

INSPECTION REPORT

KATHERINE SEMAR JUNIOR SCHOOL

Saffron Walden, Essex

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114950

Headteacher: Mrs J. Burgess

Reporting inspector: David Wynford-Jones
Registered Inspector No.23138

Dates of inspection: 6th – 10th November 2000

Inspection number: 224330

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ross Close Saffron Walden Essex
Postcode:	CB11 4DU
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Hoy
Date of previous inspection:	09/03/1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
David Wynford-Jones 23138	Registered inspector	Maths Music Design and Technology	What sort of School is it? The school's results and pupils' achievement. How well is the school led and managed? Special Educational Needs.
Christine Haggerty 13807	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Ali Haouas 15023	Team inspector	English Information Technology History Geography	How well does the school care for its pupils? Equal Opportunities English as an additional language
Janet Dyson 15926	Team inspector	Science Art Religious Education Physical Education	How well are pupils taught? How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	15
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	19
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	20
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	22
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	25
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	26
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	30

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Katherine Semar Junior School is situated on the southern outskirts of Saffron Walden in Essex. The school shares a large site with the infant school. Most pupils transfer from the infant school. There are 222 pupils on roll, 117 boys and 105 girls aged between 7 and 11. The roll has risen from 212 at the time of the last inspection. The majority of pupils live within the school's catchment area. They come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and live in a mix of private and rented accommodation. The school's intake reflects the whole ability range. Attainment on entry, based on the end of Key Stage 1 national tests, is above national expectations in English and mathematics. There are 3 pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds and no pupils who have English as an additional language. 11.5 percent of pupils are known to be entitled to free school meals. This is broadly in line with the national average. There are 56 pupils on the special educational needs register, 14 are on stages 3-5 and four have statements of special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a sound and improving school. It has improved significantly since the last inspection in March 1998. Overall standards in English, mathematics and science are now in line with national averages. Standards in English and science are in line with those of similar schools and above average for mathematics. The above average standards achieved in 1999 in the science tests have not been maintained this year. Teaching is good overall and enables the majority of pupils to make at least sound and frequently good progress. Overall, provision for pupils with special educational needs is good but there are some weaknesses. The leadership and management of the school is good overall. The governing body and the headteacher are particularly effective in providing clear direction for the work of the school. The school gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above in English and mathematics is above the national averages and those of similar schools.
- The quality of teaching is good overall.
- The headteacher and governing body are very effective in providing clear educational direction, strategic financial management and promoting a welcoming ethos.
- Pupils' attitudes to coming to school, their attendance, behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good.
- The curriculum is enriched through a wide range of after school clubs and residential visits. The provision of extra curricular activities is excellent.
- Provision for pupils' social development is excellent and links with parents are very good.

What could be improved

- Standards in science.
- Aspects of leadership and management including the role of the senior management team and subject co-ordinators.
- The clarity and focus of the targets in pupils' individual education plan (IEPs).

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1998. At that time it was judged to have serious weaknesses. These weaknesses consisted of low standards in English and low attainment in information technology and physical education. There were poor procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' progress, poor strategic planning especially in supporting, developing and monitoring the curriculum and unsatisfactory whole school planning. The school did not give value for money. The school has made good progress in addressing these issues. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in English are now in line with national averages. Attainment in information technology and physical education is in line with national expectations. Assessment procedures in the core subjects are satisfactory; there are sound strategies to support, develop and monitor the curriculum and whole school planning is satisfactory. Significant progress has been made in the development of the leadership and management of the school. The quality of teaching and pupils' attitudes to school and learning have improved. The school is a welcoming, friendly environment and the development of the physical features of the school, for example, the library, ICT suite, extra classroom and playground facilities have done much to improve provision. The school no longer has serious weaknesses and is well placed to consolidate the progress already made and to raise standards further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
English	C	C	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
mathematics	C	B	C	B	
science	C	B	C	C	

Average standards in the core subjects are comparable with those found nationally. In English and science they are comparable with those of similar schools and are above for mathematics. This is a good result. Pupils achieve above the national average and those of similar schools at Level 4 in English and mathematics. Over the last three years there is an upward trend in results overall in line with national improvements. The school has set challenging but realistic targets in English and mathematics for the next three years. No targets have been set in science.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	All pupils show very good attitudes. They are keen, enthusiastic and hardworking. There are occasional lapses when there is insufficient challenge.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour before and after school, in lessons, school assemblies, around the school at lunchtimes and during mid morning break is very good.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They get on well with each other and their teachers. They are co-operative and sociable. They willingly take on school and class responsibilities and are keen to be part of the school council.
Attendance	Attendance is very good (97%). Unauthorised absence is higher than national percentages.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-11 years
64 lessons seen overall	Not applicable	Not applicable	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.

Teaching in 40 of the 64 lessons (62.5%) was good or better, of these eight (12.5%) were very good or excellent. Teaching in 22 lessons (34.5%) was satisfactory. In two lessons (3%) it was unsatisfactory. In some classes the quality of teaching was consistently of a high standard. Pupils with special education needs receive good support. Overall, teaching in English, mathematics and science is good. This has contributed significantly to the improvements in standards in the core subjects over the last three years. The literacy hour is being implemented successfully and reading and writing skills are taught well. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are being developed appropriately in all subjects but in some classes insufficient attention is given to developing subject specific vocabulary. Good use is made of the daily mathematics lesson. The lesson structure follows the recommended format of the National Numeracy Strategy. Most teachers are using questioning techniques well. There are noticeable differences in teachers' expectations of their pupils. The quality of the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent. Across the school, lessons are characterised by very good relationships between teachers and pupils. Lessons are generally well organised, move at a good pace and capture pupils' interest. As a consequence, pupils listen very attentively, concentrate well and work with sustained concentration. This has contributed to improved standards.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and balanced and enriched by a wide range of extra-curricular activities including residential educational visits for all year groups. Too much time is allocated for the development of pupils' handwriting.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enables them to make sound progress. However, in many of the individual educational plans (IEPs) the targets are not sufficiently focused.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils within the school eligible for support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Overall, provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for pupils' social development is excellent, good for moral and cultural development and satisfactory for spiritual development. Teachers' planning pays insufficient attention to pupils' spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Every pupil is valued as an individual. Procedures for monitoring and assessing pupils' academic progress in the core subjects and their personal development are good but insufficiently developed in the foundation subjects. Some school reports lack detail of what pupils know, understand and can do in lessons.

Links with parents are very good and is one of the strengths of the school. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when they were unsatisfactory. The school encourages parents to become involved in the life of the school. Good lines of communication have been established and parents know that letters and circulars will be sent home on Fridays. The school has established an open door policy to parents, who receive a warm welcome into the school. There is a high level of parental satisfaction with the school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher leads and manages the school well. The deputy head gives good support for the development of the curriculum, improving the quality of teaching and raising standards. The senior management team has recently been enlarged but has not yet become fully effective. The role of subject co-ordinators is under-developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is very effective in providing the strategic direction for the school and holding it to account. It fulfils all statutory responsibilities. Governors are committed and enthusiastic, spending a considerable amount of time in school. The chair of governors is particularly effective in promoting the work of the governors and in providing support for the school
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is a satisfactory range of strategies in place to monitor and evaluate school performance. They require consolidation and more involvement of subject co-ordinators. Many of the success criteria in the school improvement plan are not precise enough and do not provide an effective measure in some aspects of the school's work. People responsible for monitoring and evaluating the school's progress have not been identified in the school improvement plan.
The strategic use of resources	The school manages its resources very well. The strategic management of the budget is very good. It is based on a two to three year projection of anticipated numbers of pupils on roll. Financial resources are used effectively to target priorities. The school is implementing the principles of best value satisfactorily.

There are sufficient suitably qualified teachers and learning support assistants for the number of pupils on roll. The accommodation and the external environment have been much improved with the creation of an additional classroom, computer suite and a library. The resurfacing of the playground, the upgrading of playground markings and equipment and the development of the maths garden all contribute to an improved learning environment. Overall, the provision of resources within the school is satisfactory in terms of both range and quality. They are used appropriately and treated with respect by the pupils.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The significant improvements made since the last inspection• The values and attitudes the school promotes• The leadership and management of the school and the quality of teaching.• That the school helps pupils to achieve their best and to develop as mature responsible individuals• That the school offers an interesting range of extra-curricular activities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pupils' behaviour at lunchtime• Information in advance of the work to be undertaken during the term.

