show confident subject knowledge. Mental/oral work is well presented at the beginning of each numeracy session. Work is generally carefully matched to the needs of pupils and questions are appropriately targeted to challenge learning. Resources are used well so that pupils' interest is maintained. Assessment is used appropriately to set learning targets and measure progress, and the information acquired is used well to inform future planning. Marking, especially for older

pupils, is constructive and developmental as well as encouraging and supporting pupils' knowledge of their progress and the quality of what has been learned.

114. Teachers plan suitable links across the curriculum in subjects such as science, geography, history, music and art. They have focused suitably upon problem solving work, encouraging pupils to look carefully at written questions and identify the mathematical processes to produce an answer. Good use has been made of a commercial scheme of work to further support planning. Additionally, teachers make good use of the format of questioning in the statutory tests to clarify pupils' thinking and develop good learning skills. Also they model activities well for pupils - describing carefully and clearly how they work problems out. Many classrooms have good examples of mathematical language on display and pupils are suitably encouraged to refer to these in their work.
115. Teachers set targets carefully for pupils. Suitable targets are agreed between teachers and older pupils and are carefully recorded. These targets are subject to regular review and the process encourages pupils to monitor their own progress and they are challenged to move rapidly forward.
116. The subject is well led. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of her role and responsibilities. Since the previous inspection she has worked hard to introduce the National Numeracy Strategy, ensuring that teachers have received full training. She continues to monitor developments in classes; checking teachers' long and short-term plans; evaluating pupils' progress through analysis of samples of work and the range of school assessments and keeping up-to-date on national and local developments in numeracy. The learning environment in classrooms and public areas is stimulating, celebrating pupils' work and stimulating further investigations. Resources are good - many are new and the budget provided is well allocated.

SCIENCE

117. At the ages of seven and eleven most pupils currently attain above average standards. This is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection when standards were reported as average.
118. The current judgement on standards broadly mirrors the picture reflected by pupils' performance in the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001, which showed half of the pupils in Year 6 attaining an above average level and nearly all of the others attaining the nationally expected level. However, the inspection picture for pupils' attainment at the age of seven contrasts markedly with teachers' assessment in 2001, which indicated that pupils were mainly attaining below average levels in science. The improvement currently noted - to above average standards - is the result of good teaching that has enabled the current cohort to progress well in their learning during the year.
119. Key Stage 1 pupils carry out an interesting range of investigations into air resistance. Year 1 pupils respond to their teacher's suggestions appropriately, and many begin to suggest their own ideas about which parachute will work the best. They observe carefully and make comparisons between the way different parachutes work. Appropriately encouraged by their teacher's precise questioning, pupils make simple predictions and also gain a very basic idea about whether the test they are making is 'fair' or not - this is a very advanced skill for this age group. In comparing these parachutes, pupils also gain a good insight into the properties of different materials and how they suit the purpose of this particular investigation. Pupils also gain a good basic understanding of the idea that air resistance effects the rate at which their parachutes fall and they understand how the parachutes 'catch the air'. Year 2 pupils work more intensively - gaining a solid idea about fair testing principles in setting up and carrying out tests with dropping screwed up or flat pieces of paper. The work is well organised by the teacher so that the pupils have good opportunities to test materials and think carefully about the results. They are introduced to a good range of scientific vocabulary such as 'gravity', 'force', 'spin' and start to use these words in describing what happens. In reviewing their work carefully with the teacher, they begin to make useful generalisations about how the physical process of air resistance works. Clearly, through the work they do, Key Stage 1 pupils gain above average skills with scientific enquiry at the same time as gaining a good level of knowledge about materials and their properties and physical processes. A scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that they have approached other areas of science across the year in a similarly in-depth manner, covering a good range of work in life processes and living things and materials and their properties. For example Year 2 pupils know about 'fragile' and 'transparent' materials, they know that some materials change through processes such as melting and that different materials suit different purposes. They also have a good knowledge of which foods are healthy or unhealthy, have a fairly detailed knowledge of the human life cycle and compare living and non-living things.
120. At Key Stage 2, a scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows a detailed and in-depth approach to work in all of the attainment targets. Teachers present pupils with a wide range of interesting tasks to promote interest and

