

INSPECTION REPORT

STEBBING PRIMARY SCHOOL

STEBBING

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114888

Headteacher: Mr S Clark

Reporting inspector: Peter Howlett
23744

Dates of inspection: 11th – 15th September 2000

Inspection number: 224870

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	High Street Stebbing Great Dunmow Essex
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Appropriate authority:	Essex
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Richard Beattie
Date of previous inspection:	8 th June 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Peter Howlett (23744)	Registered inspector	Mathematics, science, Information technology, history, geography, physical education, equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well is the school led and managed
Gillian Hoggard (14066)	Lay inspector		How high are standards? How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Valerie Ives (21103)	Team inspector	English, art, design and technology, music, religious education, Under fives, special educational needs.	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is a smaller than average primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven years old. It has 104 full time pupils on roll. There is no designated nursery and children under five join the reception class, currently nine children attend part time. Pupils are taught in four mixed-aged classes.

The school is situated in the centre of Stebbing, a pleasant, small village in Essex, close to the town of Great Dunmow. Most of the pupils live in the village or in the surrounding area and many come from homes with some degree of social and economic advantage. Whilst most come from private housing, a small proportion comes from local authority housing. In addition, pupils from the travelling community account for some ten per cent of the school population. The school has a fairly high rate of pupil mobility. Approximately 11 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals; this is well below the national average. Pupils come from a white ethnic background. Standards of attainment on entry to the school fluctuate from one intake to another. The overall attainment of the current intake is average, though baseline assessments show that children's attainment in the previous year's intake was above average. The number of pupils considered by the school as having special educational needs, approximately 20 per cent, is average and there are no pupils with statements of special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Stebbing Primary is an improving school. The school is an orderly and happy place and provides a sound education for its pupils. The school has a number of strengths and these outweigh its weaknesses. Pupils make satisfactory progress. At Key Stage 1, standards are rising and pupils reach expected levels. While at Key Stage 2, teachers continue to ensure that pupils achieve appropriate standards. The quality of teaching has improved across the school. Improvements in the school's management and leadership have led to a clear focus on raising standards. Taking these factors into consideration the school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Relationships within the school are very good.
- There is much good teaching.
- The school's provision for pupils' moral and social development is good.
- The school is good at monitoring how well pupils are doing in their work.
- There is a shared commitment to raising pupils' achievements within the school community.
- The school has been successful in regaining the confidence of parents.

What could be improved

- Standards in and provision for information technology.
- Teaching and learning of investigative skills in science.
- Pupils' attendance.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

At the time of the previous inspection in June 1998 the school was considered to have serious weaknesses. The school has made good progress in addressing the key issues arising from the previous inspection. The management of the school is now on a firm footing and effective procedures for monitoring have resulted in significant improvements in the quality of teaching. Many aspects of curriculum planning have improved. The school's assessment practices have greatly improved and the school monitors the progress of individual pupils effectively. The school has taken effective measures to improve standards in English and mathematics at Key Stage 1 and in writing and design and technology across the school though skills in information technology and science have not risen fast enough. The headteacher, staff and governors are firmly focused on raising standards and the school is well placed to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	B	A	C	D
mathematics	A	A	B	B
science	A	A*	B	B

Key	
very high	A*
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

This table shows that in the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, results were above average in science and in mathematics and average in English. When compared to schools that have pupils from similar backgrounds, pupils' performances were above average in mathematics and science and below average in English. In the four years to 1999, results at Key Stage 2 were consistently above average in mathematics and science but were closer to average in English. At the time of the previous inspection standards were judged to be average in the three subjects though below average in writing. Standards of work seen in the current inspection reflect the test results in mathematics and in English. Standards in writing have improved and are average. In science standards are only average. Pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding are good but their investigative skills are weaker. The pupils currently in the final year at the school are working at expected levels. However, given their very low results at Key Stage 1, these pupils are now achieving well and the targets are set at a realistic level. The school now has an effective tracking system that enables it to set realistic targets both for individuals and year groups.

At Key Stage 1, the results in the 1997 national tests in English and mathematics were unusually low and were well below average. Since then, there has been some improvement. In 1999 results were average in reading and writing though still below average in mathematics. The unvalidated results for 2000 continue to show improvement and the inspection evidence confirms that standards in English and mathematics are average. Children currently at the foundation stage make good progress and, by the age of five, they reach the expected standards in most areas of the nationally recognised foundation curriculum and exceed the expected standards in their personal and social development.

Standards in information technology are below average at Key Stage 1. Progress is unsatisfactory so by the end of Key Stage 2 standards are well below expected levels. Standards in design and technology have improved since the previous inspection and pupils make satisfactory progress to reach average standards. Pupils reach expected standards in history, geography, religious education and physical education. Insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement on standards in music.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils like coming to school. In lessons pupils are keen to learn and find out more.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour around school is very good. In lessons, pupils know the routines well and get down to work quickly and productively. The school is a quiet and orderly place.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils show respect for each other and their teachers. Some opportunities are offered for pupils to develop initiative and responsibility; However, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' independence through taking real responsibility; the emergent school council may help this.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is below the national average. Pupils are punctual to school and to lessons, but are taking too much time off in term time.

Close and constructive relationships are a strength of the school, both between pupils themselves and between staff and pupils. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of the learning environment; but there are too many authorised absences.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	satisfactory	satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching was good or better in over 60 per cent of observed lessons, including 13 per cent very good lessons. No lessons seen were unsatisfactory. These figures represent a significant improvement on the findings of the previous inspection. Teaching of English at both key stages and of mathematics at Key Stage 2 is good. Teaching of mathematics at Key Stage 1 and of science is satisfactory. Very little direct teaching of information technology was seen but a combination of teachers' lack of knowledge and limited, outdated computers means that information technology does not play a full part in teaching and learning across the curriculum. Teaching of art, design and technology and religious education is good. Teaching in the other subjects is satisfactory. Teaching of the under-fives is consistently good.

Teachers are hard working and conscientious. They have good relationships with their pupils and ensure they work hard in lessons. Lessons are well organised and planned. Generally, teachers match work appropriately to pupils' needs in English and mathematics, though in science and some of the foundation subjects work is not always planned for the different ability groups. Classroom assistants support pupils' learning effectively. The teaching of basic skills is satisfactory but there are shortcomings. Teachers provide sound opportunities to promote literacy skills across the curriculum. However, teachers do not plan sufficiently for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects and pupils' scientific skills are not adequately developed.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Early Years staff work well together to provide a good range of learning experiences for children under-five. The curriculum at both key stages has improved and is now satisfactory. The school gives high priority to teaching literacy and numeracy but there is insufficient focus on the development of science and information technology skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory; including provision for pupils from traveller backgrounds. Pupils are fully integrated in classes. The school gives careful consideration to the needs of pupils and provision is related to clear and practical targets in individual education plans. Teaching for pupils withdrawn individually from class is good. Classroom assistants support group work throughout the school and have a positive impact on pupils' progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral and social development is a strength of the school. Provision for their cultural and spiritual development is satisfactory. The school does not do enough to prepare pupils for the wider world with its diversity of cultures and backgrounds.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a strong atmosphere of care and concern for pupils' welfare. Child protection procedures are satisfactory. Assessment procedures in English, mathematics and science are good. Arrangements for promoting good attendance, however, are unsatisfactory.