The inspection findings support the parents' views in the areas that please them. Inspectors found that pupil behaviour at lunch times is very good. The inspectors judged that the school does provide reasonable curriculum information for parents but agrees with parents that further information circulated in advance would be beneficial.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Overall standards in English, based on the average points score, are broadly in line with the national average and with that of similar schools. However, in the end of Key Stage National tests, the percentage of pupils of pupils attaining Level 4 and above, is above the national average and that of similar schools. At Level 5 they are in line with all schools and those of a similar type. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. At that time, standards in English were below those found nationally and in similar schools. Evidence from the inspection confirms the high level of achievement within the school.
2. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils' attainment in speaking and listening and in writing is in line with national expectations. In reading is above. Pupils listen and speak confidently in a wide range of contexts and take an active part in discussions. In reading, pupils use a range of strategies to help them with their reading and can discuss a variety of texts. However, several pupils do not know how to find books on specific subjects in the library. Pupils write in a variety of forms including descriptive writing, autobiographies and poetry. Higher attaining pupils write extensive and imaginative pieces with the correct use of punctuation and paragraphing. Standards of handwriting and spelling are good and work is consistently presented well.
3. In mathematics overall standards, based on the average points score are broadly in line with the national average and above those of similar schools. In the end of Key Stage 2 National tests, the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above is above the national average and that of similar schools. At Level 5 they are in line. There have been some fluctuations in results over the last three years but the overall trend since the last inspection is one of improvement. This inspection confirms that the above average standards are being maintained.
4. By the end of the key stage, pupils are developing their ability to undertake mental calculations satisfactorily. They are able to respond to a wide range of questions involving the four rules of number and are able to explain their calculations. In some classes pupils' use of subject specific vocabulary is underdeveloped. In their written work the vast majority of Year 6 pupils are confident when calculating the perimeter and area of various shapes and can apply this knowledge to design a floor plan for a building. Some pupils are able to work with complex numbers, think strategically, apply logic and use codes to identify four digit numbers.
5. In science overall standards, based on the average points score, are broadly in line with the national average and that of similar schools. In the end of Key Stage 2 National tests the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above is broadly in line with the national average, but marginally below those when compared with similar schools. The high standards achieved in the 1999 tests have not been sustained when results were well above the national average. However, in the latest tests the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 has increased and is now comparable with the national average. Since the last inspection, the school has made some improvements to the standards in science, but as yet these have not been consolidated. The inspection findings indicate that standards are broadly in line

with national expectations.

6. Pupils in Year 6 are developing their scientific knowledge well. They are able to predict and explain their findings and use their scientific knowledge to present and interpret data.
7. In information and communication technology, standards are in line with national expectations. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when standards were below those expected nationally. Pupils are making good progress. They are making good use of the newly installed computer network suite to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of information technology but now need to apply these skills to support other subjects. Membership of the South East of England Virtual Education Zone (SEEVAZ) has greatly enhanced the curriculum and contributed significantly to the raising of standards within the school.
8. In religious education, pupils are on course to achieve the standards required by the Essex Agreed Syllabus by the time they are eleven. However, higher standards could be achieved in some classes as many of the tasks set are low level activities such as cutting, sticking, identifying missing words in sentences and re-telling Bible stories, which are not designed to build on and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively.
9. Pupils' attainment in history and geography is above that expected nationally. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was in line with national expectations.
10. In design technology, art, physical education, standards are in line with national expectations. In physical education there has been a considerable improvement in pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. In the last inspection standards in physical education were unsatisfactory.
11. It was not possible to make a judgement on pupils' attainment in music as no music lessons were seen during the inspection.
12. All pupils make at least satisfactory progress as they move through the school. In some classes it is good. Scrutiny of the Performance and Assessment data (PANDA) show that boys make slightly better progress than the girls in English and mathematics. This was not evident during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, particularly when working with the support teacher, however pupils would make better progress if the targets in their individual educational plans (IEPs) were more specific. Overall, higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress, they make good progress when they are withdrawn from their classes and are challenged during the "thinking skills" lessons.
13. The school's targets English and mathematics for 2001 are reasonable. Challenging but realistic targets have been set for 2002 and 2003. These are based on a careful analysis of pupil attainment, and take into consideration the significant variations of numbers in each cohort. The school is in a good position to achieve its targets in English and mathematics. No targets have been set for science.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good. This aspect is a strength of the school and represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Pupils join in classroom activities with enthusiasm because tasks are interesting and well matched to their abilities. Pupils are fully involved in the routines of the school and are well on the way to becoming independent learners. Boys and girls play well together during breaks and there is a strong feeling of community in the school. Parents attending the parents meeting and responding to the questionnaire are very happy with the behaviour of the children and the values, which the school promotes. Parents report that their children enjoy coming to school.

15. Pupils including those with special educational needs, have very good attitudes towards learning and they are keen to come to school. Parents report that their children are enthusiastic when they come home from school and are keen to talk about what they have been doing during the day. In the mornings pupils settle quickly and the day begins with a focus activity such as maths. This ensures a pleasant orderly start to the day. Pupils stay on task during group activities, with many showing very mature attitudes to learning. For example, during a history lesson, pupils were moving from extracting information from the CD Rom about how and why Tutankhamen died and then comparing what they had found with information from various text books, completing their tasks without disturbing the teacher who was working with another group. Pupils concentrate well for increasing lengths of time as they become older. During a literacy lesson the younger pupils were listening attentively to a story about the Monster Storyteller, speaking and listening confidently to the teacher. Pupils respond well to the challenge in their work. This has a positive effect on their attainment and progress. Pupils are keen to answer questions, which are well targeted to the ability levels of each group. When pupils spend too long on the carpet they can become fidgety and their attention wanders, however, generally pupils respond well to the encouragement of teachers and support staff who use praise consistently to raise and recognise effort and achievement. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress and self-esteem.

16. Overall the behaviour of pupils is very good. This has a positive effect on learning and the standards achieved. Staff and pupils manage the accommodation very well. There is some noise intrusion due to the open plan design of the classrooms, but pupils cope with this very well. Staff have high expectations of behaviour and pupils respond to this, trying to do their best for their teacher. Pupils show self-discipline when moving around the school, quietly going to assembly or queuing in a co-operative and orderly way for lunch. During assemblies the behaviour of pupils is often excellent. Boys and girls of all ages, mix and play together well during break times. Members of the school council have a rota to monitor that the quiet area is not used for football at lunchtime. This is very effective in building understanding and co-operation between pupils. Pupils respect the grounds, the buildings and the furniture, and these show no sign of graffiti or vandalism. Pupils with special needs are fully integrated in the life of the school and mix well with all pupils. The school operates as an orderly community. There is no recent history of exclusions. No poor behaviour or bullying was seen during the inspection. However, the school is aware that on rare occasions, there can be unacceptable behaviour and has reviewed their procedures to ensure there is very rigorous recording and monitoring of any incident.

17. Overall, pupils' personal development and relationships within the school are very good. All pupils mix well across ethnic and gender lines at work and play and enjoy harmonious relationships throughout the school. Pupils are polite and welcoming to visitors. All pupils are encouraged to become independent learners and their skills increase as they move through the school. For example, during a science lesson, some pupils were recording their results using ICT bar graphs, pupils allocate tasks within their groups, they set up and carried out their investigations without help, sustaining interest and concentration and applying intellectual effort. This has a very positive effect on their personal development and their self-esteem. Pupils of all ages are fully involved in the daily routines of the school and their responsibilities increase as they become older. Each class contributes to their class rules at the beginning of the academic year. The school council is elected annually and each member discusses with his or her class any issues which are causing concern, before bringing the matter to the school council. The yearly residential trips undertaken by all year groups have a very positive effect on pupils' personal development and their relationships with staff and with each other. Staff act as very good role models talking to pupils with respect. During lessons there were many examples of pupils working together in pairs and collaborating in groups, listening carefully to each other's points of view. Pupils take turns to speak and share the time well when using computers in the classroom. Two pupils were collaborating and supporting each other very well during a literacy lesson when using the computer; one pupil supplied the answer whilst the other pupil supplied the spellings.
18. The attendance of pupils is very good and is well above the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attendance was judged to be satisfactory. The very high attendance of pupils has a positive effect on the attainment and progress of those pupils who attend school. The majority of absence so far, this term, is due to pupils taking holidays in term time. This is unsatisfactory and could have a negative effect on the progress and attainment of those pupils who miss school. There is no evidence of truancy; other absence is generally due to medical reasons. Registration is taken quickly and efficiently. There are some late marks in the registers, but the time the pupils actually arrive in school is not recorded. The unauthorised absence figure is slightly above the national average and is due to the school correctly identifying unauthorised absence and to a small number of parents not providing notes.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. During the inspection 40 of the 64 lessons (62.5%) were taught to good or better standard of these eight (12.5%) were very good or excellent. Teaching in 22 lessons (34.5%) was satisfactory and two lessons (3%) it was unsatisfactory. In some classes the quality of teaching was consistently of a high standard. Pupils with special education needs receive very good support from the learning support teacher.
20. The high proportion of good quality teaching is a significant improvement for the school since the previous inspection. The good quality teaching is underpinned by teachers' good knowledge in most subjects, thorough planning, clear explanations, good use of questioning and productive sharing of lesson objectives with pupils. These features have a positive effect on pupils' learning and their academic progress.

