

INSPECTION REPORT

GREAT LEIGHS PRIMARY SCHOOL

Great Leighs, Chelmsford

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114852

Headteacher: Mr R. B. Thomas

Reporting inspector: Colin Henderson
23742

Dates of inspection: 12th – 15th November 2001

Inspection number: 195818

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Junior and infant

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 5 to 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Aragon Road
Great Leighs
Chelmsford
Essex

Postcode: CM3 1RP

Telephone number: 01245 361254

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr C. Emmett

Date of previous inspection: June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Colin Henderson 23742	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Geography History Physical education Equal opportunities	How high are standards? Pupils' results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Jenny Mynett 9334	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Sue Chesters 23196	Team inspector	English Religious education Foundation Stage Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Great Leighs Primary School is situated in an attractive rural setting on the edge of the village of Great Leighs. It currently has 116 pupils on roll (59 boys and 57 girls), which is smaller than the average primary school. Most pupils live in the local village, although 12 per cent come from outside the immediate area. Pupils live in a mixture of private and rented housing and come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds. The pupils are of white, United Kingdom ethnic background. There are no pupils for whom English is an additional language. There are 33 per cent of pupils on the school's register on special educational needs, with a broad range of physical, sensory, specific and moderate learning needs. This is above the national average of 18 per cent. Four pupils have specific statements of need. Ten per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is broadly average for this type of school. Children enter reception with a broad range of attainment. Standards on entry are average overall.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Great Leighs Primary is a good and effective school. Pupils enjoy school and have enthusiastic attitudes to their work. They behave very well and relationships throughout the school are very good. Staff provide good quality care and support. Standards of attainment are improving, promoted by sound and frequently good teaching. The headteacher gives a very good, positive lead to the work of the school, focused strongly on school improvement. He has established a good team approach involving all staff and governors. The school makes very good use of its resources. It provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils attain above average standards in science, promoted by good teaching.
- Pupils have positive attitudes to learning and they behave very well in lessons and around the school.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good. He is supported effectively by a good staff team and an active and influential governing body.
- The arrangements for supporting pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good and promote very good relationships throughout the school.
- The Foundation Stage is very good.
- The school has a very good partnership with parents, which contributes significantly to the standards attained.
- It provides very successfully for pupils with special educational needs and they are fully included in all aspects of school life.

What could be improved

- Teachers' expectations, to be at a consistently high level.
- The range of teaching strategies to challenge and inspire pupils.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good progress since the last inspection in June 1997. Pupils now attain higher standards in most subjects, especially in science. Good progress has been made on most of the key issues identified in the last report. The school has improved curriculum planning and has ensured that all subjects have schemes of work. It has improved assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science, although teachers do not use assessment information consistently to match learning activities to pupils' needs. Teaching has improved, although there are still some inconsistencies in teachers' expectations. The school is being given clearer leadership by the headteacher and he is supported by an increasingly effective governing body.

STANDARDS

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

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

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

Pupils are attaining higher standards than at the last inspection. Although there is some yearly variation due to differences in the number of pupils and their range of ability, results of national tests for Year 6 pupils over the last five years show improvement in English and especially in science. Those in mathematics have been maintained at broadly average levels. The proportion of pupils in 2001 who achieved above expected levels was very high in science (50 per cent). It was above average in English and mathematics. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Inspection evidence confirms that Year 6 pupils attain standards in science that are above the national average. Their attainment in English and mathematics meets average levels. The school did not achieve its 2001 targets of 82 per cent of pupils to attain the nationally expected Level 4 or above in English and 85 per cent in mathematics. These targets were unrealistic and not based on accurate assessment information. The school has set realistic yet challenging targets for 2002 based on specific and detailed assessment information. The current Year 6 contains a higher than usual number of pupils with special educational needs. Good teaching and the effective use of good quality support, additional literacy and booster classes should enable the school to attain its targets of 75 per cent in English and 70 per cent in mathematics.

Inspection evidence shows that Year 2 pupils attain standards that are above average in mathematics and science and average in English. Standards have improved since the last inspection. The school has effectively implemented its strategies for literacy and numeracy, which are now improving pupils' skills, for example, in rapid number recall, especially in Years 1 to 3. These pupils have benefited from these strategies consistently since they started in school. Older pupils' skills are improving, although they are not always consistently challenged to apply their literacy skills in other subjects. Year 2 and Year 6 pupils attain nationally expected standards in information and communication technology, supported by greatly improved resources. Standards in religious education meet those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils attain nationally expected standards in all other subjects. They attain above expected standards in some aspects, for example singing and geographical mapping skills. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support to enable them to be included fully in learning activities. They make good progress towards their learning targets.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have good attitudes. They are enthusiastic and clearly enjoy being at school. They are keen to learn and to succeed.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in lessons and around the school. Pupils are friendly, polite and helpful. They play and work together very well.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Pupils respond positively to opportunities to show initiative and take responsibility, although teachers do not promote these consistently in lessons.
Attendance	Attendance is very good. Pupils arrive promptly for the start of school and lessons start on time.

The high standards of behaviour and pupils' enthusiastic attitudes are strengths of the school and support pupils' learning. The very good relationships contribute to pupils' enjoyment of school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching overall	good	sound	sound

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

The teaching observed in lessons was good. It was frequently very good and occasionally excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching observed. Teaching is of a consistently good standard in the Foundation Stage. Teaching has improved since the last inspection and is a significant factor in improving standards. The teaching of English is sound overall and often good. It is improving pupils' literacy skills, although teachers do not always extend them in other subjects. The teaching of mathematics is good. It improves pupils' numeracy skills and they are challenged effectively to apply their skills in a good range of subjects. Teachers manage their classes well to enable pupils to sustain their interest and concentration. They use resources successfully to extend pupils' knowledge. Some use good methods to capture pupils' attention, although this is not consistently done in all classes. Teachers plan lessons in detail, although they do not always ensure that the learning activities match the needs of pupils of different ability. Taking all subjects into account and the range of pupils' work analysed, the quality of teaching and learning is sound overall.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The school has focused strongly on literacy and numeracy. It has retained a broad and balanced programme to meet the wide range of pupils' needs and abilities. The curriculum is enhanced through good resources for information and communication technology, good use of educational visits and very good links with the community.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Individual pupils are given good support. This enables them to be fully involved in learning activities and to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. The school provides very effectively for all aspects of pupils' personal development. Pupils have a clear sense of right and wrong and understand their social responsibilities. The school provides a very good range of opportunities for pupils to appreciate the values and traditions of their own and other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The strong caring approach by the headteacher and staff provides a good standard of pastoral care. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' work in English, mathematics and science. The use of assessment information to raise standards is not consistent in all subjects.
How well the school works in partnership with parents	The school has a very good partnership with parents. They value the very good information sent home and how the school encourages them to contribute to their child's learning.

The school's caring and supportive approach and its valuable partnership with parent are important factors in encouraging pupils to have a positive approach and to seek to improve their work.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides very strong leadership. He has successfully promoted high standards of behaviour and extended the school's caring and supportive approach. He works closely with a good staff team to focus increasingly on raising standards of attainment
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fully meets its statutory responsibilities. They have clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They work in an active and very effective partnership with the staff in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The headteacher collects a good range of attainment information to monitor pupils' performance and target areas for improvement. The school has good procedures for evaluating teaching and learning, especially in literacy and numeracy. These are not developed fully in subjects other than English and mathematics.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. The school ensures that funds are efficiently targeted on improvement priorities. It closely monitors spending levels and makes excellent use of specific grants, for example those from a local educational trust.

The school has a good number of teaching and support staff. They enable pupils to benefit from good guidance and support. The range and quality of resources are good. They contribute significantly to pupils' learning, for example in information and communication technology. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. The school has very good outdoor facilities. The small, open-plan teaching areas restrict the range of activities as, occasionally, noise levels affect other classes. The school applies the principles of best value very effectively. It gives good value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parental responses from 59 per cent of parents who returned the questionnaire and from the 15 parents who attended the meeting were very supportive of the school. There were few concerns.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • It helps them become mature and responsible. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good and enables their children to make good progress. • The school has high expectations of work and behaviour. • The school is well led and managed. • The school works closely with them to enable their children to be happy and to make good progress. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The consistent use of homework. • Information about how well their children are making progress. • A broader range of activities outside of lessons.

Inspectors confirm the parents' positive views of the school. Inspectors found that teachers use homework consistently, in line with the school's policy. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory for the size of the school and the ages of the pupils. The school provides very good information about pupils' progress.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In 2001 Year 6 pupils attained standards in science which were well above average nationally and for similar schools. They attained standards in English and mathematics that met the national average and the average of similar schools. Test results can vary from year to year given the different numbers of pupils in each Year 6 group – 28 pupils took the test in 2001, but only 15 took the test in 2000. Overall trends in test results over the last three years, as illustrated in the following table, show that the proportion of Year 6 pupils achieving the nationally expected Level 4 has improved. Standards have improved significantly in science. Pupils are attaining higher standards overall in English, although there has been some variation from year to year due to the changes in size and ability within each year group. Standards in mathematics have been maintained at the national average level or just below.

A table to show the percentage of Year 6¹ pupils achieving the nationally expected Level 4 or above

Year School/national average	1999		2000		2001		3 year average
	school/national	school/national	school/national	school/national	school/national	school/national	
English	78	70	93	75	78	75	81
Mathematics	67	69	73	72	64	71	68
Science	83	78	86	85	93	87	87
Number of pupils	18	1 pupil = 5.5%	15	1 pupil = 6.6%	28	1 pupil = 3.6%	

The main factors which are improving results considerably in science are:

- the school has focused strongly on improving pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry;
- teachers have good subject knowledge, especially in Years 5 and 6. They have used this effectively to enable pupils to achieve high standards;
- the school has improved assessment procedures and analysed test results to identify weaknesses in pupils' knowledge. Teachers improve these areas and prepare pupils soundly for taking the tests.

2. The school has successfully implemented its strategies for literacy and numeracy. Teachers are using them with increasing effectiveness to raise standards, especially in Years 1 to 3. These pupils have benefited from the strategy since they started in the school. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 are improving standards, although the literacy and numeracy strategies have not yet resulted in higher standards in the older year groups. For example, pupils attain standards in number work in Years 2 and 3 that are above nationally expected

¹ The National Curriculum has been written on the basis that pupils attain Level 4 by the end of Year 6. Pupils attaining Level 5 are reaching standards above those expected for their age.

levels. Their mental number skills have improved significantly and they are being applied accurately to solve number problems.

