

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Brightlingsea Infant School**

Brightlingsea

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114755

Headteacher: Mrs S E Kelly

Reporting inspector: Stephen Fisher  
19849

Dates of inspection: 31 January - 4 February 2000

Inspection number: 194888

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

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## **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Eastern Road Brightlingsea Essex
Postcode:	CO7 0HU
Telephone number:	01206 302719
Fax number:	01206 305702
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Lesley Sycamore
Date of previous inspection:	27 January - 7 February 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Stephen Fisher	Registered inspector	Religious education Art Children under five	Standards How well pupils are taught Leadership - management
Christine Laverock	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How the school cares for its pupils The school's partnership with parents
Mary Hutton	Team inspector	Music History English	Curriculum opportunities offered to pupils
Brian Cash	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Information technology Physical education	Leadership - efficiency
Susan Butcher	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Special educational needs Equal opportunities	Leadership - staffing, accommodation and resources

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## REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>	<b>11</b>
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
<b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b>	<b>29</b>

## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Number of full time pupils:	238	(slightly larger than other schools)
Pupils with English as an additional language:	1%	(low)
Pupils entitled to free school meals:	11%	(average)
Pupils on the register of special educational needs:	46	
Pupils for whom English is an additional language:	2	
Average class size:	26	

### HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

**Brightlingsea Infant School is a school with many good features. Though standards are not high, pupils make satisfactory progress overall as they move through the school. Children under five make good progress, particularly in their personal and social development. The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses.**

#### What the school does well

- The quality of teaching of children under five is very good
- The curriculum for children under five is good
- Reading is promoted well
- Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress
- Provision for pupils' personal and social development is very good
- The leadership and management of the school are good
- The school has effective procedures for promoting good behaviour
- The school's partnership with parents is very good

#### What could be improved

- Standards in writing in Key Stage 1
- Standards in information technology in Key Stage 1
- The quality of some of the teaching in Key Stage 1
- The quality of the school development plan to ensure that it is more closely linked to the budgeting process, has fewer priorities and includes a clear monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanism and timetable
- Assessment procedures in science and information technology
- The way pupils in Key Stage 1 present their written work
- The pair of demountable classrooms, which are in poor condition. They do not allow all pupils to have equal access to the National Curriculum or ensure that they are taught in comfortable surroundings

*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 January 1997 and has successfully dealt with the previous key issues. There are now regular formal and informal opportunities for pupils to speak to audiences. There has been good development of structured play activities, particularly for children under five. Teachers' questioning skills have improved, particularly with the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. Other improvements include the teaching of Key Stage 1 pupils in sets for literacy and numeracy sessions once a week and the introduction of phonic and spelling programmes and mathematical investigations in Key Stage 1. There has been a strong emphasis upon reading and the successful involvement of many parents in supporting their children's reading development at home and at school. The quality of personal and social education has improved. Non teaching staff, including special educational needs staff, work well with teachers and provide very good support. Assessment procedures have improved, particularly in English, though assessment in science and information technology is unsatisfactory.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
Reading	C	C	C	D
Writing	C	D	E	E
Mathematics	D	E	E	E

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

The information shows, for example, that standards in reading were average when compared with all schools, but below average when compared with similar schools. Similar schools are those with a similar percentage of pupils entitled to free school meals. Thirty five per cent of the 1999 group of Year 2 pupils were on the school's register of special educational needs, a figure that is well above the national average. Twenty five per cent of the present Year 2 pupils are on the register of special educational needs, a figure which is above average. Inspection findings for the current Year 2 are that standards in reading are average and that standards in writing and mathematics are below average. This is an improvement on 1999, where standards in writing and mathematics were well below average. The difference between the 1999 test results and inspection findings is explained by the fact that there are fewer pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 2. Standards in science are average by the end of Year 2. Pupils make good progress in reading and satisfactory progress in writing, mathematics and science. Though standards are below average in writing and mathematics, by the end of Year 2 pupils' achievements reflect their attainment on entry to the school. Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2. Standards in information technology are below national expectations. By the time that they leave the school, the achievement of pupils in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Children under five achieve well in lessons. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is good.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils show enthusiasm for school and are interested in the activities provided for them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in and around the school. They are polite and friendly towards their peers and with adults.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work and play together well. They show initiative and take responsibility.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Lessons start promptly and little time is wasted.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

<b>Teaching of pupils:</b>	<b>aged up to 5 years</b>	<b>aged 5-7 years</b>
Lessons seen overall	Very good	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in 91 per cent of lessons and is satisfactory overall. There is a high percentage of teaching which is good or better. In 38 per cent of lessons, teaching is good and in 19 per cent it is very good. One lesson seen was excellent. In seven per cent of lessons, teaching is unsatisfactory and in two per cent it is poor. The quality of teaching of children under five is very good, with almost all lessons seen being good or better. In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Half of the teaching in Key Stage 1 is good or better, but there is too much unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 1. The teaching of literacy in Key Stage 1 is successful and the quality of teaching in English is good in half of lessons. Almost all the teaching in numeracy lessons in Key Stage 1 is good or very good, though one lesson was unsatisfactory and one was poor. Teaching in science and in religious education is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching in information technology is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and computers are underused. In other subjects, teaching is satisfactory overall in Key Stage 1.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities for its pupils. The curriculum for children under five is good. Throughout the school, a strong emphasis is placed upon the development of pupils' speaking and listening and reading skills. Insufficient attention is given to raising of standards in information technology and to improving standards in writing.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school makes good provision for pupils with special educational needs and these children make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for their spiritual development is satisfactory. Though valuable, assemblies are not always calm occasions and pupils do not always leave quietly.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development and for eliminating oppressive behaviour are very good. Child protection procedures are very good.

The school's partnership with parents is very good. Parents are very positive about almost every aspect of the school's work. The school works extremely hard to make parents feel welcome and many are regular helpers in school. For example, parents and other family members assist with the weekly reading and board games sessions in reception and Year 1 classes.



## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides positive leadership and a clear educational direction for the school and helps to ensure that the school's aims and values are reflected in all its work.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The newly formed governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively and has satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Development planning and the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are satisfactory.
The strategic use of resources	The use of teaching and support staff is good. Teachers are well deployed and very well supported by classroom assistants. Satisfactory use is made of most teaching resources, with the exception of those for information technology.

The headteacher and deputy headteacher both monitor the quality of teaching and provide colleagues with advice and support on how they might improve further. The school development plan sets out relevant priorities, although it contains too many for them all to be tackled effectively. There is no monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanism built into the plan to enable the school to judge the extent to which it is being successful.

Staff at the school are suitably qualified and there are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the curriculum for children under five. Accommodation is satisfactory overall in allowing the curriculum to be taught effectively. The accommodation in the 'demountable' classrooms is poor, with cramped conditions and toilet provision barely adequate for the number of pupils.

The school upholds many of the best value principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition in the management and use of its resources. Taking into account the costs per pupil, which are close to the national average, the quality of teaching, the good attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils, their attainment on entry to the school and the progress they make by the end of Key Stage 1, the school provides good value for money. The school is in a good position to improve.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Two hundred and fifty six questionnaires were distributed and 69 were returned. Thirteen parents attended the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector and the lay inspector. Many parents expressed a range of opinions at the pre-inspection meeting and in comments and letters accompanying the questionnaires sent to the registered inspector. The main points are summarised below and include the responses from the questionnaires.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They feel that their children make good progress in school</li><li>• The teaching is good</li><li>• The school is well led and managed</li><li>• The school takes good care of their children</li><li>• Staff are approachable and helpful to parents</li><li>• Children are encouraged to have positive attitudes and values</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• They do not like the mixed age classes introduced in order to reduce class sizes</li><li>• They feel that class sizes are too large</li><li>• The number of extra-curricular activities</li><li>• Parents would like a modern foreign language, such as French, introduced</li></ul>

Inspectors' judgements are that pupils do make good progress at the school, particularly those under five. A very high percentage of the teaching is good, although too much is unsatisfactory. The school is well led and managed and it takes very good care of the children. Staff are very helpful and approachable and children are encouraged to have positive attitudes and values. The teaching of pupils in a mixed age class does not adversely affect their achievement, but the poor quality of the accommodation for this class does. The average class size is 26. This does not have any adverse effect on pupils' opportunities to learn and make progress. It is not usual for Key Stage 1 pupils to have regular extra-curricular activities but the school does provide a range of visits to enhance the quality of education provided. The introduction of a modern foreign language would be an unnecessary burden for the teaching staff.

## PART B: COMMENTARY

1. Brightlingsea Infant School is a community school for children aged from four to seven, situated near the centre of the coastal town of Brightlingsea. Nearly all its pupils live in the town. There are 238 full time pupils on roll, which is about the same as other schools nationally, and 35 four year olds, who attend part time for their first term in school. Children under five are taught in three reception classes and one reception/Year 1 class. There are slightly more boys than girls on roll.
2. Almost all the pupils are of white heritage. The number of pupils with English as an additional language is low. These pupils speak Dutch and German. Nearly 11 per cent of full time pupils are entitled to receive free school meals, a figure that is broadly in line with the national average. There are 46 Year 1 and Year 2 pupils on the register of special educational needs (25 per cent of pupils in Key Stage 1), a figure which is above the national average. Two pupils have statements of special educational need. The average class size is 26. Attainment on entry to the school varies considerably from year to year. The attainment of the current reception children on entry to the school was broadly in line with expectations for four year olds. The attainment on entry of the current Year 2 was below the county average on entry to the school.

### HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

#### The school's results and achievements

3. National Curriculum test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 revealed that standards were average in reading and well below the averages in writing and mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards were below average in reading and well below average in writing and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science judged standards to be below the national average. Inspectors' judgements about standards for the current Year 2 are that they are average in reading and science and below average in writing and mathematics. The difference between the results of the 1999 assessments and inspection findings is explained by the fact that the current cohort of Year 2 pupils has a much lower percentage of pupils with special educational needs, although the percentage is still above average. Since the last inspection, standards in reading have improved steadily as a result of the high priority the school has given to it. Writing has not been prioritised, and standards have not improved overall since the last inspection. The improvement since 1999 reflects the recent emphasis on teaching writing in all lessons, not just during English sessions. Although attainment in mathematics is still below the national average, the recent introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is resulting in higher standards, particularly in pupils' understanding of numbers and the number system.
4. Pupils make good progress in reading and satisfactory progress in writing, mathematics and science. Though standards are below average in writing and mathematics, by the end of Year 2 pupils' achievements reflect their attainment on entry to the school. The attainment on entry of the current Year 2 pupils was below average in reading, writing and mathematics. The school has set suitably challenging targets for raising standards of attainment in reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1 for the year 2000.
5. **Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress in most lessons due to the appropriateness of the tasks set and the extra support given them by teachers and classroom assistants. The time given to pupils to practise the skills targeted in their individual education plans enables them to achieve standards which are in line with their abilities.**

6. There are differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls. Girls perform better than boys do in reading and writing but not mathematics, where boys perform better than girls do. To try and address this, the school has introduced a greater variety of texts to reflect boys' interests and is monitoring their written work more closely.
7. When they enter the school the children bring a range of social and early learning skills. Children's standards on entry to nursery vary considerably. Attainment on entry for the September 1999 group of children was in line with the county average in speaking and listening, reading, writing, mathematics and personal and social development. By age five, children's attainment is in line with that expected in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development and most of the four year olds are likely to achieve the standards set out in 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning'.<sup>1</sup> Achievements exceed those expected for their age in personal and social development. Children have good disposition towards learning, they concentrate well, work both independently and co-operatively and are very willing to learn. This has a positive effect on the standards they achieve and the progress they make.
8. Attainment in speaking and listening is in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to speak individually and to develop their listening skills, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has successfully introduced 'circle time'<sup>2</sup>, which provides pupils with the opportunity to discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils happily participate and listen respectfully to each other. Pupils take part in class assemblies to develop self-confidence in speaking to an audience. There are good examples of speaking and listening skills in the introductory and summary sessions in the daily Literacy Hour.
9. Standards of attainment in reading are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils make good progress. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and read regularly to an adult in school. They know the terms 'title', 'author' and 'contents' and know about the index of a book. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because of the many opportunities they have to practise their reading. When reading, pupils do so accurately and with understanding of the main points of the story.
10. Standards in writing are below average at the end of Key Stage 1, although pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils' handwriting is well formed, spelling is satisfactory and pupils readily use dictionaries. Punctuation is generally satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is good as a result of the variation in the focus of writing pupils practise. For example, they write letters to pupils in Norway, make up poems about seashells and write as one of the kings or a donkey when describing the birth of Jesus. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. They are supported effectively during the Literacy Hour and when all the pupils are split into ability groups for vocabulary work. It is in these weekly group sessions that pupils are given their spellings to learn for homework. Not enough pupils write in sequences of sentences and the higher attaining pupils are not challenged to produce more extended pieces of writing. This was noted in the previous inspection. Although handwriting is well formed, pupils' written work is untidily presented throughout Key Stage 1.
11. In mathematics, standards of attainment are below average by the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.