enthusiasm. Scientific enquiry skills are above average with much detailed and precise measurement and recording of results apparent in pupils' workbooks. In much of the work carried out by older Key Stage 2 pupils, they make careful predictions and draw conclusions based on what they have already learned – this shows many pupils reaching a good level. For example, in their work with electrical circuits, older pupils note from their investigations that ... 'the more bulbs you use in the circuit, the less bright they will be'. Pupils also consider more complex problems such as whether the length of wire in a circuit affects how the bulbs will light. They apply their scientific enquiry skills well while studying materials and their properties and carefully compare the way in which sugar and coffee dissolve – making thoughtful predictions about the outcomes. Very good use of resources, which included a skeleton, an x-ray, a model of the human body parts, and a cardboard cut out to show the mechanics of arm muscles, helped pupils to gain a good knowledge about how muscles work. By the end of Year 6, pupils acquire a comprehensive knowledge, for example, about the properties of solids, liquids and gases and the make up of the Earth's atmosphere. They have a good basic understanding of a range of physical phenomena and a good understanding of the fact that some processes are reversible while some are not.

121. At both key stages pupils record their investigations in detail. Often written accounts are lengthy and well constructed – showing good links with and promotion of pupils' literacy skills. Links are further usefully established with science elements included in much other work. For example, the Year 4/5 class make up 'bug chant' poems in their literacy lesson and science is often included in the homework projects carried out by Key Stage 2 pupils.
122. Pupils spoken to show enthusiasm and interest with their science activities. They mainly concentrate well and carry out activities conscientiously. At Key Stage 1, a small minority of pupils did not always pay close attention and were not always fully co-operative. The Year 1/2 class teacher managed such behaviour well, ensuring that pupils were given a clear warning of the consequences if they did not behave properly. In the Year 1 class, the teacher did not follow the school's clear behaviour management guidelines rigorously enough so that the poor behaviour of a few pupils tended to slow down the pace of the lesson too much at times.
123. The science teaching is good overall at both key stages. Teachers have a good subject knowledge and provide pupils with clear explanations and directions so that they know exactly what to do in activities. Lessons are very well organised and resources are very well prepared and used so that no time is wasted and lessons flow from whole-class teaching to activities without hesitation.
124. The subject is well co-ordinated. In particular, the co-ordinator has helped staff to make very good headway in addressing the issue from the previous inspection that cited a lack of investigative opportunities provided for pupils. This issue has been fully addressed and pupils' learning is now well accelerated by the good range of investigative opportunities provided. Good systems are in place to aid planning and teachers provide detailed medium and short-term planning. Appropriate systems are in place for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in science. The co-ordinator has made full use of opportunities to monitor teaching and learning around the school and regularly monitors the science planning of other teachers – assisting with ideas where required. Teachers make good use of a suitable range of science resources and, in particular, good use is made of ICT in science work – for instance, measuring temperatures with the aid of data logging equipment. Pupils' work in science is further enhanced by work on field trips and residential visits

ART AND DESIGN

125. At the time of the previous inspection, standards in art and design were judged to be high in comparison with national expectations, particularly in investigating and making. The opportunities to observe lessons in art and design during this inspection were limited, but the work in displays, in pupils' sketch books and samples and as illustrations in other subjects of the curriculum clearly indicate that by the ages of seven and eleven, high standards continue to be attained by pupils. Sketch books give evidence of the practice of pencil skills. Drawings show a good interpretation of proportion and representation especially of body movements. Sketch books also show pupils have a good understanding of colour blending and contrasting and, in their books, pupils make appropriate designs for work using a range of materials including clay and 'modroc'. The books show pupils developing good ideas for using fabric combinations and fastenings and joins for hat and bag making. Pupils produce attractive work in the style of Monet in acrylics and in the style of Kandinsky using computer programmes. Displays of pupils' paintings show a good interpretation by pupils for their ages, using the influence of Van Gogh. Pupils competently plan three-dimensional effects through the building up of layers of tissue and use their mathematical skills well - especially considering angles and parallel lines, to draw numbers with the optical illusion of being three dimensional. The latest work of older pupils involves the

use of the digital camera to take 'body movement' photographs as the stimulus for movement silhouettes against a tissue background. Discussions with pupils and the co-ordinator confirm the wide range of the curriculum. The curriculum is well supported by pupils making visits to museums and galleries such as the visit made to the National Gallery to study a range of Greek sculptures, when the history curriculum focus was the Ancient Greeks.

