

INSPECTION REPORT

White Bridge Junior School

Loughton

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114867

Headteacher: Patricia Plested

Reporting inspector: Michael J Cahill
19623

Dates of inspection: 26 February – 1 March 2001

Inspection number: 207956

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Greensted Road Loughton Essex
Postcode:	IG10 3DR
Telephone number:	020 8508 5772
Fax number:	020 8532 0164
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Lorraine Smart
Date of previous inspection:	9 November 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Michael Cahill	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Helen Barter	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Margaret Handsley	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Art Design and technology Music	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Glenys Bramley	Team inspector	Equal opportunities English as an additional language Mathematics Geography History Religious education	How well is the school led and managed?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school has 211 pupils on roll, 110 boys and 101 girls. There are two classes of pupils in each of Years 3 and 4 and three mixed-age classes of pupils in Years 5 and 6. There are 71 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, including five pupils with full statements. These numbers represent proportions that are above the national average. The attainment of pupils on entry to the school is below national expectations. Twenty-seven pupils claim their entitlement to a free school meal; at 13 per cent this is broadly in line with the national average. Five pupils are learning English as an additional language.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school has recovered very well from a period when it under performed. The quality of the teaching and the care provided is high. Pupils' achievement and attitudes to their work are good. The school is now very well led and managed and pupils' attainment, especially in English, mathematics and science, is steadily improving. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides excellent leadership. With her deputy, other staff and the governing body, she is very effectively focused on raising pupils' levels of attainment.
- Teaching is of an overall high quality and pupils now make good progress.
- The school is very successful at promoting good behaviour, good relationships and positive attitudes towards learning.
- A pleasant, caring and purposeful working atmosphere is maintained. There are very effective ways of keeping track of individual pupils' progress. Teachers know their pupils well.
- The school makes very good use of its resources, including specific grants, to raise the level of pupils' achievements.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and very well organised; consequently pupils make good progress towards their targets.

What could be improved

In line with their existing agenda for improvement, the governors, headteacher and staff recognise the need to:

- Raise the level of pupils' performance in national tests.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures.
- Reduce the amount of authorised absence, especially for holidays in term time.
- Make better provision for swimming so that more pupils achieve at least the national standard.
- Make sure that the needs of pupils who are beginning to learn English as an additional language are met.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the last inspection, in November 1998, the standards achieved by the pupils and the quality of education provided by the school were judged to require some improvement. The management and efficiency of the school were judged to need substantial improvement. Since taking up the post in April 1999, the headteacher, supported by staff and governors, has energetically and effectively set about dealing with the issues raised in the last inspection report. There have been major improvements in the management of the school, clear identification of what needs to be done and how. Standards have started to rise as a result of the present high quality of teaching, good organisation of teaching groups and the daily timetable and very good assessment procedures. Overall improvement has been very good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	D	D	D	E
Mathematics	D	D	E	E
Science	D	D	E	E

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Schools are described as similar when they fall into the same band for free school meals, in this case between 8 and 20 per cent (the current figure is 13 per cent). The trend of results over the last three years has been upwards in English, but downwards in mathematics and science. Taking these three subjects together the trend in the school's results has been below the national trend.

Inspection evidence based on the work of the present Year 6 shows that standards are now broadly in line with national averages and the school confidently expects improved national test results this year. The improvement has been brought about by more focused teaching based on very good procedures for identifying what individual pupils need to do to get on. As a result, most pupils in Year 6 are now making good progress in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy, and science, although from a starting point that was lower than it should have been.

In religious education, standards are in line with those expected in the locally agreed syllabus. Standards in information and communication technology are greatly improved since the last inspection and are now in line with what is expected nationally, with some examples of above average work. Attainment is in line with national expectations in art and design, geography, history and physical education. In design and technology, making skills are unsatisfactory and in music only singing skills are up to national expectations.

The school sets demanding targets for pupils based on what they already know and can do. It provides good extra support through booster classes to improve performance in national tests.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good; pupils enjoy coming to school and are enthusiastic about their work and the activities provided for them.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good; almost all pupils behave well in lessons and listen well to their teachers. Around the school, pupils are happy and polite and they get on well with each other in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Good; pupils are developing good levels of personal responsibility and understanding of the views and beliefs of others. They work well together and have good relationships with each other and with the adults in the school.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory; attendance levels are below the national average, largely because many parents take their children on holiday in term time. Punctuality is mostly good, although a few children are late each day.

Relationships are a strength of the school. Pupils' good attitudes towards each other and to their work owe much to the high expectations of the staff and the good example they set.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Good

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

The standard of teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons observed. Around three-quarters of lessons were good or better, including three in 10 that were very good or excellent. This is high quality teaching and is one of the main reasons for pupils' good attitudes to learning and for the good progress that they make as they move through the school. The teaching of English, including literacy, was good or very good in 83 per cent of lessons. The teaching of mathematics, including the skills of numeracy, was also good overall, with three-quarters of lessons judged to be good or very good.

Particular strengths of the teaching throughout the school include the very good way in which teachers manage the pupils and their classrooms and the very effective teamwork with teaching assistants that makes sure that all pupils take a full part in lessons. Teachers keep very good track of pupils' learning and prepare work that helps them to make good progress. Pupils respond by working hard, often concentrating well for long periods, and take increasing pride in their work as they move up the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. It is organised well to give an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There is very good and well-organised support for pupils with special educational needs and, as a result, they make good progress towards their learning targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school recognises the need to improve provision for the growing number of pupils who are at an early stage of learning English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school actively promotes pupils' moral and social development through the behaviour guidelines, good encouragement and opportunities for working and playing together. There is satisfactory provision for spiritual and cultural development but, within this, the multicultural aspect is the weakest link.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The standard of care is very good. The school has very good systems for keeping track of pupils' achievements and for promoting good behaviour. Pupils benefit from good quality educational and personal support and guidance.

Parents rightly value recent improvements in the school and in the way in which they are encouraged to be involved with its work.

Strong features of the curriculum include the very successful focus on literacy and numeracy, the smaller group work in English, mathematics and science in Years 5 and 6 and the support throughout the school for pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher and her staff know the pupils well. They are very effective in encouraging pupils' personal and academic development.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good; the headteacher provides excellent leadership that is sharply focused on improving the quality of education that the school offers and raising the level of pupils' achievements. She is very effectively supported by her deputy and enjoys the respect, confidence and support of all members of staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good; the governing body knows the school well and is committed to supporting its programme for improvement. The governing body fully meets its statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good; The headteacher and other senior staff keep all aspects of the school's performance under continuous review. Strengths and weaknesses have been accurately identified and there are very good monitoring and evaluation procedures.
The strategic use of resources	Very good; the school makes very good use of its resources. Specific grants are targeted very well towards raising standards. The school's budget is well managed, spending is carefully monitored and best value actively sought.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall. The accommodation has been greatly improved and is now good. Particular strengths of the school's leadership and management are the vision, drive and commitment of the headteacher and the strong and developing partnership between her, the staff and the governing body.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

The views of the 117 parents who returned completed questionnaires and of the 14 who attended the pre-inspection meeting with members of the inspection team were taken into account.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress. • Teaching is good and the school has high expectations. • Behaviour is good and the school helps children to become mature and responsible. • The school is well managed and led. • They are comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information about their children's progress. • The provision for homework. • The closeness with which the school works with them.

The inspection team fully agrees with the positive views of parents. The school recognises the need to make clear to parents how homework is used and set. The headteacher and staff actively encourage a close partnership between home and school. The school intends to increase the information given in end-of-year reports and to make clear the arrangements for parents to talk with all of their children's teachers

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the school is below national expectations. Around 40 per cent of pupils have a reading age that is below their chronological age. Although the majority of pupils achieved the national standard of Level 2 at the end of Year 2, many only just did so and very few achieved the higher than expected Level 3. The 2000 National test results at the end of Key Stage 2 were below average in English and well below average in mathematics and science. When compared with schools nationally with pupils from similar circumstances, results in 2000 were well below average in all three subjects. The group of pupils concerned had not made satisfactory progress in their earlier years at the school and included an above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Many of these pupils did, however, make progress between June 1999 and June 2000 that was good and in some cases very good.
2. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in the current Year 6 are close to the national average in English, including literacy, mathematics, including numeracy and science, as they were judged to be at the time of the last inspection. The higher standards, compared with last year, have been achieved through better teaching based on better tracking of pupils' progress, enabling targets for improvement to be set and achieved. The school's own analysis, supported by inspection evidence, shows that there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.
3. Standards in information and communication technology have improved considerably since the time of the last inspection, a little over two years ago. Although the pupils currently in Year 6 did not in the past receive a full entitlement in this subject, their standards are in line with national expectations. Pupils in other year groups are attaining in line with national expectations for their age. Pupils' attainment in religious education is in line with what is expected in the locally agreed syllabus.
4. Pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations in art and design, geography, history and physical education. In design and technology, the overall standard of pupils' making skills is below what it should be. In music, pupils' skills in singing and performing are well in line with national expectations, but in other aspects they are below what is expected. For further details about pupils' attainment in the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education see paragraphs 79 – 156.