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<sup>1</sup> Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning – the nationally recommended curriculum for children of pre-compulsory school age. There are six areas of learning, which are: Personal and Social Development, Language and Literacy, Mathematics, Knowledge and Understanding of the World, Physical Development and Creative Development.

<sup>2</sup> Circle time is the practice of discussing experiences, thoughts and feelings whilst sitting in a circle.

By the end of Key Stage 1, they count in multiples of 2, 5 and 10. They count to 100, with some able to count backwards as well. Pupils recognise odd and even numbers and they understand that multiplication is repeated addition. They use mathematics in real life situations, recording numbers for school meals by using a tally system. Pupils know the names of two-dimensional shapes, though are not so confident with three-dimensional ones. When measuring, their work often lacks accuracy and precision. Most pupils do not readily use mathematical vocabulary when talking about their work. Pupils with special educational needs practise their basic skills and become more confident in sequencing numbers, in writing them correctly and in their understanding of 'more' and 'less'. Higher attaining pupils perceive patterns in numbers and use this knowledge to help them know which number will come next, as when adding on nine. They are confident in investigating numbers for themselves and looking for patterns.

12. In science, standards of attainment are average by the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils appreciate that experiments need to be done carefully or the results may not be accurate. When looking at materials they understand they have different properties and that some materials can be recycled or can be buried in the ground where they will rot. Pupils have a good understanding of living and non-living things and know what makes their bodies work. They know about reversible and irreversible change and how water to ice is a change that can be reversed, while bread to toast is one which cannot. They have a clear understanding of how an electrical circuit works and know that if a wire is not connected securely the bulb will not light. Pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding and learn the importance of scientific principles, such as fair testing. For example, when investigating the nature of change they know that to judge the dissolving rate of different substances there should be equal amounts of water, powder and stirring to make an accurate comparison.
13. Pupils' standards in the majority of aspects of information technology are below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and their progress is unsatisfactory. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have a very limited knowledge and understanding of the skills associated with information technology and its applications in everyday life. Pupils have under-developed keyboard skills, do not understand the functions of many keys or tool bar icons and are unable to save their work. Pupils' ability in word processing is unsatisfactory. They understand some key conventions but have great difficulty in locating keys on the keyboard. Their mouse skills are also unsatisfactory and few are able to place the cursor into the middle of a word to correct a mistake. Pupils' use of graphics is unsatisfactory because they are unable to open a program and many are unable to select tools to create a picture. Pupils in one of the Year 2 classes can use art and design software successfully. Pupils have some experience of using computer control technology such as a programmable robot called a 'roamer' and a few have skills in accessing information using CD-ROMs to support learning in other areas of the curriculum.
14. In religious education, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils in Year 1 recognise characters in religious stories, such as Jesus and Ganesh, and make simple responses to stories. For example, having heard the Old Testament story of Joseph and his brothers, they can talk about occasions when they were jealous. Some pupils in Year 1 know that people who are Christian have their babies baptised in a church. They have a basic understanding that a Christening is a ceremony where a person is welcomed into the Christian church and can describe a Christening in simple terms, referring to the font, holy water and roles of the people involved for example. Pupils in Year 2 have good recall of the events of stories that they have recently heard. For example, they recall that both Jesus and Krishna are usually portrayed with a light around the head to show that

they are special. They remember that Krishna is special to Hindus and Moses is special to Jews and describe how the baby Krishna had to be protected from his evil uncle. Pupils begin to understand the importance of symbols such as the Cross for Christians and the Aum for Hindus.

15. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all other subjects, except geography and music, where progress is good.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

16. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good overall, particularly in the early years, and pupils are keen to go to school. Attitudes do vary in Key Stage 1 and this is usually linked to the quality of teaching. When teaching is of a high standard, pupils are very enthusiastic in their learning and work hard. They are keen to talk to visitors about what they are doing and take advantage of the many and varied opportunities which are provided for them. When teaching is unsatisfactory, pupils lose interest in lessons and do not achieve as well as they should. This was seen, for example, in a Year 1 mathematics lesson. Parents feel that their children enjoy going to school and that standards of behaviour and the quality of relationships are good.
17. Behaviour is good overall and good standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The vast majority of pupils behave well, although a small number present challenging behaviour. There have been no pupil exclusions. Staff work very hard to accommodate pupils with behavioural difficulties and are successful in their efforts. Pupils are polite and trustworthy and take good care of their surroundings. There are occasions though when they chat whilst their teacher is talking, and they are noisy as they leave assemblies. In the playground, the vast majority of pupils behave well and are sensible with play equipment. A few incidents occur between boys playing football, although these are quickly resolved. No incidents of oppressive behaviour were seen. Pupils reflect on their behaviour in circle times and consider the impact of their actions on others.
18. Pupils form good relationships with one another. They work well together in groups in lessons, they share resources without any fuss and get on well with all adults in the school. They show respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs. Good standards have been maintained since the last inspection.
19. Pupils are willing to take responsibility for jobs around the school, helping in classrooms and in the dining room for example. They have been involved in developing plans for improving the playground environment. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
20. Pupils' attendance is satisfactory when compared with the national average. There are only a few unauthorised absences. The majority of pupils arrive at school punctually. Registrations are carried out efficiently. Pupils receive a friendly welcome when they arrive in school and lessons begin on time. In most classes, work is prepared for them to do at the start of the day.

### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

21. The quality of teaching is at least satisfactory in 91 per cent of lessons and is satisfactory overall. In 38 per cent of lessons, teaching is good and in 19 per cent it is very good. One lesson seen was excellent. In seven per cent of lessons, teaching is unsatisfactory and in two per cent it is poor. The quality of teaching of children under five is very good, with almost all lessons seen being good or better. In Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Half of the teaching in Key Stage 1 is good or better, but there is too

much unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 1. At the last inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in 95 per cent of lessons. Strengths, such as the good quality relationships between teachers and pupils, have been maintained. However, there remain too many lessons where the pace of the lesson is slow and expectations of what pupils can achieve are too low. The teaching of literacy in Key Stage 1 according to the National Literacy Strategy is successful and the quality of teaching in English is good in half of lessons. Almost all the teaching in numeracy lessons in Key Stage 1 is good or very good, though one lesson was unsatisfactory and one was poor. Teaching in science and in religious education is satisfactory in Key Stage 1. The quality of teaching in information technology is unsatisfactory in Key Stage 1 and computers are under-used. In other subjects, teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1.

22. With the exception of information technology, teachers in Key Stage 1 demonstrate good subject knowledge, including the national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy skills. All pupils in Key Stage 1 are taught in sets for basic skills, and teaching in these lessons is good. Teachers of children under five have a very good knowledge and understanding of the children's needs and the curriculum that should be provided. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection. In Key Stage 1, teachers' planning and explanations in literacy lessons are usually clear, ensuring that all pupils know what they are expected to do. However, the pace of the lesson is sometimes slow, leaving little time for a proper summary. Strategies for teaching numeracy are developing well. Questioning in the sessions is usually challenging and involves all pupils, resources are well chosen and used and a good pace is usually maintained. The quality of the group work does not always match that of the whole class work.
23. The quality of lesson planning is good for children under five and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. Early years teachers and teachers in each year group in Key Stage 1 plan together each fortnight. Planning sets out clearly what pupils are expected to learn, although planning for the use of information technology is unsatisfactory. In English and mathematics lessons, planning takes good account of the needs of pupils of different levels of ability. Teachers usually ensure that pupils work at levels appropriate for their ability. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, the group of higher attaining pupils was encouraged to think of meaning beyond the literal when looking at their text. In this lesson, pupils with special educational needs were given good guidance on how to punctuate their writing. Short term plans usually contain clear learning objectives, although these are not often made known to the pupils or discussed at the conclusions of lessons to enable teachers to evaluate progress made by the pupils. Planning takes sufficient good account of developing pupils' literacy skills in other subjects, such as religious education, science and art, but there is little evidence of pupils using and applying their numeracy skills in science.
24. Where the teaching is excellent, the teacher's subject knowledge, explanations and questioning techniques and high expectations of what the pupils can achieve are combined to enable all pupils to achieve very well in the lesson. In lessons where teaching is very good, such as structured play activities for children under five, numeracy lessons in Year 1 and Year 2 and music lessons throughout the school, lessons are very well planned, challenging and stimulating. Activities are closely matched to the needs of pupils of different ability. Subject knowledge is very good and teachers make good use of adult support, in reception classes for example. Instructions and explanations to pupils are clear and resources are very well prepared and used, in music for example. There is a good balance between whole class and group work, and a good pace is maintained. Relationships between adults and pupils are good, pupils are given good support as they work and they achieve well. In the lessons where teaching is good, lessons are well structured, as in most literacy lessons and lessons for children under five. Expectations of work and behaviour are high and pupils are managed effectively. Resources are well

chosen and used, in literacy and in religious education in Year 2 for example, where the teacher uses artefacts, pictures and books to help pupils achieve the learning objective.

25. In the lessons where the quality of teaching is satisfactory, pupils are managed well and a positive working atmosphere is created. Pupils are clear about what they have to do, although teachers do not always make it clear how they expect work to be presented and how long pupils have to complete tasks. In numeracy lessons, teachers do not always make it clear what different groups of pupils will be expected to do and the summary does not focus on the objectives for the lesson. The pace of lessons is sometimes slow, in Year 1 science for example. There is either no summary at the end of a lesson, or it is so brief that pupils are not given the opportunity to talk about what they have been doing and found out, in Year 2 science and Year 1 history for example. In most lessons, pupils with special educational needs are given tasks that are suitably challenging. Tasks are appropriate to the age group, but insufficient attention is given to planning to meet the needs of the more able pupils, in science in Key Stage 1 for example.
26. In the lessons where teaching is unsatisfactory or poor, pupils' behaviour is not managed well. The whole class introduction is brief and pupils are not clear about what they have to do when dispersed into their groups, in Year 1 numeracy and science lessons for example. Pupils and resources are not well organised, in a Year 2 physical education lesson, and there are low expectations of what pupils can achieve, in a Year 2 numeracy lesson for example.
27. Teachers have good awareness of the needs of pupils on the register of special educational needs in their classes. The quality of teaching by the special educational needs co-ordinator is good. Special educational needs assistants make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching. They work closely and collaboratively with teachers and are used successfully in the classroom, offering all pupils access to a similar content at an appropriate level and pace.
28. Teachers encourage pupils to have positive attitudes to their work, and in almost all lessons they successfully promote good behaviour. Pupils usually know what is expected of them and with few exceptions, there is a good working atmosphere in classrooms throughout the school.
29. Teachers give pupils plenty of praise and encouragement and ensure that all pupils are given equal opportunity in lessons. There is no gender division and work is planned and delivered to enable pupils of all abilities to succeed. The positive ethos created in lessons encourages pupils to 'have a go', knowing that their contributions will be valued and that others will not ridicule a wrong answer.
30. Teachers make good use of resources in literacy, science, religious education, art and music lessons, but computers are under-used. Teachers make good use of the local environment and the wider world to support work in geography and history. Time is used well and lessons begin promptly. A lack of pace in some lessons in Key Stage 1 results in pupils having insufficient time to complete their work or to take part in a proper summary session at the end.
31. Pupils are given praise and encouragement and, as a result, are motivated to do well. However, teachers place little emphasis on letting pupils know what they need to do to improve the presentation quality or quantity of the work they produce, in aspects of mathematics and in science for example. Teachers and support staff working with children under five assess their achievements well during lessons. However, the strategy of discussing and evaluating what has been achieved at the end of the lesson is under-used in Key Stage 1. Teachers' planning documents include an evaluation section and



teachers make effective use of assessment when planning the next steps for pupils. Homework is used well and includes reading, spelling and mathematical investigations. The majority of parents who responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire are satisfied with the homework that their children receive. The views expressed at the parents' meeting were largely positive about homework provision.