21. Teachers know the children well and have very good relationships with them. They plan their lessons well, and, in most cases, ensure they have a range of appropriate activities that are suited to the ability levels of pupils in their classes. Lower attaining pupils are well supported and there is very good provision for higher attaining pupils. Teachers use the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively.
22. Teachers explain ideas clearly, demonstrate techniques well and often use questioning very effectively. Their class management and the way they use resources are often very good. Lessons are well planned with the learning objectives shared with pupils at the start of each lesson and referred to at the end for reinforcement and consolidation. Classroom assistants are usually very well briefed and provide good support. However, their roles could be further developed, particularly during the oral mental starter in the mathematics lessons and during the early part of the literacy lessons.
23. Challenging questioning is used in some lessons, for example, in science, where pupils in year 6 were asked to identify and explain patterns in their findings from an experiment on factors that affect the size of shadows. In other lessons, questioning was used very effectively to assess pupils' understanding. In some dance and gymnastics lesson the teachers' demonstrations provided very good models for pupils. In many classes pupils are very well used to explaining their ideas to the rest of the class and are confident to do this.
24. Where lessons were unsatisfactory they tended to lack pace which led to a loss in attention by the pupils. In lower Key Stage 2 there is a discrepancy in the expectations which teachers have of pupils in classes in the same year group, which results in pupils making insufficient progress in some lessons. Occasionally, in science and RE, for example, tasks are not pitched at a high enough level to enable pupils to improve their knowledge and understanding of the subject they are studying. In some classes, although there are planned differentiated activities, teachers do not make sufficient reference to pupils' individual educational plans. Some teachers have inadequate subject knowledge in aspects of PSE and of key grammatical concepts in English. Marking of pupils' work is not consistent. It is often too positive in tone and lacks constructive comments that would help pupils to move on in their learning.
25. The quality of teaching in most English, mathematics and science lessons is making a good contribution to raising the standards in these subjects. In English, the teaching of reading and writing is effectively raising the standards of pupils' work. In numeracy lessons, teachers are successfully promoting pupils' ability to calculate accurately in their heads.
26. Pupils learn very well. They respond to the high expectations that most teachers have and work hard. Throughout the school, pupils have very good attitudes to learning. They are motivated well by teachers to attempt challenging work and, in the best lessons, their interest and concentration when they have challenging activities is very good. In a history lesson Year 6 pupils researched information about Ancient Egypt using a range of sources. Pupils are encouraged to develop independent learning skills and often discuss well with partners and when they work in groups. This was a strong focus in a Year 5 science lesson where pupils were being assessed on their ability to work successfully in groups whilst carrying out experiments. Research and investigative skills are strongly emphasised by many teachers and pupils respond well, using ICT and other sources to discover

information. They are keen to share their findings, for example, in a Year 6 English lesson after researching information from a website about Shakespeare. Pupils generally put good levels of intellectual, creative and physical effort into their work.

27. Pupils who have special educational needs also have very good attitudes. The very good teaching of a Year 5 mathematics group proved a highly motivating experience for pupils who responded to the positive attitude and high expectations of the teacher. They worked quickly, listened carefully to feedback and readily corrected their mistakes.
28. Homework is used effectively to extend work in the classroom and often involves pupils in researching relevant topic.

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

29. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum for its pupils. All National Curriculum subjects and religious education are taught throughout the school and statutory requirements are met. The time allocated to each subject is broadly satisfactory, although the school should review the amount of time devoted to handwriting practice as this is excessive. There are sound policy statements for all subjects. Curriculum planning clearly identifies the content to be covered on a termly basis by each year group. The school is using the QCA schemes of work satisfactorily to support planning in the foundation subjects.
30. The LEA schemes of work provide the basis for planning in RE. The school has successfully implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. Literacy and numeracy work is well planned and effectively taught throughout the school. Planning for progression is now satisfactory across the key stage. It is good in English, mathematics and science. The governors are currently discussing the draft policy for sex education but there is no agreed policy for promoting drug awareness. Appropriate procedures are in place to consult parents on the content of the sex education curriculum. Personal, social and health education is included in the curriculum but is at an early stage of development and, at present, there is no policy. Thinking skills are being effectively developed through a scheme taught by the headteacher to pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6.
31. The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs has improved since the last inspection. The governors have appointed a dedicated teacher for special educational needs and learning support assistants are deployed more effectively. Pupils with special educational needs are given extra support when they are withdrawn from the classroom. At other times the special educational needs teacher and the learning support assistants work within all classes with individual pupils or with small groups.
32. However, in several classes pupils' individual educational plans (IEPs) are unsatisfactory. They do not have clear foci. Individual targets lack specificity and are not linked to National Curriculum level descriptors commensurate with pupils' present levels of knowledge and understanding. This is unsatisfactory and is impeding the progress of some pupils with special educational needs. The school is aware of this deficiency and has already started to plan for improvement.
33. All pupils are included in the life of the school enabling them to benefit from the many

learning, social and cultural opportunities provided.

34. Provision for promoting the arts within the curriculum, which was unsatisfactory at the last inspection, is now good, particularly for the visual arts. There is a listening scheme for music in assemblies, which ensures those pupils, are introduced to a very wide range of music. A theatre group has recently visited the school to give a performance of Macbeth and extra-curricular clubs and activities include pottery, drama and choirs.
35. The curriculum committee of the governing body meets regularly to approve policies, discuss strategies and monitor the effectiveness of the provision. Individual governors take responsibility for overseeing and supporting a particular subject. They visit the school to observe pupils working and liaise with subject co-ordinators. They report back to the governing body, highlighting the strengths and any weaknesses they have observed in the delivery of their subject.
36. The curriculum is enriched through an excellent range of clubs and activities. Boys and girls participate on an equal footing in mixed groups in most of the extra-curricular activities on offer. These include French, ICT, pottery, chess, music and art. Pupils in all year groups have the opportunity to take part in an annual residential visit.
37. The school has a high awareness of opportunities for making contacts with the local community which contribute to pupils' learning and constructive links are made whenever possible. Parents are kept fully informed about community activities through the weekly folder. Pupils have been involved in fundraising with the local Round Table, selling poppies for Remembrance Day, raising funds for Amnesty International and other charities. The annual pantomime involves staff, parents and pupils and is a major fund raising event. The money raised is used to purchase equipment for the infant and junior schools. Representatives from the local Council of Churches regularly lead assemblies and pupils visit churches in the area as part of their work in RE. There is a very productive ICT link with the South East of England Virtual Educational Action Zone. The school has developed a very constructive relationship with the local secondary school. Teachers from the secondary school work with teachers to teach aspects of the science and design technology curriculum, a link that is beneficial both to pupils and to teachers in both schools. Pupils from the local secondary school have helped to dig flowerbeds in the new school mathematics gardens. The links with the infant school are becoming stronger.
38. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Provision for spiritual development is satisfactory. RE makes an effective contribution through teaching about the beliefs and values of others. In assemblies pupils are encouraged to make links between religious stories and their own feelings and experiences, for example, in an assembly on the Jewish festival of Hanukkah pupils were asked to think about the importance of welcoming and including others. Pupils have written their own prayers for the recent Harvest Festival assembly and during the inspection Year 6 pupils led an assembly on the theme of Remembrance. However, there are few opportunities for reflection and there needs to be a greater understanding of ways in which an awareness of the spiritual dimension of human experience can be developed through the curriculum as a whole.
39. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school effectively promotes pupils' understanding of the differences between right and wrong. There are many opportunities in the curriculum for them to explore and discuss the motivations of

characters in stories, for example in RE and English. Pupils in Year 6 class had a very good understanding of the characters in Shakespeare's Macbeth and were able to nominate the 'most wicked' character, explaining their reasons.