Literacy and numeracy

5. The school has successfully introduced the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and this factor, coupled with the arrangements for grouping pupils in Years 5 and 6 by ability and providing booster classes, has raised pupils' levels of attainment. These are now close to the national average in the present Year 6.

Special educational needs

6. The school makes very good provision for pupils with special educational needs who make good progress towards their carefully defined learning targets. They benefit from good support from the co-ordinator for special educational needs, their teachers and from teaching assistants both in class and in small groups or as individuals.
7. Higher attaining pupils are more clearly identified than they were at the time of the last inspection and are better catered for in lessons, particularly in English, mathematics and science. Their overall progress is now good.

8. The small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are mostly making progress that is as good as their friends. However, pupils who are at the very early stages of learning English do not get sufficient specialist help with developing their language skills and their attainment suffers.

Analysis and targeting

9. The school has undertaken a rigorous analysis of pupils' performance in National Curriculum tests and other national tests over the last two years. As a result, many weaknesses were identified and the school has been very effective in remedying many of these. Many older pupils have made at least good, often very good, progress in their basic skills over the last 18 months. Realistic targets, agreed with the local education authority, have been set to focus on raising standards in literacy and numeracy. Strategies for improvement are well considered and there is ample evidence that they are proving effective.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils' good attitudes and their good standards of behaviour are positive features of the school. There is a happy working atmosphere in which pupils are confident and positive and get on well with each other and with adults.
11. Nearly all parents feel that pupils' behaviour is good and that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. Parents who attended the meeting before the inspection said that behaviour has improved enormously since the time of the last inspection. At that time, even though behaviour was reported as good overall, parents said that there were difficulties between older and younger pupils and that some poor behaviour existed. They are now very pleased with the improvements that have been made as a result of the school's development of a consistently applied and fair behaviour policy.
12. Most parents say that their children like coming to school. However, the overall level of attendance is below the nationally expected minimum of 95 per cent, mainly because some parents take their children on holiday during term time or choose to condone their child's absence for reasons that are not always justifiable. The school is aware of this problem and impresses upon parents the importance of regular attendance at school for their children. Most pupils come to school on time, although there are a few children who are late each day.
13. Pupils' good attitudes to school and their enthusiasm for their work and school life have a good impact on the quality of their learning and the progress that they make. They are cheerful and confident in the classroom and around the school. In lessons, they concentrate well on their tasks, maintain interest and listen well to their teachers. Pupils work hard and most show good levels of personal motivation to improve their work. They are keen to answer questions in discussions and show great interest in the activities provided for them. For example, during an experiment in a science lesson, pupils watched very intently and with great concentration when washing soda was mixed with lemon juice and were very keen to comment on what they had observed. When teachers have high expectations for pupils' work and use a lively, interesting style to introduce new work, pupils respond with interest and involvement and are very well focused. They are able to work independently and productively. There are a few occasions when some younger pupils become restless because the pace of the lesson is slow. They lose interest and find it hard to settle to their work and they are sometimes noisy.

14. Pupils' behaviour is good throughout the school and is fostered through the school's consistent expectations and its emphasis on positive praise. In lessons, most pupils behave well all of the time because teachers set very clear expectations for them to follow. Around the school, pupils are clear about the expected standards of behaviour and move sensibly around the large building and staircases. They are friendly and cheerful and make visitors to the school feel welcome with a smile, by readily holding doors open for them and talking with ease about their work and lives at school. In assemblies and the dining hall, they behave well and are courteous towards others. In the playground their play is happy and lively, although some of the younger pupils are sometimes boisterous. Pupils enjoy making use of a range of playground toys and most are able to share well. There were no incidents of bullying or unpleasant behaviour observed during the inspection. There have been four fixed period exclusions in the last year relating to three pupils who have now left the school.
15. Pupils are making good progress in their personal development and relationships. Pupils and staff all work together in a caring atmosphere, which helps pupils to feel secure and ready to learn. Pupils respond well to opportunities for taking responsibility; for example, collecting trolleys of lunchboxes, helping to organise the library, sorting and counting tokens donated to the school and running the tuck shop. They are confident and act responsibly and sensibly. Pupils are learning to appreciate the opinions and ideas of others. They are learning to work with others, to share ideas and to listen to other's points of view. They get on well with each other and understand and accept differences. They are beginning to develop independence in their learning and are aware of the literacy targets that have been set for them to help them to make improvements. However, they do not contribute their views on their work and school life in their end of year reports. There are plans in place to introduce a school council, but pupils say that it is easy for them to discuss concerns and ideas with their teachers and the headteacher. Older pupils say that, although they are a little nervous, they feel that they are being prepared well for secondary school.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. **The overall quality of teaching is high.** Of the lessons observed, 29 per cent were judged to be very good or excellent, a further 46 per cent were good and the remaining 25 per cent were satisfactory. This represents a substantial improvement since the last inspection when only 5 per cent were very good and 7 per cent were unsatisfactory. The reasons for the improvement include the school's successful adoption of the National Strategies in Literacy and Numeracy. The main reason, however, is the leadership of the new headteacher in producing a very practical policy for teaching and learning and her very successful monitoring of lesson quality and support of colleagues.
17. The quality of teaching in Years 5 and 6 is exceptionally good, with 96 per cent of lessons being at least good, including 42 per cent that are very good or excellent. In around 85 per cent of the lessons observed in these year groups, pupils made progress that was at least good. In more than two-thirds of lessons throughout the school progress was good or better.
18. The teaching of English, including the literacy hour, was always at least satisfactory. In total, 83 per cent of lessons were good or better, including 42 per cent that were very good. In mathematics, including numeracy, teaching was always at least satisfactory. Three-quarters of mathematics lessons were good or better, one third being very good or excellent. The good, sometimes very good, progress in English and mathematics made by many pupils over the last 18 months is a direct consequence of the high quality of teaching.

19. Pupils with special educational needs often benefit from very well focused and organised support from teachers and teaching assistants and make good progress as a result. In literacy, for example, one pupil uses a desktop word processor to increase his speed and, with help, keep up to the rest of the class. Pupils with behaviour related special educational needs are very well supported in a very clearly structured programme so that they are able to cope in lessons and make good progress. Pupils who are potentially higher attaining are catered for better than they were at the time of the last inspection. Teachers plan effectively to challenge them, especially in literacy, numeracy and science. For example, in a science lesson with pupils in Year 4, the teacher made a point of extending the learning of a group of higher attaining pupils through good questions and the requirement that they give extended answers relating to solids and liquids. Higher attaining Year 5 and 6 pupils in the top group for mathematics were suitably challenged by the demanding number puzzles that they were set.

There are a number of features common to the good or better teaching seen during the inspection and these include:

20. **Teachers have good relationships with their pupils and manage their classes and classrooms well.** The school as a whole positively encourages good behaviour and the consistency of expectations from classroom to classroom plays an important role in helping pupils to know what is required of them. There is a pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere in the classrooms and teachers have established and maintain good routines, based on common sense and consideration for others. Very good teamwork between teachers and assistants makes an important contribution to the promotion of good learning and progress.
21. **Teachers use questions well throughout most lessons.** There were many examples during the inspection of lessons that started with the teacher asking questions in order to help pupils to revise what they had already learned. Sometimes, as in the case of the numeracy lessons, mental work helped pupils to consolidate and practise their skills. In the better lessons, time was spent at the end of the lesson on reviewing what had been done, with reference back to the learning targets that had been shared with the pupils at the start of the lessons. This was usually carried out through well-targeted questions.
22. **Lessons were conducted at a good pace** with teachers using a suitable mix of whole class, group and individual work as well as a good balance of practical, written, speaking and listening tasks. This mixture maintained pupils' interest and attention well. In some lessons there was the particularly good practice of setting time targets for the completion of tasks within the lessons.
23. **The quality of marking** is almost always good and at best is outstanding. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, in particular, respond well to the very full comments that their teachers make on their work. The best marking congratulates pupils on their achievements to date and points out clearly, often through questions, how there can be further improvement. Some pupils respond confidently to these challenges, writing their answers or comments for the teacher to read on the next occasion that the book is marked. This is a very commendable example of pupils being enabled to enter into a dialogue about their own learning and helps them to take personal responsibility for it. This good practice also enables parents to know how their children are getting on and how they can help.
24. **The practice of setting clear and achievable targets** for pupils and having these written on cards to which pupils refer during lessons is another good example of how teachers keep pupils focused on what they need to do to improve. Pupils told members of the inspection team how having these targets helped them to make progress and to see that they were doing so. The school has established very good procedures for

keeping track of the progress of individual pupils as well as of year groups. This information is then used well in planning future teaching and setting further individual targets.