32. The quality of learning of children under five is good. They acquire basic skills in all areas of learning and show very good levels of concentration and independence. Children under five are very responsive to the adults who help them and are keen to talk about and show what they can do. At the beginning of lessons their talk and their answers show that they have remembered what they have been taught previously, whether it is information about stories they have heard, number facts that they know, or something about the rules of the classroom. The quality of learning in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory overall. In many lessons pupils achieve well or very well, as a result of the good and very good teaching, which builds upon what pupils already know and where tasks are closely matched to pupils' capability. For example, in Year 1 numeracy and music lessons, pupils work productively and with enthusiasm, and in Year 2 literacy, numeracy and science lessons, pupils work with very good concentration and apply themselves well to the tasks they have been set. In most classes, pupils with special educational needs learn well. The tasks set for them are closely matched to their prior attainment and the targets set for them in their individual education plans.

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

33. The school has maintained the broad and balanced curriculum reported in the previous inspection. The school effectively covers all the nationally recommended areas of learning for children under five and successfully promotes their intellectual, personal and social development.
34. In Key Stage 1, the curriculum meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There is an appropriate emphasis on English. The planning and implementation of the National Literacy Strategy are well developed and are having a positive effect on the quality of pupils' learning. Extra time is given to reading, spelling and writing outside the Literacy Hour. The recent introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is helping towards the development of pupils' mental calculation skills. However, mathematics links with science and information technology are under-developed. Information technology is not planned sufficiently well into the curriculum to be an integral part of teaching and learning in literacy, numeracy or other subjects.
35. The allocation of time provides a balanced curriculum. Music is a strength of the school with all pupils offered the opportunity to learn to play the recorder. Physical education and art have each retained a high profile. The links with other countries for the school's environment project have strengthened the school's geography curriculum. The home-school reading policy makes a significant contribution to pupils' achievement, as well as the regular spelling homework.
36. A strength of the school is the provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. There is appropriate sex education provision and education about the use and misuse of drugs.
37. **The school has a commitment to raising standards of attainment for pupils with special educational needs and makes good provision for these pupils. They all have equal access to the curriculum which is organised so that full attention can**

**be given to their needs. Individual education plans are well thought out and all staff help pupils to gain maximum benefit from the activities offered.**

38. The school has increased the provision of non-fiction books in the school and has been aware of providing a greater variety of books to interest boys in order to encourage them to read more.
39. There are no weekly extra-curricular activities but the curriculum is enriched by visits to places of interest such as the local museum. Visitors to the school enhance the curriculum and include speakers for book week and the vicar for assemblies. Pupils sing at the local home for the elderly, who visit the school for harvest festival. Both pupils and teachers gain much knowledge and understanding about Norway, Holland and Iceland as part of the Socrates Project, a European Union funded project which links teachers and children in European schools.
40. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and has been since the previous inspection. The aims of the school are clearly reflected in the provision. All adults set a good example for pupils to follow. They speak quietly to pupils and the school is a courteous community. Pupils show care and respect for one another and are encouraged to show consideration for others. Children under five and pupils with special educational needs are well supported and all pupils are encouraged to develop self-confidence.
41. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. It is promoted during religious education lessons, for example, when pupils are shown a large model of a ship when listening to the story of Noah's Ark. Assemblies meet statutory requirements for collective worship. Pupils have time for reflection but teachers sometimes miss opportunities for creating a sense of occasion. Active participation by pupils in assemblies helps them to develop their speaking skills and increases their self-confidence. In other subjects, pupils' spiritual development is promoted sometimes, for example in science when pupils look at a sequin in a kaleidoscope.
42. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and the pupils respond well. The idea of right and wrong is promoted clearly and good levels of self-discipline are encouraged. The pupils and teachers devise the classroom rules together and sometimes all the pupils sign the list. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school demonstrates that they have respect for the feelings and opinions of others.
43. There is good provision for pupils' social development and this is evident in the positive relationships throughout the school. The school places a strong emphasis upon the promotion of pupils' self-confidence and their ability to work collaboratively in the classroom. Both have a positive effect on pupils' learning. Good opportunities are provided in lessons in a range of subjects for pupils to share, take turns and work co-operatively in groups. Pupils strengthen their social and personal development during the discussion sessions and 'circle time', which provide good opportunities for pupils to talk about matters of interest to them, as well as moral and social issues, such as looking after others and friendship.
44. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils gain knowledge and understanding of western cultures through their work. For example, they hear and read stories and accounts from different cultures in the Literacy Hour, history and art lessons, and learn about modern life in Norway through their involvement in the Socrates Project. Pupils' work is displayed in a way which celebrates their achievements. Displays cover a range of subjects and make a positive contribution to the cultural development of the

pupils. Since the last inspection the school has planned opportunities for pupils to gain an understanding of non-Western cultures. This includes the study of other world religions and festivals, supported by effective displays of artefacts and pupils' writing and art work connected with the festivals of Diwali and Chinese New Year. There has been an increase in the provision of multi-cultural books, like 'Handa's Surprise', taped music and musical instruments from other countries. The school has involved parents in giving talks and demonstrations about their own cultures, such as Kenya and India.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

45. The school cares for its pupils very well. All staff ensure that they know each child and their individual circumstances. The steps taken to ensure pupils' health and safety are very good overall, although the arrangements for storage of attendance registers during the school day need attention in case of an emergency evacuation of the premises. Arrangements for child protection are also very good. All staff are very clear about the procedures to follow if they have concerns about any pupil. Parents are very pleased with this aspect of the school's provision.
46. There are good measures to promote and monitor attendance and behaviour. Parents are contacted if they do not advise the school of reasons for an absence on the first morning that a pupil is absent. The school has been very successful in its strategies to manage behaviour. All staff work very closely together to meet the needs of individual pupils. Class rules have been established with pupils and they work well. However, there are a few occasions when high standards of behaviour are not established. For example, pupils leave assembly noisily and in some lessons behaviour is not well managed. This was the case in a Year 1 science lesson and as a result the quality of learning in the lesson was unsatisfactory. At lunchtimes, pupils are cared for very well. Lunchtime staff have raised money to purchase special equipment for pupils to play with and this contributes to the pleasant atmosphere in the playground.
47. There are good strategies outlined in the school's behaviour policy for addressing bullying if it should occur. Pupils express confidence in staff, both teaching and lunchtime, to sort out any problems that arise.
48. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. Assessment procedures are good for children under five and pupils with special educational needs. Since the previous inspection, good standards of assessment have been maintained for these two groups of pupils. Pupils are assessed when they enter the school and results are used to identify strengths and weaknesses in the children's understanding and development. Assessment information is being linked with planning and teaching in English in order to help raise pupils' standards of attainment in reading, spelling and writing. The use of assessment procedures in mathematics is developing in a satisfactory way and teachers evaluate their weekly numeracy plans and outcomes and use record sheets to record individual progress. Procedures for assessing religious education are at an early stage of development, following the adoption of the locally agreed syllabus. Assessment procedures in science only cover Year 1 and assessment procedures in information technology are unsatisfactory. Teachers are recording pupils' achievements in other subjects, but there is no whole school approach to ensure that expectations are consistent. Procedures for the identification of pupils with special educational needs are good. The school carefully assesses the needs of these pupils and maintains good records of their achievements and progress. A system of setting targets for pupils to achieve by the end of Year 1 in reading, writing and mathematics has been established in order to help raise standards.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

49. The school's partnership with parents is very good and the partnership has improved since the last inspection. Parents are very positive about every aspect of the school's work, with the exception of extra-curricular provision. Some parents would like after-school clubs and for their children to learn a modern foreign language. Extra-curricular activities and the teaching of a modern foreign language are not usually seen in Key Stage 1 and the inspection judgement is that current provision is satisfactory.
50. The school works extremely hard to make parents feel welcome and many are actively involved in its work. They contribute very successfully to the standard of learning. For example, in a reception class one parent helped with a painting activity based on the book 'Handa's Surprise'. Artefacts from Africa, which another parent had donated, also enhanced the lesson, and pupils were making observational drawings of them. Many parents and other family members assist with the weekly reading and board games sessions in reception and Year 1 classes.
51. The Parents Teachers Association is very supportive and has provided a range of resources for the school. Recent purchases funded by the association include shelves in the library, tape recorders, a public address system and equipment for the nursery.
52. The quality of information that the school provides to parents is good overall and includes a home-school agreement. Newsletters are sent frequently and they are informative. Details are issued about what is to be taught in each year group every term and expectations are made clear for weekly homework tasks. The prospectus is a good quality document, which clearly explains the work and ethos of the school. It guides parents on how to help their children with writing letters correctly and meets statutory requirements. There are regular opportunities for parents to learn about the work of the school through curriculum events and open evenings.
53. Parents are invited to class assemblies. These are very well attended and also help parents to see what their child is achieving at school. The governing body's annual report is informative but does not include all the statutory information. Annual reports on pupils' progress are unsatisfactory. They do not meet statutory requirements, as they do not report on attainment and progress for every subject. They give a clear indication of pupils' strengths and weaknesses for English and mathematics and in these subjects targets are identified for future developments. However, in other subjects comments are brief and often only describe whether pupils enjoy a subject and what they have been taught. Also, educational jargon is sometimes used.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

### **The leadership and management by the headteacher, key staff and governing body**

54. The leadership and management of the school are good. The headteacher provides positive leadership and a clear educational direction for the school and helps to ensure that the school's aims and values are reflected in all its work. Since the previous inspection, standards of attainment have risen steadily, though fluctuations in the number of pupils with special educational needs make it difficult for the school to demonstrate a trend. Subject co-ordinators for English and mathematics are actively involved in monitoring and helping to improve standards in their subjects. The headteacher and deputy headteacher both monitor the quality of teaching and provide colleagues with advice and support on how they might improve further. The headteacher has successfully encouraged the development of relationships within the school and led the establishment of very good relationships with parents and the local community.