The school values the views of parents and has established good links with them. It has significantly improved the communication between school and home since the last inspection. In response, the contribution of most parents to their children's learning, whether at home or at school, is good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The acting headteacher provided effective and strong leadership in developing and managing the school over the last year. She ensured a clear educational direction for the school and was well supported by staff and the governing body. The new headteacher has already acquired a good understanding of the needs of the school and has a clear vision for its future development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body played a key role both in shaping the school's response to the last inspection findings and in setting up effective arrangements to monitor progress. The governing body continues to be supportive and plays an active role in the management of the school. Statutory requirements are met.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has made a sound start in evaluating its performance. The school now has an effective system for tracking individual pupils' performance and setting targets.
The strategic use of resources	Financial management is prudent. Careful financial planning supports identified priorities. The school has sound procedures for securing best value for money and it monitors spending effectively. Accommodation is good and used appropriately; resources are sound except in information technology. Staff levels are satisfactory. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school• Good teaching• Their children make good progress because they are expected to do their best• The school helps their children to be mature and responsible• Pupils feel confident about approaching the school and the school works closely with them• Information on their children's progress	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More activities outside lessons

Parents' views of the school are very positive and they are strongly supportive of it. Nearly all say their children like school, that they are making good progress, and that teaching is good and expectations are high. They also feel the school is open, approachable and very willing to listen to their complaints and suggestions. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are average in English, mathematics and science. Standards at the end of Key Stage 2 are above average in mathematics and average in English and science.
2. At the time of the previous inspection pupils were not achieving well enough, because much of the teaching was judged unsatisfactory. Since then, and particularly in the last year, the school has done much to improve the quality of teaching and address those areas where pupils were not making satisfactory progress. However, better teaching has not yet fully compensated for earlier shortcomings. Nevertheless, scrutiny undertaken of last year's work in English, mathematics and science shows that pupils at both key stages made appropriate gains in learning over the year, except in the development of their investigative skills in science. Lesson observations during the inspection indicate that pupils are making at least satisfactory progress in all lessons.
3. Overall standards of attainment on entry to the school vary from one year to another. Results of baseline assessments on entry to school in 1999 were above average and inspection evidence confirms that these children maintained above average standards by the end of the year. Inspection evidence and the school's assessments of the current children under five indicate that standards on entry to school this year are broadly average. Although there is a range of abilities present among the current children under five, overall attainment in basic literacy and numeracy skills are comparable with those of children of similar ages.
4. It is of little value to make judgements based on results of national tests in any one year or make a direct comparison of standards between the different stages because of the relatively small size of each year group. In addition, the school has a fairly high rate of pupil mobility which can have a disproportionate effect on results.
5. At Key Stage 1, the results in the 1997 national tests in English and mathematics were unusually low and were well below average. Since then, there has been some improvement. In 1999 results were average in reading and writing though still below average in mathematics. Results in English were broadly in line with similar schools but below in mathematics. The unvalidated results for 2000 continue to show improvement and the inspection evidence confirms that standards in English and mathematics are average.
6. In the four years to 1999, results at Key Stage 2 were consistently above average in mathematics and science but were closer to average in English. In 1999 results were average in English and above average in mathematics and science. In comparison with similar schools, results were below average in English and above average in mathematics and science. There are no comparative data yet available for 2000. However, test results indicate that the proportion of pupils reaching expected levels was above the 1999 national figures in mathematics and science and broadly average in English. Scrutiny of the work of these pupils confirms these figures for English and mathematics, but standards in science were average. In science, pupils knowledge and understanding were good but their investigative skills were weaker. The pupils currently in the final year at the school are working at expected levels. This is

confirmed by the lower targets set for this cohort. However, given the very low results at Key Stage 1 of this cohort, these pupils are now achieving well and the targets are set at a realistic level. The school now has an effective tracking system that records individual performance in compulsory and voluntary tests. These now enable the school to set realistic targets both for individuals and year groups. End of Key Stage 2 targets for future years are appropriate and reflect prior performance in tests.

7. Pupils who have special educational needs make sound progress when taking account of their prior knowledge. It is regularly assessed and recorded so that the targets in individual education plans can be modified at review dates with full information at hand. Pupils from a traveller background are well integrated and those that attend regularly make satisfactory progress. However, some make unsatisfactory progress as their attendance is erratic due largely to their migratory pattern.
8. Children at the foundation stage make good progress and, by the age of five, they reach the expected standards in the nationally recognised foundation curriculum and exceed the expected standards in their personal and social development. Continual observations and assessments are made of each child's progress to ensure that work continues to match their needs and build on their previous learning. Children with special educational needs are identified quickly and fully integrated into the class. They make progress at the same rate as the other children.
9. In English, pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of their literacy skills at Key Stage 1. Progress accelerates in Years 3 and 4, due largely to the good teaching. The pace and momentum of learning levels out in Years 5 and 6. Pupils reach the required standard in speaking and listening skills at both key stages. For example, pupils speak confidently in school assemblies and to adults and they listen considerately to each other's contributions. Standards in reading across the school are average, although some pupils attain above average standards. By Year 2, pupils use a variety of strategies to work out words they find difficult, and the majority of pupils have a sound knowledge of the structure of books. By the age of eleven, pupils read an appropriate range of literature fluently and accurately, with good expression and understanding. They know how to use the library and how to look for information in books.
10. At the time of the last inspection standards in writing were below average and pupils' progress was unsatisfactory. Since then there has been a whole school focus on improving pupils' writing skills and this emphasis combined with well-structured literacy lessons is having a positive effect on pupils' attainment in writing. The majority of pupils attain the expected standards and make satisfactory progress. By seven, pupils write for a range of different purposes, sequence their ideas appropriately and use simple punctuation. By eleven, pupils use their skills for a suitable range of purposes, including letter-writing, collecting factual information and in writing book reviews. Standards in grammar, spelling and punctuation are satisfactory. Standards of presentation have improved since the last inspection and work is usually well presented, with most pupils being able to join their writing.