3. Inspection evidence reflects test results in English and mathematics and shows that pupils attain average standards by the end of Year 6. They attain standards that are above average in science. Many Year 6 pupils are currently achieving standards in English and mathematics that are just below those expected for their age. However, with the impact of sound and often good teaching, additional support and booster groups and good preparation for taking the tests, it is likely that the school will reach the national average. Although the current Year 6 has a higher than usual proportion of pupils with special educational needs, it is likely to achieve its 2002 targets of 75 per cent of Year 6 pupils to achieve Level 4 or above in English and 70 per cent in mathematics. The school did not achieve its 2001 target, although inspection evidence shows that these targets of 82 per cent in English and 85 per cent in mathematics were not based on reliable attainment information.
4. Year 2 pupils attain standards that are above the national average in mathematics and science. Their standards in English are in line with the national average. Standards in English and science have improved since the last inspection. They have been maintained at the above average level in mathematics. Children in reception make good progress in their learning, promoted by good and often very good teaching. Years 1 and 2 pupils continue to make sound and often good progress, supported by effective teaching and teachers' effective use of good quality support staff and adult helpers. Pupils' attainment in other year groups reflects improving standards in all three core subjects of English, mathematics and science. For example, a significantly high number of Year 3 pupils achieve standards that are above those expected for their age, particularly in mathematics and science. The sound and often good teaching throughout the school builds on these skills effectively and enables pupils to make good progress in their learning. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Where teachers include activities to enable more able pupils to apply their skills and knowledge, this promotes higher standards. However, teachers do not consistently ensure that learning activities always challenge pupils to extend their knowledge and learning. With an increased focus on challenging pupils more consistently and on providing pupils with more opportunities to develop independent study, it is likely that standards will improve more rapidly and an increasing proportion of pupils will achieve above average standards.
5. Pupils' literacy skills are soundly developed overall. They develop their reading skills effectively, especially through their interest in fiction books. Pupils do not develop their library and research skills sufficiently. Pupils attain average standards in writing. Most pupils take pride in their work and present it neatly. Pupils use punctuation with increasing accuracy and they make sound, often good progress in their spelling. Teachers extend pupils' literacy skills effectively through their teaching in literacy lessons. They enable pupils to extend their literacy skills in some other subjects, for example design and technology. However, teachers do not provide enough opportunities across the curriculum to require pupils to apply their literacy skills to support attainment in a broad range of subjects. Pupils make good progress in improving their numeracy skills. Teachers make good use of mental mathematical activities to extend pupils' number knowledge and speed of recall. They do not consistently require pupils to apply these skills to solve challenging number problems or investigations. Teachers extend pupils' numeracy skills effectively by requiring them to use them frequently in many other subjects, for example science, geography, history and design and technology.
6. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, in particular in personal and social skills. They make good progress toward the targets set for them in their individual educational programmes. The school identifies pupils with special educational needs early in their school life, and sets clear and specific learning targets for them. The pupils have a

positive attitude to their work and make good gains in self-confidence. This aids their overall progress. Teachers plan work very carefully for pupils with moderate and severe learning difficulties so that they are challenged at a good level to match their abilities. Pupils with multi-sensory or physical disabilities receive very good support from well-trained support staff. This enables them to take part fully in all lessons because their work is carefully planned to meet their changing needs.

7. Pupils attain standards in information technology that are broadly in line with those expected of pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have improved since the last inspection due largely to the impact of new resources and teachers' increased confidence and subject expertise. Standards have also improved since the last inspection in religious education and design and technology. Pupils attain standards in religious education that match those expected of pupils in Years 2 and 6 in the locally agreed syllabus. The school has focused recently on improving the range of activities in religious education. This is enabling pupils to make good progress in their learning. Pupils attain standards in art and design, design and technology, history, geography, music and physical education in line with those expected nationally of pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Pupils' standards in some aspects of these subjects, for example singing, map work and gymnastics, are above those expected for their age.
8. Children in the Foundation Stage are likely to attain the early learning goals² in all six areas of learning by the time they begin Year 1. Teaching and support staff have a warm and welcoming manner. Children settle quickly and are encouraged to become involved fully in a good range of practical activities. Teaching is good, and often very good in all areas, especially in promoting children's personal and social development. Children make very good progress in their learning.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to school and their learning are very good. They are happy and enjoy school. Pupils particularly enjoy practical lessons, where they are enthusiastic, eager to contribute and keen to participate in the different tasks and activities. Pupils with special educational needs enjoy their learning activities and, with extra support, stay on task and achieve well. Pupils are also enthusiastic about the out-of-school activities, such as the sports club. Parents are particularly pleased at the high expectations of staff, which they feel promotes pupils' personal development, helping their children to become mature and responsible. They value the good teaching and commitment of staff
10. **The standards of behaviour in and around the school are very good and have been well maintained since the last inspection. Parents commented on the high standards. They feel that pupils know what is expected and any problems are resolved sensitively. The school has an orderly atmosphere and pupils are well aware of the school's rules and ways of going on. Pupils' respond positively to the reward system, which they feel acts as an incentive to work hard and behave well. Pupils are very friendly, happy to talk about what they are doing and willing to show their work to visitors. Pupils report that the school is a happy and secure place with few incidents of bullying. If there are problems they know who to go to and are confident it would be dealt with properly. There is an absence of oppressive behaviour and a high degree of harmony exists between all pupils. There have been no exclusions in the school.**

² Early Learning Goals – these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the ~~foundation stage~~ **Foundation Stage**. They refer to achievements children make in connection with the following six areas of ~~learning-learning~~; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for example, in language and literacy, pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write sentences.

11. Relationships in the school are very good, both between staff and pupils, and amongst the pupils themselves. The school works hard to promote tolerance and kindness and ensure pupils do not feel excluded. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly well integrated into school activities. There are frequent chances for pupils to work together in pairs, although opportunities for mixed gender groupings are less evident. Pupils co-operate well and this harmonious atmosphere promotes a good working environment and makes a positive impact on learning. They interact well when working on the computers or practising their skills in physical education lessons.
12. The personal, social and health education programme identifies many opportunities for pupils to talk about important issues. This promotes a good moral code, enabling pupils to share their views and feelings, values and beliefs. During one lesson observed, pupils were enthusiastically discussing issues to do with the environment, including the recycling of rubbish and prevention of waste. The care and encouragement shown by pupils for those with disabilities or special educational needs is very good – “we look out for them”. The school promotes a value and respect for each other, which is reinforced by the good role models of the staff.
13. Opportunities to develop pupils’ personal development are good, but not consistently promoted. Pupils respond positively when they are given tasks to undertake independently, such as reading and following instructions, or undertaking some of their own investigations. This helps them to take responsibility for their own learning and develop their initiative. Pupils willingly undertake roles of responsibility around the school, such as acting as class monitors. In Year 6 pupils have wider responsibilities as prefects. They help set up the hall for assemblies and look after the younger pupils during wet lunch and play times. They value the privilege this offers as it “makes us feel a bit grown up”. There are plans to establish a school council in the new year to provide an opportunity for pupils to air their views and become involved in the decision making processes of the school.
14. Attendance levels in the school are very good and similar to the high levels reported in the last inspection. Punctuality in the mornings is generally good. However, the traffic problems involved with the new by-pass causes occasional hold-ups. Attendance and punctuality is well monitored and the registration process offers an orderly start to the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. Teaching is sound overall and frequently good. It was often very good and, on occasions, excellent during the inspection. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It was good in 43 per cent of 33 lessons observed in the inspection. It was very good in a further 39 per cent and excellent in 3 per cent of lessons. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The teaching of English and mathematics is sound and often good. Teachers have implemented the literacy and numeracy strategies effectively. They are improving pupils’ skills, especially for the younger pupils who have benefited consistently from the strategies since they started in the school. Teaching in science is good and is promoting above average standards of attainment, especially in Years 5 and 6. Teaching is good in religious education, design and technology and physical education. It is sound overall in history, geography, music and information and communication technology. There was not sufficient evidence to make a judgement on teaching in art and design. The sound and often good quality of teaching is improving standards. Teachers plan in detail to provide a good range of learning activities. They manage their classes very effectively to ensure that pupils sustain their attention and remain focused on the learning activity. However, teachers do not have consistently high expectations of pupils. They do not always ensure that the activities challenge pupils consistently to extend their knowledge and skills. This does not always ensure that they attain their highest standard.

16. Teachers have very good relationships with their pupils. They manage and control their pupils very successfully to enable them to focus attentively on their activities. Teachers use praise and encouragement to recognise achievement and to encourage pupils to take pride in their work and produce good quality. For example, in a very good Year 1 English lesson, the teacher's very good control was unobtrusive but very effective. She had very good relationships with the pupils. The teacher provided individual encouragement and her quiet manner and guidance ensured that all pupils knew what they had to do. They were very keen to succeed and to please their teacher. This resulted in some good quality work being achieved. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it effectively to promote above average standards. For example, in a very good Years 5 and 6 science lesson, the teacher used her knowledge and use of such terms as 'resistor' and 'parallel circuits' to extend pupils' understanding. In a very good Years 4 and 5 physical education lesson, the teacher used her good knowledge of gymnastic techniques to raise standards in pupils' sequence work, for example, by improving their body position in rolling and balance movements.
17. Teachers plan their lessons in detail throughout the school. They make very good use of the literacy and numeracy frameworks to identify clear learning objectives and the key skills to be covered. They share learning objectives with their pupils so that they know what they are trying to achieve. This gives a good focus to each lesson and enables teachers to assess and monitor pupils' progress towards these objectives. Teachers use this daily assessment information soundly, together with good quality, constructive marking, to inform teaching plans and identify areas for improvement. For example, the teacher amended her teaching plans for a Years 4 and 5 numeracy lesson because she assessed that many of her pupils had not grasped the concepts on fractions which they had worked on in previous lessons. This allowed her to reinforce the earlier work before moving on to more challenging fractions activities.
18. Teachers use resources successfully to capture pupils' interest and encourage their involvement. Occasionally, some use interesting methods to extend pupils' knowledge. For example, in an excellent Year 1 religious education lesson, the teacher worked closely with parental helpers to improve pupils' knowledge and understanding of the Jewish festival of Shabbat. They prepared a range of traditional food and encouraged the pupils to try them. Pupils were enthralled when one of their classmates sang a traditional Jewish prayer with her father. The activity, supported by a follow-up discussion, extended pupils' knowledge and understanding. It enhanced their respect for the traditions and religious practices of others. Teachers do not enable pupils to get actively involved enough in practical, challenging activities. Most direct the lesson closely and do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to initiate and develop their own ideas. For example, in a Years 4 and 5 science lesson, the teacher gave clear instructions over how she wanted the electrical activity to be completed. By insisting "You do not try until you have joined the wires!" and "Don't forget that the circuit has to be completed!" the teacher limited the opportunity for pupils to apply and extend their own knowledge of electrical circuits.
19. In some lessons, teachers organise a good range of activities, which effectively meets the learning needs of all pupils in the class. For example, in a good Years 3 and 4 English session, the teacher introduced an activity focusing upon planning a fictional story by a lively 'brain-storming' activity in which she used questions to ensure everyone contributed. She then organised the class into groups, with support for lower attainers to ensure that they were fully involved. The teacher maintained a good lesson pace with regular reminders over what she wanted achieved in the time available. By challenging more able pupils about the detail and story development, the teacher encouraged them to try to achieve high standards in their story writing.
20. However, teachers do not have consistently high expectations of pupils' work. They do not always use assessment information to match learning activities closely to the range of