40. The school provides excellent opportunities for pupils to develop socially. There is a strong emphasis on collaboration and co-operation and pupils work very well together in lessons. The School Council is an effective group that involves pupils in making decisions about the quality of school life. Representatives take their role seriously, they take the initiative and raise issues themselves, for example, contributing their ideas to the plans for developing the school grounds. Pupils in all year groups have the opportunity to take part in an educational, residential visit, which makes a significant contribution to their personal and social development.
41. Cultural development is good in many respects. The school is a culturally rich environment. Art and design are given a high profile in the excellent displays around the school, with examples of the work of artists such as Escher, Monet and Van Gogh and traditional art from Africa and North America. Displays are often interactive requiring pupils to draw on and apply their knowledge of artists or to express their own tastes and ideas. Resources include many books of stories from around the world. Pupils have sent postcards to schools around the world and received replies. There are visits from theatre groups, most recently a group performing Macbeth for pupils in Year 6. Recorded music played as pupils come into assembly covers a wide range of composers and traditions and pupils are able to identify the music of some composers, Vivaldi, for example. Correspondence between pupils in the school with their counterparts in a range of other countries and the valuable contribution of the South East of England Virtual Education Action Zone in promoting the use of international contacts are well used to enhance pupils' intercultural development. However, this provision is often confined to West European and Anglophone cultures and few planned opportunities are used to promote positive images of black people and women.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. Procedures for child protection and pupils' welfare are satisfactory overall. Staff know their pupils well and take action early to ensure that any problems of safety and welfare are dealt with promptly. Both the headteacher and deputy have received appropriate training. The headteacher attends all case conferences and key meetings. Currently the school is considering and reviewing procedures to introduce whole staff training. All staff have received appropriate training for certain medical conditions. Effective procedures are used for risk assessment.
43. Outside agencies such as speech therapists, educational psychologists, social services and support services for pupils with English as an additional language are used well by the school to provide constructive guidance for staff and individual pupils. Many pupils whose self-esteem is low are identified and targeted for close monitoring and given appropriate attention. The school works hard in involving parents in the process where relevant and this has a positive impact on their welfare.
44. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are very good. Absences are followed up effectively and the education welfare officer supports the school well and makes regular visits to monitor attendance. Registers are kept in good order. Effective systems are used to monitor pupils' behaviour. Evidence from

observation of teaching shows that staff contribute positively to pupils' self discipline and have effective management skills to minimise rare incidents of disruption. Pupils' involvement in negotiating class rules and their apprenticeship in decision making through the school's council contributes to their growing maturity and sense of responsibility. The behaviour policy is clear and identifies both rewards and sanctions and these are well understood by pupils. The school has introduced a central register for recording serious incidents and all staff are generally aware of the steps to take to report them and take appropriate action.

45. The school's arrangements for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment and progress are good and have improved significantly since the last inspection. The assessment co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has developed effective strategies for co-ordinating different aspects of assessment. There has been a significant amount of training focused on the use of level descriptors that are judiciously used to inform the setting of objectives and matching of work to different abilities. A range of tests, including optional tests, are carried out and used to monitor pupils' progress and identify pupils whose performances need to be boosted. The school liaises effectively with Katherine Semar Infant School and with the main secondary feeder school to develop continuity and common practice. These procedures are well developed in English, mathematics and science but not in the foundation subjects.
46. The school's procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' personal development are good. Positive attitudes are promoted through the personal, social and health education programme and pupils' participation in the school council. Pupils with challenging behaviour are identified early and effective systems of referral are used to support them.
47. The school sets challenging targets in English and mathematics and has established an effective system of short term target setting. This process is documented well in the target books. Pupils and parents are directly involved in reviewing them on a regular basis. The school's analysis of test results is good and has led to the identification of differences in attainment with boys often outperforming girls. This finding does not conform to the national trend and the school is keen to follow this up and research the factors contributing to the differences. No whole school targets have been set for science.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Parents who attended the parents meetings and those who completed the parents' questionnaires are generally very pleased with what the school is now providing and achieving. Parents commented positively on the improvements that have taken place since the last report. The school is planning to provide advance notice of the topics, which pupils will be studying in response to requests from parents. They are also reviewing their procedures when a parent has a concern to ensure that feedback is given to the parent.
49. The school has very effective links with parents. Parents and governors are very supportive of the school and its aims. There has been a substantial improvement in links with parents since the last inspection. The links with parents have improved from unsatisfactory in the last report to very good. This aspect is now strength of the school and contributes very positively to pupils' attainment, progress and the standards achieved.
50. The quality of information provided to parents about their child's progress is very good. All the issues in the last report have been successfully addressed with the

exception of information in pupils' annual reports. Pupils' annual reports are hand written, but they do not always show what pupils know, understand and can do, although the pastoral part of the report shows staff know pupils very well. There are some examples of good practice particularly in English that clearly identify what pupils have achieved and understand, identifying strengths and weaknesses. The school is now reviewing the format that they use, in time for next year's reports. The school provides a very wide range of information to parents. Pupils have a Friday folder, which reminds parents of forthcoming events such as class assemblies. The folders also include information about events which are happening in the community, for example, there was information about the forthcoming firework display organised by the Round Table. There are helpful booklets for numeracy and parent teacher consultations are held termly. The half-termly target folders provide very good quality information on pupils' progress and identify pupils' individual targets for improvement. The work in the folders is levelled and gives very precise information to parents on their child's achievements. This is a very effective way of enabling parents to become more involved in their child's education and raising standards. The school prospectus is in draft form and is written in a reader friendly style providing good quality information to parents about the school routines. The Governors Annual Report to parents is well written and informative, providing all the required information. There are a number of curriculum evenings where the school shares information with parents about school routines, the literacy hour and the next meeting will be used to explain about SATs and the National Curriculum.

51. Parental involvement in their children's learning is very good. Parents are encouraged to help their children at home through homework, which is set and marked regularly by staff. The half-termly target folders record many positive comments from parents and clearly show their commitment in helping their child and the school to move forward.
52. Parents help regularly in the classroom. The school provides very good quality support and guidance to parent helpers, which gives them confidence and ensures their contribution to pupils' learning is effective. This has a positive effect on the standards being achieved by the school. Parents help with swimming, on trips and with the many residential trips which pupils take part in. Parents always attend events, which involve their children, for example, the class assemblies, sports day, Christmas Productions and the Carol Concert. They report that they feel welcome in the school. The hardworking joint Friends Association meets monthly and arranges a range of fund-raising events for the junior and the infant schools, raising substantial amounts of money for both schools. Parents provide good support to the fund-raising events, for example, over 80 parents attended the last quiz night.
53. Parents of pupils with special needs are fully involved in their child's education. The individual education plans include social targets, such as 'Tying shoelaces' in addition to academic targets. Pupils with special needs work in differentiated groups and have homework set, which is linked to their targets. Parents report that the school is very supportive and the door is always open if there are any concerns. The school and parents are working in partnership to support pupils with special needs.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The leadership and management of the school is good overall. It has improved significantly since the last inspection.
55. The headteacher provides strong, clear and effective direction for the work and development of the school and has made a significant contribution to the raising of standards, improving the quality of teaching and promoting the ethos of the school. She is supported ably by the deputy headteacher. They work together well. The role of the deputy headteacher has focused on improving the quality of teaching and in raising standards. This was a good decision given the needs of the school. The school is aware of the need to develop the management role of the deputy headteacher further.
56. The senior management team has recently been extended but the contribution of the additional members has not as yet had time to impact on the work of the school. The effectiveness of the co-ordinators is varied but overall is developing satisfactorily. Further developments are required in monitoring standards and the quality of teaching and also taking the responsibility for a subject budget.
57. The governing body is relatively new but is already effective in holding the school to account and in providing the strategic direction for the work of the school. Communication within the governing body is good. There is a sound sub-committee structure. Each sub-committee has appropriate terms of reference. There is a good system for the induction of new governors. Through the work of the sub-committees and meetings of the full governing body, governors ensure that all statutory requirements are met fully. The chair of governors is particularly effective in promoting the work of the governors and providing support for the school. As a result, governors are enthusiastic, undertake their roles with increasing rigour and support the work of the school and the headteacher. They regularly visit the school, help in classes, liaise with subject co-ordinators and provide positive and encouraging support. Governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and are currently working on policies for sex education, promoting good behaviour and best value. The prospectus is also in the process of being updated.
58. The school's aims are broad and appropriate and are generally reflected in the work of the school. However, references to the high standards the school has set for itself are not sufficiently explicit. One of the strengths and a notable feature of the school is the commitment to, and the successful development of, the very good relationships between governors, staff, parents and pupils. The school has been very successful in achieving this aim. The importance of equal opportunity is acknowledged by the school and is promoted through its programme for personal, social and health education provision
59. There are sound systems in place to monitor, evaluate and improve the quality of teaching. The headteacher and deputy headteacher, regularly monitor the quality of teaching. The observations are followed up appropriately and areas for whole staff development identified. This has contributed significantly to the good quality of teaching seen during the inspection. However, the role of other members of the senior management team and the co-ordinators in monitoring the quality of teaching is underdeveloped.