126. Pupils make good, and by age eleven, very good progress in their learning. The care with which work is presented, the confidence with which pupils use colour and the delicacy and concentration with which they work when placing tissue and pencil lines exactly where they want them to go, gives evidence of the pupils' good skills development and understanding of the techniques that have been taught to them. Pupils' responses to the challenge of the work and their relationships with teachers and each other are very good. For example, when two pupils brought their Monet reproductions to show the teacher and the class, there was a spontaneous round of applause from the rest of the class. When moving round the room they take care not to disturb the work of their partners. They independently gather the resources they need, taking only enough to meet their need and helping by distributing resources such as newspaper, pencils, scissors and glue to each other.
127. The quality of teaching in the lessons is generally good, and that for the older pupils, very good. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and how to develop the skills being taught. This knowledge is enriched by the teachers' good knowledge of the life and work of artists specialising in the media and techniques being taught. For example, in one lesson seen, although Monet was the representative artist of the impressionist period being introduced to the pupils, the teacher had a range of information and images to give evidence to pupils of other artists of the period. In the best lessons, teachers provide challenging tasks for pupils and clearly teach skills and techniques so that pupils are fully engrossed in their work and little time is required to manage behaviour – instead, a brisk, challenging pace is established and maintained throughout the session. Teachers question pupils carefully in order to develop their skills of observation and structure sessions to challenge learning and dexterity regardless of prior ability. As pupils are usually completely engrossed in their work, teachers have the opportunity to talk individually to them about the quality of their work, challenging them to critically look at what they have produced and how they could improve.
128. Art and design is well managed by an experienced and skilled co-ordinator. From analysis of the school's practice, she is revisiting the scheme of work to ensure that all the requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study are met, that resources are sufficient, appropriate and accessible, that teachers are confident in using the kiln to fire pupils' pottery and teachers' skills are developed further by a range of training opportunities. Among her proposals for future development she has rightly highlighted the focus of developing the use of sketchbooks more across the school in order to raise standards even further at both key stages. Systems to assess pupils' skills' development and their knowledge and understanding are at an early stage of development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

129. It was only possible to see one lesson of design and technology during the inspection and so no judgements are made about the overall quality of teaching. From the evidence of the lesson seen and the work scrutinised in classroom and school-wide displays, as at the time of the last inspection, pupils attain standards that match the national expectations by the age of seven and eleven. Some aspects of the work seen, particularly with the work of older pupils, show indications of above average work in the level of finish and imagination apparent in the designs.
130. In Year 1, pupils design and make attractive air balloon models using a range of different materials, which have been carefully selected and joined together. Year 2 pupils design a 'coat of many colours' for Joseph. The work involves making a suitable pattern, cutting, sewing, discussing and evaluating how the design could be improved. Some of the designs are usefully made using an ICT art program. The work produced is well finished and shows pupils have used models, pictures and discussion appropriately to develop the designs. In a lesson seen for Year 3/4 pupils, the teacher used the story of the 'Enormous Crocodile' effectively to provide a source of inspiration for pupils to design and make finger puppet crocodiles. Most pupils managed to produce a plan for their design although these were of variable quality with many pupils going to a lot of trouble to search for extra ideas in books and producing labelled diagrams, while other pupils produced poor quality sketches that did not show their design clearly. Teachers provide Key Stage 2 pupils with interesting design tasks. For example, pupils have produced a good range of well-made models of Tudor Houses. These have been carefully designed and based on real houses pupils have seen in the local area. Pupils have also

designed clothing to suit different weather. Year 3/4 pupils have made clear plans that include the costs of materials and examples of the work were seen to be well finished with some imaginative ideas being used. Similarly, Year 5/6 pupils produce very imaginative and often humorous ideas for clothing items for different weather; for example a hat complete with real solar powered fan and a boot with an inflatable foot warmer inside. Pupils have used a wide range of materials to complete these models and produced different ideas for joining pieces together. Through this work pupils have learned to work with a good degree of accuracy with a range of materials, and they have clearly thought carefully about the accuracy and quality of the finished object.