needs in the class. This does not ensure that all pupils are consistently challenged to extend their skills and knowledge. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 geography lesson, the teacher used an atlas exercise which required pupils to apply their reference and mapping skills. All pupils were required to complete all questions. Many pupils, especially those of lower attainment, found the activity too difficult. They only achieved some progress with the help of support staff. Some more able pupils quickly used their skills to find out some of the information needed. They were not then challenged to extend their knowledge by thinking of and using other ways of gaining the information they needed, for example, to locate the source of the River Amazon. Although teachers use group or partner activities in many lessons, for example physical education, science and geography, the evidence from the inspection was that teachers rarely change their teaching approach. For example, inspectors noted very few activities that involved mixed gender groups.

21. Teachers make increasing use of pupils' improving skills in information and communication technology to support work in other subjects, for example English, mathematics, science and history. Teachers provide pupils with opportunities to gain information they need to improve the quality of their work. For example, Year 2 pupils used the Internet to find out about famous Victorians such as the Bronte sisters and William Booth. Teachers promote pupils' literacy skills soundly in other subjects; for example, written descriptions in history and recording investigations in science. However, they do not always plan to extend pupils' literacy skills enough in a broad range of subjects. This does not ensure that pupils are consistently applying and improving these skills. Teachers extend pupils' numeracy skills effectively through a good range of subjects and this promotes higher standards. For example, in Years 5 and 6 geography, the teacher required pupils to work out the average speed of the River Ter. Teachers require pupils to collect data and produce graphs in geography, history, science and information and communication technology. Teachers use homework consistently, in line with the school's policy, to support pupils' work, especially in literacy and numeracy. They make effective use of occasional, additional homework challenges to extend pupils' knowledge. For example, in a Years 4 and 5 history lesson, the teacher offers a team point for any pupil who can find out the dates of Stone Age Man.
22. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. They receive good teaching and support in their class work. They are helped and supported so that their self-esteem is positively developed and, consequently, they achieve well. All staff are aware of and sensitive to each pupil's particular needs and they work hard to help each individual to improve.
23. Teaching in the Foundation Stage of learning is very good and has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers and support staff work very effectively together to provide very good support, especially in promoting children's personal and social development. All staff are calm, patient and sensitive to needs of young children. They involve children in a stimulating and enthusiastic way. All staff fully involve themselves enthusiastically in all activities. This encourages very good relationships. They allow children to settle into school very successfully, enjoy the school day and promote good learning.

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

24. Since the last inspection, the school has made good improvement to the curriculum. At that time, there were deficiencies for design and technology and physical education and some subjects did not have enough teaching time. These issues have been fully and effectively addressed. The curriculum is now good. It has sufficient time to include a good range of subjects and activities that meet the needs and interests of all pupils. All statutory requirements are met. All aspects of design and technology and physical education are now taught. There is also a marked improvement in what is studied in science and information and communication technology. This improvement is reflected in pupils' achievements in these subjects. The use of information and communication technology is developing effectively in all subjects. The curriculum for the foundation subjects³ is good and covers them in sufficient depth. This shows an improvement in curriculum provision since the previous inspection. The time allocation for all subjects is adequate. The school has policies and schemes of work in place for all subjects. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Religious education is taught in accordance with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The foundation curriculum for the children in their reception year is very good. The children have a wealth of very good experiences planned for them.
25. **The curriculum is planned to ensure that the pupils have a good range of first-hand educational experiences. Visitors are encouraged to come into school to talk to the pupils. Pupils visit places of educational interest in the immediate and wider neighbourhoods. Their personal development is addressed satisfactorily through an effective personal, social and health education programme. This includes drug awareness and sex education. Homework gives a satisfactory level of support to the work that pupils do in lessons. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. These are mostly sporting activities. There are opportunities for pupils, throughout the school, to learn to play musical instruments.**
26. **Pupils are prepared well to play an active role as citizens in the school community and in the outside world. Relationships with the local secondary school and the nursery are very good. This allows pupils to make smooth transitions between the different phases of their education. The school has very strong links with the local community. These deepen pupils' understanding of social dependence and of belonging to a caring community.**
27. The school has satisfactorily implemented the National Literacy Strategy. This is beginning to have a positive impact on pupils' reading and writing skills. This is proving particularly effective for the younger pupils, who have benefited from the strategy since starting in the school. This has enabled their skills to build successfully on prior learning. These skills are used satisfactorily across other subjects, but the school has identified the need to develop this aspect further. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is proving effective in raising pupils' standards in mathematics. The school places a suitably strong emphasis on the investigative element of work in mathematics.
28. The school places especial value upon the pupils with special educational needs. The dedication of the teaching and support staff, and the challenges that they set, enables the pupils to learn in a secure, yet demanding, environment. All staff give the pupils good help. The school meets all the recommendations of the new Code of Practice⁴ for the pupils with special educational needs. They are given very good support, allowing them access to all of the subjects of the National Curriculum. Their individual education plans indicate the

³ Foundation subjects: those not deemed core, that is art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.

⁴ [Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities, duties and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help and support to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Special Educational Needs and Disability Act 2001.](#)

precise support that the pupils need. They are thorough and detailed, having specific, measurable and achievable targets for the pupils. The tasks set in class are well matched to pupils' abilities and they are given very good help from the learning assistants. This has a positive impact upon the pupils' learning. The school's strategies for inclusion ensure that all pupils, regardless of age, ability or gender, have equal access to the curriculum. This is noticeably effective in the case of pupils with special educational needs. They integrate very well into classroom work and work happily alongside their classmates. The school regularly reviews the trends in performances of boys and girls. However, it was evident that teachers do not create frequent opportunities for mixed gender groups to work together. This does not always enable boys and girls to gain a greater understanding of how they can work effectively together and enhance their social development.

29. The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage of learning is good. It is based very effectively on enabling children to achieve their early learning goals. Provision for young children's personal and social development is very good. This prepares them very well for future learning. There is still work to be done on the provision for outdoor learning opportunities. The school is aware of this and has ensured good provision is planned into the new building project. The curriculum prepares children well for work at Key Stage 1 of the National Curriculum.
30. Provision for pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.
31. Pupils' spirituality is sensitively promoted through religious education lessons and the daily acts of worship; this provides a good foundation for pupils' spiritual development. The pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and other major world religions, such as Judaism and Hinduism. This is particularly effective when presented through first-hand experience involving parents of pupils. During the inspection, Jewish parents sensitively introduced pupils to the religious ceremony of Shabbat. Opportunities for reflection and the promotion of awe and wonder are developed and successfully promoted across the curriculum
32. The school makes very good provision for pupils' moral development. Good standards of behaviour are expected in and around the school, together with a respect for others. Pupils help devise the class rules, which are prominently displayed in each classroom. These emphasise good behaviour and personal responsibility. The school aims to develop the children's spirit of co-operation with positive reinforcement. This is achieved through the awarding of team points and the recognition at the weekly achievement assembly. Pupils are encouraged to consider the difference between right and wrong, to pay back for acts of kindness and to say 'thank you'. Adults in the school provide good role models for pupils.
33. The provision for pupils' social development is very good. The school encourages pupils of different ages and abilities, including those with special educational needs, to mix and work together. This is particularly important in mixed-age classes. Social issues are considered within different areas of the curriculum. This includes a focus on environmental issues, with pupils discussing issues to do with recycling and waste. Pupils help collect money for charities, through such activities as 'Jeans for Genes' and raising money for the National Children's Homes. This gives them an in-sight into those less fortunate than themselves. Extra-curricular activities, such as the sports club, help to develop pupils' team spirit as well as their skills and abilities. Pupils have the opportunity to participate in village events, such as the Millennium Day and forthcoming Golden Jubilee celebrations.
34. The very good provision for pupils' cultural development is promoted both during lessons and through various visits and visitors. These have included musicians, storytellers and theatre groups. Pupils have the chance to learn to play a musical instrument and the choir has sung at the county festival at the Albert Hall. Visits to art galleries and museums

support many subjects. The school has particularly benefited from an artist in residence with her stimulating ideas promoting imaginative three-dimensional art, displayed in the classrooms. Pupils have been creating computer-generated paintings in the nature of Jackson Pollock and Mondrian, whilst others have been painting to music to capture the mood of the Planet Symphony by Holst. The school is aware that there are few pupils of ethnic minority backgrounds in the school so a conscious effort is made to celebrate the cultural diversity within the UK. The school has a good selection of books and a variety of ethnic music, and pupils have learnt dances from other cultures. There are plans to develop links with a primary school in South Africa next year.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 35. The school provides a very caring and supportive environment. Its provision for pupils' health, welfare and guidance is very good and makes a significant contribution to their personal and academic development. Parents speak very highly of the school. They find the small family environment very friendly, and feel that pupils are well supported and encouraged to develop their individuality. However, they express slight concerns over whether this will continue to such an extent once the school expands. Teachers and their support staff know the pupils very well. They monitor pupils' personal development effectively and will act quickly when they see a need. The school seeks to ensure that pupils have equal opportunities. There are good systems in place to support the academic and personal development needs of pupils with special educational needs, and pupils make good progress.**
- 36. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and eliminating any oppressive behaviour, are very good. This is reflected in the good behaviour and orderly atmosphere in the school. The comprehensive behaviour policy provides clear guidelines for promoting good behaviour and dealing with any disruptive pupils or incidents of bullying. There is a good balance of rewards and sanctions, with staff offering a consistent approach to behaviour management. Pupils are involved in devising the rules and boundaries and know what is expected of them. They respond positively to the weekly achievement assembly where their successes both inside and outside school are recognised.**
37. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good and reflected in the high levels of attendance in the school. Parents are regularly informed about their responsibilities regarding the need to ensure their children attend school regularly and promptly. They call in at the start of the day to inform the school when their children are away ill. Good links have been established with the education welfare officer, who gets involved in following up cases where necessary.
38. The school has very good systems in place for child protection and ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare. The school has good procedures and guidelines for child protection. The headteacher and his deputy are the staff with designated responsibilities for child protection and both are well aware of the process involved. The headteacher has undertaken recent updating training and other members of staff are similarly updated on changes to the legislation. Well-established systems are in place to take care of pupils who have minor accidents or fall ill during the day, and there are effective procedures to meet the medical needs of pupils. A sufficient number of staff are qualified to provide first aid treatment.
39. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and good procedures in place to address the issues of safety and security of pupils in and around the school. The headteacher and governors from the finance and general purposes committee undertake regular health and safety checks and risk assessments. A recent external health and

safety audit identified the school's procedures as being 'above average'. The governors undertake their responsibilities for health and safety conscientiously.