55. The recently established governing body is kept up to date by the headteacher, who provides it with full and regular reports, and by subject co-ordinators, who report to governor committees and to governing body meetings. Governors' committees include policy and resources, personnel and curriculum and pupil related matters. There are named governors for literacy, numeracy, special educational needs and early years. The governing body has been actively involved in drawing up the school's aims and in discussing the literacy targets that have been set in consultation with the local authority. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities effectively and has satisfactory understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
56. Since the previous inspection, the school has drawn up an action plan and a subsequent development plan to address the key issues. There are now regular formal and informal opportunities for pupils to speak to audiences. There has been good development of structured play activities, particularly for children under five. Teachers' questioning skills have improved, particularly with the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy. Other improvements include the teaching of Key Stage 1 pupils in sets for literacy and numeracy sessions once a week and the introduction of phonic and spelling programmes and mathematical investigations in Key Stage 1. There has been a strong emphasis upon reading and the successful involvement of many parents in supporting their children's reading development at home and at school. The quality of personal and social education has improved. Non-teaching staff, including special educational needs staff, are valued and given responsibility. They work well with teachers and provide very good support. Assessment procedures have improved, particularly in English, though assessment in science and information technology is unsatisfactory.
57. Development planning and the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance are satisfactory. The school development plan sets out relevant priorities, although it contains too many for them all to be tackled effectively. Parts of the plan are costed, but costs have not been clearly linked to the budgeting process. Timescales for reaching targets are too general and there is no precise timetable to enable staff and governors to know what is happening and when. Criteria for measuring success are identified, but there is no monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanism built into the plan to enable the school to judge the extent to which it is being successful. The school uses a teacher appraisal system to help it improve performance. Teachers are observed teaching and targets for improvement are agreed. Induction procedures for teachers new to the profession and for all new staff are good. Support staff have regular meetings with teachers to discuss pupils' achievements and progress, and midday supervisory staff meet regularly with the headteacher to discuss behaviour and welfare issues. Children are assessed on entry to the school and again six months later. All pupils are assessed in literacy and numeracy at the end of Year 1 and targets are set for pupils to achieve by the end of Year 2. These targets are reviewed at the end of each term for pupils in Year 2.
58. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is well managed and the school's special educational needs policy complies with the Code of Practice<sup>3</sup>. The quality of pupils' individual education plans is good and provision is managed effectively to ensure that correct procedures are in place.
59. The school's equal opportunities policy is thorough with clear aims and objectives. The consistent reference to equal opportunity in documents makes it obvious that the school attaches great significance to this aspect and works hard to fulfil its objectives. Parents value the strong multi-cultural ethos and the fact that the school looks outwards in striving

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<sup>3</sup> Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

to give pupils a greater awareness and understanding of the wider world and their place in it. Care has been taken to ensure that the school buildings are accessible for those with physical disabilities. However, the poor condition of the two 'demountable' classrooms means that not all pupils have equal access to the full range of activities set out in the National Curriculum programmes of study.

60. The school has a very positive ethos, which reflects a commitment to raising standards. Relationships within the school are good and parents are very supportive of the school. The school is in a good position to improve.
61. Not all statutory requirements are met. There are omissions in the governors' annual report to parents and in annual pupil reports to parents. For example, the governors' annual report does not refer to the progress being made with the post-inspection action plan or to security. Annual pupil reports do not give sufficient information about pupils' strengths and weaknesses in all subjects.

### **The adequacy of staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

62. Staff at the school are suitably qualified and there are sufficient teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the National Curriculum and the curriculum for children under five. They are also appropriately qualified and experienced to match the demands of the curriculum to the particular requirements of pupils with special educational needs. Specialist teaching in music and for special educational needs has a positive impact on pupils' achievement and progress. Teachers' range of experience enables them to provide valuable support to the newly qualified teacher. Previous inspection findings with regard to classroom support assistants still hold true. Support staff are fully involved in training opportunities and their experience, qualifications and willingness to learn ensure that they are able to offer quality provision to those that they support. The school encourages visits and involvement from teachers and students from other countries and cultures, increasing pupils' appreciation of the contribution that different people can make to society. There is a strong team spirit and a commitment to the importance of all staff being able to continue learning, developing and questioning their approach to education and teaching. Professional development is linked closely to the school's future planning and knowledge and expertise are successfully shared. The school's participation in the 'Socrates Project' has opened up wider learning opportunities for both staff and pupils. From their visits to partner schools in other countries, staff have picked up aspects of good practice which have been incorporated into the provision offered by their own school. For example, the importance given to children's play opportunities in other European countries has encouraged the staff to place greater emphasis upon structured play for children under five. Pupils, parents and midday assistants have contributed their observations and ideas in a thorough appraisal of the outdoor environment and how it can be improved.
63. **Accommodation is satisfactory overall in allowing the curriculum to be taught effectively. There are good sized classrooms in the main building, a large hall and a new library. Recent increases in pupil numbers have resulted in partial additional funding for an extra teacher but no extra classroom. This means there is no amenity space for cookery and groups with special educational needs have to use the library, thereby restricting its use by others. The accommodation in the 'demountable' classrooms is poor, with cramped conditions and toilet provision barely adequate for the number of pupils. The school has a rolling programme for decorating the school and replacing worn carpets, which at present do little to enhance the learning environment and the initial impression of the school. Outdoor areas are spacious, with the exception of that provided for children under five. It is too small for the number of children and there is insufficient hard surface**

for them to use large toys, wheeled vehicles and construction apparatus. The wildlife area does little to stimulate enthusiasm or arouse interest, but ambitious plans are in place for the development of the entire outdoor environment, linked to the school's monitoring of behaviour and over-boisterous play activities.

64. The school has a satisfactory range of books, materials and equipment to support learning in all areas of the curriculum, except for information technology. Computer hardware is outdated and restricts pupils' access to the latest software and technology that would enhance their levels of attainment in this subject and their learning opportunities in other subjects. The school is seeking to address deficiencies in provision through the addition of a new computer suite. Recent increased funding has contributed to the provision of resources necessary for teaching literacy and numeracy and there are sufficient resources for pupils with special educational needs. Pressure on accommodation has resulted in less storage space, which means resources are not always easily accessible. The library is small, but contains a satisfactory range of fiction and non-fiction books. Resources reflect other cultures and appeal to the interests of both boys and girls. Displays throughout the school combine pupils' work with artefacts and are informatively labelled. A range of visitors to the school provide opportunities for pupils to extend their understanding in many areas of the curriculum.

#### **The extent to which principles of best value are applied and the strategic use of resources**

65. The school upholds many of the best value principles of comparison, challenge, consultation and competition in the management and use of its resources. Following the last inspection, there were no related issues for the school to address. Tender arrangements when seeking purchases are in place and the school has made considerable savings in buying in a financial adviser and organising its own insurance. It has also improved the quality of provision by arranging its own cleaning services. Local authority services are purchased when they are judged as being superior to private suppliers. Earmarked funds are appropriately used for designated purposes, such as in the support of pupils with special educational needs. Some of these funds are often supplemented from the school's own resources, for example, to provide additional special needs support staff.
66. The school's financial planning to support educational priorities is unsatisfactory. The school allocates small subject specific budgets on an annual basis rather than subject co-ordinators bidding for resources to support areas they have identified for development. More importantly, the school development plan and the annual budget cycle are not directly linked so that the school's main priorities are identified and given earmarked funding. While many aspects in the development plan are identified as requiring finance, some are not appropriately earmarked. For example, release time identified for subject co-ordinators to monitor standards and teaching is sometimes used for sickness cover. Co-ordinators express frustration when this occurs and monitoring sessions do not take place. The school has been successful in attracting additional funding, for example, as part of the 'Socrates Project' and from the National Grid for Learning to supply new computer equipment for the school. While this computer funding was granted in April 1999, it has not yet been released for the school to purchase urgently required replacement equipment for information technology.
67. The governing body finance committee meets on a regular basis and receives monthly monitoring reports on the budget from the headteacher. The committee reports to the whole governing body on a termly basis and identifies any changes in the budget situation.

68. The use of teaching and support staff is good. Teachers are well deployed and very well supported by classroom assistants. Satisfactory use is made of most teaching resources, with the exception of those for information technology. The accommodation is used efficiently but is under constant pressure due to additional pupil numbers. Pupils who have to travel from their 'demountable' classrooms to the hall for lessons such as physical education and music are disadvantaged by this necessity. Time is lost in moving to and fro and this limits learning opportunities for these pupils.
69. Procedures for the administration and control of the budget are good. Appropriate systems are in place for the ordering, receipt and payment of all goods and services. The administrative staff work hard and successfully to ensure the day to day administration is efficient and effective. The most recent auditor's report was in 1998 and all the recommendations have been fully implemented, with the exception of updating the school's register of pecuniary interests.
70. Taking into account the costs per pupil, which are close to the national average, the quality of teaching, the good attitudes, behaviour and personal development of the pupils, their attainment on entry to the school and the progress they make by the end of Key Stage 1, the school provides good value for money.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

The school should now:

- improve standards in writing in Key Stage 1 (see paragraphs 3, 10, 23, 79, 83 and 87);
- improve standards in information technology in Key Stage 1 (see paragraphs 13, 21, 30, 34, 68, 87, 98 and 117-122);
- improve the quality of some of the teaching in Key Stage 1 so that it matches the standard of the best by making sure that in all lessons:
  - i. objectives are clear and pupils understand what is expected of them;
  - ii. instructions to pupils are clear;
  - iii. behaviour is well managed;
  - iv. resources are well prepared and deployed;(see paragraphs 21-3, 25-6, 30, 91, 97, 120 and 130);
- improve the quality of the school development plan to ensure that it is more closely linked to the budgeting process, has fewer priorities and includes a clear monitoring, reporting and evaluation mechanism and timetable (see paragraph 57);
- establish assessment procedures in information technology and improve them in science in Key Stage 1 (see paragraphs 48, 56, 98 and 122);
- improve the way pupils in Key Stage 1 present their written work (see paragraphs 10, 31, 83, 85 and 135);
- take steps to secure the replacement of the pair of 'demountable' classrooms, which are in poor condition (see paragraph 63).



## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	34

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	19	38	32	7	2	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery Part-time YR	YR-Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	35	238
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	YR-Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	46

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	17
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	25

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.5
National comparative data	5.4

#### 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.

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	43	46	89

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	28	33
	Girls	40	42	36
	Total	67	70	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (77)	79 (78)	78 (80)
	National	82 (80)	83 (80)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	27	33	36
	Girls	39	37	42
	Total	66	70	78
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (80)	79 (80)	88 (91)
	National	82 (80)	86 (84)	87 (85)

*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	2
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	176
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR-Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	25.6

#### **Education support staff: YR-Y2**

Total number of education support staff	19
Total aggregate hours worked per week	129

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

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

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	445,694
Total expenditure	435,230
Expenditure per pupil	1,566
Balance brought forward from previous year	-9,182
Balance carried forward to next year	652

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate: 256 distributed, 69 returned ( 27% )

Number of questionnaires sent out	256
Number of questionnaires returned	69

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	70	29	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	59	38	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	43	45	6	0	6
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	45	42	7	0	6
The teaching is good.	61	38	0	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	64	31	4	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	13	1	3	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	48	48	1	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	72	22	6	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	70	25	1	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	59	40	1	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	31	26	6	17

### Summary of parents' and carers' responses

There is criticism of mixed age classes, in order to reduce class sizes to 30, and criticism of the appearance of parts of the school. A number of parents would like to see a modern foreign language taught. There was one concern about bullying. Parents are positive about the school's induction arrangements.

## 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

71. Provision for children under five is a strength of the school and since the last inspection the school has continued to provide a good early years curriculum. Children receive a good start to their education in the nursery and reception classes, where curriculum provision is rich and varied. There are good induction arrangements and before they join the school children and their parents make visits for school sessions. Children spend their first term at school part time in the nursery class, for five morning or afternoon sessions. From the beginning of their second term in school they attend full time. For the September 1999 intake, standards on entry to the school were in line with the county average for their age. At the time of the inspection, assessments had not been completed for the January intake of children. Attainment on entry varies considerably from year to year. For example, the attainment on entry of the current Year 2 was below the county average. At the time of the inspection, 37 of the 100 nursery and reception children were already five. By age five, children's attainment is in line with that expected in language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development and most of the four year olds are likely to achieve the standards set out in 'Desirable Outcomes for Children's Learning'. Achievements exceed those expected for their age in personal and social development. Children have good disposition towards learning, they concentrate well, work both independently and co-operatively and are very willing to learn. This has a positive effect on the standards they achieve and the progress they make.
72. The quality of teaching of children under five is very good overall. Over three-quarters of the teaching is good and a third is very good. Children make good progress because the curriculum is planned and resourced well, but principally because of the consistently good teaching by the teachers and nursery nurses. They are a strong team who have developed very professional relationships. All staff have very good knowledge of the needs of the children. Learning is made stimulating and enjoyable and a good level of challenge is provided. Adults intervene at appropriate points to extend learning. Children are praised constantly, behaviour is controlled calmly, and children feel secure in this supportive environment. A very wide range of activities is available during structured play sessions. There are many good opportunities for children to learn through play and develop speaking, listening, reading, personal and social skills, such as when playing in role play areas, when dressing up, using construction kits and materials, in writing areas and playing board games. Resources to support learning are used very well, such as books and games in language and literacy and mathematics sessions. The accommodation is well organised to support learning. Adults train children to return equipment and toys after use and they always do this effectively. All pupils receive equal opportunities to make progress.