11. In mathematics, there has been an improvement in standards since the previous inspection. Standards in numeracy are average at Key Stage 1 and above average at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, pupils' number skills are sound. Most pupils have a secure knowledge of numbers to at least 100, add and subtract numbers to fifty, solve simple problems with money and measures, have a sound knowledge of the properties of two-dimensional shapes and can read simple graphs. Pupils' number skills are generally good by the time they leave the school. They use a variety of mental and written methods and are confident with fractions, decimals and percentages. Although overall standards in the current Year 6 are in line with expected levels rather than above, pupils are achieving well, given the low starting point for most of these pupils at the end of Key Stage 1.
12. In science, overall standards are in line with the national picture at the end of both key stages. Pupils' achievements in science have improved since the previous inspection and they make satisfactory progress in acquiring knowledge and understanding. Pupils' scientific knowledge is sound. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop a sound understanding of plant and animal life and a basic knowledge of electricity, magnetism, light and sound. At Key Stage 2, pupils have a good knowledge of many aspects of science, for example the properties of light and different types of forces. The previous inspection noted that pupils did not make sufficient progress in developing their experimental and investigative skills. This remains so. Pupils' observational skills are good and they write accounts of tests and investigations using appropriate scientific vocabulary, but there is very little evidence that pupils plan tests or systematically develop an idea from initial hypothesis to a sound conclusion. When compared to the standards that these pupils achieved at the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, though not in their skills.
13. Standards in information technology are below average at Key Stage 1. Pupils have basic mouse skills and can perform some functions on the keyboard and with help, they can save and print their work. In most cases, they are unable to retrieve, process or display information on a computer. Pupils get insufficient opportunities to develop their skills and as they move up the school they make insufficient progress. The gap between their knowledge and understanding and the levels required means that by the end of Key Stage 2 they are well below the expected level for their age. At this age they know how to word process adequately, but are unable to organise, analyse and classify information satisfactorily, or select and interpret it, because they have not had enough experience in doing so. There is little evidence of information technology being used to support learning in other curriculum areas. There is little evidence of control or modelling work.
14. Standards in design and technology have improved since the previous inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1 to achieve expected standards. At Key Stage 2 pupils achieve well, compensating for prior lower attainment to reach average standards by the end of Key Stage 2. Standards in religious education have been maintained since the last inspection and pupils at the end of both key stages meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils reach expected standards in history, geography and physical education but their achievements are held back by insufficient focus on developing skills in a way that gets progressively harder. Pupils reach expected standards in art but insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement on standards in music.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. Pupils' attitudes to learning are nearly always good and sometimes very good. Parents report that their children are happy and enthusiastic to come to school, a view which was confirmed by the inspection findings. They are keen to learn right through the school: for example, children under five, looking at food safety, were enthusiastic about handling fruit; eight and nine year olds in a geography lesson were attentive and focused as they learned about pollution; and Year 6 pupils, looking at design principles in a design and technology lesson examining different slippers, were attentive and well-behaved. They are interested in school life and participate well in extra curricular activities such as netball club and piano lessons.
16. Behaviour around school is very good. Pupils move quietly and sensibly between lessons in the main school, the hall and the outdoor play area, and line up quietly and efficiently when required. They mix and chat freely with others at lunchtime. Close and constructive relationships are a strength of the school, both between pupils themselves and between staff and pupils. Even those in the reception class, very new to the school, are beginning to watch the performances of others in a physical education lesson and listen sensibly to the teacher. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 work collaboratively in a geography lesson looking at the characteristics of islands, and Year 3 and 4 pupils demonstrate warm relationship with their teacher in a science lesson about common materials.
17. There is no evidence at all of bullying or oppressive behaviour and pupils of both genders and all ages play happily together at breaktime. No evidence was found of the tendency seen at the previous inspection for the sexes to work separately. Pupils with special needs and those from traveller backgrounds are fully integrated and accepted by their peers. Parents feel that behaviour and attitudes are good and this is supported by inspection findings. The school has largely maintained the high standards noted at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are capable of responding thoughtfully to the experiences of others, as seen in a religious education lesson in the Year 1 and 2 class about The Lost Sheep. The pupil population is largely of a white ethnic background, so it is not greatly exposed to different beliefs or cultures. However, pupils are naturally polite and respectful to newcomers. There were no exclusions in the last school year.
18. Some opportunities are offered for pupils to develop initiative and responsibility; the youngest children enjoy washing and drying their cups at snacktime and older ones operate tape recorders and word sheets for songs in assembly. Year 6 children take on minor classroom jobs such as watering plants and taking registers, but these are assigned and not voluntary. Some opportunities are offered for personal study, such as history and geography projects and pupils are clearly familiar with library reference systems, although not the use of CD-ROMS for research. However, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' independence through taking real responsibility; the emergent school council may help this.
19. Attendance is unsatisfactory. The attendance rate in the 1998/99 at less than 90% was very low in comparison with other schools. Although there are some extenuating circumstances, in particular children in the travellers' community who stay on the school register and are marked absent, the attendance figures show a high level of absence. For example there was a very high level of authorised absence, more than 10% in 1998/9. Pupils are normally punctual to school and to lessons, but are taking too much time off school in term time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

20. There has been a considerable improvement in the quality and consistency of teaching since the previous inspection when 19 per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. Teaching was satisfactory or better in all lessons as no unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The quality of teaching was good or better in 62 per cent of lessons and very good in 13 per cent of lessons. Teaching at the foundation stage is good. All the observed lessons for children under-five were good or very good. Teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, teaching in Years 3 and 4 is good, while teaching in Years 5 and 6 is satisfactory. The quality of teaching in English and religious education, is good overall. Teaching of mathematics and design and technology is good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. The teaching of science, geography and physical education is satisfactory. Only one lesson was observed in music, so there is insufficient evidence to make a judgement. While no lessons were observed in history, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that teaching of history is satisfactory. Little direct teaching of information technology was observed during the inspection, but a combination of teachers' own lack of expertise and limited, outdated computers means that information technology does not play a full part in teaching and learning across the curriculum.
21. The quality of pupils' learning has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers are hardworking and conscientious and provide a sound quality of education for their pupils. Pupils now make better progress in their learning. The improvement in teaching is partly due to a rigorous programme of monitoring of classroom performance established by the acting headteacher. Much has been done to remedy identified weaknesses in teaching, in particular in terms of planning and assessment. Teachers plan lessons more effectively because they use schemes of work to guide and support planning in all subjects and a clear planning format that all follow consistently. There is good clarity in planning and teachers make the purpose of lessons clear to pupils so they know what they are doing and why. Teachers evaluate the outcomes of lessons and this information helps them in planning the next steps in pupils' learning. Assessment opportunities are identified as an integral part of every-day planning in all subjects. These are evaluated each day in order to modify or change the work planned for the next day.
22. The teaching of children under-five is good overall, with half the lessons being very good. Lessons are thoughtfully planned using the early learning goals and effectively managed. Staff take every opportunity to develop children's language and number skills by talking to them and questioning their responses. Expertise is shown in the regular assessments of pupils that are kept and suitably used to inform future planning. The literacy session is being used effectively. There is good collaboration between adults and this is beneficial in developing children's confidence. They have a good knowledge of how young children learn. Provision for all areas of learning is very good. The learning environment is stimulating and resources are used effectively which prompts children's curiosity and extends their learning.
23. Teachers are confident in teaching literacy and numeracy and they structure their lessons in line with the recommendations of the national strategies. The teaching of literacy is good overall. Class teachers have a good understanding of what is expected. Teachers' planning for the literacy hour is good and the strategy has been implemented effectively. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations and skilful classroom management. Classroom routines are established and resources are well prepared and used to good advantage to stimulate interest. Lessons proceed at a brisk pace and good questioning skills challenge pupils to check their