25. **Homework** is regularly set and is making an important contribution towards raising standards. Although quite a few parents expressed concerns about homework the inspection team found that it was often set as a follow-up to the work in lessons and on other occasions was set as a separate piece of work. Inspectors agree wholeheartedly with the vast majority of parents who said that the quality of teaching is good. Further information about teaching and the learning and progress of pupils can be found in the subject sections (paragraphs 79 to 156)

Areas for improvement

26. Where teaching was less stimulating or successful, the reason was usually the absence of some of the characteristics of very good practice described above. On a few occasions the planning for the lesson could have been sharper in defining more precisely what the pupils were intended to know, understand or be able to do better at the end of the lesson than at the beginning. While on most occasions teachers shared with the class what the learning targets for the lesson were and used them to maintain focus, occasionally this was not effectively done.
27. The use of information and communication technology to support and extend learning in other subjects is under-developed. This is largely due to the fact that information and communication technology has only recently been established as a subject in its own right in the school. It is also due to the lack of computers in classrooms. Where these are available, as in the special educational needs room, teachers and their assistants use them very effectively to promote pupils' learning.

Learning and progress

28. As a result of the high quality of teaching, pupils have positive attitudes towards learning and show real interest and enthusiasm for their work. The quality of their learning and the progress that they made was judged to be good or better in two-thirds of the lessons observed. It was very good in 15 per cent of cases.
29. Pupils enjoy contributing to whole class discussions and work well together in small groups or on their own when required to do so. Pupils maintain interest and concentration for extended periods of time and are happy to follow up work at home. They show a good level of understanding of their own existing knowledge and skills and of what to do to improve. Although few examples of independent research were observed during the inspection it was clear that some older pupils knew how to find information and organise it. A pupil from Year 5, for example, responded to his teacher's suggestion that he did some extra research on liquids, gases and solids with an extensive account, in his own words, of what he found out.

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

30. The school meets statutory requirements by providing a broad and balanced curriculum, including all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There are strengths in the provision for pupils with special educational needs and in the provision for literacy and numeracy. The provision for information and communication technology has significantly improved since the last inspection, although it is not used sufficiently well for real, practical purposes in other subjects. Also, provision for pupils who are learning English as an additional language, especially beginners, is underdeveloped.

Nevertheless, the school has made significant improvements in its curriculum provision and organisation since the last inspection.

31. The school is developing new policies in all subjects and aspects of its provision, although most subject policy documents are not yet completed. Language and literacy policies take into account equality of opportunity for all pupils. There is, however, no explicit policy for meeting the needs of pupils learning English as an additional language. Good quality schemes of work are in place for all subjects, although there is no formal scheme of work for personal and social education. The governing body has an appropriate policy statement for sex education and is developing one on drugs education, although policy has already been developed through practice. These aspects of the curriculum are taught in a structured way through lessons in science and in personal, health and social education. Parents are invited to review the provision before pupils embark on the learning programme. Long-term and medium-term planning is clear, following national frameworks for literacy and numeracy and nationally recommended schemes of work for other subjects. Co-ordinators are developing useful cross-curricular links, the inter-linking of art and English, for example. Short-term planning does not always cater well enough for more able pupils, although for them it is much better than it was at the time of the last inspection.
32. The quality of the provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those with full statements, is very good. Pupils' individual education plans are appropriate to them. They include useful guidelines and identified strategies are effectively used by teachers and teaching assistants. All aspects of the provision are very effectively organised and co-ordinated. The policy for pupils with special educational needs meets statutory requirements and provides the basis for the high quality of this area of the school's work.
33. The quality of provision for pupils learning English as an additional language is sound. They make good progress in well-structured lessons. However, the provision for pupils new to English is insufficiently developed for them to make enough progress in lessons. The school has recognised this need and has sought advice from the local education authority.
34. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy well. Teachers and the literacy governor have received training, the school has bought good quality resources and the teaching of literacy is planned effectively throughout the school. Teachers make good use of the literacy hour to raise pupils' attainment in English, particularly in reading. Teachers recognise the need for pupils to have extra practice in writing and in reading comprehension, so extra lessons have been arranged for these. This is a good example of the way that the school looks at pupils' needs and makes good quality provision to meet them. The National Numeracy Strategy is also implemented well. Teachers have received training, suitable resources have been purchased and numeracy is well planned through the school.
35. The school provides a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. Football, netball, tennis, cricket, badminton and dance are popular clubs. All pupils have the opportunity to learn to play the recorder and to audition to sing in the choir.
36. Teachers' are aware of the need to provide equality of opportunity. They make sure that boys and girls have equivalent experiences and that pupils with special educational needs are catered for. The content of the curriculum and learning resources, such as books, reflect cultural diversity and present positive role models. However, this needs to be built upon in some areas. Planning and assessment show that all pupils have access to the curriculum. Teachers are aware of the need to develop expertise in teaching pupils new to English.

37. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. Although the school has no formal policy or scheme of work, teachers make appropriate provision in the course of their lessons. Pupils develop independence and organisational skills in the course of their classroom work. Lessons are planned to include pupils working in pairs or in groups and this promotes good relationships. Health education takes place as part of the science curriculum. Pupils learn about what they need to do in order to stay healthy.
38. The school forms satisfactory links with the local community and this makes a sound contribution to pupils' learning. A local church group, for example, comes into school to take assemblies. Good links are established with the infant school, which shares the same site, and with the local secondary school. Teachers meet and pass on information about the pupils to ensure a smooth transfer.
39. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. Good equal opportunities practice ensures that pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical disabilities, have access to the same provision as their peers. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. That for moral and social development is good and provision for cultural development is unsatisfactory with respect to opportunities for learning about the richness and variety of other cultures. Teachers make good use of assemblies to develop pupils' spiritual awareness, encourage them to reflect on the world around them and to develop their understanding of right and wrong. Assemblies are calm and orderly occasions that promote a pleasant and purposeful working atmosphere.
40. The school has a very clear code of behaviour that is used effectively to promote moral and social development. Pupils are encouraged to think how their actions affect others. Older pupils develop their social awareness by taking responsibility to help the school run smoothly. They help to organise assemblies, run the tuck shop and help younger ones at playtimes. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to learn about their own culture. These have recently improved in art, music and dance. The religious education curriculum offers good opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths, but there are too few opportunities in other subjects for pupils to recognise and value the contribution of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. The provision made for pupils' educational and personal support and guidance is very good and is a strength of the school. The school is a safe and caring place where pupils are well looked after and are helped to make improvements in their work, behaviour and personal development. Procedures for identifying the nature of pupils' special educational needs are effective. Pupils receive very good quality educational support and their progress towards their individual learning targets is carefully checked.
42. Parents appreciate the quality of pastoral care provided for their children. They feel that teachers know their children well and that 'the door is always open' when they want to discuss their child's progress or any concerns that they might have. Some parents commented on how well the school deals with their children when they have been upset or have not wanted to come into school at the start of the day. Parents are pleased that the school has improved its procedures for promoting good behaviour and say that the system of individual, class and whole school awards for attitudes, behaviour and work has had a very positive impact on improving the atmosphere in school.
43. Since the last inspection, the school had made very good improvement in its arrangements for health and safety. There are very good procedures in place to ensure that any possible hazards are reported and dealt with quickly. The school building has

been much improved in the last two years to provide pupils and staff with a safe and clean environment in which to work. Members of staff and governors who have responsibility for health and safety have a very good understanding of current regulations and ensure that the school meets the statutory requirements. The procedures for dealing with pupils who are unwell, who hurt themselves or who require medical support are good. The school makes regular arrangements for staff to update their first aid training. Office staff, who provide most of the first aid, give caring and sympathetic support to pupils. Midday staff care well for pupils at lunchtime and in the playground.

44. All staff are well aware of pupils who may be experiencing difficulties or whose welfare gives cause for concern. The school's arrangements for child protection have been reviewed and additional training provided for those staff who are in regular contact with pupils and their families. Very good confidential records are kept where staff have concerns about a pupil's well being.
45. The procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' attendance are good. Registers are correctly completed and checked weekly and office staff quickly follow up all absences. The school is aware that the high number of authorised absences affects the school's overall attendance level. The headteacher, supported by the educational welfare officer, has begun to meet individual parents to discuss their child's patterns of attendance. It is made clear to all parents when absences will not be authorised; for example, term-time holidays during the week of national tests, or holidays which will disrupt the education of pupils who are receiving additional support for their special educational needs.
46. The school has very good procedures for promoting behaviour and discipline. The behaviour policy is very good because it is clear about the expected standards of behaviour throughout the school and is based on well-structured and explicit systems of rewards and sanctions. The policy is applied consistently by all staff who make clear to pupils what their expectations are and are consistent in their approach to any lapses. Pupils are involved in negotiating class rules and, as a result, understand what is expected of them. There are clear and well-structured support programmes in place for those pupils who have specific emotional and behavioural difficulties and these are regularly monitored. Pupils are set clear targets for improvement and can see from their behaviour records how well they are progressing towards them. There are very good systems in place for recording any incidents of bullying. Parents commented at the meeting before the inspection that their children feel the headteacher deals very fairly with any incidents and that all those involved are able to discuss what has happened.
47. There are good procedures in place to monitor and support pupils' personal development. Through its policy of positive praise and the work it does to promote pupils' self-esteem, the school helps pupils to mature and act responsibly. Good use is made of systems such as class points, awards and certificates to reward good behaviour, attitudes to work and improvement. There are regular opportunities to share in pupils' achievements and successes in assemblies. This gives pupils pride and encourages them to do better. The adults working in the school know pupils very well and give them good guidance and support when they need to make improvements.
48. The systems for assessing pupils' progress are comprehensive and of very good quality. Each year, pupils complete nationally standardised tests in English, mathematics and science. The results of these are used to identify weaknesses in the curriculum and the information is passed on to class teachers. Assessment in literacy, numeracy and science is carried out, both in the course of the lessons and at regular intervals throughout the year, to make sure pupils are making enough progress. The use made of assessment information to make changes in the curriculum is very good. Changes are also made to meet the identified needs of individual pupils. This is effective in promoting their progress. Pupils have individual targets in English and mathematics that help them

to focus on what they need to learn next. These are noted on target cards to prompt pupils in lessons and pupils are very much aware of their own needs. Assessment in other subjects is carried out at the end of each year and fulfils statutory requirements.