### Personal and social development

73. Children form very good relationships with each other and all adults who support them. Most children persevere with their learning and sustain concentration when working on activities. Their ability to listen well and concentrate is good. The younger and the older children listen to adults' instructions well. For example, the older children follow the rules of 'circle time' well, listening to each other and taking turns to speak. The youngest children behave appropriately when playing and working independently, when using wooden building blocks and toy vehicles for example. When it is time for a music and movement lesson, they quickly change their shoes and clothes. Those who are ready first settle down to read a book whilst waiting for the others. Children eagerly explore new learning, they willingly initiate ideas and take part in role-play naturally. Their level of working independently is very good. They readily make choices about the activities they wish to do

and remember the rules to do with certain activities, such as only four people being allowed to play with the large toy house. Children try hard, for example when writing their names and other words such as 'daddy', and they willingly share their learning and experiences with each other. For the children who show more of a reluctance to speak, staff patiently support them with encouragement. Children behave very well, take care of resources, know when to wait to take turns and are very polite. Teaching in this area of learning is very good. The school places a very strong emphasis upon children's personal and social development and staff devote a great deal of time and thought to planning a curriculum and an environment that encourage responsibility and independence.

## **Language and literacy**

74. Children make good progress in language and literacy. They are making good progress with recognising that letters have sounds. They name objects beginning with a chosen letter. All children recognise their own names and, as well as writing their own names, many of the older ones write simple sentences. The older children recognise rhymes and words that have particular endings, such as 'at'. A significant minority of children have speech difficulties and they make good progress when talking and reading with their teachers or other staff, as well as through their conversations with fellow children. All speak and listen properly in 'circle time' and in whole class discussions. A number of children struggle to find the correct vocabulary to express themselves but they make good progress with this because of the support from adults. Children listen well to stories and songs. Children successfully make up their own games in the role-play areas, with toy animals and vehicles for example. They enjoy books and handle them carefully. Children can talk in simple terms about the events of stories that they know, such as 'Handa's Surprise' and 'Elmer the Elephant'. They readily talk about matters of immediate interest, such as the models they have made. The teaching of language and literacy skills is consistently good. Teaching and learning are planned around books, with a particular book being selected by each class each half term. Teachers generally make the most of opportunities to develop children's literacy skills throughout the school day. A particularly good example of teaching is the way in which each teacher invites parents into the classroom once a week for board games sessions. These sessions are well organised, very well attended by mothers, fathers and grandparents, and greatly enjoyed by the children, whose reading, speaking and listening, counting and social skills are enhanced in these sessions.

## **Mathematics**

75. Children make good progress in mathematics. They are familiar with number songs and counting and make very good progress with recognising numbers and sequencing them. Children are developing their ability to sort and match items. They can sort by size, shape and colour and when using a computer program where they have to estimate which rocket will match the correct shape. Their good awareness of space and shape is demonstrated in the rapid way that they complete jigsaw puzzles. They use numbers to 10 well, and can add one more to a number. The older children count to beyond 20. When given an instruction to do something five times, such as jump or clap, the youngest children do so without difficulty. When using objects to help them, children can add two numbers together. Most do so by counting, but some recognise the numbers of objects in a group when adding. They understand mathematical language such as bigger than, smaller than, more than, in front of, on, inside and behind, and name a range of common two-dimensional shapes, such as circles, triangles and squares. The teaching of basic numeracy skills is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and understanding of how to teach basic skills and realistic expectations of what children should achieve. They use an appropriate range of techniques, such as whole class and small group work, and resources are well prepared. Adult support is used well, in a lesson on pattern and sequence for example, where children made sequences of different jam tart colours in their cookery activity.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

76. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world develop well through the activities presented. They use a range of materials, such as building bricks and interlocking construction components to make structures based on an instruction from their teacher or using their own imagination, when making castles for example. Their study of 'Handa's Surprise' has enabled them to taste and name a range of fruits and to recognise the names of many wild animals. The youngest children know that ice was once water and that heating ice will turn it back into water. They show excitement and curiosity when touching a ball of ice made by freezing a balloon filled with water. As a follow up to their hearing the story 'The Blue Balloon' pupils use their senses effectively. Though many initially think that bubbles are filled with water or colour, they learn to look closely at bubbles and to appreciate that they contain air. Children draw accurate pictures of themselves, with features such as eyes, ears, nose and mouth drawn appropriately. They know that nearby Colchester is a large town with shops, a cinema and cafes. Some draw 'treasure maps' with lines depicting the route to the treasure. Computers are chosen frequently by children who enjoy phonics programs, for example. They use the space bar and direction keys to navigate their way through activities. Their cooking activities help them towards an understanding of how materials can be mixed and used to make food. Teaching in this area of learning is good. Teachers provide a wide range of stimulating and interesting activities for children, such as cooking, ice and bubble making and observational drawing of fruit. Support staff and voluntary helpers are well deployed and activities are well planned and organised. Time is used well, including time for discussions at the beginning and end of sessions.

## **Creative development**

77. Children perform very well in their weekly singing sessions with the visiting music teacher and within their classes when singing with their teachers. They know a good range of songs and are learning to keep time. They can change from loud to soft and from fast to slow when singing. Children play imaginatively and explore with a range of media, such as paint, pastel, crayon, dough, sand, water and reclaimed materials for model making. They enjoy their art work, such as making a collage based upon the use of only one colour, as well as collages based of 'Elmer the Elephant'. They make observational drawings of African artefacts, such as a wicker basket and a wooden carving, and paint pictures of their coats, of themselves and of characters and animals from stories that they know. They produce recognisable pictures of places in Brightlingsea. Many are keen on drawing and spontaneously add pictures in the little 'books' that they make. Teaching in this area of learning is good. Particularly good use is made of voluntary helpers and the school places a strong emphasis on children's creative development. The specialist music teaching is very good. It is lively and stimulating and succeeds in gaining the active and enthusiastic involvement of all children

## **Physical development**

78. Children make good progress in developing their physical skills. There is good provision indoors for developing children's physical skills. All children have regular access to the large school hall for music and movement lessons and activities with balls and small apparatus. The teaching of physical development is good. Teachers provide an appropriate range of activities to stimulate children and encourage their control and co-ordination. Teachers provide movement activities, as well as opportunities for children to use pencils, scissors, glue spreaders, crayons, construction kits and jig saws for example. Children under five have a dedicated outside play area but it is too small. There is an insufficient amount of hard surface, to enable children to use wheeled vehicles for example,

there is no seating and only a limited range of climbing apparatus to enable children to be more adventurous. The school is well aware of deficiencies in this area and has plans to enlarge and improve it.

## KEY STAGE 1

### English

79. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 are in line with the national average in reading but below average in writing. Standards in speaking and listening are in line with national expectations. The previous inspection reported that standards in reading and writing were in line with national averages. The 1997 test results showed the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level in reading and writing were in line with the national average. In the 1998 tests reading was in line with the national average but writing was below average. Standards in reading in the 1999 tests were in line with the national average. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level was below the national average but the number of pupils reaching the higher level was above the national average. The standard of pupils' writing was well below average in 1999. When compared with the results of similar schools, the 1999 test results were below average for reading and well below average for writing. The difference between the results of the 1999 test results and inspection findings for writing is explained by the fact that the current cohort of Year 2 pupils has a much lower percentage of pupils with special educational needs, although the percentage is still above average. Improvement since 1999 also reflects the recent emphasis on teaching writing in all lessons, not just during English sessions. For example, pupils write explanations about how they made their puppets during design and technology lessons and they make individual books writing facts about the Sun during science lessons. Teachers are comparing pupils' work more regularly to the national levels and are more accurate with judgements on pupils' levels of achievement.
80. Pupils' achievements are good in all areas of English. Pupils benefit from the school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. They also have additional reading, spelling and writing sessions during the week. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
81. Standards of speaking and listening are in line with national expectations. Pupils are given frequent opportunities to speak individually and to develop their listening skills, which is an improvement since the last inspection. The school has successfully introduced 'circle time', which provides pupils with the opportunity to discuss a wide range of personal and general issues. All pupils happily participate and listen respectfully to each other. Another effective way the school develops pupils' speaking and listening skills is when pupils take it in turns to be one of the characters in a story they all know and answer questions posed by the other pupils. Pupils take part in class assemblies to develop self-confidence in speaking to an audience. There are good examples of speaking and listening skills development in the introductory and summary sessions in the daily Literacy Hour and the reflective comments about Noah's Ark in a religious education lesson.
82. Standards in reading are average by the end of Key Stage 1. Standards have improved since the previous inspection in the percentage of pupils attaining the higher National Curriculum level in reading. Pupils are enthusiastic about reading and read regularly to an adult in school. They know the terms 'title', 'author' and 'contents' and know about the index of a book. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well because of the many opportunities they have to practise their reading. When reading, pupils do so accurately and with understanding of the main points of the story. As well as



the graded reading scheme books and the free choice books within a graded series, pupils read 'big books' together during the daily Literacy Hour. They also take home the books used in the group reading sessions of the Literacy Hour to help them consolidate their learning at home. Pupils have regular opportunities to play a wide variety of reading games based on story books that they know. Many parents visit school each week to help in these activities. The home-school reading system is consistently used throughout the school, which involves parents in promoting pupils' reading progress by writing comments in their children's home-school books.

83. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards in writing are below average. Pupils' handwriting is well formed, spelling is satisfactory and pupils readily use dictionaries. Punctuation is generally satisfactory. Pupils' achievement is good as a result of the variation in the focus of writing pupils practise. For example, they write letters to pupils in Norway, make up poems about seashells and write as one of the kings or a donkey when describing the birth of Jesus. In science lessons, they write 'Keeping Healthy' books and extend their vocabulary by thinking of different adjectives when they change bread into toast. They understand the difference between a story and a play. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. They are supported effectively during the Literacy Hour and when all the pupils are split into ability groups for vocabulary work. It is in these weekly group sessions that pupils are given their spellings to learn for homework. Not enough pupils write in sequences of sentences and the higher attaining pupils are not being challenged by being asked to produce more extended pieces of writing. This was noted in the previous inspection. Although handwriting is well formed, pupils' written work is untidily presented throughout Key Stage 1.
84. Pupils have positive attitudes to the subject, and to reading in particular. They follow instructions properly and work individually, in pairs or in groups as required. They behave well in lessons and are happy to talk about their work. They form positive relationships with their teachers, support staff and the voluntary helpers who help them with their board games and reading activities. They are responsible and take care when handling books.
85. The overall quality of teaching is good. Of the lessons observed, over a half were satisfactory and the other lessons were good. All teachers plan their work well, make good use of resources and make sure that activities match pupils' different levels of understanding. Teachers make good provision for pupils with special educational needs. They use the support staff and voluntary helpers well. In the good lessons, teachers have a secure knowledge of the Literacy Hour and structure it well. They make sure that explanations of the tasks to be completed are clear, keep the pace brisk to motivate the pupils and ensure that the higher attaining pupils achieve enough work in the time set. In the satisfactory lessons, unclear explanations and low expectations of the amount of work to be completed in the lesson sometimes hinder the quality of work. All teachers consistently set spelling homework. Teachers ensure that pupils regularly exchange their reading books and they keep records of pupils' attainment in reading, spelling and writing. The quality of learning is good in English lessons. Pupils practise skills, as well as acquiring new knowledge. Though their work is not always tidily presented, pupils quickly settle to their tasks and concentrate on the tasks that they have been set. They are absorbed when reading and writing. They are given a great deal of help to develop their speaking and listening and writing skills, though they are not given much guidance about how to improve the ways in which they present their written work.
86. The National Literacy Strategy is being implemented well and supplemented by additional reading, spelling and writing sessions held outside the daily Literacy Hour. These extra sessions help to improve pupils' achievement. The good provision of fiction books, the new library, the very good provision of the story sacks, story boxes, story games and regular book weeks are all used well to promote pupils' reading development. The

weekly setting into ability groups for vocabulary work is successfully promoting pupils' achievement in spelling.