131. In the one lesson observed in the Year 3/4 class, the quality of teaching was satisfactory. Work was carefully planned and clear explanations and directions were given to the pupils. The majority of the pupils worked hard and enjoyed the activity. A small minority of pupils did not put much effort into the work and did not always respond fully to the teacher's instructions. The teacher monitored these pupils carefully but was not sufficiently rigorous in applying the school's behaviour management policy in dealing with them.
132. The subject is monitored satisfactorily. Teachers currently use the nationally produced guidelines to inform their planning and the co-ordinator is usefully producing a school based scheme of work for the subject to further support planning. The provision of suitable assessment procedures is at an early stage of development. The school has an adequate range of resources, which are well used.

GEOGRAPHY

133. Only one lesson was observed at Key Stage 2 and one short session at Key Stage 1. Pupils attained the standards expected in these sessions. A scrutiny of work supports this finding and shows that by the ages of seven and eleven pupils attain the nationally expected levels, although some project work is of a high standard. Pupils, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Standards noted this time are not as high as those found at the time of the previous inspection – when they were judged to be above average - but the curriculum has changed since then, and, with small cohorts of pupils in year groups, such variations are to be expected from year to year.
134. Some Year 1 pupils were considering whether the car-parking facilities at the school could be increased. They counted the number of cars, observed the area in which they are parked and staff encouraged them to discuss whether it is feasible to increase the space. They were to record this work through drawing the number of cars in the car park. The topic was challenging but the pupils did not fully understand what they were expected to do. The teacher, accompanied by a volunteer, attempted to keep the pupils focused on the activity and to gain their attention but many took little notice and a minority were disobedient. Pupils did not listen well although the teacher tried hard to implement the agreed behaviour management policy, which worked for very short periods of time. Pupils' behaviour in this session hindered their learning.
135. In the Key Stage 2 lesson, some Year 5 and all Year 6 pupils were considering the results of their recent traffic survey aimed at finding out whether a bypass would ease congestion in the village and the best route for it. Pupils recalled the survey findings accurately and made suggestions to ease the congestion; for example, to widen roads or create bicycle lanes. Pupils show familiarity with maps, understand the concept of a bypass and can explain their route. A minority are very articulate in doing so and individuals make valuable contributions, such as whether the traffic would still take shortcuts through the village. Most discuss in small groups satisfactorily. However, in some groups, not all pupils are included or boys dominate the discussion. The teacher prompted learning through good questioning.
136. Work in books shows that pupils at Key Stage 1 have covered topics such as 'Jamaica', compared aspects of the Caribbean with aspects of Britain and looked at why people travel to Britain. They have widened their knowledge of the local area through a visit to a local supermarket, where they learned about how the 'behind the scenes' facet of the store operates. Key Stage 2 books show a suitable coverage of a range of topics such as the water cycle and weather. Staff plan interesting topics across the whole school, which ensure pupils have experience of a suitable range of learning opportunities. Skills such as the use of maps are developed over time. Staff make good use of the local area.
137. There is some effective use of information and communication technology; for example, map resources are downloaded from the Internet at Key Stage 2.
138. The policy has been updated by the co-ordinator and teachers use the nationally produced guidelines to support their planning, although the co-ordinator is usefully constructing a school-based scheme of work. The monitoring of teaching and learning is currently at an early stage of development. Whilst the national guidelines for this subject are suitably used as a checklist against pupils' progress, assessment procedures are yet to be fully developed.