60. Progress on the introduction of performance management is satisfactory. The performance management policy complies with statutory requirements. Governors have received appropriate training, and plans are in place to meet the statutory deadlines of the end of December 2000 and the end of February 2001 for the setting of the headteacher's and teachers' targets.
61. The school improvement plan is broadly satisfactory, but requires further refinements. The priorities are appropriate to the developmental needs of the school and the actions to be undertaken clear. However, there is no clear statement on how the priorities were identified, who will be monitoring and evaluating each activity, and in some cases the success criteria are not sufficiently specific to enable governors to monitor the progress of the improvement plan. The headteacher regularly reports progress on the improvement plan to the governors' curriculum sub-committee.
62. There is a determined commitment by all staff and governors to raise pupil achievement and to achieve high standards within the school. Results over time reflect a significant improvement in standards particularly in English. The end of Key Stage 2 targets for Level 4 and above in mathematics and English for 2002 and 2003 are challenging but realistic. Good systems are in place to track pupils' progress as they move through the school. The information is used well to set targets for individual pupils in English and mathematics. However, school targets have not been set in science.
63. The educational priorities for the school are supported through very careful financial management. The allocation of funds to the different budget headings is appropriate. The planned use of the under-spend accumulated over a number of years is satisfactory. Systems for the financial management of the school are sound. External personnel provide good financial administration support and appropriate use is made of information technology in the financial management of the school. The planned changes within the school for the processing of invoices are sound. Appropriate use is made of grants for designated purposes, however, the special educational needs grant is supported, but appropriately, from the initial budget. This is having a major impact upon raising standards.
64. There is no recent auditor's report. The school has not been externally audited since 1995.
65. The number, qualifications and experience of teachers and support staff are appropriate to match the demands of the curriculum and the age, range and ability of the pupils. Teachers and support staff work together well, they are clear about their own role as well as those of colleagues. Learning assistants provide effective support within the classes for the most of the time. However, in some classes they are not sufficiently involved at the beginning and the end of the lessons. Sound job descriptions are in place and have been reviewed recently. The allocation of subject responsibilities is broadly satisfactory, although some co-ordinators have the responsibility for areas of the curriculum in which they do not have an initial or subsequent qualification. Facilities to provide support to pupils with special educational needs are good.
66. The provision of accommodation is sufficient to meet the needs of the curriculum. It is maintained to a high standard. Effective use is made of all available teaching and display space. Significant improvements have been made to the school through the creation of a new classroom, the development of the ICT suite and a library. External improvements, for example, the creation of a mathematics garden, the installation of

climbing apparatus, seating areas, the re-surfacing of the playground, together with the a good range of playground markings have all helped teachers deliver the curriculum more effectively. This has contributed to the improvement in pupil attainment. However, the school lacks a designated medical room and as some teaching spaces are inter linked, movement around the school can disturb some classes

67. The level of resources within the school is good overall. The school is particularly well resourced in information technology and science but there are shortcomings in the resources in the library, and in the provision of overhead projectors in the classrooms.
68. There have been significant changes in the teaching staff since the last inspection. Induction arrangements for new staff are good. The school has adopted the Local Education Authority induction portfolio for newly qualified teachers and introduced career portfolios for experienced teachers. The staff handbook satisfactorily provides new staff with a broad overview of the day-to-day routines within the school. In-service courses for teachers are linked to the school improvement plan.
69. The governors and the headteacher are aware of the principles of best value and are satisfactorily applying them in the management of the school.
70. Good progress has been made in addressing the key issues identified in the last inspection. Given that attainment of pupils on entry is favourable and the expenditure per pupil is well above the average, overall the school provides sound value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. In order to improve the quality of education and raise standards further the governing body and headteacher should:

(1) Raise standards in science by:

- Improving the quality and impact of the subject co-ordinator
- Setting school, year and class targets
- Improve the monitoring of teaching to eradicate any that is unsatisfactory.
Paras:5,13,24,47,62,92,97.

(2) Improve leadership and management by:

- Developing the roles and responsibilities of new members of the senior management team
- Extend the role of the curriculum co-ordinators to include the analysis and evaluation of standards and the consistency of teaching across the school
- Improving the quality of the school improvement plan by ;- identifying the persons responsible for monitoring and evaluating the actions set in the school improvement plan and setting more precise and measurable success criteria for the evaluation of the school improvement
Paras:56,59,61,98,107,112,117.

(3) Improve SEN provision by:

- Ensuring that all individual education plans are written to the standards of the best.

Paras:12,24,32,88.

The following minor issues should also be considered in the school's action plan:

- Improve pupils' annual reports so that parents are clear about what their pupils know, understand and can do in class.
Paras 50
- Improve the quality and consistency of teachers' marking.
Para 24,87,95.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	64
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1.5	11.0	50.0	34.5	3.0	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	Nursery	Y3-Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		222
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals		24

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		56

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	11
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	2.46
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.88
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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	32	31	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	29	30
	Girls	25	22	25
	Total	54	51	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	86	81	87
	National	75	71	84

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	29	28	29
	Girls	21	21	22
	Total	50	49	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81	81	83
	National	70	72	79

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	3
Chinese	
White	219
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3-Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.2
Average class size	28

Education support staff: Y3-Y7

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	178

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999
	£
Total income	423104
Total expenditure	411300
Expenditure per pupil	1978
Balance brought forward from previous year	18196
Balance carried forward to next year	30000

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	231
Number of questionnaires returned	99

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	42	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	44	5	1	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	63	1	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	38	47	12	1	1
The teaching is good.	51	43	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	39	52	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	63	34	1	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	32	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	36	56	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	56	39	1	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	39	5	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	40	4	0	3

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

72. Overall, the standard the school achieves, based on the average point score, is in line with all schools and that of similar schools. Results in the 2000 National Curriculum tests showed that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above is above the national average and those of similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 is in line with all schools and those of a similar type. This represents a substantial improvement compared with results in 1999 and over the last three years when they were just in line with results nationally for the last two years and below in 1997. The English results for 2000 were better than those were for mathematics and science. The trend indicates some variation in attainment with the boys often outperforming the girls. This is contrary to the national trend. The school is aware of this but until now has not identified the possible factors involved and taken any necessary action. Evidence from the inspection reflects these outcomes. Pupils' attainment on entry in Year 3 is above average and by the end of the key stage they achieve appropriately against their prior attainment and make satisfactory progress.
73. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment in speaking and listening is in line with the national average. The majority of pupils listen and speak confidently in a wide range of contexts, take an active part in discussions and report on their work to their peers, for instance, in the plenary in literacy lessons and other subjects. Listening and speaking was a specific focus of one drama lesson and was identified in another teacher's lesson plan. In many lessons there is a clear emphasis on specific subject vocabulary, this enables pupils to understand and use language in an appropriate way. The school has started using the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work for listening and speaking. However, opportunities have not been systematically planned either in literacy lessons, or across subjects, to ensure clear progression, to set targets and enable the school to assess outcomes over time in this aspect of the subject.
74. Attainment in reading by the end the key stage is above the national average for the majority of pupils. Pupils use a range of strategies to help them in their reading and discuss a variety of texts. They read enthusiastically and regularly. Higher attaining pupils read consistently with good expression and a sense of the book's style. The majority of pupils use a range of strategies when they read independently. They predict what might happen, using their knowledge of the plot and characters, justify their predictions and their preferences for particular books or authors. However, several pupils do not know how to find books on specific subjects in libraries. Pupils do not keep records of what they have read. Reading is well managed with increasingly improving provision for guided reading and the use of books for independent research. This was well exemplified in a Year 6 history lesson, where pupils demonstrated skills in searching and using information from books on Ancient Egyptian funeral and burial rites. Effective records containing diagnostic comments are kept by teachers as part of ongoing assessment.
75. Attainment in writing, by the end of the key stage is in line with the national average. Pupils write in a variety of forms, including descriptive writing, autobiography and poetry. Higher attaining pupils write extensive, imaginative pieces with correct use of punctuation and paragraphing. Standards of handwriting and spelling are good and

work is consistently well presented. Marking of pupils work is inconsistent with constructive identification of strengths and weaknesses and guidance for pupils to improve their work being used only in one class. Pupils' achievement in writing is satisfactory but less well developed than their listening and speaking or reading skills.