understanding and extend their knowledge. In most classes the teaching of numeracy is good. Lessons throughout the school start with mental work, associated with number facts and quick calculations enabling the pupils to practise their number facts every day. In consequence there is sound development of pupils' mental skills.

24. The teaching of basic skills is satisfactory but there are shortcomings. Teachers are aware of the need to promote literacy in the subjects they teach. There are sound links with literacy in science, religious education and history through writing and discussion. Generally, adults give clear explanations which help the pupils to understand what is being taught, particularly those with poor skills of literacy. In a good design and technology lesson with Years 5 and 6, the clarity of explanations extended the pupils' understanding of how a designer has to consider many factors before producing the product. The discussion promoted their knowledge and use of technical subject vocabulary. Most teachers have good skills in asking questions, which develop pupils' speaking, and listening skills and encourage them to reflect on their learning. In the Key Stage 1 class, the teacher's questions enabled the pupils to apply their understanding of their five senses to a practical task. Good learning took place as a result. The pupils could describe confidently what they had done and were keen to share their knowledge and understanding with the class. In history, pupils develop their research skills in independent studies. However, teachers do not plan sufficiently for pupils to use their numeracy skills to support other subjects; for example in science and geography, pupils seldom record or graph their results. Pupils' scientific skills are not adequately developed. Although teachers provide opportunities for pupils to undertake investigations, these are very teacher directed. There are few opportunities for pupils to devise and conduct their own experiments.
25. Generally teachers' subject knowledge is secure. The school has taken steps to improve teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum with a sound programme of professional development informed by the monitoring programme. For example, organised in-service training has developed teachers' competence in teaching aspects of design and technology. In consequence, pupils' learning in this subject has improved and they now attain expected standards. Teachers' subject knowledge is particularly good in English where a good range and variety of work challenges and meets the needs of all pupils. Teachers have high expectations of pupils; work is marked regularly and comments are helpful and encouraging. Written advice is given to pupils on how to improve their work, particularly in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Staff usually shares the aims of the lesson with the pupils. In a mathematics lesson in Year 3 and 4 this enabled the pupils to be clear about the tasks they were given. Extra challenges are also set for higher-attaining pupils to extend their learning successfully. However, teachers are not secure in their teaching of information technology or physical education to develop pupils' skills appropriately in these subjects.
26. Teachers demonstrate good classroom management skills. There is mainly good organisation of groups, time and space. Teachers maintain good relationships and this develops confidence and a sense of partnership and teamwork. They have high expectations of behaviour and high standards of discipline. These ensure that the majority of pupils complete their work and sound progress is made. Pupils are expected to work hard and sensibly. Teachers talk encouragingly to pupils and the marking of work is accurate, informative and sometimes diagnostic, providing pupils with clear points for improvement. Teachers generally match work appropriately to the needs of the pupils, with extension work planned for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics, and materials suitably modified for pupils who have special educational

needs, as was seen during Literacy Hour. Correct terminology in subjects is continually stressed.

27. Time in lessons is used effectively, as are resources. A wide range of resources in a design and technology lessons enable pupils to develop their skills of choice. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are able to appreciate that certain places are special through the thoughtful preparation of resources, including photographs, poems, stories and pictures. Pupils in year 5 and 6 were given a variety of maps to study the possible effects of proposed road improvements. Teachers provide good quality learning environments with well-organised classrooms enhanced by good quality displays. Teachers make good use of additional adults, who provide valuable support to pupils in group work. They help teachers with assessment by making notes of pupils' responses, for example, during whole class sessions in literacy, numeracy and physical education lessons. This good practice helps teachers in planning further learning objectives.
28. Part of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is teaching on a one-to-one basis once a week. They are taught well within this teaching programme. This is achieved by the careful planning of lessons, the match of work to the ability of each pupil and the individual preparation of resources to support their work. There is increasing differentiation planned for pupils with achievable targets that has a significant impact on their progress, particularly in reading and English. The teacher provides a secure learning environment and promotes good relationships so pupils become confident and want to improve. In addition, clear instructions build pupils' confidence and enable them to sustain concentration and complete the tasks.
29. Overall, teachers promote the learning of all pupils successfully. Teachers use homework effectively to support pupils' learning, particularly in English and mathematics. The school has a clear commitment to the principles and practice of equal access to the curriculum, and of equality of opportunity for all pupils. However, there are limited opportunities for teachers to observe good practice so that they can continue to improve their own knowledge and expertise.

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

30. The school has maintained the sound curriculum since the previous inspection and has improved its planning.
31. At the time of the previous inspection, the curriculum provision for children under-five was judged to be sound with appropriate practice to meet children's needs. Since then, the provision for learning for the children under-five has been further developed and enhanced. Clear and thorough planning and organisation for each area of learning is in place. Early years staff work extremely well together and collaborate very effectively to plan activities and assess children's needs.