49. A strength of the use of assessment is the way in which pupils are made aware of what they need to learn in each lesson and encouraged to evaluate their success at the end of the lesson. This gives pupils a good insight into, and responsibility for, their own learning. Pupils refer frequently to their cards in lessons, say that the targets are very helpful reminders and that they understand how the targets are helping them to achieve better. The procedures for assessment and the use made of the results have improved significantly since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Since the last inspection, the school has strengthened its partnership with parents and there are now effective links that have a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning and the life of the school. Through the effective work of the headteacher and staff, parents are feeling more positive about the school, the improvements that are being made and the more settled and caring environment that the school provides.
51. Parents' views of the school are good. At the meeting before the inspection, parents commented on the 'immeasurable' improvement that has been achieved since the last inspection. They are particularly pleased with the work that has been done to improve standards of behaviour. Parents say that teachers are very welcoming and that it is easy to talk to them about their child's progress. They are very pleased with the improvements that have been made to the school building and resources, particularly the library, and feel that their children are making much better progress as a result. In the questionnaires, nearly all parents show good support for the work of the school. They feel that the school has high expectations and provides good quality teaching which helps their children to make good progress. Most parents say that the school is well managed and led and commented at the meeting that the school now has a very good staff and headteacher. Inspection findings support parents' positive views of the school and its work.
52. There were some criticisms of the information that parents receive about their child's progress, although at the meeting some parents said that this was because they wanted more information about what their child is learning rather than about the progress that they are making. Some parents were not clear how they could speak to the staff who teach their children for English and mathematics if it is not the class teacher. The school recognises that some parents are not clear about these arrangements and will set them out clearly in a newsletter. Plans are in place to provide parents with termly curriculum information so that parents have a better understanding of what their children are learning and can support them at home.
53. A significant number of parents criticised the amount of homework that is provided and the range of activities that take place outside lessons. The inspection team finds that the range and consistency of homework provided are satisfactory and support pupils' learning. However, the school recognises that it needs to make clear to parents how homework is set and used in school. The quality and range of extra-curricular activities provided is satisfactory and is being further developed.
54. The quality of information provided for parents is satisfactory. Parents receive regular newsletters about events and activities taking place in school and are well informed when there are changes in policy, for example the introduction of the reward system. Since the last inspection, the quality of information provided for parents by the governing body in

their annual report has been much improved and parents receive good detail about the school's work and development. The prospectus, while meeting requirements, does not give parents enough information about what is being taught in school and its daily organisation. The school is aware of this and has plans to improve the prospectus so that all parents, especially those who are new to the school, have much better quality information about the school's work.

55. The school also plans to improve the quality of information contained in pupils' end-of-year reports. Current reports meet requirements and give parents satisfactory information about what their children know, understand and can do in all subjects, although reporting is more detailed for English, mathematics and science. Although targets are set for improvement in these subjects, some are too vague and do not help those parents who wish to help their children. In the light of its arrangements for setting more specific on-going targets for pupils, the school intends to review the validity of the targets set in reports. There are also well-considered plans to introduce a commentary sheet, so that pupils and parents can make their own additions to the reports at the summer consultation evening.
56. The school makes a good commitment in its home-school agreement to an open and positive relationship with parents. It provides a good range of leaflets which encourage parents to support their children with reading and spelling at home and has held meetings to explain national testing, the National Numeracy Strategy and homework. Attendance at these meetings is sometimes low, although there is good attendance by parents at meetings to discuss their child's progress. The school is keen that parents should feel that it is 'open' and the headteacher and staff make themselves readily available to speak to parents when they have concerns. Teachers take pupils out to the playground at the end of each day and this makes it easy for parents to speak to teachers informally. Parents say that teachers always have time for them.
57. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept informed formally and informally through frequent conversations, communications and termly reviews. Almost all parents attend their child's reviews. Parents are asked to work in partnership with the school to meet the pupils individual needs; for example, parents of pupils with learning problems are made aware of the strategies to be employed in school and encouraged to use the same strategies at home.
58. As the home-school partnership develops, more parents are becoming involved in school life. There are regular helpers in the library, parents hear children read, run football coaching after school and help on visits outside school. Parents give good support when their children are participating in concerts, assemblies and sports events. Although not all parents support their children's learning at home, many regularly hear their children read and comment in their reading record books. The Parent Teacher Association, which is jointly run with the infant school, has recently been revived and enables families to meet socially and to raise funds for both schools.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. The headteacher took up her post some five months after the previous inspection. The school was reported at that time to have serious weaknesses. During the last two years the headteacher has led the school to a position where it has made substantial improvements in many of the areas of concern identified in the previous report.
60. The school is very well managed and organised. The headteacher gives strong, purposeful and distinctive leadership and the governing body and staff share her vision of the direction in which she wants the school to develop. A sense of purpose permeates

the work of the school, for example, in the high expectations which staff have of pupil performance and behaviour in lessons and elsewhere, in good quality teaching and in the very effective support given to pupils with special educational needs.

61. The headteacher has established realistic priorities for improvement. These are based not only on the key issues identified by the last inspection, but also on those which have emerged from the programme of lesson observations and scrutiny of teachers' planning in literacy and numeracy. This programme, although not yet extended to other curriculum areas, has nevertheless improved the quality of education and contributes a great deal in establishing a distinct whole school approach to learning.
62. Issues such as the regularity and quality of marking and the impact of teaching on pupils' learning have been thoroughly addressed. The agreed whole school policy on behaviour is fully in place and this has an important impact on pupils' progress.
63. Although the results for 2000 in the national tests in English, mathematics and science are well below the national average, the introduction of setting for literacy, numeracy and science in the mixed Years 5 and 6 classes is having an impact on raising standards. In addition, procedures for assessment, test analysis, target setting and tracking pupils' progress make an important contribution in the drive for improvement in attainment. Pupils benefit from additional support in booster classes in literacy and numeracy. Attendance at these classes, however, requires pupils to miss some other lessons. The school is aware of these organisational difficulties. There has been a big improvement in the provision for information and communication technology in the school with the completion of the computer suite. There is further work to be done to make more effective use of information and communication technology across the curriculum.
64. The deputy headteacher has leadership and management responsibilities for major areas of the curriculum. These include mathematics and assessment. These responsibilities, together with day-to-day duties, are carried out very competently. With the headteacher, she is directly involved in lesson observations, the analysis of pupils' test results in literacy, numeracy and science and monitoring of teachers' planning. This makes an important contribution towards raising the levels of pupils' achievement and provides invaluable support to the headteacher.
65. Curriculum co-ordinators are knowledgeable and enthusiastic. They advise and support colleagues informally and in staff meetings. The sharing of knowledge and expertise is proving beneficial to teaching across the school and in improving the quality of education provided. Co-ordinators are keen to develop their management skills in their areas but, with the exception of the literacy and numeracy co-ordinators, do not yet have opportunities to monitor teaching in the school.
66. The previous inspection report found serious weaknesses in the clarity of the education direction provided by the governing body. The new governing body, in place since the last inspection, addressed this key issue vigorously. In discussions with members of the inspection team, governors showed a good awareness of their roles and responsibilities towards raising standards. Governors are fully involved in monitoring standards of attainment, the impact of spending on learning and the school's progress.
67. A very good relationship exists between the headteacher and the chair of the governing body. The governors are supportive of the school and the headteacher and many play an increasingly active role within the school. There are named governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs. Governors visit the school regularly and there is a written policy to ensure that everyone benefits from the visits. The headteacher informs governors on all aspects of school life and they are fully involved by the

headteacher and the chair of governors in shaping the future direction of the school. There is an appropriate committee structure and effective reporting procedure to the full governing body. The governing body fully meets its statutory obligations.