87. The subject is led well. Pupils' written work is assessed by the subject co-ordinator and teaching staff receive feedback on how they might improve their pupils' work. Targets are set for individual pupils' reading and writing at the end of Year 1, and they are reviewed termly in Year 2 in order to monitor pupils' achievements. Reading and spelling tests are given at the beginning of Year 2 to ensure that pupils are in the correct ability groups for vocabulary work and spelling homework. Teachers' planning is monitored and lessons are observed. However, opportunities for sharing good practice are limited because the time for monitoring the subject is not timetabled on a regular basis. There is a strong commitment of staff to raising standards in writing, as seen in the planning for literacy in all subjects. Pupils' literacy skills are developed well in other subjects of the curriculum, such as religious education, art and history, but there is very little use of information technology.

## Mathematics

88. **The 1999 end of Key Stage 1 tests showed pupils' attainment to be well below average when compared with all schools and with similar schools. Inspection findings are that standards for the current Year 2 are below average. The difference between the results of the 1999 tests and inspection findings is explained firstly by the fact that the current cohort of Year 2 pupils has a much lower percentage of pupils with special educational needs, although the percentage is still above average. Secondly, although attainment in mathematics is still below the national average, the recent introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy is already resulting in higher standards, particularly in pupils' understanding of numbers and the number system. All pupils learn from the structured approach and direct teaching which are features of the daily mathematics lesson. Higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs make good progress where activities are matched closely to their needs and abilities. The introduction of 'Maths Clubs', where pupils are taught alongside others of similar ability, means that greater attention is given to individual needs. The high percentage of pupils with special educational needs, which was 36 per cent in Year 2 in 1999 and is 25 per cent this year, has been the focus of extra support from staff. The additional support now received from classroom assistants and class teachers is having a significant impact on learning opportunities and the standards reached by these pupils.**
89. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1, as was found to be the case in the previous inspection. Pupils in Year 1 are becoming more confident in using multiples of 2 and 10, using a number square. Pupils know that two tens and four units make 24 and can recognise two-digit numbers. Higher attaining pupils are becoming more proficient in writing numbers up to 100 without any help. Many pupils become adept at helping the teacher to work out the number of pupils present when told that there should be 29 but two are away. They gain an increasing understanding of time through counting how many cubes they can join together in one minute, how many skips they can do and how many pegs they can put in the peg-board. Timed tasks also help pupils to understand how much can be done in a certain length of time and how this can affect the speed at which they must do things. In handling data, pupils understand how block graphs and pictograms can show at a glance how many pupils have their birthday in October and how many have been named after their father. They learn to compare items of information by the length of each column and this helps them to understand the term 'difference between two numbers'. Higher attaining pupils make the link between this and 'take-away'. In Year 2, pupils count in multiples of 2, 5 and 10. Some do this without

reference to the number square. They count to 100, with some able to count backwards as well. Pupils recognise odd and even numbers and they understand that multiplication is repeated addition. Pupils use mathematics in real life situations, recording numbers for school meals by using a tally system. They know the names of two-dimensional shapes, though are not so confident with three-dimensional ones. When measuring without adult intervention, their work often lacks accuracy and precision. Most pupils do not readily use mathematical vocabulary when talking about their work. Pupils with special educational needs practise their basic skills and become more confident in sequencing numbers, in writing them correctly and in their understanding of 'more' and 'less'. Higher attaining pupils perceive patterns in numbers and use this knowledge to help them know which number will come next, as when adding on nine. They are confident in investigating numbers for themselves and looking for patterns. Pupils making squares with interlocking pieces enjoy finding out how many more should be attached each time. They comment on the shape, "No, that's a rectangle, we need a square". They begin to predict, "I think we should add five more." Gradually they begin to recognise the pattern in the number of extra pieces. "It's two more than before." "It's going up in odd numbers." The majority of pupils make better progress when there is direct teaching, where the teacher involves the whole class and carefully structures the lesson to gradually extend pupils' understanding. In group activities, pupils sometimes lose sight of the main focus of the lesson and the quality of their learning is not as good.

90. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They settle quickly to work and are keen to contribute in lessons. The majority show obvious enjoyment of what they are doing, especially where the teacher's enthusiasm shines through and she takes pleasure in her teaching and in the responses of the pupils. The positive ethos created in lessons encourages pupils to 'have a go', knowing that their contributions will be valued and that others will not ridicule a wrong answer. Where the teaching is good and the lesson proceeds at a brisk pace, pupils involve themselves actively in whole class sessions. Where the teaching is weaker, pupils do not always bother to think through problems for themselves unless specifically targeted. Pupils co-operate well together. They talk sensibly about their work and their ideas. When motivated and encouraged by the teaching, they stay on task and concentrate on what they are doing for prolonged periods. Behaviour is good. Pupils treat each other and adults with respect. They use equipment and other resources appropriately and move around purposefully. Pupils respond with enthusiasm to timed tasks, but respond quickly to instructions and do not allow their excitement to get out of hand. Where teaching is less than satisfactory, pupils can become noisy, talking instead of listening and not gaining full benefit from their activities. Teaching throughout the key stage is not helping or expecting pupils to pay sufficient attention to the presentation of their work. They use their notebooks mainly for investigations and for jotting down and trying out ideas. Whilst this makes an acceptable contribution to their learning, it does not reinforce the importance of neatness and accuracy, especially when drawing graphs or measuring, or help pupils to value their own work.
91. Teaching is satisfactory overall but with a range of strengths and weaknesses. Teachers have a good understanding of the numeracy strategy and are very positive in their approach to the subject. They have good subject knowledge but there is a difference in the quality of the teaching observed in whole class teaching and in the teaching of follow-up sessions. Most of the direct teaching to the whole class is good or better. Teachers link effectively with pupils' previous knowledge and lead them forward in their understanding, whilst reinforcing basic skills. Lessons move along at a good pace, with a variety of teaching methods which motivate pupils and ensure their attention. Pupils are challenged to think for themselves and the teachers involve them actively in choosing numbers, writing on the board and explaining what they notice about numbers. However, there is a lack of emphasis on allowing pupils to share the strategies they use in arriving

at their answers. In group activities, teachers make good use of the extra adults in their classrooms. Learning support assistants and parent helpers make a significant contribution to pupils' learning opportunities. Younger pupils in particular are guided in their tasks so that they get the most out of them. The quality of questioning and support reflects the close liaison between class teachers and adult helpers. Teachers prepare activities that are matched well to pupils' needs. They take into account the individual targets set for pupils with special educational needs. However, teachers do not always give pupils sufficient guidance in carrying out their tasks when they are expected to work without adult support. The stimulation and vitality of the class session are not so evident when pupils have to work independently and their accuracy and the general quality of their learning is not as high. This reflects a lack of emphasis on what pupils are actually meant to be doing and learning in this part of the lesson. Resources are well prepared and usually support the aims of the lesson, though this is not always apparent to the pupils. Teaching is particularly effective where learning objectives are shared with the pupils at the beginning of the lesson. When these are then referred to at the end, pupils' learning is reinforced, work takes on increased relevance and pupils feel a real sense of achievement. The poor and unsatisfactory teaching results in pupils' needs not being met so that they are not led forward in their understanding and are, therefore, not able to build successfully on what they know. Teachers do not ensure that they have the attention of everyone and time is wasted organising pupils and resources. A lack of flow in the delivery of the lesson results in pupils losing interest and failing to involve themselves fully in what is going on. Activities are allowed to go on for too long, with pupils losing concentration. There is a lack of challenge in the approach and in the work provided and low expectations of what pupils can achieve. The lesson's aims are not clear and pupils are unaware of the purpose of the work that they are doing.

92. Numeracy skills are used in other areas of the curriculum. In history, pupils use time lines and sequence events. They collect data in science and sort and classify it. They make use of their measuring skills in geography and use co-ordinates. Links with mathematics are not always clear to pupils, however, and the lack of emphasis on good presentation means that work often lacks the precision which is such a vital part of the subject.
93. There is a strong commitment to raising standards in the school and an enthusiasm for the National Numeracy Strategy. Since the previous inspection, the time given to teaching pupils in ability groups has been extended. Pupils in need of extra support have been identified and learning support assistants are used more effectively in working alongside them. The quality of learning of pupils with special educational needs is enhanced by their participation in an increased number of practical activities. Higher attaining pupils have tasks matched more closely to their needs and extension activities are planned for them. Teachers have a clear understanding of what their pupils can do and they have set individual targets for the end of key stage tests. However, there are no short term targets for individual pupils, which would focus attention on how the final targets might be achieved. Pupils are not sufficiently involved in their own target setting, although this is beginning to happen with those who have special educational needs. The time allowed for monitoring what is happening within this subject is helping the school to develop a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in its provision through looking at teaching, planning documents and pupils' work.

## Science

94. The end of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments for 1999 indicated that pupils' standards were below the national average for the percentage of pupils achieving the expected National Curriculum Level 2, and above average for the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3. The results of the 1999 assessments showed that girls performed better than boys did. Inspection findings are that standards for the current Year 2 are

broadly in line with the national average. The difference between the results of the 1999 assessments and inspection findings is explained by the fact that the current cohort of Year 2 pupils has a much lower percentage of pupils with special educational needs, although the percentage is still above average. Since the last inspection standards have improved for the pupils achieving at a higher level. This was a target identified at the last inspection.

95. In Year 1, pupils know that experiments are an important part of science, such as when investigating colour and finding out how different colours combine to make one colour. By using chromatography they predict what colours will emerge from a coloured ink dot on a strip of blotting paper when immersed in water. They then record their predictions and the outcome of the experiment. They also appreciate that experiments need to be carefully carried out or the results may not be accurate. For example, they try to avoid allowing colour to get into the water they are using. When looking at materials they understand they have different properties and that some materials can be recycled or can be buried in the ground where they will rot. Pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of living and non-living things and know what makes their bodies work. They learn what should and what should not be taken into their bodies and the difference between good and bad drugs. Pupils know about reversible and irreversible change and how water to ice is a change that can be reversed, while bread to toast is one which cannot. Pupils in Year 2 have a clear understanding of how an electrical circuit works and know that if a wire is not connected securely the bulb will not light.
96. Pupils have enthusiastic attitudes to science throughout the school and co-operative skills develop successfully. In some science lessons there are elements of spirituality, for example when a pupil making a kaleidoscope finds that a sequin in the viewing window has changed into the shape of a butterfly. In a limited number of lessons some pupils are not always considerate to others. They call out during introductory sessions and fail to focus on subsequent activities. Throughout the school the presentation of pupils' work in science notebooks is sometimes untidy and inaccurate.
97. Throughout Key Stage 1, there is a range in the quality of teaching. Overall, teaching is satisfactory with some excellent teaching as well as that which is unsatisfactory. Where teaching is good or better, teachers set very clear learning objectives at the start of lessons and these are revisited at the end. In very good lessons, pupils are given the opportunity to be 'new teachers' in summary sessions and to talk to the rest of the class about the work they have done. This allows work to be discussed, evaluated and developed further and is a positive response to an issue raised during the last inspection. However, this is not a practice that occurs in all lessons. Other features of good teaching are characterised by an effective pace with time reminders given as activities come to a close, references made to previous learning and scientific vocabulary, such as predict, fair test, spectrum, reflection, dissolve and melt, being introduced at appropriate times. These strategies allow pupils to develop their scientific thinking and focus on the task in hand to ensure that the majority of investigations are completed. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' abilities and behaviour. The effective use of questioning is also a feature of good lessons and gives the teacher an immediate judgement on how much pupils have learnt and what to teach them next. The use of classroom assistants and parent helpers is strength of teaching in science because they aid pupils' concentration and also allow for different groups to be given different tasks according to their prior knowledge and understanding. In lessons that are unsatisfactory, pupils are not given the opportunity to predict what will happen in experiments and they record only what they have done and not what they have learned. Unsatisfactory lessons are also characterised by weak planning. Learning opportunities are identified but are not reflected in all activities. Lessons are too long, pupils start to lose interest, there is a poor pace and experiments are not completed. Throughout the school, most teachers'

planning identifies clear learning objectives but plans vary in detail and format and do not refer to how gains in pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding will be assessed. The quality of pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs who often receive additional classroom support, is satisfactory. Pupils acquire skills, knowledge and understanding and learn the importance of scientific principles, such as fair testing. For example, when investigating the nature of change they know that to judge the dissolving rate of different substances there should be equal amounts of water, powder and stirring to make an accurate comparison. Pupils also learn that their scientific knowledge can help them in other subject areas. For example, in design and technology they use their knowledge of electricity to make a motorised colour spinner. In physical education they know that exercise can make a healthy body. These links are a positive feature of pupils' learning in science.