40. Procedures for monitoring academic progress are satisfactory and have improved since the last inspection. There are good procedures in place to assess and monitor the attainment and progress of the pupils in numeracy and literacy. The school is developing similar systems in science and information and communication technology. Currently, procedures in the foundation subjects are informal. Most teachers make good use of data collected to set individual targets for pupils, particularly in mathematics and English. However, there are inconsistencies in the way in which this information is used. This means that there are variations in the impact it makes on pupils' progress.
41. Teachers identify targets for pupils' individual academic development. This helps them make progress from day to day. The school uses assessment data satisfactorily to check the progress of different groups of pupils, for example, those with special educational needs. Pupils who need extra help are identified early and their progress is monitored closely. The first assessments done, as the children enter school in the reception year, provide useful information about each child's ability and potential. The school analyses the results of these tests thoroughly and sets targets for each child's further development. It shares this information very efficiently with parents.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school's partnership with parents is very good and one of the strengths of the school.
43. The quality of information provided for parents is very comprehensive. Information regarding the school and its activities is detailed in the school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents. Regular contact is maintained through the fortnightly newsletters. Teachers hold informal meetings at the start of each year to introduce themselves to parents and share with them what will be covered during the year. Curriculum information, including details of projects and topics to be covered, is circulated to parents at this meeting and highlighted in later newsletters.
44. Parents feel that they have very good links with the school. They appreciate the open door policy and the fact that the school encourages suggestions and takes any concerns they have seriously, handling them sensitively. Parents reported that they are kept well informed about the progress their children were making. A few parents expressed concerns relating to an inconsistent approach to homework, the limited amount of outside physical education/games lessons, including swimming, and the range of activities offered outside school. Inspection evidence did not support these views. Teachers use homework soundly in line with the school policy. The range of extra-curricular activities is satisfactory for the size of the school and the ages of the pupils. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are very complimentary about the support and help their children are receiving. However, some other parents queried whether their more able children are being sufficiently challenged. Inspection evidence confirmed that these pupils are not always challenged enough to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding.
45. Parents have frequent opportunities to speak with staff. There are the informal times at the start and end of the day when teachers are in the playground. Alternatively, parents can make an appointment for a convenient time when they can ask questions or discuss any concerns they may have. The system of formal consultation evenings has been changed to facilitate more time for discussions. Parents are invited to contact teachers to arrange a consultation interview during the autumn or spring terms. This provides sufficient time to enable a comprehensive review of their child's progress and achievements. Parents are very pleased by these changes. The annual reports to parents are very detailed. They describe what has been covered and the pupil's progress and attainment, identifying

targets for improvement. Parents are regularly consulted regarding important issues - most recently relating to the expansion programme. Details concerning the numeracy and literacy strategies, as well as the 'rapid recall' programme, have been made clear to parents through workshop sessions. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the reviews and meetings about their children. It is clear that these very good relationships benefit the pupils, as the school and home work together to give the child maximum help.

46. The significant contribution of parents to their children's learning is having a positive impact on pupils' progress. The school warmly encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning by helping out in the school. A large number of committed adults are volunteering to help in the classroom, with various group activities around the school or helping out on school trips. Parental skills are brought to bear in such areas as investigations within science classes and listening to reading. Parents appear to be regularly listening to their children read at home and this is contributing to the good standards of reading.
47. Parent's involvement in the school through the Friends of Great Leighs (FOGLS) is making a valuable contribution to the school. FOGLS is very effectively run by a committed group of parents and staff. It acts as a 'sounding board' for discussing important issues, as well as a support group for the school. FOGLS successfully runs a large number of fund-raising and social events each year. These are well attended and generate significant additional funds to help purchase resources for the school. These include increasing the book stock, purchasing computers and new software packages, picnic benches and the adventure playground equipment. A number of parents also offer additional support by undertaking minor maintenance tasks around the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The school has good leadership and management. It has improved since the last inspection. The headteacher provides very good leadership. He gives a clear and positive direction to the work of the school. He has made a significant impact on promoting high standards of behaviour and extending the caring and supportive approach. He works closely with a good staff team and a very supportive and influential governing body to focus increasingly on raising standards of attainment. He has a very good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Parents value the leadership that the headteacher gives to the school. Their comments, both in the pre-inspection meeting and in their questionnaires, recognise the improvements that have been made to the school since he took on the role in January 1999. The school has made good progress overall since the last inspection. It has made very good progress recently, guided by the headteacher, which is improving teaching and enabling pupils to attain higher standards. Curriculum planning is now good. The school has improved its procedures for assessing pupils' work, especially in English, mathematics and science. However, teachers do not use assessment information consistently to ensure learning activities match pupils' needs. Teaching has improved, although there are still some inconsistencies in teachers' expectations. The school's development planning has improved and is now giving a clearer focus to priorities for school improvement.
49. The headteacher has established a strong sense of staff working together to plan and co-ordinate teaching and learning. They work closely with the Governors Improvement Group to discuss and agree development priorities. The headteacher monitors and evaluates teaching and learning, with support from the local education authority's advisory staff. He has observed all staff teaching literacy and numeracy and completed other observations as part of the school's performance management programme. The headteacher gives detailed feedback to teachers, recognising both what they are doing well and identifying any points for improvement. This improves standards. Some subject co-ordinators,

particularly the co-ordinator for numeracy, have also had opportunities to monitor and evaluate teaching, although this has yet to be fully established. The school has developed a structured programme of monitoring and evaluating the curriculum, which includes looking carefully at samples of pupils' work, monitoring teaching plans, analysing test results and visits to lessons by governors. This provides a broad range of information and is improving the staff and governors' knowledge of how successful the school is in achieving its aims. This information is being used with increasing effectiveness to target areas for improvement.

50. The governing body continues to be very supportive of the school. Governors make a significant and valuable contribution to its effectiveness. They are linked to areas of the curriculum, for example literacy and numeracy. Many visit the school frequently, sometimes with a specific focus for their visit. They report back to the governing body on their visits and discuss any issues that may have arisen. Governors have benefited from attending local education authority's training courses. These have given governors a greater understanding of their roles and responsibilities and have enabled them to become more actively involved in working with the school. Governors bring to the school a good range of personal and professional expertise, which they use well to form a close partnership with the headteacher and his staff. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities very effectively.
51. The headteacher works closely with the school's efficient finance officer and finance governor to ensure that finances are targeted efficiently on school improvement priorities. They closely monitor and evaluate their spending, and benefit from good quality support from the local education authority's financial services. They have established a very focused strategy to managing the budget process. This enabled them to turn a deficit budget into a significantly large carry-over. This is clearly targeted, together with specific grants, to improve the accommodation and link it effectively with the proposed new building. The school applies best value principles to very good effect. It makes good use of new technologies to ensure efficient general and financial administration, which contributes very effectively to the smooth running of the school. The high quality of the school's administrative staff is valued by parents as they provide a close and friendly link between the school and its community.
52. The management of the arrangements for pupils with special educational needs is good. The headteacher, in his role as special educational needs co-ordinator, ensures that all procedures meet requirements. He gives very good support and guidance to all colleagues and ensures that all the pupils have their entitlement. They are fully included in all school activities. This fully reflects the school's aim. Governors regularly discuss issues relating to special educational needs in their school improvement meetings and monitor closely the funds spent on this aspect.
53. The school has a good number of staff to teach the National Curriculum. Teachers are properly qualified and possess a good range of subject expertise. They are well assisted in their teaching by skilled and enthusiastic support workers. This makes a valuable contribution to the quality of education provided by the school.
54. The accommodation is satisfactory. However, it does have limitations which can inhibit teaching and learning. For example, the teaching bays are small and cramped, particularly for the older pupils. These bays are open plan and noise from adjoining areas can be a distraction during lessons. Teachers are adept at minimising any negative impact that the building might have on learning. They plan very carefully to ensure that noisy and quiet activities do not happen at the same time. They also ensure that the displays in each area are bright, attractive and stimulating, thus making sure the working areas are aesthetically very pleasing. The buildings and grounds are very well cared for and a credit to the cleaner in charge.

55. The school's resources are good in most areas, notably science, mathematics, information and communication technology, religious education, music and physical education. For other subjects they are adequate and, in all cases, they are used effectively to support teaching. There is a very small but pleasant library and the school has a good number of good quality fiction and non-fiction books. Unfortunately, the size of the library, and the fact that it is outside of the secure entrance hall, restricts the number of pupils who can use it at any one time. Thus, it is under-used as a teaching resource.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

56. In the context of its many strengths, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) raise teachers' expectations to a higher level by using the assessment policy consistently to ensure that learning activities challenge all pupils;
(paragraphs 4, 15, 20, 40, 80 and 82)
- (2) increase the range of teaching strategies to challenge and inspire pupils by:
 - improving their understanding of what they are achieving and how they can improve;
 - enabling them to take increasing responsibility for their own learning;
 - including more opportunities for pupils to work in groups of differing size, ability and gender.