76. Pupils' attitudes in English are positive in all lessons seen. The majority are keen, well focused and engage well with activities and contribute well when answering questions. Standards of behaviour are very high and pupils are keen and proud to demonstrate and talk to peers and visitors about what they have been doing. They show initiative when they help with the distribution and collection of books or work trays and are very responsive when given responsibilities.
77. The quality of teaching is very good in under a third, good in under half and satisfactory in one quarter of lessons observed. In the best lessons, teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of English. They explain tasks thoroughly and have high expectations; they intervene positively to promote learning and provide well-designed tasks which engage all pupils. In these lessons, skilful questioning is matched to pupils' abilities and all pupils are involved at their own level, group tasks are thoughtfully planned enabling pupils to work independently and are closely linked to the main objectives. In some instances grammatical terms are incorrectly used and at times not clearly explained to pupils to enable them to grasp their use fully and potentially use them in their writing.
78. The school uses the literacy framework effectively and has used its monitoring well to identify strengths and weaknesses. Clear and effective strategies are used to address weaknesses and improve practice. This has led to the identification of writing as an area for development. The school has developed effective methods of analysing assessment outcomes and has been using the information judiciously to target groups of pupils and provide them with support. This has had a clear and positive impact on pupils' achievement and their capacity to learn. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and committed to improving standards further. Good links have been established with the governing body. They monitor and support developments well.

MATHEMATICS

79. Overall, the standard the school achieves, based on the average point score, is comparable with all schools and is above that of similar schools. Results in the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 National tests show that the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above is above the national average and that of similar schools. At Level 5, they were in line.
80. There have been some fluctuations in the results over the last three years but the overall trend since the last inspection is one of improvement. The school has maintained the above average results for Level 4 by increasing the percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 (the level expected for pupils aged eleven) in line with the national trend. In addition, the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 has risen from below the national average to comparable figures in the most recent test. Lesson observations and scrutiny of pupils' work in Year 6 suggests that the above average standard is being maintained.
81. As in English, the improving trend does show some variation with boys marginally

outperforming the girls. This is contrary to the national trend. During the inspection there was no noticeable difference on the standards achieved and the progress made between boys and girls. Attainment on entry in Year 3 is above average. Pupils make at least satisfactory and more recently good progress as they move through the school. Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support from the learning support teacher and make good progress in her lessons. The school has set itself challenging but realistic and achievable targets for mathematics in 2002 and 2003.

82. Pupils throughout the school have responded well to the introduction of the numeracy lesson. They are keen to contribute during the oral mental starter, work with sustained concentration during the individual or group activity and are eager to present their work during the plenary. However, in many classes pupils' knowledge and use of a wide range of subject specific vocabulary is underdeveloped.
83. Overall, pupils are developing their ability to undertake mental calculations satisfactorily. In Year 3, pupils are developing their knowledge of multiplication, They can count forwards and backwards in 2s, 3s, and 4s, but are at times a little hesitant. They understand number patterns and can use the hundred squares to help them in their calculations. In Year 4, pupils can add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers confidently, they can count forwards and backwards in 5s from various starting points and can explain the pattern of the numbers. In Year 5, pupils can undertake complex calculations involving several numbers and can explain the strategies they have employed. This includes the rounding and partitioning of numbers. They are also developing a sound knowledge and rapid recall of the multiplication tables. In Year 6, pupils are able identify the factors for a range of numbers, convert units of measurement, and undertake challenging calculations correctly.
84. Pupils are making sound progress during the main part of the lesson. Pupils in Year 3 are working confidently on vertical and horizontal addition and subtraction with numbers below 100. They can tell the time, draw and interpret block graphs, and identify a wide range of 2 and 3D shapes and their properties. Many pupils do not take sufficient care in the presentation and recording of their work. In Year 4, pupils are developing their knowledge and understanding of number satisfactorily. They understand place value and can calculate the addition of hundreds, tens and units set out vertically or horizontally. They have a sound understanding of the concept of fractions. They can explain the difference between the numerator and denominator and the equivalence of certain fractions. In Year 5, pupils work confidently with numbers up to 10,000, they understand the vocabulary and symbols for comparing and ordering numbers, for example, greater than or less than. They can position fractions on a number line and change improper fractions to mixed numbers. They are able to measure and calculate the perimeter and area of regular shapes. In Year 6, pupils' understanding of place value is secure. They are able to round and order numbers up to one million, they use the four rules of number confidently when working with decimals, fractions and money. They are able to calculate the perimeter and area of irregular shapes and use this knowledge to draw plans for a leisure centre. Some pupils are able to apply logical deductions, strategic thinking and use codes to identify four digit numbers.
85. The quality of teaching is good or better in half of the lessons and satisfactory in the other half. Good teaching was observed in the three out of the four year groups. The quality of teaching was generally of a higher quality in Year 6 and from the special education needs support teacher.

86. In the good or better lessons teachers identified their learning objectives clearly and explained them to the pupils. They used questioning techniques effectively to consolidate and challenge pupils' thinking and to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. The pace of the lesson was brisk and pupil interest sustained through imaginative presentations. For example, in one Year 6 class, the class used the format for a popular game show for the oral mental starter. Pupils responded well to the approach and were extremely keen to participate and involve each other. Learning support assistants worked well with the teachers, they were clear about their tasks and provided good support to the pupils particularly during the individual and group activities.
87. Overall, insufficient use is made of resources to support the oral mental starter, for example, counting sticks, fan or number cards, follow me cards and individual dry wipe boards. In some classes, pupils' knowledge and use of mathematical language are not being systematically extended. Key vocabulary is not displayed and the numeracy environment not sufficiently developed. The quality of the marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory in most classes. Whilst most teachers mark the work regularly and use praise appropriately there are few developmental comments or targets set. In one class there was a significant amount of work that had not been marked.
88. The mathematics co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has successfully overseen the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy into the school. Teaching and learning support assistants have been given appropriate training and all teachers have had the opportunity to observe leading maths teachers. Sound systems have been introduced to monitor the quality of teaching and to assess pupils' progress. Good links have been established with the governing body and with parents. For example, governors, parents, staff and pupils have worked well to create a maths garden. The co-ordinator has recognised the need for the development of the use of ICT in the teaching of mathematics throughout the school and more precise targets to be identified in some pupils' individual educational plans (IEPs).

SCIENCE

89. Standards in science have varied from year to year. Improvements made in 1997 and 1999 have not been sustained in the following years.
90. Overall standards, based on the average points score from the latest end of Key Stage 2 national tests, are broadly in line with the national average and that of similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining Level 4 and above is broadly in line with the national average, but marginally below average when compared with similar schools. This is a significant drop when compared with the results for 1999 when overall standards were above the national average and in line with similar schools. However, in the latest tests the percentage of pupils attaining the higher Level 5 has increased and is now comparable with the national average. Since the last inspection, the school has made some improvements to the standards in science, but as yet these have not been consolidated. Observation in lessons and inspection of pupils' work suggests that standards for the current Year 6 are in line with national averages. The school needs to identify the reasons for these fluctuations in attainment.

91. The last inspection identified investigative work as an area for improvement. The teaching of this aspect has improved considerably, particularly in upper Key Stage 2. Pupils' ability to predict and explain their findings using scientific knowledge and to present and interpret data has improved. At the age of eleven pupils have a good understanding of the importance of carrying out fair tests in their scientific investigations. They complete a wide range of interesting experiments to find out about, for example, in Year 5, two factors that would help a solid to dissolve faster and, in Year 6, investigating how shadow size can be changed. The results of these, and many other, experiments are carefully recorded and pupils draw thoughtful conclusions about the outcomes using correct scientific terminology. Science work makes a useful contribution to learning in both literacy and numeracy through pupils' written reports and the recording of results in a variety of tables and graphs. Year 5 pupils were able to explain clearly how writing in a scientific manner differs from other forms of writing. Pupils also record their results using ICT, for example, using a programme to produce a bar graph. Year 4 pupils can explain some of the ways in which living things and the environment need protection. In Year 3 pupils were able to explain the effect of water on plant growth, to make predictions and to carry out a fair test. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and make good progress.
92. The quality of teaching and pupils' learning ranges from unsatisfactory to very good. There is clear variation between upper and lower Key Stage 2. The teaching in upper Key Stage 2 was good or very good. In lower Key Stage 2 teaching was unsatisfactory in half of the lessons seen.
93. Good subject knowledge is a feature of the best teaching. This enables teachers to make relevant teaching points and deliver lessons in an interesting manner, helping pupils to learn effectively. Lessons are well planned and organised, objectives are explained clearly to pupils and there is effective questioning to establish pupils' knowledge and understanding, check for misconceptions and extend thinking and consolidate learning. Expectations are high. Pupils are expected and encouraged to develop their ability to work effectively, both independently and in collaboration with others. This was demonstrated well in a Year 5 lesson where pupils devising a fair test worked very successfully together, allocating tasks within the groups, discussing strategies for their experiments, and setting them up and carrying them out with very little dependence on direction from the teacher. Pupils of all abilities made good progress in their learning the course of this lesson and could demonstrate a secure understanding of the work by the end.
94. Where teaching was unsatisfactory it was the result of the pace of lessons being too slow to engage and sustain pupils' interest and motivation. Observations of lessons and scrutiny of pupils' work show differences in teacher expectations between classes in the same year group in some instances and this results in lack of challenge in the tasks set. Management of pupils is sometimes unsatisfactory and classroom space is not always used effectively to ensure that learning is taking place.
95. The quality and usefulness of marking varies between teachers. There are some examples of formative comments and extending questions while others show lack of focus in comments, spelling is not corrected, and tasks are not completed.
96. The school policy has been updated, the QCA scheme of work introduced, there has been some monitoring of pupils' work and links with the infant school are being strengthened. The links with the local secondary school are extremely good. There