HISTORY

139. It was only possible to observe one lesson at Key Stage 1 during the period of this inspection. However, the evidence from this observation along with the evidence of work seen in pupils' books indicates that by the ages of seven and eleven pupils attain standards that match the national expectations. Standards noted during this inspection are not as high as those found at the time of the previous inspection – when they were judged to be above average – but fluctuations such as this frequently occur where the number of pupils in each year group cohort are low.
140. In the lesson seen, Year 1/2 pupils learned about Bessie Coleman, the black pilot. They know that Bessie Coleman was treated unfairly and could not become a pilot in America at the turn of the nineteenth to twentieth century because she was black. Their drawings of her and related incidents in her life were satisfactory and showed an appropriate level of understanding of the historical context. When talking about their work, pupils did not always project their voices to enable listeners to hear. Teaching was good in this lesson and the teacher planned carefully, gave clear instructions, and chose work that matched pupils' interest and attainment levels. The work enabled pupils to increase their knowledge of famous people from the

past and built on previous work about Amy Johnson. The teacher planned for independent learning although pupils did not have the necessary skills to carry this out effectively. The learning support assistant and teacher worked together well, providing effective support for group activities.

141. Work in Key Stage 2 books shows that pupils have completed projects such as the Tudors. Staff use local buildings to support pupils' learning. Skills, such as the use of timelines, are developed over time in different year groups. A recent project whereby pupils worked with an undergraduate student on a placement in the school has resulted in a recently published high quality book tracing the history of the school. This includes detailed research and substantial involvement of local people and organisations. This is a very worthwhile and educationally valuable project.
142. The policy has been updated by the co-ordinator, but the whole school scheme of work is still being developed. The monitoring of teaching is at an early stage of development. As with geography, staff plan a series of topics across the whole school which ensures that pupils experience a range of learning opportunities. There is satisfactory use of information and communication technology. Visits to places such as the Houses of Parliament or Colchester Castle by Key Stage 2 pupils enhance the curriculum provision. Current procedures for assessing pupils' progress are at an early stage of development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

143. By the ages of seven and eleven pupils reach above average standards in ICT. This is an improvement upon the situation reported in the last inspection and is the result of a great deal of work on the part of the school to improve teachers' subject knowledge and confidence in teaching the subject, to fully develop the ICT curriculum and to improve the ICT resources – in particular the building of a well equipped computer suite.
144. At both key stages, ICT is now used frequently and the staff and pupils are now at the stage where ICT is regarded as an essential learning resource to support work in a wide range of curricular areas. Although it was only possible to observe one lesson where ICT was the timetabled subject, frequent occasions were noted where ICT was used in lessons. Also much work is evident in wall displays around the school and in the samples of work scrutinised. Additionally, interviews with pupils showed that they have confident knowledge and an eagerness to describe their use of ICT facilities to support their work.
145. By the age of seven, pupils are experienced and competent in producing pictures via graphics programs, for example making pictures of summer and winter scenes and constructing calendars. They also produce charts and graphs to show information clearly. They make use of the Internet to find out information – for example about lighthouses for a project undertaken and have added their own text to work downloaded from the Internet. Pupils use ICT frequently to support work in literacy; for example, in making up poems and making labels. Pupils confidently describe how they use a program that involves providing instructions to control the movement of an object on the screen and use this facility to draw shapes. Pupils know how to save work and retrieve items from folders when required. By the age of eleven, pupils are familiar with using spreadsheets to set out data that they use. They also use data logging equipment to record temperatures and represent the information in graphs. They use ICT to help present information to specific audiences, presenting work in different styles, for example in Powerpoint displays. The teacher has organised this work well for the pupils, giving them the opportunity to have their displays evaluated by another class. Pupils also made displays for younger pupils, which incorporated the use of music. In providing these activities the teacher has got the pupils working at an advanced level. Pupils interviewed discussed the web site that has been constructed for the school and described their use of Internet facilities to aid research into projects and to extend and support their work in mathematics and science. A lesson observed with Year 4/5 pupils showed them making very good use of the ICT suite computers to follow up a literacy lesson – with the aim to present the poem they had composed as attractively as possible. The pupils showed a good knowledge of using the facilities in the programs used to generate watermarks and select clipart and different fonts to suit the theme of their work. The teacher worked the pupils at an intensive rate so that they succeeded in 'publishing' their poem in an attractive design/format by the end of the session. The Year 5/6 teacher provides pupils with many stimulating ICT projects such as regular ICT challenges - for example, to review a selection of different websites.
146. All the pupils observed and spoken to demonstrated very enthusiastic attitudes towards their work. Older pupils in particular are proud of their achievements and what they can do on the computer and they are keen to investigate and develop their understanding of using ICT facilities.
147. In the one lesson seen with the Year 4/5 class, the teaching was very good. The teacher selected a good task for the pupils and gave very clear instructions so that pupils worked very rapidly in the time available and