32. At both key stages the school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory). The programme for personal, social and health education is soundly planned to link in with other areas of the curriculum. Drug and sex education are mainly handled through science lessons. In classes, teachers cover aspects of personal and social education at specified times. The school provides sound opportunities for developing citizenship for example, the Year 6 'Crucial Crew' visit. Arrangements for collective worship meet statutory requirements. The school allocates an appropriate amount of time to the core subjects of English, mathematics and science but also ensures that there is enough time available for pupils to receive sufficient, worthwhile learning experiences in other subjects. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative skills in science and to use information technology skills effectively for learning in literacy, mathematics and other subjects.
33. The school has made good progress in addressing the weaknesses in curriculum planning identified at the previous inspection. The curriculum planning is now satisfactory, and the curriculum is effectively organised and contributes to the overall quality of learning. The curriculum is planned and taught as separate subjects, but where appropriate there are effective links between subjects, often within a topic theme. This results in programmes of work having a good sense of meaning and purpose, as, for example, in history, when the study of Vikings is linked to design and technology activities. There are supportive policy statements and schemes of work for all subjects. This is a good improvement from the previous inspection because they are helpful in assisting planning. They provide a framework for ensuring that knowledge and understanding are developed within a wide range of learning opportunities. The school has long and medium-term plans that outline broad subject areas to be covered over the year. The medium term plans are constructed to give a clear outline of the coverage of subjects and help to ensure good breadth to the curriculum. The English and mathematics curriculum follow the national frameworks. However, there are some shortcomings. Planning in physical education, history and geography does not give a clear outline of subject-specific skills to be learnt as pupil's progress through the school. In these subjects pupils do not sufficiently build upon previously learned skills.
34. The school has improved its short-term planning. There is a consistent format for weekly planning that all teachers use appropriately and lesson plans are good and helpful, giving a clear indication of the learning objectives and opportunities for assessment. The school has made a sound start in the introduction and development of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. In general, teachers are implementing the daily literacy and numeracy lessons successfully. Lessons are appropriately organised and pupils are familiar with the daily classroom routines that accompany these activities. However, opportunities for pupils to develop these basic skills through other subjects are more variable. At Key Stage 2, teachers develop literacy skills across the curriculum in relevant and meaningful contexts, so that all pupils can consolidate what they have learned and further develop their skills. However, opportunities are missed to promote the development of literacy skills in science, history and geography at Key Stage 1 and numeracy skills in science and geography across the school.
35. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. There are a number of extra curricular activities including football and cricket. Local professional players provide football coaching and pupils have opportunities to learn to play a number of musical

instruments through the peripatetic music service. The school has developed good links with its local community and in turn has a special place within it. Some parents and grandparents attended the school themselves, and the community is active in its support by attending social events and collecting vouchers for books and computers. Christmas, Easter and harvest provide opportunities for visiting the local church, and the vicar comes in regularly to lead a series of assemblies. There are links with the local playgroup and Over 60's club, and pupils go out on visits to local places such as Boydell Farm and the Essex Rangers, which supports their work in history and geography.

36. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory across the school. All pupils have equal access to the full curriculum, including those with special educational needs and pupils from traveller backgrounds. There is a clear and comprehensive special educational needs policy and careful consideration is given to the needs of pupils through appropriately matched activities or through providing additional support. These pupils are fully integrated in classes. Classroom assistants support group work throughout the school and have a positive impact on pupils' progress. They are kept informed of pupils' needs and so can offer good support for pupils' learning in the classroom. Some pupils are withdrawn individually from class for a set time once a week. Provision for those who have special educational needs is related to clear and practical targets in individual education plans. It concentrates mainly on English skills and sometimes tasks are related to other subjects where appropriate. There are inconsistencies in the provision for higher-attaining pupils, partly due to the absence of an agreed policy. They are sufficiently challenged in English and mathematics, but in other subjects there is often insufficient planning of extended activities.
37. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is a strength of the school
38. Moral development is good. Pupils are encouraged to contribute to school rules and consider their impact on others, for example, by choosing the appropriate 'voice' to use when in the classroom or in the playground. There is a clearly understood system of rewards and sanctions and a sharing assembly which allows midday supervisors, among others, to give positive reinforcement for good playtime behaviour. The School Council is set to make a good contribution to moral development, but has not started meetings for this term.
39. The school has a strong sense of community, both within its walls and as a part of the village, reinforced by local visits to places of significance, and local visitors to the school such as the Over-60's club. Residential visits help to develop pupils' ability to get on with others. Within school they are encouraged to care for the environment through recycling schemes, and looking after living things such as tomatoes and sunflowers. They also contribute to charities such as shoeboxes for Romania and Children in Need.
40. Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory, but less strong because opportunities are missed to promote them across the curriculum. Spirituality is developed in religious education lessons. For example, pupils in class 2 take part in a sensitive discussion following the telling of the story of 'The Lost Sheep' and are beginning to understand the Christian principle of love. In class 3, pupils understand that certain places are special to each of us. For example, one pupil said, "School is special because my friends are there." The Church makes some contribution to spiritual development, but prayers in assembly offer little opportunity for reflection. Class 3 pupils are genuinely enthralled by Rembrandt portraits in an art lesson.

However, pupils do not experience frequently enough the wonder and excitement that can be found in English, science and music.

41. Pupils learn something of their own culture through local visits, religious celebrations such as the harvest festival, and country dancing. There is some exposure to other cultures for example, in the study of St. Lucia in geography, and the visit by an Indian dancer, but not enough to prepare pupils properly for the wider world with its diversity of cultures and backgrounds. In this respect, the school has improved only marginally since the last inspection. The minority of traveller children in school are very well integrated socially, but little attempt is made to celebrate or utilise their distinctive heritage in any planned way.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

42. The school is a warm and caring community where staff know individual children well. There is a range of sensible policies for such areas as behaviour, health and safety and asthma. Arrangements for pupils' welfare are underpinned by sensible routines, for example, in moving to the hall for physical education. All staff have undertaken first aid training. There is one child in the school who has a specific allergy and all staff have been trained to treat this if necessary. This a good illustration of the school's caring approach. Sick children are brought to the office until parents can be contacted, and all incidents, both minor and major, are logged in accident books. The school is well looked after and provides, for example, a clean and pleasant environment for eating arrangements.
43. There are satisfactory arrangements for child protection. All staff, including midday supervisors, have undergone some training, and the new headteacher, as designated officer, intends to provide additional training. The staff handbook contains a relevant section about child protection and staff themselves know what is required. Close and caring relationships between staff and pupils ensures that concerns are quickly noticed and acted upon.
44. Sensible and efficient procedures are in place to ensure good behaviour. There is a clearly understood system of rewards and sanctions. Empowering midday supervisors to organise playtime games and reward good behaviour has done much to raise their profile with the children. Regular sharing assemblies help to reinforce positive attitudes to work and behaviour. Children with special needs and those from traveller backgrounds are treated with respect and integrated completely into the life of the school.
45. Arrangements for promoting attendance, however, are unsatisfactory. Although the school handles practical procedures for registers and latecomers adequately, it has been too ready to authorise absence for non-essential reasons such as holidays. This has led to a figure of more than 10% authorised absence.