is a planned programme of lessons for Year 6 pupils that are delivered jointly by a science specialist from the secondary school and the class teacher. This partnership is very effective. The level of challenge in the lessons is high and the quality of learning for pupils is very good, they respond positively to the challenge and make very good progress.

97. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped. There has been no monitoring of the quality of teaching, the results from the statutory tests have not been analysed and curriculum targets have not been set.

ART

98. Attainment in art is in line with national expectations. Pupils in lower Key Stage 2 are using a variety of ideas and processes to communicate their ideas and are exploring additional information to inform their work, such as pictures of African and Native American masks. In Year 3 pupils showed good development in the control of tools and techniques, using different processes to design masks to be used in a dance performance on 'Monsters'. All pupils are introduced to the work of a wide range of artists and they apply their knowledge of artistic styles very well to their own work in art and design. Year 6 pupils were able to explain clearly the processes that they had employed in the design of a slipper based on the styles of Monet or Escher. They showed appropriate knowledge of the work of these artists. Pupils in Year 6 also used charcoal, pastels and crayons for a border design based on a motif, which they had selected from careful observation of the work of Monet and Escher.
99. Some pupils are very inspired by the work of these two artists and are beginning to identify the elements that define their styles. They express their own tastes and preferences clearly.
100. All pupils have sketch books which they use appropriately to record visual and other information, to experiment with techniques such as cross hatching, shading, colour mixing, line and form and for close observational drawing.
101. Teaching is good. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and provide a range of interesting resources for pupils to use. They use questioning techniques well to assess pupils' knowledge and understanding of why they have chosen particular techniques and approaches and how their work could be improved. Teachers successfully convey their own enthusiasm for art to the pupils and they respond well, showing good levels of motivation and applying good creative effort. They concentrate well and are often pleased with the finished product.
102. The subject is managed very effectively by the co-ordinator who has very good subject knowledge and provides good support for teachers. The standard of display in the school is very high. Displays are used to introduce pupils to the work of a wide range of artists and techniques. They are an excellent source of inspiration and make a significant contribution to the quality of pupils' learning.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

103. Pupils are on course to achieve the standards expected of them by the end of the key

stage. Overall, the level of attainment is better than when the school was last inspected in March 1998. Now, pupils particularly in Years 5 and 6 are generating and evaluating their own designs. Teachers identify the learning objectives more precisely, the development of ongoing teacher assessment has been improved but remains an area for on-going development.

104. In Year 3, pupils are developing their skills in evaluating products appropriately. They can compare, evaluate and record their judgements on the quality of sandwich packaging against a range of self-selected criteria. They can justify why each criterion had been included, however their ability to be impartial on the quality of the packaging is on occasions influenced by the content of the sandwich. When sampling the sandwiches, pupils are able to articulate their thoughts on the appearance, taste, smell and texture of the contents and make the cross-curricular connections to the science lessons on healthy living. In Years 5 and 6, pupils are refining their designing process skills satisfactorily. They can identify the equipment, materials and the sequence to make a sandwich and record their work through drawings and sequenced writing. Pupils are using these skills to produce step-by-step plans for making pencil cases and slippers from the design stage to the finished product. They know that there is a range of techniques for joining materials; pupils are satisfactorily developing their knowledge of a range of sewing stitches to make their pencil cases, however, their manipulative skills are not sufficiently refined when cutting out and sewing. They are able to make good links between their work in mathematics on fractions and are extending their knowledge of the English language by using subject specific vocabulary.
105. Pupils are making satisfactory progress as they move through the school and demonstrate a positive attitude to their work. Pupils, particularly in Years 5 and 6, work with sustained concentration and show respect for the equipment and for each other.
106. Teaching is satisfactory and frequently good, especially in the upper key stage. All lessons have a sound structure, learning objectives are reasonably precise and shared with the pupils. Good planning ensures that teachers present their lessons with confidence and enables them to use a range of questioning techniques to consolidate and extend pupils' knowledge and thinking. Occasionally, some pupils become over involved in their work and the noise level becomes excessive. In one lesson this was not dealt with effectively and caused some disruption to the neighbouring class.
107. The co-ordinator assumed the responsibility for the subject in September, although the role is still in its infancy and in need of further development, the co-ordinator has a reasonable understanding of the areas to be developed. Following the recent adoption of the QCA schemes of work for design technology, the co-ordinator plans to review the school policy document; audit and update the resources, develop the use of ICT within the subject and monitor the quality of teaching and standards pupils achieve. These are appropriate areas for development.

GEOGRAPHY

108. Attainment for the majority of pupils by the end of the key stage exceeds national expectations. This is an improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection.

109. Pupils in Year 4 use a key to identify different features on the map of the local area, establish differences between village and town and hypothesise why different sizes of settlements have different amenities. In Year 6, pupils studying rivers use their previous knowledge of rivers and maps identify where a river has its source and where it ends. Evidence from previous written work indicates that pupils have a good grasp of the water cycle, the different stages in the life of a river and the effects of flooding.
110. Pupils apply themselves well to geography, work with sustained concentration and focus well when working independently. Many work well in groups and collaborate spontaneously. However, in some instances, some pupils indulge in chatter and have to be reminded repeatedly to listen and concentrate during whole class presentations.
111. The quality of teaching is good in two lessons seen and satisfactory in the other. Where teaching is good, lessons are effectively introduced, skilful questioning is used to challenge pupils and deepen their understanding and good use is made of subject specific language. Resources are carefully prepared and effective matching of work to pupils' abilities. In one lesson, the task was carefully designed to promote pupils' literacy skills when acting as journalists reporting news about flooding
112. Since the last inspection, improvement in planning through the use of the QCA's scheme of work is providing a better balance of activities across year groups. Ongoing assessment has also improved and is now well integrated into the planning with learning objectives being used to assess pupils' achievement. The co-ordinator has identified areas of development but these are not sufficiently focused and directed towards raising achievement in the subject.

HISTORY

113. Attainment for the majority of pupils by the end of the key stage exceeds national expectations. This is an improvement on the position at the time of the last inspection.
114. In Year 6, pupils planning a group report on Tutankhamen's death and burial as part of their study of Ancient Egypt, demonstrate high levels of factual knowledge and understanding and show well-developed skills in identifying, selecting and researching information, using a range of books. The majority of pupils work independently. Evidence from current written work on the topic also shows increasing depth of knowledge and well-presented pieces on different aspects of Ancient Egyptian society.
115. Pupils work with enthusiasm in history and show interest and curiosity in discussing features of a particular period. During lessons, they concentrate well and listen attentively to teachers' explanations and are keen to research information and find answers to questions. When they are given opportunities to discuss and produce work requiring planning, they collaborate well and share ideas.
116. The quality of teaching is excellent in one out of three lessons seen and good in the other two. In the best teaching, learning objectives are thoroughly explained and high expectations and outcomes are clearly communicated to pupils. Tasks are explained effectively to ensure that pupils work to their optimum potential and are designed to promote and foster independent research skills. Well-timed interventions by teachers are used to challenge pupils to use information selectively.