68. The governing body's provision for special educational needs is very good. Pupils benefit from high quality teaching and support. They make good progress. The governor responsible for special educational needs meets the special educational needs co-ordinator each term and reports to the governors at their meetings.
69. All the staff and governors are aware of the aim to enable each pupil to fulfil their individual potential. However, at present the school has no written policy or guidance on the issue of equal opportunities and social inclusion. The headteacher recognises this. She is also aware of the need for additional support for the few pupils in the school who speak English as an additional language and are at an early stage of English acquisition. The school also recognises the need for its curriculum to reflect the richness and diversity of its own and different cultures.
70. The school improvement plan is a useful working document that covers a two-year period. It identifies targets and priorities, such as the current need to improve pupils' national test results in English, mathematics and science, to update all policies and schemes of work, performance management and playground development. It is linked closely to the school's finances and helps to set the way forward for the school.
71. The very good quality of the leadership and management results in the development of good attitudes, behaviour and relationships. There is parental support for the aims and values that the school successfully promotes. Parents appreciate the improvements that have been made, not only in terms of raising standards, but also in the efforts made to work more closely with them and to keep them more fully informed about their children's progress. The efforts of pupils and adults are recognised and valued. The hard work that is being put in towards securing its aims gives the school an exciting sense of purpose.
72. The school is run efficiently and now provides good value for money. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection, when financial planning was said to be satisfactory although there were no criteria for evaluating spending decisions. This contributed to the school being judged to provide unsatisfactory value for money. Since then, financial planning has been made a priority for the school and it is now good.
73. The governors are clear about the priorities for school development and relate expenditure closely to the priority educational developments listed in the school improvement plan, for example the continued improvement of resources for information and communication technology and the on-going programme to improve the school environment. The governing body is prudent in its spending in order to maintain some contingency to ensure that staffing needs are met as the school roll increases. Specific grants are used well; for example, money used for booster classes is helping the pupils concerned to raise their standards of attainment. Funding for special educational needs, augmented from the school's budget, is used effectively to provide teacher assistants. They are deployed very well to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs and this has a positive effect on pupils' progress.
74. The governing body plays an active role and, through the resources committee, closely monitors expenditure. Governors on this committee are provided with good information by the headteacher and finance officer and this enables them to make considered decisions about spending and the priorities of the school. Since the last inspection, governors have improved their role in monitoring the effectiveness of spending decisions, for example how well pupils are achieving as a result of setting in English and

mathematics for the two oldest year groups. Through its careful consideration when setting the budget, ensuring that the best prices are obtained for goods and services and comparing its results with other schools, the school is satisfactorily applying the principles of best value. It has not yet fully developed its consultation process to take into account formally the views of pupils and parents.

75. Day-to-day financial procedures and school administration are good. The three office staff are efficient and effective in their roles and give good support to the headteacher and staff, as well as contributing to the positive links between the school and its parents. The school makes satisfactory use of new technology to support its management and administration. Good use is made of electronic mail and access to the Internet to extend pupils' learning and to make school administration more efficient, although some of the office machinery now needs to be updated to cope with modern accounting systems. The school has not had an audit of its financial systems for over four years, but all financial procedures are clearly stated in the governing body's finance policy.
76. The school has a satisfactory number of teaching staff to meet the needs of the current numbers of pupils on roll, although some class sizes are large in the afternoons. Good use is made of a part-time teacher to split large classes into smaller groups for teaching English, mathematics and science. There are a good number of teaching assistants who give good support to pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator has very effectively led the recent improvement in provision and practice. The effectiveness of staff is well supported by the good procedures in place for professional development and performance management. Professional development and training, including the induction of new teachers, is well managed and has a good priority in the school. Training needs are very closely linked to the priorities identified in the school improvement plan and are planned to ensure that as many staff as possible can learn together. This has been particularly beneficial in joint training for the use of information and communication technology.
77. The school's accommodation is good and is much improved since the last inspection. Significant improvement has been made to the school library in terms of both its location and resourcing. The area between the entrance and the hall is now attractively fitted to house both non-fiction and fiction books as well as sets of reading books. There are attractive seating and table areas to contribute to the welcoming and bright environment. Good use has been made of old cloakroom areas to provide additional work and storage spaces and to open up corridor space. The school hall is large and is a very good facility for physical education, music, drama and assemblies. The school now plans to improve the decoration of classrooms and to brighten up the drab stairwells. Display around the school is satisfactory overall, although there is some variation in quality. The outside area is large and is being developed with the planned installation of fixed play equipment and seating. There is satisfactory access on the ground floor for wheelchair users, but there is no access to upper classrooms, the special educational needs room or the computer suite. The school is kept clean and well maintained by the caretaking staff.
78. Overall, there are sufficient resources to support learning in most subjects, although the range available for music and art needs to be developed. There has been significant improvement in the quality of resources for information and communication technology and English since the last inspection. The computer suite is bright and well equipped. Resources for the teaching of religious education are satisfactory overall, but still need further development. In science and design technology, there is a satisfactory number of resources of good quality, but the range needs to be further extended. The school has addressed the finding in the previous inspection report and has now purchased a good range of mathematics textbooks.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

79. **To improve further the quality of education provided and to raise standards of achievement, the governing body with the headteacher and staff should:**

raise the level of pupils' performance in national tests by:

- continuing the present very good use of assessment to keep track of pupils' progress and set appropriate targets for them;
- maintaining the high quality of teaching and provision of extra teaching groups;

(paragraphs 16-29, 48-49, 87, 90, 100, 102-103, 105 and 111)

provide more opportunities for pupils to learn about their own and other cultures by:

- increasing the amount of focus in art, dance, music and literature on the arts of other places and times;
- extending the programme of visits;

(paragraphs 39-40 and 69)

reduce the amount of authorised absence, especially for holidays in term time by:

- continuing the present efforts to convince parents of the importance of regular attendance;
- working in close co-operation with officers of the local education authority to monitor and respond to absence that has not been notified;

(paragraphs 12 and 45)

make better provision for swimming so that more pupils achieve at least the national standard by:

- adjusting present timetable arrangements so that pupils who have not reached the national standard by the end of Year 4 have further opportunities to do so.

(paragraphs 144 and 145)

In addition, the governing body should indicate in its action plan how it intends, in co-operation with the local education authority, to improve the level of support for pupils who join the school understanding and speaking very little English.

(paragraphs 8, 30, 33 and 69)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

48

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

60

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
2	27	46	25	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	211
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	27
Special educational needs	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	71
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.9
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2000	26	30	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	16	21
	Girls	22	15	20
	Total	39	31	41
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (62)	55 (66)	73 (75)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	14	16	22
	Girls	20	19	21
	Total	34	35	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (55)	63 (58)	77 (66)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	7
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	201
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	4	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: Y3– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.7
Average class size	26.4

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	467,291
Total expenditure	445,855
Expenditure per pupil	2,144
Balance brought forward from previous year	43,086
Balance carried forward to next year	64,522

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

55.7 per cent

Number of questionnaires sent out

210

Number of questionnaires returned

117

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	47	6	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	52	8	3	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	67	5	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	48	21	12	3
The teaching is good.	38	54	2	3	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	26	49	21	3	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	51	41	1	3	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	51	42	4	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	22	55	15	3	4
The school is well led and managed.	30	52	7	6	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	29	60	7	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	10	39	32	12	6

Some rows may not add up to 100 because of rounding

Other issues raised by parents

Parents at the pre-inspection meeting felt that improvement since the last inspection was 'immeasurable'

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN SUBJECTS

ENGLISH

80. Provision for English, including literacy, has improved significantly since the last inspection and standards of attainment have improved considerably during the last two years. Pupils are now achieving well in relation to prior attainment.
81. In the national test for 11 year olds in 2000, pupils' performance was below the national average. Their performance was well below average when compared with similar schools. The trend in results over the last four years is upward, but at a slower rate than the national trend. There were significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls by the age of 11; girls scored higher than boys. However, the school's analysis of the current pupils' attainment shows no significant differences between boys and girls and none were observed during inspection. Pupils' achievement, in relation to their prior performance, is good throughout the school.
82. Inspection evidence shows that the current Year 6 pupils' overall attainment in English, including literacy, is near to the national average. Performance in speaking and listening is in line with the national expectation. Performance in reading is securely in line with the national average. However, performance in writing remains below the national average, with too few pupils reaching the expected or higher levels.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good. The school has a higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs. They receive good quality support in literacy and most make good progress towards their individual targets. Well-structured lessons enable pupils working with English as an additional language to make good progress, but the provision for pupils who are new to English is not well enough developed for them to make enough progress in lessons.
84. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the National Literacy Strategy so pupils make good gains in understanding texts. Pupils read a good range of books and articles and talk readily about their favourite authors. Most show a good level of insight into characters' motivation and behaviour. Some pupils are beginning to make inferences and deductions from the text, but only a small proportion are skilled in this. The school has arranged extra reading comprehension lessons to improve skills throughout the school. Pupils reading at lower than average levels use appropriate strategies as a result of carefully focused teaching. Those who read regularly at home make the most progress. Most pupils make use of reference books, libraries and the Internet to search for information, but do not have regular planned opportunities to do so.
85. Lesson planning is clear and in line with the National Literacy Strategy so that pupils are tackling work at the right level for their age. Teachers plan activities that are well matched to pupils' needs so that the majority works productively. The higher attaining pupils write with interest, developing and sustaining their ideas through the text, for example, when constructing an argument about the pros and cons of mobile phones. They use punctuation correctly, such as speech marks, commas, question and exclamation marks. However, the writing of a significant minority of pupils is not well enough developed in purpose and organisation to reach the standard expected for their age. The school has responded to this by organising additional writing lessons. Teachers, particularly of Years 5 and 6, make good use of homework to reinforce pupils' learning. Most pupils' handwriting is fluent and legible in Years 5 and 6, but handwriting is not always well formed or consistently joined in the lower school. Standards of spelling are generally sound. Pupils make frequent use of dictionaries and thesauri, but have few opportunities to use computers in English lessons.