(paragraphs 4, 11, 13, 86, 103, 113, 116 and 118)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

33

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

24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	1	13	14	5	0	0	0
Percentage	3	39	42	15	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	116
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	11
Special educational needs	YR– Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	32
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.2

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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	8	8	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
	Total	14	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (81)	94 (94)	100 (94)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
	Total	15	16	16
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	94 (94)	100 (94)	100 (75)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	17	11	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	11	8	15
	Girls	11	10	11
	Total	22	18	26
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	79 (93)	64 (73)	93 (87)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	10
	Girls	10	11	11
	Total	20	20	21
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	School	75 (73)	72 (67)	75 (87)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	112
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y R – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19
Average class size	23.4

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 / 01
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	£
Total income	351,089
Total expenditure	327,279
Expenditure per pupil	2,407
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,264
Balance carried forward to next year	37,074

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 58.6%

Number of questionnaires sent out	116
Number of questionnaires returned	68

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	56	43	1	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	54	6	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	50	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	57	13	2	2
The teaching is good.	50	46	1	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	44	15	2	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	33	4	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	32	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	37	53	4	1	5
The school is well led and managed.	56	43	0	0	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	57	0	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	16	54	16	9	5

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

57. At the time of the inspection, there were four children in the reception class. They began school in September and attend full time. The previous inspection findings indicated that the school made satisfactory provision for children under five in the reception class. Current inspection findings show that this provision has improved since then and is now very good. Opportunities planned for these young children are very good and make learning fun. The school has implemented very successfully the Foundation Stage curriculum for the children under five. All of the six areas of learning are thoroughly represented. This stimulating start to school increases children's awareness of the world around them and helps them learn very rapidly.
58. Children enter the school's reception class at the beginning of the term in which they are five. All staff are very skilful in providing work that effectively meets all children's needs and abilities. This ensures that all of the children are included in all activities and have equal access to the curriculum. The initial assessment of children's abilities when they first enter school shows that most children begin school with average skills in speaking, listening and mathematics. This has been the pattern of children's attainment at entry for a number of years, although cohorts vary considerably in size and in the proportion of children with special educational needs. Most children are likely to meet the expectations of the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the time they begin Year 1. They make good progress in their first weeks at school. This is a direct result of the patient, carefully structured and high quality teaching.
59. The quality of teaching in all areas of learning is good and frequently very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The teaching is particularly good in promoting children's personal and social development. All staff are calm, patient and sensitive to needs of young children. Adult interaction with children is stimulating and enthusiastic. All staff fully involve themselves in all activities, including role-play. This results in very good relationships and a great degree of trust between adults and children. The classroom is stimulating, interesting and welcoming. This adds to the enjoyment of the school day and promotes good learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

60. Children improve in self-confidence as they work and develop an increasing awareness of their own worth. All of the children respond very well to adults and each other. They work cheerfully together, share equipment happily and talk together with good humour. This was particularly noticeable in one session, when children worked together in the dark to find and identify objects, using senses other than sight. They enjoyed sharing their ideas and telling each other how they had found a variety of objects. The children work with a clear sense of enjoyment and purpose. This is a direct result of the very good teaching. Teaching and support staff are very skilful at encouraging children to participate and express their ideas and opinions.

Communication, language and literacy

61. Most children enter the reception class with average standards in their communication skills. Staff ensure that the children learn to listen carefully and follow instructions accurately. At the time of the inspection, the children are already working at standards expected for their age and are likely to meet the goals set for this area of learning. This represents good progress and is a direct result of the skilful teaching. All staff ensure that children have opportunities to see the values of reading and writing, in most activities. For

example, children have constant access to a good selection of books in the classroom. They use computers to read some of the books they have read in class. They quickly begin to recognise key words. They enjoy looking at books and listening to stories. This enjoyment makes children eager to read and write. They practise how to write their names and copy simple sentences accurately under their pictures. The teacher's detailed assessments and knowledge of the individual children's needs enable her to guide children in the Foundation Stage successfully to follow the National Literacy Strategy for children of reception age. This contributes very effectively to the development of their reading and writing skills.

Mathematical development

62. At the time of the inspection, most children achieve standards expected for their age. This represents good progress from their entry to school five or six weeks before. Staff make number activities very interesting. They take every opportunity to develop children's awareness of the sequence of numbers and their relationships. Children quickly begin to develop a secure knowledge of mathematical language. For example, they already know the names and some of the properties of regular shapes. They count to five or ten confidently and sort objects, such as teddy bears, by size and colour.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

63. The teacher, supported very effectively by support staff and other adult helpers, provides a good range of interesting and practical activities. This good organisation, supported by good quality teaching, ensures that children gain good knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Children use the computers confidently and accurately. They begin to understand the notion of 'now and then' by comparing new and old teddy bears. They find places on maps and begin to appreciate that weather affects people's lives.

Physical development

64. The provision for the development of children's physical skills is good. The children have good opportunities for outdoor and indoor explorative play, particularly in physical development sessions in the hall. They also have ample, good quality opportunities to develop their ability to control pencils, scissors and brushes. They experience a variety of activities, such as cutting and using malleable material, which helps them practise and refine their manipulative skills.

Creative development

65. Staff have high expectations of children's attainment in this area. As a result, children use paint and colour pictures confidently. They use different instruments to make long and short sounds in music sessions and sing a variety of rhymes and songs. They have good access to areas for imaginative role-play, such as the 'dark area'. These areas have stimulating displays to enhance learning.

Summary

66. The provision for the Foundation Stage is very good. The most significant strength is the high quality of teaching for these young children. Staff plan adult-led activities very carefully. This ensures that all children have opportunities to express themselves as well as to experience direct teaching. The school analyses results of the baseline assessment and uses this to plan work for individuals accordingly. Staff have a very clear understanding of how young children learn and develop. This ensures that all children, including those with special educational needs, make rapid progress and learn well.

ENGLISH

67. Pupils at the end of Year 2 attain standards which have improved since the time of the last inspection when they were below average. They are now in line with the national average. Standards attained by Year 6 pupils have dipped since the last inspection. Then, they were above average, now, they are in line with the national average. However, although cohorts are generally small, their size varies considerably, as do the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. Thus, a comparison of standards year-on-year is not reliable as, for example, the results of one pupil in a small group affects the overall results by 5 or 6 per cent. In lessons, pupils learn well and often make good progress. An analysis of pupils' work shows that most of them make sound progress over time. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. They receive consistently good quality support and guidance. This enables them to be fully included and purposefully involved in the full range of learning activities. Some more able pupils are not challenged consistently to extend their literacy skills, particularly in writing. During the inspection, good teaching meant that pupils learned well.
68. Throughout the school, pupils have sound speaking and listening skills and use them to listen attentively and respond satisfactorily to questions. The youngest pupils start school with an average level of vocabulary and most listen satisfactorily. Mostly, teachers encourage younger pupils to answer questions using complete sentences and correct vocabulary, although this approach is not always consistently used. However, where it is successful, it results in the pupils quickly and confidently joining in class discussions. They achieve standards that are in line with those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, these skills are built on soundly and pupils mostly speak clearly in class discussions, using an increasingly broad range of vocabulary. Teachers expect pupils to listen carefully to what is said to them. Most pupils respond well and meet these expectations. They sit quietly and listen attentively to instructions and questions. Consequently, the majority of pupils understand what they are to do and concentrate effectively in their lessons. However, there is a small but significant number of pupils in some classes who do not listen carefully. They sit quietly, but are not listening carefully to what is being said by their teachers. Inspectors noted several pupils who put up their hand regularly to answer questions, but when asked for an answer 'forget' what it is they want to say. This does not ensure that their speaking and listening skills are used consistently as they move through the school. This also affects their learning, since they have not always heard what it is they are to do, or miss vital information that the teachers give them. Teachers do not always use strategies to ensure that all pupils know what they are expected to achieve and settle quickly to their learning activity.
69. Pupils attain average standards in reading at the end of Years 2 and 6. Throughout the school, particularly in Years 3 and 4, a significant number of pupils read at above average levels. These year groups have benefited from the effective group reading activities developed since the introduction of the school's literacy strategy. Younger pupils enjoy sharing books with adults. They quickly learn key words and begin to read for themselves. Average and below average pupils have a good grasp of letter sounds, which helps them to tackle unfamiliar words. Older pupils become reasonably adept at finding the information that they need from a variety of sources. The competent readers skim and scan successfully to access information. However, for most pupils, library and research skills are not well developed. The reading skills of the average and above-average pupils are sufficiently well developed to enable them to cope with most texts. Lower attaining pupils achieve sound progress in developing their reading skills because they receive good support from teachers and support staff.
70. Pupils attain average writing skills by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards seen in lessons during the inspection and in the scrutiny of pupils' work are average. Most pupils take pride in the way in which they present their work and handwriting is often good. Younger pupils begin to write in a legible, well-formed style. They use capital letters and

full stops correctly, although less able pupils find this difficult to do consistently. Year 2 pupils write for different purposes. For example, they write instructions to tell their reader how to play a game of skittles. More able pupils write sentences, spelling words phonetically. By Year 3, pupils begin to spell more complex words accurately and become more adventurous in their use of vocabulary. Pupils make sound progress and, by the age of 11, they write more complex grammar and use well-defined sentence structures. For example, Year 6 pupils wrote good accounts of 'A Day at Cats'. Many use a good level of mature vocabulary and use advanced punctuation, such as speech marks and paragraphs, in their work. Sound standards of work were seen in lessons and many pupils, particularly the more able, achieve well.

71. The quality of teaching and learning is sound overall and often good. Teachers plan and organise their lessons well. They have good subject knowledge and now use the National Strategy for Literacy successfully to promote good learning. At the beginning of each lesson, teachers usually explain clearly what they want pupils to learn. They revise previous learning effectively. As a result, all pupils understand exactly what they are to do and know what is expected of them. Learning is noticeably improved when teachers use a variety of methods to keep pupils interested and working at a good pace. For example, in lessons where discussions and formal writing are alternated with practical activities, the pace of learning increased. This was evident in a Year 6 lesson when, between discussing the format of headlines, pupils were given the opportunity to look at simple, powerful headlines and prepare their own versions. The pace of learning and the amount of work increased because of the variety of tasks given. However, inspectors analysed a sample of pupils' earlier work and this show that teachers do not always maintain high expectations of the amount and quality of work achieved.
72. Teachers plan satisfactorily for pupils to practise their literacy skills in some other subjects. For example, in literacy sessions, they use historic text for class reading. They encourage pupils to use their writing skills in other subjects, for example, to produce a set of instructions for making cheese crackers and a cup of tea. However, these opportunities are underdeveloped as teachers do not consistently focus on ways in which they can apply pupils' literacy skills. Pupils use information and communication technology well to support their learning. For example, they use computers to experiment with headings and font sizes for their headlines and sub-titles.
73. The literacy leader manages the subject well. She has a clear understanding of the needs of the subject and has prepared a good action plan to address the subject's future development. Resources are adequate for the current curriculum and are used well. There is a pleasant but small library and the school has a good stock of fiction and non-fiction books. However, because the library is so small it is not a suitable area for pupils to practise their library and research skills nor one in which they can work independently.