made good progress. The work also usefully encouraged a high level of effective collaboration between pupils. The samples of work seen and discussed with pupils also strongly indicate that teachers make a significant effort to promote the use of ICT as much as they can. A good example of this is the widespread use of the digital camera throughout the school either as a means of enhancing displays of pupils' work or as a direct teaching tool for example through photographing items for artwork.

148. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who supports her colleagues enthusiastically. The co-ordinator monitors lessons and the use of the ICT suite carefully and ensures all of the equipment is fully operational. She has provided staff with an appropriate scheme of work – supported by the national guidelines for ICT. She has introduced a good quality system for assessment that is intended for development in the near future. The school also usefully provides an ICT club to further enhance opportunities. The school has a good range of resources and these are very well used.

MUSIC

149. Only two music lessons were seen during the inspection. It is therefore not possible to make overall judgements about standards or the quality of teaching. In addition to the two lessons seen, a school singing practice session was seen in the school hall along with the singing in two other assemblies. From this evidence it is clear that the quality of singing throughout the school is good. The pupils sing melodically and with enthusiasm. In the whole school singing practice observed, the teacher showed a very skilful approach to teaching the pupils to sing a two-part melody so that by the end of the practice session pupils performed the newly learned song well.
150. In the lesson for Year 3/4 pupils, they learned to clap a range of different rhythm patterns and recognise crotchets and quavers. The lesson was satisfactorily taught so that pupils learned to sing and perform appropriately. The pupils tended to be rather restless and did not always listen carefully so that the teacher had to repeat her instructions. The lesson seen with the Year 4/5 class of pupils was very well taught. The teacher used her very good singing skills to model the pitch and dynamics of the melody taught. Pupils memorised and performed complex clapped rhythm patterns. All pupils kept the beat well and managed to learn a challenging piece of singing. The teacher was rightly rigorous about pupils maintaining the beat accurately and in this way set high expectations that pupils responded to well. Pupils showed a good level of musical performance and knowledge in this session and progressed very well with their work.
151. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator (the headteacher) has a clear overview of the subject across the school as, in assemblies and class lessons, she teaches all of the pupils in the school. The subject benefits from the expertise of the co-ordinator as a good quality musician and the fact that the teaching program is also supported by the deputy headteacher who is also a music specialist. Despite the fact that only a limited amount of music could be observed during the period of the inspection, it is clear, from discussions with the co-ordinator and through interviews with the pupils, that the school promotes a wide range of musical activities. The school offers suitable music lessons taught by peripatetic staff and currently pupils who wish to learn are taught guitar or keyboard. A junior choir is sometimes formed and rehearses for specific occasions, and pupils' learning is further enhanced through opportunities to participate in the school's productions and occasions such as a local festival.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

152. Only one games lesson at Key Stage 1, and 2 lessons at Key Stage 2 - one games and one athletics - were observed during the inspection. Standards of attainment in these lessons showed that by the ages of seven and eleven, pupils attain levels that match the national expectation. It is not possible to judge improvement in games since the previous inspection as only athletics was observed then. The school has maintained standards as seen in the athletics lesson. Records indicate that pupils' attainment in swimming is above expectation with all pupils in Year 6 able to swim at least 25 metres and many able to swim to a higher standard. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
153. In the lesson seen, some Year 1 and all Year 2 pupils learned to throw a beanbag. Individual pupils threw, caught and aimed with skill and hit a target on most occasions. Pupils were not always well behaved. They were noisy, did not listen well to instructions nor control resources satisfactorily – fiddling with them when they should be still; this limited their learning and progress. Pupils changed appropriately, needing very little help. Staff planned a good range of activities to reinforce the learning objectives and the teacher gave some

helpful guidance to help pupils improve their skills. Staff did not always take appropriate action when pupils were noisy, nor position themselves so that all pupils were in sight and on task.