98. Planning is based on the whole school termly topic and is drawn from a scheme of work that is being developed to include national guidelines for science. Whilst the subject co-ordinator monitors these plans, there is no clear evidence of a system that ensures that all elements of the science curriculum are covered by the end of Key Stage 1. There are assessment procedures in place for Year 2 pupils but not for those in Year 1. There are good links with literacy due to the science planning being based on the termly literacy theme, such as colour. There are also positive links with other subjects, such as design and technology and physical education, but there is little planning to help pupils use their mathematical skills and information technology capability to improve the quality of their work in science. Good use is made of visits and visitors to develop pupils' scientific understanding. A science theatre group and a local waste disposal company make visits on recycling. Visits made to other places of scientific interest, such as Fingringhoe Nature Reserve, develop pupils' understanding of life processes and living things in their environment. Resources are satisfactory but the subject has a very small budget at the beginning of each year to develop the subject.

## Art

99. Only one lesson was observed during inspection but a study of a wide range of past and present work and discussions with pupils show that all pupils, including those with special education needs, make good progress by the end of Key Stage 1. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils enter the school with average skills but by the end of Year 2 their skills are developed well.
100. Pupils experiment, investigate, design and make well using a wide variety of techniques in two and three dimensions. Pupils in Year 1 make careful observational drawings of types of lamps. They look at works of art, such as Breugel's 'Census at Bethlehem' and Rousseau's 'Tropical Storm with Tiger', and produce carefully constructed pictures of their own, based on the original work of the artists concerned. Their learning about Chinese New Year involves them in producing very detailed and well-proportioned drawings of characters, such as dragons. They produce good self-portraits in pencil and crayon and make three-dimensional sculptures using paper and card. Pupils in Year 2 make observational drawings of plants with berries, using wax crayon and white chalk on black paper to create effect. Their posters about the importance of protecting the natural environment show a developing sense of designing for a purpose. Their design skills are further enhanced when they look at the work of Mondrian and paint their own pictures based on the use of vertical and horizontal lines. They mix primary colours successfully to produce a range of shades and tones. Rubbings produced from the soles of their shoes are very effective and pupils' observational drawings of seashells and vases of flowers show good attention to detail and a good sense of balance and proportion. Three-dimensional work includes paper sculpture, collage work and the making of models of the Sun using salt dough. The results are very striking. Pupils use the computer programs

'Dazzle' and 'Splosh' to experiment and some of the resulting images are very well composed.

101. Pupils enjoy art and talk about their work with pleasure and enthusiasm. They are highly motivated and show positive responses to their work. Pupils work with accuracy and care when drawing, painting and model making in particular, and look after tools and equipment properly. Pupils behave well, remain well focused on tasks and clear away well at the end of a session.
102. The quality of teaching was good in the one lesson seen. The teacher provided a range of stimulating activities and pupils and resources were organised well. A parent helper was effectively deployed to assist one group of pupils, whilst the teacher helped another group with their skills development. Others were expected to work independently and did so because they not only knew what was expected of them, but also were provided with enjoyable, as well as demanding work to do. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon and review their work, although there is no formal system of assessment used consistently throughout the school. Planning is appropriate and good use is made of a wide range of resources in all classes. The quality of pupils' learning, including those with special educational needs, is good. They acquire skills, knowledge and understanding, are productive and make creative effort.
103. The school has a good curriculum and since the last inspection has ensured that all pupils have sufficient opportunities to select from a suitable range of resources when working, and to express their ideas using a range of media. There are links with other subjects, such as when Year 2 pupils find out about the life of Monet in their literacy lessons, through their use of information technology software and in their paintings and drawings of characters from the Hindu religion. The subject is well led and in keeping with its aim of developing pupils' creative awareness, the school has ensured that art has a high profile in the school.

### **Design and technology**

104. Judgements are based on the scrutiny of pupils' work, displays, some photographic evidence, teachers' planning and discussions with teachers and pupils. Little teaching was seen during the inspection but available evidence indicates that throughout the school, pupils make satisfactory progress.
105. Pupils throughout Key Stage 1 have a sound understanding of how to make an initial sketch of a design idea and to list the resources required, for example, when making a pair of coloured glasses. They have a good understanding of certain mechanisms such as sliders and levers and incorporate these into pictures with moving parts. They learn that links with other subject areas can provide them with additional skills. For example, when constructing a colour spinner, they use their scientific knowledge of electricity to construct a circuit and attach their colour spinner to an electric motor. Their knowledge of simple health and safety procedures when working with materials and components is not so effective. For example, they are unaware of the possible dangers of the fast rotating colour spinner attached to the electric motor. When making puppets, they use skills learnt in art lessons to apply simple and effective finishing techniques. Links with literacy are good due to each term's topics being literacy based. For example, pupils use their literacy skills to write recipes for a gingerbread man, list resources for specific projects, clearly label diagrams and write a sequence of instructions. Links with mathematics and information technology are less evident. However, when making a quilt for a bed, pupils in Year 1 achieve an effective product when using their mathematical knowledge of shape and tessellation to create a pattern.

106. Pupils generally have good attitudes and respond enthusiastically to tasks. They show perseverance and actively enjoy helping other pupils who are having difficulty. When working in a group with large construction apparatus, they co-operate well. Pupils gain great satisfaction from completed tasks but are sometimes frustrated by a lack of time to complete projects in a lesson. At the end of sessions, children clear equipment away efficiently and ensure the room is ready for the next lesson.
107. The quality of teaching in the one lesson observed was satisfactory. Clear objectives were shared with pupils and reinforced by writing them on cards and placing them on tables where pupils were working. Achievements to be met by the end of the lesson were also highlighted. Resources were well prepared and classroom assistants and parent helpers provided good support for individual groups. The summary at the end of the session looked at completed work and set tasks for the next day. The lesson lacked the identification of specific skills for development and the lesson lacked a brisk pace. Regular time reminders were not given to allow the majority of activities to be completed. In teachers' planning, opportunities to involve pupils' learning in other subjects are not always planned for. For example, when making a wheeled buggy, pupils are not given an opportunity to measure and cut their materials accurately. Pupils designing a machine are not given the opportunity to use a design program in information technology. Throughout the school, there is little evidence in teachers' planning for the consistent and progressive development of pupil's skills. For example, there is no evidence of pupils having learnt to use a wide range of tools by the end of Key Stage 1. The quality of children's learning, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. They develop appropriate knowledge and skills and once they have made their product, they learn how to identify improvements in order achieve even better results.
108. The school's policy has been recently updated and elements of the newly published national guidelines are being used alongside the school's scheme of work. The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject and attends year group planning meetings to give advice on the teaching of design and technology. The school has identified some areas for development, such as the design and construction of wheeled vehicles and product disassembling. Some planned monitoring has not taken place due to designated release time being used for other purposes. Assessment of pupils' work is very limited but the co-ordinator has established a portfolio of pupils' work to help demonstrate the standard of work expected. Resources are satisfactory, though there is a limited stock of tools.

## Geography

109. **Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress in this subject as they move through the school. Year 1 pupils know about the features of their own environment. They can identify houses, trees and roads on town maps. They use this knowledge in literacy lessons in describing landscape features in 'Handa's Surprise' and underwater features in 'Rainbow Fish'. They draw pictures, which include features such as a valley, hills, fields, farm, trees and river. In physical education lessons, they follow directions and begin to use their understanding of directions to program and control the robot in information technology. Pupils understand the significance of maps and globes and use them to identify the countries of their friends in partner schools. Their sandcastles on the beach and model villages reinforce the notion of a bird's eye view, which they use when drawing plans of their classrooms and their own groups of tables. In Year 2, pupils have a greater understanding of natural environments such as desert, forest and polar. They can relate these to Egypt from their knowledge of the stories of Moses, to rainforests and tigers in India from their contact with a charity working there, and to Norway and Iceland from their links with schools in**



those countries. Visits to a travel agent, to see a house being built, to the main street and to their own nature area increase pupils' knowledge of their own locality and the features which characterise it. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have the opportunity to visit another area which they can compare with their own and where they can develop orienteering skills. Visitors to the school talk to pupils about their own countries so that pupils have experience of the food eaten in Switzerland, how to put on a sari and what life is like in Kenya.

110. Throughout the school, involvement in the 'Socrates Project' has had a very positive impact on pupils' achievements and the quality of their learning in this subject since the previous inspection. Links with schools in other countries have extended pupils' understanding of the wider world and are a strength of the school. Pupils have a very clear idea of how the weather affects people and their surroundings because they have photographs and letters from their friends in partner schools. They also receive regular videos from them. They can rejoice with people in Norway at the return of the Sun at the end of winter and can explore the common themes that each of the partner schools have embraced together: homes, families, pets, playground games and Christmas. They know that Norway, Iceland and The Netherlands are different, that towns and villages within each country are different, but they also recognise the considerable similarities. They learn about everyday life, culture, language and heritage in the four countries and begin to develop a strong sense of European identity and citizenship. E-mail links have made the world a smaller place for the pupils. The combined environmental education project, set up collectively by the partner schools, has resulted in a week of activities which has taken pupils beyond the requirements of the National Curriculum in their understanding of environmental issues. They know how people affect our surroundings and are involved in considerations of what is attractive or unattractive in their school environment and how it can be improved.
111. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about teaching. However, staff enjoy teaching this subject. Visits from teachers of partner schools and their own travel experiences have increased their confidence and knowledge. Their enthusiasm rubs off on their pupils, who say that they enjoy their geography lessons. By sometimes teaching different classes and by looking at pupils' work, the co-ordinator has a good understanding of how well the pupils are learning. Resources have been recently updated and are continually extended through overseas links and support from parents.

## History

112. **Little teaching of history was observed during the inspection. Judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work and planning documents and discussions with pupils and teachers. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.**
113. **Pupils describe simple characteristics of life in the past compared with now and have an understanding of how lives were very different, such as the absence of electricity and that candles were used. They are knowledgeable about 'hurricane' lamps and why they were called storm lamps. They identify the items in pictures of an old bathroom and a kitchen and compare them to modern appliances. Pupils understand something of school life in Victorian times by using a role-play area in one of the classrooms which has an old fashioned wooden and iron desk and a slate for pupils to act out being at school in those times. Pupils compare toys of today and the past by looking at and handling a variety of toys and discussing the materials used to make them. They realise that some toys are still popular in modern times, such as marbles and teddy bears. Pupils develop a sense of chronology, as time lines are used in different ways in the classrooms. One class**

**is recording by photographs an event for each month of the year during the time they are in that class. Pupils use appropriate phrases related to the passing of time when writing in their books entitled 'How we have changed'. They write about themselves as babies, when they were five and a recent event. Pupils develop a knowledge and understanding of people who lived in particular periods, through stories about Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes.**

114. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory. In discussion with pupils they show they have been motivated by previous learning experiences and have responded well to artefacts provided, such as a flat iron.
115. **The small amount of teaching seen was satisfactory. Teachers make good use of opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills, as seen in the role-play area and the use of the African artefacts. Literacy skills are developed by writing books about their history topics, for example, one pupil wrote 'I want to be a palaeontologist'. The quality of learning in history lessons is satisfactory. Pupils acquire new knowledge and skills and understand what they are doing and learning about.**
116. **There is a comprehensive policy and scheme of work from which teachers can plan the development of history skills. Assessment has not been developed as fully as suggested in the previous inspection, but history is identified on the school development plan for a major review to include assessment. History makes a significant contribution to pupils' social and cultural development.**

### **Information technology**

117. Standards in information technology are below national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 and pupils make unsatisfactory progress. There has been a decline in standards since the last inspection, when standards in information technology were in line with national expectations.
118. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a very limited knowledge and understanding of the skills associated with information technology and its applications in everyday life. A few pupils have appropriate computer skills but these are mainly learned at home. Pupils are unable to turn a computer on, have under-developed keyboard skills, do not understand the functions of many keys or tool bar icons and are unable to save their work. Pupils' attainment in word processing is unsatisfactory. They understand some key conventions but have great difficulty in locating keys on the keyboard. Their mouse skills are also unsatisfactory and few are able to place the cursor into the middle of a word to correct a mistake. Pupils' use of graphics is unsatisfactory because they are unable to open a program and many are unable to select tools to create a picture. Pupils in one of the Year 2 classes can use art and design software successfully. There is no evidence of pupils' understanding of how to assemble and present data using information technology. Pupils have some experience of using computer control technology such as a programmable robot called a 'roamer', but there is no evidence of pupils making up their own simple instructions to control the robot. In Year 2, pupils know to clear the robot's memory before entering single forward instructions, but they are much less confident about how to program a specific number of degrees to make a turn. Pupils also have no understanding of other control technology, such as 'Logo', and only a few have skills in accessing information using CD-ROMs to support learning in other areas of the curriculum.
119. Pupils are enthusiastic about information technology but, with few exceptions, do not use it well to support their learning. Pupils who have a computer at home have a better

knowledge and understanding and are sometimes usefully used to help others. Throughout the key stage, the majority of pupils concentrate well and respond positively when asked to collaborate. All pupils use equipment with care but are unable to close down computers safely after use.