117. The planning of the history curriculum is well managed with a clear focus on skills and progression. Short-term assessment is well integrated into the planning and learning objectives are used to enable pupils to evaluate their learning well. The role of the co-ordinator is underdeveloped. Monitoring by the co-ordinator is limited to planning there is no formal monitoring of outcomes or of the quality of teaching. Good use is made of visits to the museum in Saffron Waldon to enhance the curriculum. Clear targets for developing the subject are identified but they are not sufficiently focused on raising standards in the subject.

INFORMATION and COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. Pupils' attainment by the end the key stage is in line with national expectations. This is a clear improvement since the last inspection when attainment was below average.
119. Pupils in Year 3 planning an invitation card, show skills in using a paint program and in combining texts and graphics. They choose tools appropriately and experiment with ideas to produce specific effects. Pupils in Year 5 designing a different way of setting out their classroom, choose and use different tools to select, rotate, resize and copy shapes. By the end of the key stage, pupils in Year 6 use a range of sources including the Internet and CD-Roms to locate specific information on animals. They log on successfully and use a series of instructions to guide them in answering a range of questions. They demonstrate skills in using key words as a way of searching for information. They record the results of the search and discuss difficulties encountered.
120. Pupils including those with special educational needs achieve appropriately against their prior attainment. This is mainly reflected in the confidence pupils have in learning new skills and in the sophistication of software used. Pupils particularly make gains as they are exposed to a range of skills and programmes that are regularly demonstrated in the information and communication suite with opportunities for pupils to practise and experiment in pairs.
121. Pupils are interested in and motivated by the use of information and communication technology. They listen attentively during presentations and are keen to demonstrate their knowledge and skills. All pupils collaborate well when working in pairs and are proud of demonstrating their ability. They respond positively to requests of help from their peers.
122. The quality of teaching is good or very good in over half and satisfactory in under half of the lessons observed. This is a substantial improvement on teaching seen at the last inspection.
123. The lessons are well structured and have clear learning objectives. Demonstration of new skills is effectively conveyed and skilful questioning is used to focus on the key learning points. Effective interventions and support for individuals enable all pupils to have equal access to the activities and make good progress.
124. Provision since the last inspection has improved substantially with much of it provided in the Information and communication technology suite. The co-ordinator is new but has good subject knowledge and has provided helpful guidance to her colleagues. The school has an appropriate long-term development plan with clear timescales, appropriate success criteria and arrangements for monitoring and evaluating how far targets are being achieved. Insufficient use is made of information and communication technology in other subjects but this has already been identified as a

priority for development. As a member of the South East England Virtual Education Zone, the school has greatly benefited from sharing expertise with other colleagues, from training provided and opportunities to forge links with schools in Australia to extend teachers' and pupils' skills. This has greatly enhanced the curriculum and increased staff confidence.

MUSIC

125. It was not possible to make a judgement on the standards pupils achieve or on the quality of teaching as no music lessons were observed during the course of the inspection.
126. Every Friday, a specialist music teacher is responsible for the teaching of music throughout the school. This did not coincide with the timing of the inspection. However, discussions were held with the specialist teacher. Pupils were observed listening to music before morning assembly and responding to music in the creative dance lessons.
127. Scrutiny of documentation and discussions with the specialist teacher indicate that the school is fully meeting the requirements of the music national curriculum. Provision within the school is enhanced by visits from a specialist violin teacher and extra-curricular activities. Pupils are enthusiastic to attend the after-school choir held on a Friday evening. During the pre-inspection visit, the choir presented two songs. They sang well with good tone, pitch and diction. They watched the conductor carefully and responded well especially during the two-part singing.
128. Pupils sit quietly and listen carefully to the music played before morning assembly. They are able to name classical composers and identify work attributed to them, for example, The Planet Suite by Holst, and The Four Seasons by Vivaldi. In a Year 6 dance lesson the pupils' response to the music and their behaviour throughout was excellent. They interpreted the music extremely well. Opportunities for all pupils to sing together as a school are limited, and insufficient use is made of singing to enhance acts of collective worship and assemblies. The school values the contribution of the specialist teacher, however, too much reliance is placed on the individual and as a result class teachers are not taking sufficient responsibility for the teaching of music.
129. The range of equipment available to the school is at least satisfactory and of suitable quality.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130. Pupils are on course to achieve the standard that is expected for their age and ability by the time they are 11. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when PE standards were below national expectations. Only dance and gymnastics lessons were observed during the inspection but teachers' planning shows that all aspects of the subject are covered over time, including swimming, athletics, and adventurous activities. All pupils receive swimming tuition in Year 3 and

in the first term of Year 4. Suitable arrangements have been made for pupils who have not achieved the standards identified in the national curriculum to continue with lessons until these have been achieved.

131. Pupils are making appropriate progress as they move through the school. Pupils understand the need for correct warm-up activities and are able to explain the beneficial effects of exercise on the body. They are developing their ability to move in response to music, reflecting the mood of the music and the theme of the lesson. In Year 6, pupils dance with feeling and expression. They respond well to the music, using movements to show the different ways water moves. They worked in groups well and developed good imaginative work on the theme of 'water'. Pupils in a Year 3 gymnastics lesson were able to copy, remember and repeat simple balancing actions with control, selecting and using appropriate skills to improve their co-ordination. They make good progress during lessons, working in a very focused way to refine their movements and developing control and fluency of movement.
132. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Learning objectives are clear and shared with pupils at the start of all lessons. Teachers manage pupils well and use time effectively to keep them active throughout lessons. Pupils have very good attitudes to the subject and their behaviour is always good. This has a positive effect on learning, as pupils remain focused on the learning intentions throughout each lesson. This was effectively demonstrated in a Year 6 dance lesson when pupils watched each other's demonstrations with rapt attention and absolute respect and engaged in meaningful evaluations which led to improvements in performances. There is a brisk and appropriate warm-up at the start of each gymnastic and dance lesson which is followed by the main learning activity. Activities are well planned to build on the prior attainment of all pupils and help them learn effectively. Pupils dress correctly for lessons and teachers address all health and safety issues appropriately.
133. Teachers monitor progress effectively, questioning pupils to help them develop their ideas and demonstrating well themselves. Pupils put good creative and physical effort into their work in PE. They are developing the skill of evaluation and teachers use questioning well to make their observations more focused. The majority of pupils are able to vary their movements, compare and comment on their ideas and are working towards achieving greater consistency in control, precision and fluency of movement. Teachers give constructive feedback and set targets for next lessons. Pupils cool down with appropriate movements or by relaxing to calming music.
134. PE is well managed by the co-ordinator who has a very good level of subject expertise. The curriculum is appropriately planned and is enriched through a number of extra-curricular clubs including football, netball and gymnastics.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

135. Pupils are on course to achieve the standards required by the Essex Agreed Syllabus by the time they are 11. Their attainment is best where there is an appropriate focus on both of the two attainment targets, 'learning about' and 'learning from' religion. For example, pupils in Year 6 learned about some aspects of Jewish belief and practice through the story of Hanukkah and then used the story as a basis for exploring their own ideas about how God may be symbolised using light. Some pupils in Year 3

have written sensitively and thoughtfully about their experiences of a favourite place and linked this with ideas about special places, which give a sense of comfort and protection. They are encouraged to develop a sense of wonder, for example, by identifying 'the most beautiful thing I have ever seen', with one pupil giving the example of seeing the birth of a baby cousin. Year 4 pupils are learning about key events in the lives of religious figures such as Joseph and Moses, and beginning to explore moral issues raised in Bible stories, explaining the feelings and motivations of characters and predicting outcomes.

136. Teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have adequate knowledge of the subject. Where the initial teacher input is followed by appropriate activities pupils are able to extend and deepen their knowledge and understanding of religious beliefs and practices and how these affect peoples' lives. A good example was a Year 6 task which required pupils to apply their knowledge and understanding of the symbols of Hanukkah to design a commemorative stamp, explaining what colours and symbols they would use and why. However, scrutiny of pupils' work across the school shows that the tasks set vary in quality, with many examples of low level activities such as cutting, sticking, inserting words in sentences and re-telling Bible stories, which are not designed to build on and develop pupils' knowledge and understanding effectively. The school has adopted the schemes of work produced by the Local Education Authority and should use these as a basis for exploring ways of developing tasks which will extend and deepen pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in RE.
137. RE is effectively managed by the co-ordinator. The subject makes an effective contribution to pupils' spiritual and moral development through teaching about the beliefs and values of others, providing opportunities for pupils to explore moral issues and encouraging them to reflect on their own feelings and experiences. Pupils' learning is enhanced by visits from members of local Christian denominations. Pupils have visited some of the Christian places of worship in Saffron Walden as part of their study of the local area. However, opportunities to meet members of faiths other than Christianity or to visit non-Christian places of worship have yet to be explored.