MATHEMATICS

74. Pupils attain standards at the end of Year 6 that meet the national average. Inspection evidence shows that Year 6 standards are currently just below those expected for their age. However, with continued sound, and often good, teaching, together with the good use of additional support and preparation for the national tests, it is likely that standards will attain average levels. Standards in Year 6 are lower than at the time of the last inspection. Attainment levels vary from year to year, dependent upon the range of ability in the small year groups. For example, last year there were 28 pupils in Year 6. This current Year 6 has 17 pupils and a significantly high number of them have special educational needs. Teachers work closely with support staff to ensure that these pupils are fully included in learning activities and make good progress in their learning. It is likely that many will achieve average levels by the end of the year.

75. Pupils attain standards that are above average by the end of Year 2. Attainment has been maintained at the level reported in the last inspection. Pupils are benefiting from the school's good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, which has been used consistently since this group of pupils started at the school. Many Year 2 pupils have good number knowledge and understanding. Inspection evidence shows that they are already achieving average standards for Year 6 pupils. It is likely that they will continue to make good progress in their learning and achieve above average standards by the end of Year 6.
76. Most Year 2 pupils are confident in counting in twos and fives up to 100. They use their knowledge successfully to count on, and show the difference between two numbers greater than 20. Some lower attainers have weaknesses in their knowledge of counting numbers, which restricts the level achieved. Most Year 2 pupils use mental recall to add sums of money up to 20 pence accurately. A more able Year 2 pupil achieves well above average levels; for example, using a very good multiplication tables knowledge confidently to work out 8×4 in answering a shopping problem. Years 3 and 4 pupils build on these number skills successfully and continue to make good progress in their learning. For example, most are confident in their rapid use of mental number skills and knowledge to work out multiplication problems involving 5, 10, and 8 and 9 times-tables. Some more able Year 3 pupils are already achieving standards close to those expected nationally of pupils at the end of Year 6, for example, when multiplying and dividing by 100. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 show a developing awareness of the use of different number strategies to solve problems accurately. For example, many use 'bridging' through multiples of 10 to rapidly work out the difference between sums of money; for example, they calculate the difference between £3.95 and £6.75 by adding 5p to the £3.95 to make it £4.00 and add 5p to the £6.75 to 'compensate' the sum. They then calculate the multiples of ten up to £6.80 to get the correct answer.
77. Teachers use the Numeracy Framework to provide detailed plans that include all the required mathematical topics. For example, they systematically plan to extend number work to include more challenging work on fractions, decimals and percentages. Most Year 5 pupils know how to work out equivalent fractions and how to convert common fractions, such as $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{3}{4}$, into decimals and percentages. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of other concepts and skills, for example shapes and handling data, are sound. They are above expectations in some aspects; for example, their knowledge of the properties of different mathematical shapes. Some teachers challenge pupils to apply their knowledge to solve difficult number problems; for example, in identifying number sequences and patterns. However, this is not consistently done in all classes, particularly in Years 3 to 6. Teachers use extension activities too frequently, which are consolidation of similar work to that already achieved by pupils rather than requiring them to use their skills and knowledge to complete a challenging mathematical investigation.
78. Discussion with pupils, confirmed by the views of some parents, showed that many of them like mathematics. The school has implemented its numeracy strategy successfully. It has recently focused on improving pupils' mental skills and teachers use rapid-fire mental questions to interest pupils and to encourage their involvement. Pupils respond very positively to the challenge of needing to think and reply quickly. They enjoy trying to be one of the quickest. This pace and enjoyment promote good progress in pupils' learning. Where teachers challenge the more able and use other questions to ensure all pupils are thinking and using their knowledge, this enables all pupils to be involved effectively and contribute to the lesson. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher used a wall-display of large playing cards very effectively to focus pupils' attention. She used a good range of questions to enable all pupils to participate. She made good use of support staff to enable pupils with special educational needs to be included fully. She made it more difficult for the more able pupils by challenging them to keep their eyes closed and not use the display to help them work out the answers. On occasions, teachers spent too much time on

explaining to individual pupils the strategies needed to solve a particular problem. They did not challenge other pupils, particularly the more able, to be thinking about another problem as they completed their explanations. This did not enable the brisk pace to be maintained nor ensure that pupils remained actively involved.

79. Teaching of mathematics is sound and often good or very good, especially for infant pupils. It contributes to raising standards, especially in number knowledge and understanding. Teachers manage their classes effectively to ensure that pupils sustain their attention and concentration. They plan in detail and share the learning objective with the pupils to enable them to know what they are trying to achieve. Teachers use the end-of-lesson feedback sessions effectively to check on how much progress the pupils have made in achieving the objective. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 lesson on graphs, the teacher used the feedback activity to check on pupils' understanding of how to interpret information on graphs. She used questions very well to check on how pupils use the graph to get their information, for example, "Where would you look to see if this information is on your graph?" This required pupils to focus carefully on how the graph had been drawn and the information provided on each axis. Teachers extend pupils' numeracy skills successfully in a good range of other subjects; for example, science, geography, history and design and technology. For example, in developing practical fieldwork skills in geography, the teacher required pupils to apply their numeracy skills to calculate the rate of flow and the average speed of the River Ter. Teachers make some use of information and communication technology to support standards in mathematics, for example in handling data, although this is not consistently developed.
80. Although teachers use assessment information to provide a range of activities to meet pupils' mathematical ability, they do not do so consistently in all classes. Teachers' expectations are not always sufficiently high enough to ensure that all pupils achieve the standards of which they are capable. Where teachers have planned a similar activity for different ability groups, more able pupils achieve more in the amount they cover. However, teachers do not consistently re-direct pupils on to more challenging tasks which enable them to attain a higher standard. Teachers do not always require pupils to use their knowledge and understanding, either in written or spoken answers, to explain how they used their skills and knowledge. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 lesson, the teacher effectively reinforced pupils' use of different number strategies, although she did not challenge more able pupils to offer other ways to work out particular problems. The teacher did not challenge pupils, especially the more able, to listen carefully to the answers of other pupils and suggest alternative strategies to work out number problems. This did not ensure that they were always involved fully in the activity and constantly looking for ways to apply their number knowledge.
81. The subject co-ordinator gives good leadership. Teachers have improved the quality of their planning and of the procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment. She has given a clear direction, supported effectively by the headteacher and the local education authority's numeracy advisory teacher, to implement the numeracy strategy and improve the quality of teaching. The co-ordinator has improved resources, which are now good in both range and quality. This effective management is contributing to improving standards.

SCIENCE

82. Pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 attain standards that are above the national average. They have improved significantly on the average standards reported in the last inspection. The school has focused strongly on improving pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding of scientific enquiry, which was reported previously as a weakness. Supported by good teaching, this increased focus has raised standards. Teachers have good subject knowledge, particularly in Years 5 and 6, and they use it effectively to achieve high

standards. Many pupils throughout the school have above average skills and knowledge of how to carry out a scientific investigation. They make good progress in their learning. Discussions with pupils showed that they really enjoyed the practical investigations. This positive and enthusiastic approach encourages them to become involved fully in the activities and contributes to their achievements. Teachers organise some opportunities for pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6, to initiate and develop their own ideas when carrying out a scientific enquiry. This is not built on consistently throughout the school and does not ensure that pupils are always challenged to apply and extend their knowledge and understanding.

83. Teachers make good use of national guidance to ensure that all required scientific topics are taught effectively and skills build successfully on prior learning. For example, many Year 2 pupils know the main uses of electricity and how a bulb lights up in a simple electrical circuit. Year 3 pupils show a good understanding of the dangers of electricity and apply their knowledge successfully by knowing how to use circuit breakers to make some jobs safer. Their knowledge and understanding are extended further in Years 5 and 6, for example, by knowing which materials are good conductors and insulators. They use their knowledge effectively to extend their investigation skills; for example, by finding out how different types of electrical circuits, such as parallel or series, change the brightness of bulbs. Pupils throughout the school are aware of the need for 'fair testing' and show a good understanding of which factors need to be controlled when testing their predicted results. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils, some with teacher guidance, know that it is important to maintain one circuit with the bulb shining in order to compare how the brightness of bulbs in other circuits have changed.
84. Inspection evidence from work completed earlier in the term showed that pupils develop a good range of methods to describe their activities and record their results. For example, Year 2 pupils use their literacy skills successfully to report about different medicines, following a talk by a visiting doctor. They use their information and communication technology skills successfully to produce tally charts and bar graphs as part of their 'healthy lifestyle' work. These are built on effectively in other years and Years 5 and 6 pupils respond conscientiously to describe their activities in detail. They include their prediction; a description of the equipment and how they use it; what actually happens and suggest reasons to explain 'why' it happened. For example, more able Years 5 and 6 pupils explain in detail how the different surfaces and different torches altered the accuracy and detail of a reflected image.
85. The quality of teaching is good, and often very good. Most teachers use a good range of interesting, practical activities to focus pupils' attention and encourage their enthusiastic participation. For example, during the inspection week, many classes were developing pupils' knowledge and understanding of electricity. Teachers make good use of support staff and other adult helpers to ensure that pupils are fully involved in a good range of partner or group activities, for example, to investigate different electrical circuits. This level of support is particularly successful for pupils with special educational needs. It enables them to be included fully in all activities. Where teachers allow them to use ways of recording that are closely matched to their learning needs, they achieve well. Pupils maintain their interest and attention and are very keen, for example, to try to find out why bulbs worked in some circuits or how their brightness changed in others. Teachers use questions effectively to require pupils to use their knowledge to explain what may happen or has happened. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher used "What might happen if ...?" and "What will we need to do...?" to encourage pupils to predict and explain what might happen to the bulb in their electrical circuits. They use good subject knowledge to extend pupils' skills and knowledge and this promotes high standards. For example, in a Years 5 and 6 lesson, the teacher's very good use and explanation of specific scientific vocabulary, such as 'resistance', 'energy' and 'current', improved pupils' understanding.

She used clear and detailed circuit diagrams to extend pupils' knowledge of how circuits in series or parallel can change the amount of current received by the bulb or bulbs.