46. Significant improvements have been initiated in assessment procedures since the previous inspection. At the time of the last inspection there were no unified systems for regular assessment procedures. These are now established and used effectively, for example, to set improvement targets for groups of pupils.
47. Arrangements for assessment are good. Baseline testing takes place within the first seven weeks of entry into the reception class. Tests are carried out each year to assess standards in English, mathematics and science and these are analysed and influence planning and teaching. Targets are then set for these subjects. Individual pupils' progress is carefully tracked through both national and non-statutory test results to indicate strengths and weaknesses in performance and provision across the school. Appropriate assessment opportunities are identified in all subjects and are an integral part of teachers' planning. Teachers are confident in assessing pupils' progress and set foci for assessments for the teaching assistants to carry out. Regular assessments that are undertaken in lessons are used appropriately to plan the next stage in pupils' learning. Suitable use is made of the information gained from the National Curriculum assessment tests to inform curriculum planning. These assessment procedures are effective in ensuring that records are both useful and manageable. Subject co-ordinators are building up portfolios of assessed pupils' work, but these are at an early stage of development. There is an agreed marking policy in place.
48. Assessment information is used appropriately to identify pupils with special educational needs and to plan the targets in their individual education plan. Careful support and guidance are given to pupils with special educational needs and their parents. The school makes effective use of outside agencies such as the education welfare officer and the education psychologists who make regular visits. The special needs teacher is well organised and keeps detailed information on each pupil to enable her to plan work which matches their needs. The school uses various published assessment tests to make successful diagnoses of the pupils' needs. These are used regularly to measure what the next step is.
49. The school provides effective support for its pupils, including children going to school for the first time. The youngest reception children attend for the mornings only until the term in which their fifth birthday occurs, which helps them to settle in gradually. Staff know their pupils well and take an active interest in their progress, development and welfare. Parents praise this aspect of school life, and inspection findings confirm that the high standards of care found at the time of the last inspection have been maintained.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. Parents' views of the school are very positive and they are strongly supportive of it. Nearly all say their children like school and that they are making good progress. Parents believe that teachers have high expectations and that teaching is good. They also feel the school is open, approachable and very willing to listen to their complaints and suggestions. Most importantly, they feel that standards, especially in reading and writing, are improving, and this view is confirmed by inspection findings.

51. Information provided by the school is generally good. The prospectus is satisfactory but needs updating. Reporting attendance figures to parents by using a standard format would help reinforce their importance. The Governors' annual report to parents is well-structured and easy to read, but lacks minor statutory information such as the date of parent governor elections and arrangements for disabled children. Pupils' annual reports have improved significantly and now show targets for improvement. Parents' meetings are held once a term and parents feel free to contact teachers at other times, such as the regular drop-in sessions on Tuesdays. Parents of children with special educational needs are involved appropriately in their children's education and are regularly involved in discussions with the school and class teachers, including the reviews of the targets in pupils' individual education plans. These take place twice yearly and during parents' evening when the special needs teacher is also available.
52. Parents have been enthusiastic in attending curriculum events and found the opportunity to see the numeracy strategy in action very valuable. The school has been pro-active in improving reports, developing a home-school agreement and eliciting parents' views. From the time of the last inspection, it has significantly improved the communication between home and school to the benefit of all.
53. Parents strongly support the work of the school through homework, helping on trips and voluntary work such as refurbishing the environmental area. The Association of Friends of Stebbing School has done sterling work in raising funds to buy equipment such as computer software, and in running popular events like the summer fair. The links between school and parents are a strength and a tribute to hard work on both sides.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

54. The previous inspection in June 1998 identified several areas of weaknesses in the management of the school. Since then the school has undergone changes in its leadership. The headteacher at the time of the inspection resigned a year later to take up another post. The Governing Body appointed an acting headteacher who, over the past year, has provided the school with strong and effective leadership. She had a clear sense of purpose and a commitment to moving the school forward and introduced a number of successful strategies to raise standards. For example, the school now makes good use of assessment information to monitor the performance of pupils and sets appropriate targets for future performance. With the support of the staff and governing body, the acting headteacher gave a firm steer to the school community, successfully addressing the management shortcomings and the other key issues. The new headteacher has already acquired a good understanding of the needs of the school and has a clear vision for its future development.
55. The school has made good improvement since the previous inspection when it was considered by the inspection team to have serious weaknesses. After the inspection the school produced a sound action plan with clear objectives linked to each key issue identified in that inspection. The governing body played a key role both in shaping the school's response to the inspection findings and in setting up effective arrangements to monitor progress. In the first year the headteacher, staff and governors made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues. However, the rate of progress has been more rapid in the last year. Subsequent monitoring visits by HMI and the local education authority's inspectors have noted the school's continuing success in addressing the key issues. This inspection confirms that the school has made good progress in addressing the issues identified. The management of the school, the

quality of teaching, curriculum planning and assessment have all greatly improved. Communications with parents have also improved leading to much greater confidence in the school among parents.

56. The governing body continues to give good support and plays an active part in the management of the school. There are well-defined and appropriate committees with clear terms of reference. Governors are appropriately involved in planning, decision-making and policy-making. Governors value the professionalism of the staff and there is an effective working relationship between staff and the governing body. Within the school community there is a shared commitment to raising pupils' achievements. All teachers work hard to ensure an effective climate for learning and create positive expectations of pupils' behaviour and esteem. They are successful in this: the school is an orderly community where instances of poor behaviour are rare and effective learning takes place in all lessons.
57. Monitoring and evaluation procedures have improved significantly since the previous inspection. Then they were unsatisfactory, now they are good. The acting headteacher put in place systematic arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching that are positive, constructive and rigorous. All teaching staff are observed on a regular basis and receive appropriate feedback. The success of these arrangements can be seen in the improvement in the quality of teaching since the last inspection. Governors are knowledgeable about the school and the governing body has effective procedures to monitor the work of the school. For example, a designated governor liaises with the special needs teacher so the governing body can keep oversight of special needs provision through this nominated governor reporting back. Governors are involved in analysing the results of national tests. The school has made a sound start in its analysis of performance data. The school's system for tracking the individual performance of pupils is being used effectively to monitor individual performance. Target setting for pupils in English and mathematics is having a positive effect on standards. The school needs to develop further its use and evaluation of assessment data so that the governing body can be assured that fluctuating test results genuinely reflect pupils' starting points and that each set of results represent at least satisfactory progress for that cohort.
58. Staffing levels are satisfactory and the school has an appropriate number of suitably qualified teachers to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and to support pupils with special educational needs. The school employs a part-time teacher to work with pupils who have special educational needs. The school employs a good number of support staff, and teachers use them effectively to support pupils working in groups. There is also additional support from learning support assistants in numeracy and literacy lessons. The school has a sound programme of professional development but at present the links between the school's improvement plan and the staff development programme are not strong. The school needs to ensure that there is an appropriate balance between meeting the individual professional needs of staff and the priorities of the school. Procedures for the appraisal of staff are appropriate, and there are sound arrangements to support teachers new to the school. However, there is a lack of expertise among staff in information technology.
59. The management of the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection. The allocation of subject responsibilities among staff is appropriate although it means all staff carry responsibility for more than one subject. Subject co-ordinators are keen and enthusiastic and, within the limitations of a small school, provide sound leadership. The school rightly focuses on the development of literacy and numeracy, and the co-ordinators for English and mathematics provide effective leadership. Monitoring by the

English and mathematics co-ordinators enables them to have an overview of the school's provision in their subjects. The headteacher has taken on the role of co-ordinator for information technology and has a clear understanding of what needs to be done.