154. Throughout the school, pupils wear appropriate clothing and footwear and all staff were wearing appropriate footwear. Individual pupils wear watches, which are a potential hazard, although most remove jewellery independently.
155. In another lesson, some Year 5 and all Year 6 pupils threw a soft ball satisfactorily; individuals caught competently. A minority batted and aimed accurately when working in pairs. Pupils learned to evaluate each other's skills. Resources were not sufficiently well-organised and prepared; for example, all resources were placed in the same area of the field and this meant pupils had to wait to get resources to avoid congestion. Pupils enjoyed the activities. The remaining Year 5 pupils and some Year 4 ran in teams and placed bean bags at one end or passed them to team members at the other satisfactorily. They were introduced to baton-passing in preparation for relay racing. Their racing skills are not refined even though the teacher is a good role model for all movements, has very good subject knowledge and gave valuable guidance to improve skills. She set frequent challenges to motivate pupils. Despite the teacher's very good teaching skills, pupils were never still and some chatted continuously even when the teacher was speaking. Her voice became strained as she had to speak over them yet she did not draw them closer to encourage better listening and reduce the strain on her voice.
156. The well-qualified co-ordinator is in the process of developing a whole school scheme of work. The co-ordinator is trialling an assessment system that the school intends to introduce in the future. The monitoring of teaching is at an early stage of development.
157. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by a wide range of extra-curricular clubs and specialist coaching for a limited number of pupils. School teams have had success in a wide range of inter-school competitions.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

158. At the time of the previous inspection standards at the end of both key stages were judged to be in line with the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Even though there have been many changes in the expectations of the curriculum since then, the school has been able to maintain standards at a satisfactory level for the majority of pupils so that by the ages of seven and eleven pupils attain standards that meet the expectations of the Locally Agreed Syllabus. Older pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of Christianity - the key festivals such as Christmas and Easter; the Bible including the differences between the old and new testaments; Jesus and his life and work and the disciples who followed him. Younger pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of different faiths through their topics. When investigating light for instance they learned the Rama and Sita story and about Divali, - the festival of light. The menorah candlestick was used well to teach pupils about the Jewish festival of Hannukah. The story of Christmas was also well taught with pupils usefully looking at a story of 'the journey of the star to Bethlehem'. Currently junior pupils study the Passover from the Jewish faith, looking at the story at levels of depth appropriate for their ages and abilities. Year 6 pupils read the story for themselves from the old testament of the Bible and discuss the meaning behind the actions and the feelings of the key people. Younger pupils have the story read to them with worksheets to consolidate the details of the story. Key Stage 1 pupils learn about Jesus' special friends, the disciples - they listen to the story of the 'Call of the fishermen and Matthew' and consider the ideas in discussions about their friends and friendship in general.
159. Pupils are making good progress in religious education as a result of good quality of teaching. Teachers make sure that what they are teaching is accurate and planned to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding not only of the stories, but also how different faiths impact upon the lives of believers. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour, applying the school behaviour policy carefully to support pupils' learning. Teachers are careful to ensure that enough time is devoted to religious education and select resources carefully to support and enrich the curriculum. Artefacts and resources are also helpfully provided by parents and visitors such as local clergy.
160. The scheme of work is drawn from the Essex Locally Agreed Syllabus and deals with both explicit and implicit religious education teaching. Teachers are careful to use a range of strategies that support direct telling of faith stories. They establish common links between the faiths such as celebrations and festivals and provide older pupils with the opportunity to work at greater depth in researching areas or to debate and discuss areas of study. The subject is well managed. The school has a thoughtful and skilled co-ordinator who monitors development through an examination of teachers' planning and displays. At present she has no time for in-

class monitoring of the quality of teaching and learning nor has there been any opportunity for whole-school training recently to increase teachers' skills, knowledge and understanding. Assessment procedures are at an early stage of development.