86. Teachers successfully build opportunities for speaking and listening into their lessons, such as discussing the similarities and differences between town and country life. This contributes to pupils achieving well and reaching the expected standards by the time they leave the school. Pupils enjoy the lessons and are keen to take part in discussion. Most teachers keep a brisk pace to their lessons so pupils are involved and responsive. Pupils express themselves clearly and speak confidently. They are aware of the needs of the listener, adding detail as necessary, such as when talking about their preferences in literature. Pupils listen carefully, for example, in a discussion about fox hunting and are ready to respond to each other. They are beginning to make use of Standard English when speaking with adults, adapting their speech to the situation.
87. The National Literacy Strategy is well established and is taught consistently throughout the school. The subject is carefully organised and planned to meet the pupils' needs. The monitoring of teaching and learning in the subjects has done much to improve the overall quality of teaching and make practice more consistent. Procedures for assessing pupils' work are effective and teachers' knowledge and understanding of pupils' learning needs are good. The monitoring of individual pupils' progress through the school tracking system is a recent and successful initiative. The information gained is used to set individual targets and this is effective in promoting progress. Initiatives such as 'booster groups', the 'additional literacy strategy' and the 'early reading research' project are well targeted to specific groups of pupils who need extra help. They are effective in raising attainment overall. The library is attractive and spacious, providing a good quality resource for the school. Pupils use this regularly, with the help of parents, to change books for their own individual reading. The use of the library for research is underdeveloped.

MATHEMATICS

National test results

88. At the time of the last inspection in 1998, the percentage of pupils reaching the nationally expected standard of Level 4 and above was in line with the national average. In comparison with similar schools the percentage was below.
89. The results of the national curriculum tests results in 2000 were well below the national average. Although the percentage of pupils achieving Level 4 was close to the national average, the proportion attaining a higher level was less than half that achieved nationally. The autumn analysis of anticipated National Curriculum test results for the year 2001 indicates some improvement. Inspection evidence, including lesson observations, discussions with pupils and an examination of pupils' work, supports the analysis.

Standards and progress

90. The school carefully analyses the school's National Curriculum and internal test results. The findings identify weaknesses so that teaching can be more sharply focused on improving these areas. Pupils are grouped for mathematics according to their level of attainment to ensure that they build on prior learning. Within these groups, work is set to suit the needs of each pupil. These measures are leading to an improvement in standards.
91. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress overall. They make good progress in 75 per cent of their lessons and at least satisfactory progress in the remainder. Progress in calculations and number work is particularly evident and is helped by teachers' insistence on accuracy. This work is encouraged by

the daily mental mathematics sessions, which are often well conceived and enjoyed by the pupils.

92. Pupils make less progress in problem-solving activities. For example, a significant proportion of younger pupils have some difficulties in reading and interpreting instructions. Lower attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 are often unable to retain and apply their knowledge.
93. Attainment and progress in the lower part of the key stage are satisfactory overall. Some lower and middle attaining pupils do not yet have a secure recall of number facts. This hinders their progress when adding to 10 and beyond. Higher attainers are challenged and succeed in finding the highest and lowest totals obtainable from numbers on a hopscotch grid. Most pupils use the plus and minus function keys of the calculator correctly to solve simple number problems. Examination of pupils' work shows sound progress throughout the year, particularly in the skills of working out sums.
94. Older pupils make good progress in lessons. For example, pupils in Year 4 make gains in their learning about multiplication and number patterns in preparation for learning their six times table. They are quick to see the pattern and enjoy their discoveries. Some higher attaining pupils, by the end of the lesson, begin to recall the multiplication table. Pupils are familiar with negative numbers. Higher attainers recognise and complete number sequences formed by counting from any number in steps of a constant size.
95. The work set is well matched to pupils' different learning needs. The careful explanations and support given by teachers enable pupils to work with a degree of independence.
96. Pupils in the mixed Years 5 and 6 classes are taught in four groups based on ability and progress. The work is carefully matched to the abilities of the pupils and builds on their previous achievements. Teachers set high standards with respect to work and behaviour and pupils display positive attitudes to the subject. Pupils recognise prime numbers. They understand factors and prime factors and use tests of divisibility to confirm these if necessary. For example, most answer quickly and accurately when asked if 35, 52 and 108 are divisible by 4, 6 and 8. Higher attaining pupils enjoy puzzling over the challenge of using the digits 1 to 6 to make $54 \times 3 = 162$. They use good reasoning skills. Pupils are confident in calculating square numbers and enjoy the challenge of squaring 13. The teacher develops pupils' confidence to *have a go*, gives them strategies and puts their work in the context of applying what they know. In a booster class, pupils work on simple word problems involving the calendar and months of the year. They benefit from the effective individual help and careful explanations from the teacher to ensure their understanding.
97. Work in pupils' books is usually well presented. There is evidence of sound progress in work on shape, area and calculation involving the four rules. Most lower attaining pupils have a reasonable recall of multiplication tables and facts. They multiply and divide whole numbers by 10, 100 and 1000 and demonstrate some understanding of decimals and decimal places. They respond particularly well to the challenge of mental arithmetic.
98. When practical work is planned and organised, as in a lesson where pupils represent and interpret data on a line graph, pupils make good progress in developing skills and concepts. Most respond with enthusiasm. Less able pupils make good progress in the use of calculators, in setting their work out and in solving problems involving money. They benefit from well focused teaching and clear expectations of standards and conduct. Pupils' books show that there has been comprehensive coverage and careful teaching of shape, angles, fractions and data handling.

Pupils and mathematics

99. Most pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy the subject. Many enjoy the challenge of mental arithmetic. Behaviour in lessons is good and pupils work well together when necessary.
100. **The overall teaching of mathematics is good and is never less than satisfactory. Important features of the best teaching which lead to pupils making good progress often include:**
- work well matched to groups of pupils of differing abilities;
 - clear identification of what pupils are going to learn and telling them this;
 - effective recapitulation at the beginning and consolidation at the end of the lesson so that all pupils know what they have learned;
 - good questioning, both to find out what pupils know and to extend their learning;
 - skilful intervention to support and motivate pupils and setting a brisk and purposeful pace;
 - pupils' behaviour is well managed through the interest and pace of the lessons;
 - well established classroom routines and organisation.
101. **Where teaching is less effective this is because:**
- basic classroom routines and expectations are not consistently applied;
 - work is less well matched to pupils' needs;
 - learning objectives are not sufficiently focused.
102. **Strengths of the subject**
- overall good quality of teaching;
 - effective monitoring of planning, teaching and learning;
 - careful analysis of test results to identify areas of weakness and strength;
 - assessment procedures;
 - target setting for individual pupils;
 - booster classes.
103. **What could be improved:**
- The number and range of opportunities for investigational work;
 - results in the national tests;
 - the use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning.

SCIENCE

National test results

104. The national test results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 in 2000 show that attainment was well below the average for all schools as well as for similar schools. The trend over the last five years has been downwards in comparison with the rising national average.

Standards and progress

105. At the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment were judged to be in line with national expectations. On the evidence of the lessons observed, examination of a substantial sample of pupils' work and discussions with them, attainment is now judged to be in line with national expectations at the end of the key stage. Pupils are benefiting from well-focused teaching in individual year groups throughout the school and a greater emphasis on scientific investigation. Pupils also benefit from having their weekly allocation of time for science in two sessions, separated by two or more days. This means that previous work is relatively fresh in pupils' minds and teachers can plan to build progress and learning over an appropriate timescale. In the great majority of the lessons seen during the inspection, the progress made by pupils was at least good.