120. The quality of teaching was unsatisfactory in the one lesson seen. While there was some evidence of whole-class teaching to teach computer skills directly, this was not effective. At the start of the lesson there was a clear learning objective stated both orally and on a white board. However, the time scale of the lesson was inappropriate and there were no practical demonstrations for pupils to appreciate and consolidate learning objectives. The lesson ended too quickly and pupils were not given enough time to experiment on their own to consolidate skills that had been taught, for example, when using the robot. Throughout the school, teachers' planning is unsatisfactory and many fail to clearly identify specific learning objectives and the development of information technology capability. There is no evidence of any assessment and recording of pupils' computer skills to provide evidence of progress over time and to act as a basis for future planning. This is a serious weakness and was an issue identified in the last inspection report. However, the school has identified the necessity of establishing assessment and recording procedures and plans are in place to implement these once new computer equipment and related software are installed. There is some evidence of information technology being used to support pupils with special educational needs, but very little evidence of its use to support the development of literacy and numeracy skills.
121. The quality of pupils' learning by the end of Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory. Pupils make very little progress in word processing. While there is evidence of some copy typing there is little evidence of pupils using word processors to compose their own work. Pupils in Year 2 have no knowledge of modelling where, for example, they explore an adventure game and find out the consequences of different decisions. There is some evidence of information technology being used to support geography through the school's involvement in the 'Socrates Project' and pupils learn that e-mail can be used to communicate with people around the world. Apart from this good initiative, there is very limited evidence of pupils' learning being used to support other subject areas, such as science or mathematics. Overall, the unsatisfactory level of pupil achievement is due to a limited amount of focused teaching time where pupils' skills are systematically taught. The lack of modern equipment and appropriate software also restricts the quality of pupils' learning throughout the key stage. The school is planning to ensure that skills are systematically taught and learned by pupils as soon as it receives new computers under the National Grid for Learning funding, which was promised to the school in April 1999.
122. There are no whole school assessment procedures. The school's scheme of work is due to be updated by adopting the nationally published scheme to help ensure that pupils' skills are systematically developed as they move through the school. A significant weakness in the school's provision is the age and wide variety of computers currently available. Throughout the school, four different operating systems exist which do not allow for the consistent and progressive development of pupils' knowledge and skills. Some of the school's computers are incapable of loading modern software and have no multimedia facilities. Much ancillary equipment, such as printers, is also old and its unreliability frustrates both staff and pupils. There is significant lack of teacher subject knowledge and staff training has been recognised as a priority. A bid has been submitted for New Opportunities Funding in 2001.

## **Music**

123. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. Good progress has been maintained since the previous inspection.

124. Pupils make good progress in performing and composing music. They sing songs every week. The younger children sing number songs and rhymes and the older pupils sing in tune a variety of songs from memory. Pupils develop a good sense of rhythm and successfully clap patterns. They use tuned and untuned percussion instruments to accompany songs. Pupils have a good understanding of fast and slow, loud and soft and they demonstrate the differences confidently with their instruments. They make up tunes and record them by using pictures and symbols. Pupils learn to play tunes such as 'Twinkle twinkle little star' on the chime bars. All Year 2 pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder. They also listen to and appraise music of various composers, for example Holst's 'The Planets' and music from different cultures such as China.
125. Pupils have a positive attitude to learning. They enjoy the activities, behave well and are keen to play instruments, which they handle with care. They follow instructions from their teachers properly and respond enthusiastically to the musical activities provided for them.
126. **The quality of teaching is consistently good and is often very good. The visiting teacher is an accomplished musician with a very good knowledge of the needs of children under five and in Key Stage 1. The pace of lessons is brisk and time is used very well. A variety of activities is planned into every lesson in order to interest and motivate the pupils to enjoy making music. Teaching promotes pupils' learning by extending their musical vocabulary, such as explaining what an opera is. Pupils' listening skills and musical knowledge are encouraged through demonstration, for example by playing on the keyboard how the pentatonic scale is used in Chinese music. The quality of learning in music lessons is good. Pupils refine and improve their skills and learn new songs and music making techniques, such as composition using simple notation. They respond very positively to the brisk pace of the lessons and achieve well in their short weekly sessions.**
127. The music curriculum makes a significant contribution to pupils' social and cultural development. Pupils benefit from performing in assemblies, concerts and festivals within the school and the community. Music has played an important part in helping to develop the school's multi-cultural policy since the previous inspection. Pupils play an African drum like the one in their class story. They make up a song about Chinese New Year and sing it accompanied by instruments. With the adjoining junior school, the school is preparing for a joint multi-cultural week in March 2000 to include musical events. There have been additions made to the tape library to include music from other cultures. The school is well resourced with a good quality and range of instruments, including multi-cultural instruments, which successfully promote learning, as there is a sufficient number for all pupils in a class to have a choice of instrument to play in class sessions.

## Physical education

128. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1. Pupils in both Year 1 and Year 2 know the importance of warm-up activities to exercise their muscles before commencing vigorous physical activity. Pupils in Year 1 learn that when bouncing a ball they must not throw it too hard or they will lose control of it. They accurately bowl to their partner who returns the ball in the same manner. Year 2 pupils learn what is meant by a space and are good at identifying one in a crowded hall. They appreciate the need for accuracy when throwing and catching a ball and know the importance of keeping a ball under control while standing still. They then develop these techniques and learn how to control the ball while moving around the hall.
129. The attitude of the majority of pupils is generally good. However, a few pupils occasionally disrupt lessons through their poor behaviour. Teachers deal appropriately

with these pupils, but this interrupts the flow of lessons and distracts other pupils. The Year 1 pupils who have to travel to the hall from their 'demountable' classrooms are disadvantaged by this necessity. Despite significant efforts from their teacher, it takes rather more time for them to settle down to start the lesson when compared to pupils whose classrooms are in the main school.

130. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but with examples of some very good and some unsatisfactory teaching. In good lessons, learning objectives are identified in teachers' planning, which is based on a range of previously learned skills. Instructions are clearly given, checks are made on pupils' understanding and a brisk pace is maintained throughout. These good lessons are also characterised by teachers' high expectations and a keenness to circulate around the class to develop individual pupils' skills. Throughout the school, effective use is made of teacher and pupil demonstrations. This is a strength in the teaching of physical education. In lessons which are unsatisfactory, some of the lesson's pace is lost in dealing with a minority of pupils whose behaviour is poor, and expectations of what pupils can achieve are not high enough. In these lessons, such as Year 2 ball skills, activities are also not appropriate and do not help pupils to develop control and co-ordination. All teachers pay attention to health and safety matters, particularly when pupils are moving equipment or performing. Pupils and teachers dress appropriately for physical education activities. The quality of children's learning, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory overall. They develop appropriate skills and learn to listen to instructions, behave well and enjoy lessons whether working alone or with a partner. When devising their own rules to a game they learn how important it is to have rules which are fair and which allow equal opportunities.
131. The management and co-ordination of the subject are good. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' planning but has had limited opportunities to monitor teaching. However, the school has identified areas for development, such as ensuring all pupils are appropriately dressed for physical education lessons. The school recognises the importance of physical education and devotes a good amount of time to it. Resources are satisfactory, but there is only a small annual budget to replace and update equipment to ensure that this situation is maintained.

### **Religious education**

132. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress overall. Enabling pupils to explore beliefs and feelings is a part of curriculum planning and pupils have sufficient opportunities to reflect on how religious beliefs and values affect their own and other people's lives.
133. Pupils in Year 1 recognise characters in religious stories, such as Jesus and Ganesh and make simple responses to stories. For example, having heard the Old Testament story of Joseph and his brothers, they can talk about occasions when they were jealous. Some pupils in Year 1 know that people who are Christian have their babies baptised in a church. They also know that a Christening may be held in another place, such as a hospital. They have a basic understanding that a Christening is a ceremony where a person is welcomed into the Christian church and can describe a Christening in simple terms, referring to the font, holy water and roles of the people involved for example. Pupils in Year 2 have good recall of the events of stories that they have recently heard. For example, they recall that both Jesus and Krishna are usually portrayed with a light around the head to show that they are special. They remember that Krishna is special to Hindus and Moses is special to Jews and describe how the baby Krishna had to be

protected from his evil uncle. Pupils begin to understand the importance of symbols such as the Cross for Christians and the Aum for Hindus.

134. Pupils generally behave well and readily share resources. They show interest in the subject, work productively and with concentration. Nearly all pupils listen attentively when others are speaking and quickly settle when given written tasks, though some of the Year 1 pupils have not yet learned to listen attentively to others or to wait their turn to speak.
135. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a satisfactory knowledge of the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and the religions that they are expected to teach about. Planning for pupils to respond to the views of others and give points of view of their own is given sufficient emphasis, as is consideration of the implications for living or holding a religious view. For example, pupils are taught about the festivals, times of the year, clothes and food that are significant for Christian, Hindu and Jewish people. Stories, such as the birth of Krishna, are effectively told, and in some lessons teachers make good use of resources, including pictures, an Aum, a candle and a font to stimulate pupils' thinking and promote discussion. In the best lessons, opportunities are taken to develop pupils' literacy skills. For example, Year 2 pupils compare and contrast the events of two religious stories they have been told and then write about them. Pupils are usually well managed and support staff and voluntary helpers are effectively deployed. For example, pupils with special educational needs develop their reading skills by playing a specially made board game, with an adult, about the life of Krishna. On occasions, insufficient time is allowed for pupils to talk about or to reflect on what they have learnt. As a result, the summary of the lesson is not always successful. Pupils' writing is not often well presented, as teachers do not routinely encourage or expect high standards of presentation in pupils' written work. Pupils' learning is satisfactory in religious education lessons. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, have positive attitudes and take a keen interest in the subject, particularly in Year 2.
136. Curriculum planning is satisfactory and the subject co-ordinator gives support and advice when teachers plan units of work. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator has led the school's response to the introduction of a revised 'agreed syllabus' and the development of the school's scheme of work for religious education. Links are made with other subjects. For example, pupils produce good quality paintings and drawing of characters from religious stories. The school has many story sacks based on children's fiction and two have been made with a focus on religious education and the development of literacy skills. One is about Moses and the other is about Noah. The school is building up a portfolio of pupils' work, setting out the standards expected in each year group. However, assessment is unsatisfactory as there are no established procedures for assessing what pupils know and understand.
137. In the last year, a vicar and a Salvation Army officer have visited the school to talk to the pupils, with a particular focus on the special clothes that they wear. The school has a multi-cultural week planned in March 2000, which will include learning about the lifestyles of people of different faiths.