86. Teachers make good use of partner and small group activities to encourage pupils to work collaboratively, for example, when following instructions and setting up their electrical circuits. Some teachers challenge pupils to test their own ideas. However, teachers do not challenge pupils enough, especially more able pupils, to discuss, develop then test their own ideas for solving a scientific problem. Most teachers clearly explain what they want the pupils to investigate. This provides a good focus to learning. However, it does not always enable pupils to think carefully about what they already know and then try to use this knowledge to investigate further. This does not enable pupils to achieve standards that are consistently above or well above average.
87. The science co-ordinator gives good leadership to developing the subject through the school. She has been effective in enabling teachers to focus on pupils' enquiry skills and in promoting higher standards. She is improving assessment procedures, including identifying key skills to be covered in each year group. This is giving a clearer focus to teaching and learning. Most teachers are using these assessments soundly to inform their teaching plans. They are not using it consistently to inform pupils of how well they are achieving and what they have to do to achieve higher levels of attainment. The co-ordinator monitors teaching plans and evaluates samples of pupils' work. The headteacher has observed and evaluated some lessons. The school has planned for the science co-ordinator to monitor some more lessons later this year. She has introduced some individual pupil target setting, although this is not yet established consistently in all year groups. She has encouraged teachers to make some use of information and communication technology to support standards in science, for example, by enabling pupils to present detailed graphs of their results. She is planning to improve resources in order to provide more opportunities, for example, to allow pupils to use scientific sensors. This good subject leadership has been influential in promoting higher standards.

ART AND DESIGN

88. Pupils attain average standards in Year 2 and Year 6. The overall standards in art are similar to those at the time of the last inspection. During the inspection, the school's focus was on design and technology. Only one art-based lesson was observed and judgements, therefore, have been based upon interviews with the pupils, observations of the pupils' work and an interview with the subject leader. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time and learn well in lessons.
89. The scheme of work now in place ensures that art is taught not only to develop the pupils' artistic skills, but is also used to support other curriculum areas. For example, the pupils study the work of well-known artists. They then work in the style of those artists, using computer software. Years 2, 4 and 5 have produced in this way some very good displays of their work, in the styles of Mondrian, Pollack and Seurat. All aspects of the art curriculum, including sculpture and textile work, are covered well. For example, Year 6 produced a stitched banner portraying the story of Perseus. Year 2 studied materials by weaving natural materials and wool to represent what they observed in nature.
90. By the age of seven, pupils use a range of media to record their observations. In Class 1, the pupils make collage faces of themselves for their 'Myself' topic. Year 2 use pencil designs to illustrate their question 'Can buildings speak?' By the age of 11, pupils build upon the skills and techniques acquired when they were younger and begin to develop a critical awareness of their own work, and the work of others. Years 4 and 5 use sketchbooks to practise techniques for pencil shading and pose for portraits. They study the shape and form of animals and produce clay models. Year 6 extend their skills with clay, producing a variety of slab, coil and thumb pots, which they decorate.

91. Throughout the school, wonderful displays of pupils' work undertaken with the artist in residence decorate walls and ceilings. These range from simple card and paper designs and collages, to intricate three-dimensional pictures made from cardboard and wood. They give clear evidence of the way in which the school builds on pupils' knowledge and skills in progressive steps.
92. The subject leader manages the subject well. She has a clear view of how she would like art to develop and has an action plan to achieve her vision. Resources are satisfactory. They are accessible to staff and pupils and used well.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

93. Pupils attain average standards in Year 2 and Year 6. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection, when standards for pupils aged 11 were unsatisfactory. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. They make good progress over time and learning in lessons is good.
94. Year 2 pupils investigate a range of materials and construction kits, as they design, plan and make their models and artefacts. They use tools sensibly and cut and stick with care and consideration. Year 1 pupils explore the possibilities of different types of fastenings when manufacturing a jointed teddy bear puppet. Year 2 experiment with different ways of joining materials together as they make a coat for Joseph.
95. Year 6 pupils develop their designing and making skills. Their evaluation skills become more considered. The pupils talk about the different projects that they have completed and how they have to consider carefully the materials that they use. Years 5 and 6 pupils examine a variety of cams to understand how rotary motion can be translated into linear motion so that they know the best way to produce a moving part picture.
96. Teaching is good. Teachers plan and prepare lessons well. They link work effectively to other subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils carefully design repeating patterns on the computer, using good information and communication technology skills. They transfer their designs onto felt, to decorate Joseph's coat. Teachers encourage pupils to use their literacy skills, for example, to write instructions and label their plans and sketches. Teachers explain what they want pupils to learn carefully and precisely. For example, in the lesson on cams, the teacher used accurate vocabulary, such as 'follower' and 'rotation point', to demonstrate how models moved. This helped the pupils to understand what was happening and also enabled them to explain their thoughts accurately.
97. The subject leader manages the subject well. She has a clear view of how she would like design and technology to develop. Resources are adequate for the current curriculum. They are efficiently used and teachers encourage pupils to look after them carefully. Teachers pay good regard to the health and safety aspects of the subject by teaching the pupils to use tools correctly.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

98. Only two history lessons and one geography lesson were observed during the inspection. Inspectors gained further evidence from a scrutiny of pupils' work in books and on display around the school, and by talking to staff and pupils. Pupils attain standards that are line with those expected of pupils nationally in Years 2 and 6. They attain standards that are above expectations in some aspects; for example, mapping skills in geography and their factual knowledge of people's lives in specific historical periods, such as in Victorian times. Pupils maintain standards that are similar to those reported in the last inspection. They have a very positive attitude and clearly enjoy their work. They talk with interest about

historical events and places they have visited or studied. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils recently extended their geographical fieldwork skills by studying the local River Ter. A group described enthusiastically how they had measured the flow of the river.

99. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 use teddy bears very effectively to help them with their work in both history and geography. Year 2 pupils know that Barnaby Bear uses different forms of transport to travel to different places in this country, in Europe and in other parts of the world. For example, they know that he needs to wear warm clothes when he is 'ski-ing' in the mountains of Switzerland, but that he cannot ski easily in Great Leighs because "We have not got any mountains and we do not get very much snow!" Year 2 pupils use their numeracy skills successfully to support their learning in geography and history, for example, by gathering information about how Barnaby used different forms of travel on holiday. They then recorded it accurately on a bar graph. Year 1 pupils' understanding of how things have changed over time is supported very effectively by a 'teddy bear' time-line. The teacher has used a very good range of different teddy bears to show to younger pupils how their style and clothing have changed between 1902 and the present day.
100. Years 3 and 4 pupils have a sound understanding of how their local environment is affected by different forms of pollution, for example noise and rubbish. They show a good awareness of how ineffective waste disposal can badly affect the local area and possibly lead to health problems. They clearly express their concerns, both in discussion and in their writing, about issues such as disease coming from germs and waste food possibly attracting rats. Pupils' mapping skills are developed effectively. They make good use of plans of the school site to develop their knowledge and understanding of layout and the use of symbols. Teachers then extend these successfully in other years, for example, when Years 5 and 6 pupils carefully draw detailed sketch-maps of the River Ter. They show clearly the course of the river and use symbols and labels to identify key features. Many pupils show a good understanding of specific geographical terms such as 'source', 'tributary' and 'estuary'. Pupils apply their mapping skills effectively in using an atlas to locate such famous rivers as the Amazon and the Nile. They use the index and co-ordinates to locate the river accurately and identify the countries through which it flows.
101. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of different historical periods and the contributions of famous people are developed soundly. Year 2 pupils talk in detail about the life of Grace Darling. They apply their mapping skills successfully to draw a map of the Farne Islands. They use it to carefully locate the heroic journey of Grace and her father. More able pupils use historical sources effectively such as photographs and drawings to write in detail about how living conditions were different for Grace Darling compared to their own lives. Years 4 and 5 pupils work well together to use information books effectively to find out about the life of Henry VIII. They provide a good range of words to describe the king, for example courageous, greedy, handsome and superior. More able pupils discuss what they have found out and decide that "Henry was a good king when he was young but, because of the pain he was in, he changed later to become stern and selfish!" Many Years 5 and 6 pupils have a good factual knowledge of the lives of rich and poor people in Victorian England. They know about the attractive Victorian styles of furniture which the rich bought and the very poor conditions of people living in workhouses. More able Year 5 and Year 6 pupils use census lists effectively to find out more about local families in Victorian times.
102. The quality of teaching was sound overall. It was very good in two out of the three lessons observed and pupils achieved above average standards. An analysis of a sample of pupils' work covered earlier in the term shows that they consistently achieve standards expected of their age. For example, although Year 6 pupils have a good knowledge of Victorian family lives, they do not clearly understand some of the key events of the Victorian era.
103. Teachers use interesting methods to capture pupils' attention and encourage an enthusiastic response. For example, in a very good Years 5 and 6 history lesson, the

teacher used local census returns from 1841 to 1891 to gain pupils' interest. Pupils began to notice well-known local family names and recognised local addresses and how they linked together. This excited them and they were very keen to get as much information as possible from these sources. Pupils knew that the amount of information they could get would help them prepare for their next lesson, which involved them in role-play activities. They discussed their ideas together. This generated a busy, lively working atmosphere, which resulted in some good quality ideas. Teachers have good subject knowledge and use it well to promote pupils' knowledge and understanding. For example, in a very good Years 4 and 5 history lesson, the teacher's good knowledge of the Tudors enabled her to retain pupils' interest and attention. She used her knowledge to maintain a lively discussion with her pupils and to enthuse them so that they wanted to find out more. Teachers, however, do not consistently challenge more able pupils to extend their skills and knowledge. For example, the teacher extended the more able Years 5 and 6 pupils in history by requiring them to use the census lists to locate and record specific information. However, they were not so effectively challenged in a geographical activity in which all pupils used their atlas skills to find out the same information.