60. School development planning is sound. The school's development plan is a comprehensive document which identifies the school's priorities in a clear and accessible way. The priorities are appropriate, provide firm direction to the developmental work of the school and help inform the budget process. The management of the school's financial resources is prudent and the school makes effective use of its financial resources to support pupils' needs. The headteacher and governing body plan the school's budget systematically. Financial planning is sound. The construction of the budget is based on sound information provided by the finance officer. For example, the school looks at the expenditure patterns of other schools. Governors consider spending decisions carefully. They consider the implications of budgetary decisions for the future so, with guidance from the finance officer they were able to avoid a deficit budget when numbers were falling. The finance officer, provides support to Governors to ensure that there are sound procedures for securing best value for money. Governors are fully aware of the need to review and evaluate their spending decisions.
61. The school has appropriate financial controls and the finance officer provides the governing body with up-to-date budgetary information, enabling them to monitor the school's spending effectively. Staff use the computer system for budgetary control satisfactorily. The day-to-day management and administrative systems are effective. The clerical and administrative staff work together very well as an efficient team providing good support for the headteacher, parents, pupils and staff alike. Co-ordinators are not yet involved in monitoring the quality of spending in their subjects.
62. The school uses the funds it receives for specific purposes appropriately. It made very effective use of the additional funding it received from the local education authority as a school in serious weaknesses. The funds used to support pupils with special educational needs have a positive effect on the progress they make. The special needs teacher provides good support to pupils on an individual basis and classroom assistants provide good support in the classroom. Learning materials for special educational needs are adequate, well maintained and efficiently organised. However, the special needs teacher is only in school one day a week and this makes it difficult to maintain any regular reinforcement in pupils' learning. When she is in school she withdraws only one pupil at a time for a designated period. This expensive resource is not an efficient use of money. As there is no designated co-ordinator, there is no overall management of classroom assistants to provide specific support for pupils on the special educational needs register.

63. Generally the school has adequate resources to support pupils' learning. The exception is in information technology. Teachers make effective use of these resources even though there is no up-to-date catalogue. Accommodation is good. Classrooms are large and spacious and the library makes optimum use of interconnected spaces. The hall is large and pleasant, offering a useful space for physical education, music, assemblies and lunch. The school has made sensible use of the smaller hall for music and the planned new computer suite. The school also benefits from large, pleasant, grassy outdoor areas with a good range of equipment for children such as a much-loved old boat and a swimming pool for younger children. There is also an environmental area for work in science. The school makes effective use of its accommodation and facilities. The teaching areas are bright, attractive working areas, with a variety of displays to support learning. The library provides a valuable resource for encouraging pupils' independent research and is utilised as an additional area for teaching individual pupils. The reception class has suitable teaching areas with an appropriate range of equipment and a good secure area for outdoor play that includes fixed climbing apparatus and a safety surface. These help to promote children's physical development.
64. Pupils enter school with varying levels of attainment. They make satisfactory progress and by the time they leave school they achieve appropriate standards given their starting point. Taking the fact that the school has a number of strengths and, as a result of the implementation of clear targets to improve pupils' achievements and the quality of provision, the school is now judged as providing satisfactory value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

Improve pupils' skills in science by:

- identifying opportunities in curriculum plans for pupils to undertake systematic enquiry in experimental and investigative science (paragraphs 101 and 102).
- teaching pupils to use a range of methods to record and present information (paragraph 101).
- making clear the expectations on skills for each year group (paragraph 104).
- providing graded writing frames to support pupils' recording skills (paragraph 103).

***Improve provision and standards in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) by:**

- implementing in full a scheme of work that ensures full coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study (paragraph 125)
- developing the schools' tracking system to include assessments of pupils' acquisition of ICT skills (paragraphs 57 and 126)
- providing training to ensure that all staff are competent in teaching the full ICT curriculum (paragraph 126)
- identifying and planning opportunities for the development of ICT skills across the curriculum (paragraph 13)
- improving the range of resources (paragraph 126)

Raise rates of attendance to match or exceed the national average by:

- *reviewing procedures for authorised absences (paragraph 45)
- promoting good attendance among pupils (paragraph 45)

*identified by the school as a priority and appropriate plans are in place.

OTHER SPECIFIED ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- extend pupils' knowledge and appreciation of the cultural diversity that exists in British society (paragraph 41)
- *produce a management plan for special educational needs provision that includes a job description for the special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) and strategies for the management of classroom assistants (paragraph 62)
- improve the teaching of skills in geography, history and physical education (paragraphs 116 and 135)
- promote pupils' numeracy skills in science and geography at both key stages (paragraph 14)
- promote pupils' writing skills in science, history and geography at Key Stage 1 (paragraph 85)
- complete an audit of resources so that all staff know what resources are available (paragraph 63)
- put a staff development programme in place that meets the school's identified needs (paragraph 58)
- develop further the use and reporting of assessment data so that the governing body can evaluate fluctuating test results in relation to prior attainment (paragraph 57)

*identified by the school as a priority and appropriate plans are in place.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	13	49	38	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	108
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	20

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	28
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	10.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	5	9	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	13	13	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (72)	93 (63)	79 (72)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	13	14	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (64)	100 (73)	100 (100)
	National	82	86	87

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest 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
	1999	8	9	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	11	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	65 (76)	82 (82)	88 (100)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Total	9	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	53 (63)	82 (83)	76 (77)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	104
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27.8

Education support staff:

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	76

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	259130
Total expenditure	263156
Expenditure per pupil	2659
Balance brought forward from previous year	25526
Balance carried forward to next year	21500

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	100
Number of questionnaires returned	39

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	21	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	36	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	54	44	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	51	10	0	3
The teaching is good.	59	41	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	49	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	77	21	3	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	67	33	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	44	0	0	3
The school is well led and managed.	59	41	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	44	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	39	21	8	5

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

65. At the time of the last inspection, the provision for children under-five was judged to be sound with appropriate practice to meet children's needs. Since then the quality of teaching, the curriculum and provision for learning for the children under-five has been further developed and enhanced. For example, expectations are clearly identified for all ages in the class and targets for learning are focused to cater for the varying experiences of the children. Clear and thorough planning and organisation, including a comprehensive system to record the children's attainment are in place and assessment opportunities are identified as an integral part of the planning for each area of learning.
66. There is one intake of children into the reception class every year, but the younger children attend for mornings only until the term in which they are five when they attend school full-time. Attainment on entry is broadly average although there are a few children with below average attainment. By the age of five, they have made good progress and have reached the expected standards in the nationally recognised foundation curriculum. Children with special educational needs are identified quickly and fully integrated into the class. They make progress at the same rate as the other children. Good use is made of assessment. The information gained when the children first join the reception class is used effectively to plan activities for them. Continual observations and assessments are made of each child's progress to ensure that work continues to match their needs and build on their previous learning. Early Years staff work extremely well together and collaborate very effectively to plan activities and assess children's needs.