106. Pupils in Year 3 had already covered work on food, teeth, natural and man-made materials, the properties of magnets and the forces operating in springs. Their work showed well-planned progress, both in acquiring a body of scientific knowledge and in developing the investigational skills of designing and carrying out experiments. Sound progress was also made in recording the results of investigations. During the inspection, pupils in one Year 3 class were learning about the different plants and parts of plants that we use for food. Helpfully, their teacher had brought in various fruits and vegetables for them to look at. Pupils moved successfully on to identify from which plants and parts of a plant chips, marmalade, bread and rice came. Pupils were interested and worked well in response to the teacher's clear expectations and setting of time targets for tasks.
107. Pupils' books in Year 4 show that pupils have made good progress in recording and presenting the results of their practical work and higher attaining pupils give good explanations of why bubble wrap is an effective heat insulator. Other pupils have produced good accounts in their own words of what muscles and tendons do. An account of setting up a habitat appropriate to woodlice provides good evidence of encouragement to observe, comment and explain. During the inspection, pupils were establishing the key properties of solids and liquids through observing the behaviour of, for example, sand, flour, treacle and washing up liquid. The well-planned practical tasks and good organisation led to good learning and progress on the part of the pupils. Through questioning, the teacher effectively encouraged discussion and promoted learning, thereby contributing to the development of pupils' literacy skills as well as their scientific skills.
108. Pupils in the three mixed-age Years 5 and 6 classes are split for science into two Year 5 and two Year 6 groups. This arrangement is having a clear positive effect on raising standards through teaching that is matched well to pupils' learning needs. Year 5 pupils benefited from a very well focused and planned introductory lesson on evaporation, the first of three designed to lead to a practical investigation of the factors influencing the rate at which liquids evaporate. In the lesson observed, pupils showed a good ability to use scientific language correctly and to answer questions in full sentences in response to the teacher's clear expectations. They offered good examples of evaporation in operation, including a towel drying on a radiator and grass drying in the sun. The teacher very skilfully used such examples to reinforce the key points of the lesson and dealt very clearly with confusion between *condensation* and *evaporation*. Earlier work completed by pupils in Year 5 shows a continuing good development of scientific knowledge, particularly about healthy living, living organisms, the plant life cycle and reversible and irreversible changes. There is also good development of skills in using the scientific method, in finding out, for example, whether there is air between the particles of a sponge and in soil.
109. The earlier work of pupils in Year 6 shows a clear understanding of the nature of a fair test, good experience of planning investigations and writing them up in their own words. The National Curriculum programmes of study are being taught well. In lessons during the inspection, pupils were looking at change and mixing different materials, for example bicarbonate of soda and vinegar, and cement and water. They demonstrated good use of correct scientific language in response to the teacher's very good questioning in relation to reversible and irreversible changes. The very good practice of providing key word prompts on wall displays supported learning well, as did the teacher's modelling of how to write up the experiments. In this lesson, as in most, pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, made progress that was at least good and for many was very good.

Pupils and science

110. Pupils obviously enjoy their science lessons, not only the excitement of carrying out practical tasks, but also the challenge of observing, describing and trying to explain. Their behaviour and attitudes to their work are good in response to well-planned and interesting lessons. They work together well and sensibly when carrying out experiments. As pupils move up the school they take increasing responsibility for writing up their accounts of investigations and the quality of presentation of their work shows good improvement.

Teaching

111. The quality of science teaching is always at least satisfactory. In fact, 83 per cent of lessons were good or better, of which 33 per cent were very good. Teachers have a good scientific knowledge, plan lessons well and teach with enthusiasm. Other important features of the best teaching that make a major contribution to the good quality of pupils' learning and progress include:
- very good questioning skills that help pupils to consolidate and extend their learning;
 - insistence on the correct use of scientific language;
 - promotion of an inquiring, investigative approach;
 - high expectations of standards of work and behaviour that lead to well-paced lessons.

ART AND DESIGN

112. The improvement in the provision for art and design since the last inspection is satisfactory.
113. Not enough teaching and learning was seen to make a judgement about their quality. The work on display around the school was limited and not necessarily representative of the work of pupils as a whole. It is, therefore, not possible to judge pupils' overall performance. However, the work seen was of a standard that meets national expectations by the time the pupils leave the school at 11 years. Teachers' planning shows that the scheme of work is implemented in each year group and scrutiny of pupils' work on display shows the curriculum is sufficiently well covered.
114. Pupils cover a good range of work in paint, collage, crayon, chalk, pastel and clay, demonstrating variety and individuality. Pupils in Year 3 create self-portraits in collage which, although immature in execution, show individual characteristics. Pupils in Year 4 carry out fine paper mosaic work in 'Roman' style that is neat and attractive. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 produce pastel pictures in the styles of Renoir, Monet and Van Gogh. Those pictures on display are of a good standard with recognisable style and good, complex use of colour to create the right atmosphere. Watercolour portraits in Tudor style are well proportioned and carefully executed.
115. Other examples of work on display include repeating prints using carved polystyrene blocks or string mounted on card, complex repeating patterns such as tessellating figures and clay coil pots, some of which are finely made. Pupils have recently been supplied with sketchbooks and are extending well their skills in drawing. Some good examples of pencil drawing were seen in Years 5 and 6. Overall, pupils are more skilled in pencil drawing, pastel and crayon than in controlling paint. Three-dimensional work is under-represented.
116. The subject is presently a priority in the school improvement plan. The action plan is appropriate and some of the tasks, such as mapping out the scheme of work and cataloguing resources, have already been carried out. The action plan is due to be completed by summer 2001.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

117. Provision for design and technology was unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Although improvements have been made in the curriculum, these have not yet led to improvements in standards of attainment. These are still below the expected level.
118. By the age of 11, pupils' attainment in developing and communicating ideas reaches the expected level. Attainment in terms of using tools and materials to make quality products does not reach the expected level. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of materials and components is underdeveloped. Evaluation skills are also underdeveloped.
119. Not enough lessons were seen to make a judgement about the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school. Nevertheless, scrutiny of planning shows that the range of work covered meets requirements. Scrutiny of pupils' books shows appropriate work for each year group.
120. Pupils in Years 5 and 6, investigating slippers, make sound judgements of design requirements. They know that several factors, such as appearance, comfort and cost, must be taken into consideration when designing an article. They know that these factors relate to the choice of materials used. Pupils' annotated sketches are of sound quality, demonstrating pupils' understanding. However, waterproof shelters made by pupils in Years 5 and 6 show that, although many pupils have good ideas, most do not have making skills appropriate for their age.
121. Pupils in Year 4 make cards with moving parts, for example a card in the shape of a bird with moving wings. These are attractive in design, but not made well enough and pupils' evaluation of their work does not relate to their original intentions. Again, leather purses and wallets are attractive in design, but not made well enough or evaluated.
122. Pupils in Year 3 design and make sandwiches with a healthy nutritional content. Pupils' written work is in line with expectations for their age. They explain rules for hygiene and list well thought out instructions on how to prepare them.
123. The subject is a priority for development in the school improvement plan. Appropriate action is planned and some tasks have already been completed, such as the organisation of resources. The action plan is due for completion in summer 2001. In the meantime, the scheme of work is sufficiently detailed to maintain a satisfactory provision.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

124. The school plans its history and geography curriculum to be taught at different times of the year. No history was being taught at the time of the inspection and it was possible to observe only two geography lessons. Judgements on attainment and progress in lessons are based largely on the examination of pupils' work in classrooms, work on display and the evidence from discussions with pupils.
125. Pupils make satisfactory progress in history and geography and achieve standards similar to those achieved by pupils of their ages nationally. These judgements are in line with those made in the previous inspection.
126. During the autumn term, pupils in Year 3 study the Ancient Egyptians. They gain knowledge and some understanding of historical events and ways of life in the past. Pupils understand that a pharaoh was the most important person in Ancient Egyptian society and describe in simple terms the rites and rituals connected with Egyptian life at the time. By the end of the key stage, pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are developed through the study of the Romans, the Ancient Greeks, the Tudor era and

Britain in the 1930s. Some pupils place events, people and periods they have studied in a chronological framework, others are less secure about this. They give reasons for the different ways in which the past is represented and interpreted. For example, they are beginning to understand the notion of wealth and power as symbolised in portraits of Tudor monarchs. They gain some understanding of the court of Henry VIII and how his wish for a male heir led to the split with the Roman Catholic Church. Work on the Egyptians, Romans and the Tudor era is supported by visits to the British Museum, Colchester Castle and Hatfield House.

127. In geography, pupils in Year 3 know and use correctly the four main compass points. They construct simple maps and use keys. They follow directions such as left and right. They are beginning to have some knowledge of the local area and the use of land in their investigation of Loughton. Pupils have good recall of observations made on their walk in the area. Some name a range of public services, for example a garage and the doctor's surgery. From their observations they realise that the local area is mainly residential and that the shops are clustered together.
128. Pupils in Year 4 consider life in the Indian village of Chembakolli. They identify similarities and differences in the people's work and lives when compared to their own.
129. Examination of teachers' planning and pupils' work indicate that, in Years 5 and 6, pupils broaden their knowledge of the local area. They begin to understand how decisions about places affect the environment and offer ideas for improvement. They are positive and interested in the issue and are encouraged to evaluate their points of view.
130. In the better of the two lessons observed in geography, the quality of teaching was good. The teacher presented information effectively and stimulated discussion with well-focused questions that probed pupils' thinking. The interesting activities were planned to encourage pupils' observations and research skills. Where teaching is less effective, pupils' activities are not so well matched to their learning needs.
131. There is good evidence of the use of literacy skills in recording history and geography. For example, pupils write about their proposals for solving the problem of traffic in the local area and interview parents and other adults for their responses. There is some informal assessment, but no consistent procedures for monitoring pupils' progress. There is little use made of information and communication technology to support and extend learning in geography and history.
132. History makes a contribution to pupils' cultural development and, in geography, the school makes good use of the local area as a resource to support the subject.
133. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and hard working. She has audited the resources and prepared a scheme of work based on guidance produced by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. She has carried out some monitoring of pupils' workbooks. However, there are no set procedures for assessing and recording pupils' progress. The monitoring of the subjects does not include opportunities for the co-ordinator to visit classrooms to support the improvement in learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

134. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment was well below national expectations, the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory, resulting in poor progress, and much of the hardware was out of date and slow. Improvement since then has been impressive. The school now has a computer suite and the quality of teaching is good overall, with three-quarters of lessons judged to be good or very good. Although older pupils in the school have not had their full entitlement to the National Curriculum programme of study, levels of attainment throughout the school are now securely in line with national expectations, with elements that are above that benchmark. All pupils make good progress in developing the necessary skills, knowledge and understanding and there is a good weekly allocation of time for the subject in each year group.
135. The school recognises that more use needs to be made of pupils' information and technology skills to support and extend their learning in other subjects. There are already good examples of this in work with pupils with special educational needs and in the use of a webcam to track the decay of a banana in a scientific investigation. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. The development plan for the subject makes provision for her to work with other subject leaders to develop the use of computer-based resources in the teaching of their subjects. There is a very good basis for further development in this aspect of the curriculum.
136. A good lesson for pupils in Year 3 provided an effective introduction to e-mail. Using a mixture of print resources and projected monitor screen (a good use of information and communication technology to teach skills in the subject) the teacher very thoroughly prepared pupils to send e-mails to another class. Pupils listened well and, as a result of the teacher's good planning and preparation, all made good progress. They showed a good understanding of the various ways that letters can be sent and of the advantages of e-mail.
137. A very strong feature of the lesson on screen and floor robots with pupils from Year 4 was the skill with which the teacher had broken down the learning intention into several small steps each with its own clear objective. She used questions very effectively to revise and extend pupils' knowledge of controlling a floor robot and of measuring turn. This very thorough preparatory work enabled all pupils to engage fully in instructing the floor robot or in guessing what sequence of instructions led to a sequence of observed movements. They were enthralled and eagerly answered questions and offered suggestions. By the end of the lesson, all pupils were well prepared to move to the computer with a secure understanding of the command sequence structure. This was planned to be the work of the lesson on the following day, providing time for consolidation before moving on. Timetabling arrangements for this subject help learning and progress.
138. Pupils, mainly from Year 5 in a mixed-age Years 5 and 6 class, demonstrated confidence in accessing the Internet and successfully identified good and bad features of web pages. Year 6 pupils had the appropriate task of saying how they would improve sample pages. This lesson was successful in promoting good learning and progress because the teacher had been very careful in her selection of which web page particular pupils were to access. All were able to carry out the set task at different levels of challenge. Classroom routines were well understood and maintained with the results that the teacher was able to give focused attention to individuals while other pupils worked independently. This well planned sequence of lessons culminates in pupils designing their own web page and this is a level of work that exceeds national expectations for Year 5 pupils.
139. Pupils respond well to the opportunities for developing skills in information and communication technology and to the mainly good or better teaching that they receive.

The use of a journal in which pupils make notes and record their progress and learning is a good feature of the organisation of the subject.

MUSIC

140. At the time of the last inspection, the provision for music was unsatisfactory. This has now improved to a satisfactory level. The good quality scheme of work shows that the music curriculum is well balanced. Pupils' achievement is good and the overall standard of attainment is improving, although not yet in line with national expectations in all aspects of the subject. Pupils' skills in composing, responding to and appraising music are not developed to the expected level. Their knowledge and understanding of musical elements, such as pitch, dynamic and tempo are not yet in line with their age. However, pupils' skills in singing and performing have improved significantly since the last report and are now securely in line with national expectations.
141. The quality of teaching and learning are good overall. In the best lessons, teachers' enthusiasm and expertise motivates pupils to try hard, enjoy the lessons and so make good progress. Pupils demonstrate a good attitude. They listen carefully, following the teacher's clear directions and developing a feel for the music. Teachers who are less confident in their own subject knowledge are supported by the well-structured scheme of work. Lessons have a clear structure and build on each other through the term so pupils build their listening and performing skills progressively. Long term plans include a good balance between composing, performing and appraising, resulting in pupils gaining experience and confidence in all aspects of the subject. Lessons are varied and interesting and use music from a range of cultures, so that pupils are interested and enjoy them. The work is clearly adapted to meet the needs of pupils of different ages. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 study a Tarantella song, learning about the structure of the song, working out the Tarantella rhythms and learning about the cultural origins of the Tarantella dance.
142. The teaching of singing in Years 5 and 6 is very good. A visiting specialist teacher takes weekly lessons in which pupils are taught how to develop and extend their vocal skills. This is very effective in promoting good progress. The lessons are varied, well paced and very enjoyable, with a good choice of interesting songs to develop a good range of skills.
143. Singing is a growing tradition in the school, making a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development. Whole school singing is developing well and is well supported by the co-ordinator's very good quality piano accompaniment. The newly formed choir benefits from careful, focused teaching that develops a pleasing tone, clear expression and a good sense of rhythm. A video of the Christmas concert shows an exciting and varied programme performed with energy and enthusiasm. Parents expressed great enjoyment and appreciation of the event.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

144. At the time of the last inspection most pupils were making satisfactory progress in the various areas of physical education and attainment at the end of the key stage was appropriate to their age. About a third of pupils achieved the national standard of swimming 25 metres unaided.
145. Only two lessons could be observed during the course of the inspection. Judgements are based on these lessons, on examination of planning and on discussions with pupils and members of staff including the co-ordinator. Attainment is broadly in line with national expectations. However, the proportion of pupils achieving the national standard in swimming by the end of Year 4 is around 45 per cent and the school makes no further

provision for those who have not achieved it. The school recognises the need to do something about this.

146. Planning shows that pupils have good opportunities throughout the years they are at the school to develop skills in dance, gymnastics and athletics as well as a good range of games. The physical education curriculum is supported by after school activities, including coaching in football, tennis, cricket, badminton and dance. There is also provision for outdoor and adventurous activities on a residential experience for Year 6 pupils near the end of their time at the school.
147. In the Years 4, 5 and 6 gymnastics lessons observed, levels of attainment in terms of balance, control, changes of direction and speed when sequencing movements were broadly in line with national expectations. Very few pupils displayed above average attainment. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in one case and good in the other. Teachers and pupils were appropriately dressed for the lesson and there were good warm up and warm down routines.
148. The subject has had a regrettably low profile in the school until recently. The relatively new co-ordinator has reviewed resources and developed a useful long-term plan based on national guidelines. She has identified the next steps in the development of the subject as training for staff and the adoption of a published scheme of work to provide guidance in short term planning. There is a sound basis for further development and for raising standards of attainment.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

149. Only three lessons were observed during the inspection. Evidence from these lessons, from discussion with pupils and an examination of pupils' work indicates that pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations in the locally agreed syllabus. This judgement is in line with that made at the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory and sometimes good progress.
150. The school is in the process of adopting the model scheme of work of the local education authority. This is helping to provide a structure for lessons throughout the school and ensures that statutory requirements are met.
151. The school recognises that under-provision and a lack of focus have had an adverse affect on pupils' attainment. Religious education has not been a high priority and there has been no clear vision for the future development of the subject. The co-ordinator, who has had the responsibility for religious education since last September, is knowledgeable and has a good understanding of the need for development and improvement. He is working hard to bring this about.
152. However, at present there is no opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor standards throughout the school. As a result, basic syllabus requirements are fulfilled, but it is difficult to ensure that the level and sophistication of pupils' understanding is being developed. Class teachers are showing an increasing understanding of the needs of the subject and there is a shared commitment to improving standards.
153. Pupils in Year 3 have a basic knowledge of Bible stories, are beginning to explore their own ideas of who or what is God and to link them to the Christian belief of God as a loving Father. They write about places that are special to them. Pupils discuss personal values and recognise how people care for each other within family and friendship groups. They learn about the dedicated work of Mother Theresa. Their understanding is developed as they write about belonging to a group and listen later to the story of the Lost

Sheep. Pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of different religious beliefs and world religions. They learn about the Hindu festival of Holi and some recall Easter as a spring festival in the Christian calendar.

154. Older pupils develop their understanding of Christianity. They explore the concept of compassion as they listen to and write about the story of Jesus and Zacchaeus. As part of their study of Judaism, pupils learn about Hanukkah, the Jewish festival of light and explore Jewish history.
155. Pupils' responses to religious education are very positive. In the best lessons observed, teachers' very good management and high expectations involved all pupils in the lesson. Planning is thorough and identifies clear objectives. In the lessons observed in two mixed Years 5 and 6 classes a short excerpt from *The Lion King* was used effectively to stimulate pupils' ideas of life as a journey and a circle. Many showed a willingness to discuss personal values and issues of inter-dependence. In these lessons the skilful use of questioning broadened the pupils' understanding and promoted thinking and discussion. Pupils develop a personal response to right and wrong. Through their lessons and daily acts of worship pupils become increasingly aware of Christian values and the beliefs and celebrations associated with other faiths. Frequent visits by *Youth for Christ*, which involve pupils in mime and drama, make a valuable contribution to pupils' religious education.
156. In the lessons observed, teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. Lessons are well paced and provide a good balance between activities and teacher expectation. Teachers manage whole class lessons well and ask appropriate questions to promote discussion.
157. Religious education features in displays around the school. There are adequate resources which are well organised. The co-ordinator himself makes use of the Internet for obtaining information and recognises its potential for pupils' research.