104. Both subjects are managed effectively. The subject leaders have provided a good range of resources for each topic to promote pupils' learning. They give effective help and guidance to enable teachers to extend pupils' skills, for example mapping skills. They consult closely with other staff to monitor the effectiveness of their teaching, although neither subject leader has had opportunities to evaluate teaching and its impact on learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

105. Pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with those expected nationally of pupils by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards are improving and have risen significantly since the last inspection. The school has improved resources considerably. It has recently established a new computer suite, which offers pupils more opportunities to extend and apply their skills. This increased range of resources, together with improved teachers' subject knowledge and confidence, is promoting higher standards.
106. Teachers make good use of national guidance to ensure that learning opportunities are planned carefully to build pupils' skills and knowledge consistently on prior learning. The subject co-ordinator has provided a sound curriculum programme. This enables teachers to cover all required areas, although some aspects of sharing and exchanging information are not yet fully developed. Teachers are using pupils' improving skills with increasing effectiveness to support work in other subjects. For example, Year 2 pupils were exploring lines of enquiry through the Internet to find information about famous people from the Victorian era, linked to their work in history. Many had secure mouse control skills and knew how to 'click' on the correct icon to help them find their information. Some pupils, for example those with special educational needs, had literacy weaknesses, especially in their spelling. This restricted the speed at which they could find the information, as they did not immediately recognise which words to select from the list on screen. Teachers made very good use of a high level of adult support to ensure that these pupils received suitable guidance and support. This enabled them to take a full part in the research activity. All pupils clearly enjoyed the opportunity to find information and were very enthusiastic when they found out about the Bronte sisters or William Booth. They particularly enjoyed using the 'Sniffy Dog' icon to help them find their information. More able pupils explained how they used the 'word-search' technique to locate more information about the Brontes' house at Howarth.
107. Years 4 and 5 pupils showed sound mouse skills to use a 'paint' program linked to their work in art. They knew how to access and load the program quickly. Many knew how to use the 'brush' icon and adjust the size of the dot they needed to create a 'pointillism painting' in the style of Seurat. Many found it difficult to control the mouse carefully in order

to try to 'copy' the Seurat painting. All sustained their interest and concentration and achieved a good start to their work. Most pupils, some with support, saved their work to their own folder in the year group file. Year 2 pupils extended the use of their information and communication technology skills to support work in art by creating attractive, colourful 'paintings' in the style of Jackson Pollock and Mondrian.

108. Pupils develop their word-processing skills soundly and are using them with increasing effectiveness to produce good quality work, for example, in English and geography. Years 4 and 5 pupils produce a newspaper-style front page. They know how to adjust the size and style of different fonts to create different, eye-catching headlines. They present their writing neatly in columns and add their own drawings to illustrate their articles. Pupils use word processing to provide an accurate description of their geography fieldwork trip to the River Ter. Pupils improve their skills in control technology, for example, by using a 'control house' in Year 1 and programming the movements of a robot 'turtle' in Year 2. These are built on successfully in Years 5 and 6, although the school does not have the resources to enable pupils to make a broader use of these skills, for example, the use of sensors in science. Pupils use the digital camera successfully to illustrate examples of their work, for example in physical education. They talk about how they use information and communication technology every day, for example, through computers and microwave cookers. However, their understanding of its full impact on their lives today is not developed fully.
109. Teaching is sound overall and is often good. Teachers use the new computer suite effectively to ensure that pupils' skills are first developed and then applied successfully. Most teachers are confident in their knowledge of the programs they are using. They use this knowledge to improve pupils' skills. For example, in a Years 3 and 4 lesson, the teacher worked very effectively with a knowledgeable learning support assistant. They used their good knowledge of a computer simulation program to enable pupils to understand each of the different stages. They provided good support to individuals and groups to ensure that they focused carefully on the changes in the rules and instructions as they made progress through the simulation activity. This enabled the lesson to flow smoothly and pupils made good progress in applying their knowledge and skills. Teachers make very good use of information and communication technology to promote the learning of pupils with special educational needs. They have enabled specific software to be installed on particular computers with particular peripherals; for example, a special mouse to improve hand-eye co-ordination. Teachers edit programs, for example, by ensuring that words are clearly written in very large font size. These have allowed pupils to focus clearly on the letters and sounds and resulted in significant improvements in spelling.
110. The subject co-ordinator provides enthusiastic leadership and has been influential in promoting the development of information and communication technology throughout the school. She has attended training courses to improve her own subject expertise. She has used her expertise to work with staff and enable them to improve their confidence in teaching the subject. She provides regular guidance and monitors teachers' plans to ensure that they provide suitable opportunities for improving pupils' skills and knowledge. She monitors teaching and learning informally through discussion with other staff. She has not had opportunities to evaluate teaching through lesson observations.

MUSIC

111. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. They are in line with nationally expected levels throughout the school. Standards achieved in singing are good. Many pupils take up the opportunities offered to learn to play instruments, such as woodwinds. The school encourages these pupils to share their talents with others in assemblies and concerts. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time and learn well in lessons.
112. The school covers the listening and appraising and performing elements of the subject satisfactorily, enabling pupils to reach satisfactory standards. Years 3 and 4 listened carefully to a musical selection and then discussed sensibly what sorts of moods the music invoked. The teacher's good subject knowledge reflected in her use of correct subject vocabulary, such as 'pitch', 'tempo' and 'timbre'. She encouraged the pupils to use the terminology correctly so that they evaluated the music using sentences such as "the low pitch adds to the sad mood of the music".
113. The quality of teaching in lessons is good. Teaching overall is sound. Pupils make good progress in developing their musical skills. Teachers adopt an enthusiastic approach and encourage pupils to participate fully in lessons. They work with pupils to develop listening and performing skills, encouraging pupils to co-operate, persevere and enjoy their work. Pupils respond well to the good levels of teaching and enjoy lessons. However, teachers do not consistently plan and develop opportunities for pupils to compose, score and record their performances.
114. Throughout the school, pupils sing well. Younger pupils sing a good variety of songs and rhymes. They enjoy familiar tunes and words. Older pupils sing more complex songs. For example, Years 5 and 6 pupils mastered most effectively a complex Jewish song which, by the end of one lesson, they sang confidently in two-part harmony.
115. The subject leader manages the subject effectively. She has a clear view of how she would like music to develop. Resources are good and include a good representation of multi-cultural instruments and recorded music. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' cultural and spiritual development because they listen to music from other traditions and they use, and become familiar with, instruments from around the world.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. During the inspection the focus was on gymnastics. Pupils attain standards overall which meet those expected nationally in Year 2 and Year 6. Some Year 6 pupils, especially those who attend the school gymnastics club, achieve above expected standards. Pupils' attainment has been maintained at the level reported in the last inspection. Sound, and frequently good, teaching enables pupils to develop their skills effectively in lessons. Where teachers have good subject knowledge, they use it successfully to promote standards. However, teachers do not use enough opportunities to evaluate standards and look for ways in which to improve pupils' performance. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have enthusiastic attitudes and are keen to try to improve their gymnastic skills. This contributes well to pupils working hard and building their skills soundly.
117. Many Year 2 pupils show a sound range of balances using one body part, for example their back or one foot. They maintain their balance effectively showing good control and co-ordination. Teachers challenge pupils successfully in Years 4 and 5 to build on these skills successfully by combining different movements together in a short gymnastic sequence. Some more able pupils show good control when including more difficult movements, for example headstands and backward rolls. Pupils co-operate successfully with a partner to

develop their sequence. Some pupils do not show good technique or maintain effective control to some of their movements, particularly during rolling movements. This restricts the standard of the sequence, particularly in combining movements smoothly. Years 5 and 6 pupils extend their partner sequence work successfully, with some more able pupils including challenging movements, for example, jumping and turning with control and precision. Many Years 5 and 6 pupils evaluate their own performance and that of others; for example, how to use the arms effectively to maintain control when jumping and landing. This improved standards. Teachers do not use evaluation consistently to focus on ways in which the quality of movement could be improved.

118. The quality of teaching of gymnastics was good and occasionally very good. It was never less than sound. Teachers manage their classes effectively to ensure that pupils stay focused on the activity. They make good use of demonstrations, either by pupils or by themselves, to show the correct gymnastic technique, for example, body position during a forward roll. This improved the quality of pupils' movements. It also increased their awareness of how an incorrect technique could lead to an injury to the neck. Some teachers used their good subject knowledge to evaluate pupils' performance and to challenge them to extend their skills and knowledge. For example, in a Years 4 and 5 lesson, the teacher evaluated pupils' balances very effectively. She clearly identified the key points on ensuring that the balance is maintained, for example, by extending the width of its base. This improved the standard. However, teachers did not involve pupils sufficiently in evaluating their own performance and that of others. Too few were challenged to identify which aspects of a sequence were good and which could be improved. This did not encourage them to focus consistently on improving the quality of their gymnastic work.
119. The subject co-ordinator gives good leadership, which contributes effectively to maintaining standards. She has encouraged staff to improve their subject knowledge; for example, by arranging some general Top Sport coaching sessions and some for specific activities, for example tennis. She has organised swimming sessions at Braintree pool for Year 3 and less confident Year 6 pupils, with help on transport from parental volunteers. She has made good use of organisations within the local community, for example Essex County Cricket Club, Chelmsford Football Club and the local Health Service. This has broadened the range of physical activities and increased pupils' knowledge and understanding of caring for their bodies.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

120. Standards have improved since the last inspection, when they did not meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus at Year 6. They now match these expectations at both Year 2 and Year 6. Since the last inspection, the school has made considerable effort, especially recently to plan for pupils' progress in skills, knowledge and understanding. The subject leader has prepared a good policy and helpful guidance for teachers. As a result, the quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress over time.
121. The curriculum has two strands; one is to explore and respond to human experience and the other is to investigate religious traditions. Teachers give pupils satisfactory opportunities to be still and reflect. These contribute effectively to the spiritual side of school life but, in general, are underused. For example, during assemblies, there are opportunities for pupils to pray quietly and reflect on the wonder of life. However, sometimes opportunities to do this during lessons are missed.
122. Staff plan opportunities for pupils to discuss their ideas and feelings, for example what makes them feel vulnerable or happy. Teachers listen carefully to pupils and challenge their ideas through good questioning techniques. Consequently, learning is good and

pupils reach expected standards. In Key Stage 1, pupils learn about celebrations, such as Christmas, Diwali and Shabbat. In one most effective lesson, the Jewish parents of one girl in the class shared their Shabbat celebrations with staff and pupils. The pupils learned how and why Jewish people celebrate from dusk every Friday until the evening of the next day. They shared the prayers and food of the family sensitively and respectfully, learning much from the experience.

123. At Key Stage 2, pupils study some of the major religions of the world. They compare Sikh and Christian wedding ceremonies. They explore the similarities and differences of ceremonies of rites of passage in Christianity, Hinduism and Judaism. This adds considerably to the spiritual and cultural aspects of school life. Teachers plan interesting tasks to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. They give pupils opportunities to use their literacy skills well. For example, the pupils write about Christian compassion and retell stories from the Bible, such as 'The Good Samaritan'.
124. Pupils respond well to lessons and say that they enjoy the opportunities to discuss and share ideas. They behave well, showing respect for each other and adults. Both staff and pupils show high levels of sensitivity and understanding towards each other. Relationships are good and everyone's contribution is equally valued. This is a good feature of religious education in school. The subject is supported very well by the very good quality multi-faith displays around school.