Personal and social development

67. By the age of five, the majority of children exceed the expected standards in their personal and social development. They are beginning to form positive relationships and to communicate suitably with one another and with adults. Relationships are very good and staff are effective in creating a warm, caring and stimulating learning environment in which the children develop good attitudes to learning and become self-confident. They are taught the difference between right and wrong. Clear routines have been established in which the children thrive and very good progress is made. For example, they are expected to help clear away after finishing their activities by returning equipment to the correct places, putting chairs under tables and generally tidying areas for the next session. Morning snack-time is used very effectively to develop the children's social and personal skills. For example, tables are attractively covered with tablecloths and the children are taught to sit sensibly and respond positively when another child serves each a drink. The majority of children in the reception class remain interested in tasks until completed, particularly when working with an adult. They are beginning to share equipment and collaborate appropriately during group work, for example, when using paint and pieces of fruit to make a print pattern.

68. The very good teaching in this area has a positive impact on children's learning. Where classrooms are well managed children are secure and confident. The teacher plans good opportunities for the children to learn and to concentrate on a given task. No opportunity is missed to help them learn how to live amongst a large group. On-going daily assessments are kept to identify specific difficulties and areas for improvement. For example, "...has difficulty sitting still on the carpet." Staff have high expectations that children will learn how to give and take, share and begin to understand what they may expect of others and others of them. By working very well together, the staff give the children very good role models.

Communication, language and literacy

69. By the time they are five, the majority of children meet the required standard in communication, language and literacy, while a small minority exceeds the expectations of the Early Learning Goals. They make good progress from entry and are developing their skills well in receptive English. Adults use skilful questioning to encourage the children to express their ideas and increase their vocabulary. For example, the children are provided with additional opportunities to develop their speaking and listening skills at the end of the literacy lesson when they talk about what they have been doing. Children are developing skills in writing which are appropriate for their ability, for example, they are beginning to identify the initial sound of words when playing a game with the teacher. Most children handle books carefully. They understand how books are written and know that pictures tell a story and words have meanings. A small number read a group of familiar words accurately and make sense of the story. A few higher-attaining children use a number of methods to read stories. For example, they use the sounds of the letters to help them read words or the pictures to give them an idea of what the writing is about. Teachers encourage all children to take home their books to share with their families and most do this regularly. Evidence from the scrutiny of work shows that the majority of pupils are exceeding expectations in handwriting in that they are joining-up and writing legibly by the end of the school year. Information technology is used effectively to support this subject through using Talking Stories and by writing sight words on a PenDown program. The introduction of the literacy hour is having a beneficial impact on their learning.
70. The quality of teaching in this area of learning is very good. Lessons are well organised and good cross-curricular links are made with other subjects such as mathematics and geography. Adults interact suitably with the children, particularly in discussion, to exploit any opportunities to increase children's vocabulary. The teacher and teaching assistants use praise well to build up confidence and self-esteem. Challenging work is planned successfully to make children think and keep them focused with interest on the activities provided. Effective opportunities are taken by the teaching assistant to assess the children's understanding through well planned observations during the whole-class session of literacy hour. Planning appropriately takes account of the newly introduced 'Stepping Stones' for the Foundation Year. Scrutiny of work shows that appropriate targets are set, evaluated and shared with each child by the third term in school.

Mathematical development

71. In this area, the majority of children enter school with average number skills. They make good progress and meet the expected standard by the time they are five. The children count and sort numbers to 10 orally and are beginning to compare, sort and match every day objects. They are appropriately introduced to mathematical language such as big, little, more, less, in front of and behind. Staff use every opportunity to reinforce their knowledge and understanding of number through consistent repetition of ordering numbers, in the singing of various number rhymes and in counting the fruits in a story. This subject makes a good contribution to the children's personal and social development, for example, the children are interested and motivated, confident in speaking and sit quietly and sustain concentration during the activities. Learning is effective because the children have many opportunities to learn from and with each other and at different rates. The introduction of a numeracy hour is having a positive impact on pupils' attainment and progress in mathematics. Information technology is used effectively to support mathematics through carefully selected number programs and in listening to counting rhymes on tapes.
72. The quality of teaching is good and has a strong impact on children's learning and the good progress they make. Good teaching is characterised by clear and precise exposition and instructions so that the children know what is expected of them. Questions are used skilfully to stimulate thought and provoke discussion from which children learn much. Teaching assistants are used very successfully and are well deployed. Work is planned effectively to meet the needs of all the children, taking account of the newly introduced 'Stepping Stones' for the Foundation Year and clear objectives ensure that the children progress well. The teacher has a secure understanding of how young children learn and provides a rich learning environment in which the children can develop.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

73. By the time they are five, the majority of children meet the national expectations in their knowledge and understanding of the world, while a small minority exceeds them. Effective opportunities are provided for the children to develop their understanding of the senses through well planned activities. For example, they taste, smell, feel and look closely at different fruits in order to bring to life and reinforce their understanding of a story that was read in literacy hour. The children's knowledge of vocabulary is extended through good use of subject terminology, for example, the children are encouraged to describe the texture of fruit by using such words as rough and smooth. Scrutiny of the children's previous work on display shows that the children are beginning to show an awareness of the features of living things, through watching how chicks hatch. They further investigate eggs by doing experiments and extend their vocabulary when weighing the eggs to learn such words as lightest and heaviest. They compare goose and duck eggs with hen's eggs. The children enjoy using play dough by squeezing and moulding it and handle a variety of tools to experiment in making different shapes. Good opportunities are provided for them to be aware of safety and hygiene when handling food, for example, they understand the importance of washing their hands and the fruit before eating it. These activities effectively enhance the children's speaking and listening skills as they talk freely about the kinds of fruit they like or dislike. The children are developing an awareness of the passing of time through well chosen activities, for example, they talk about the changes in themselves since they were babies. Parents are welcomed into the class with their babies. Visits from people who help in the local community further enhance the children's understanding of the world around them. Scrutiny of photographs, the

display of children's art work and pictures created on the computer show that a visit to a farm enabled the children to look carefully at the different animals and to later design farm pictures on the computer using different programs for support. Their computer skills are satisfactory. They are developing eye and hand co-ordination through controlling the mouse when following programs. Information technology is successfully integrated into all the areas of learning.

74. The quality of teaching in this area is good. Very good relationships have been established between the staff. The teaching assistants are very able and make a valuable contribution to the children's learning by skilfully reinforcing their understanding and supporting them effectively. The stimulating displays support this area effectively. The teacher plans activities that develop and increase the children's skills, particularly of observation. Plans take account of the newly introduced 'Stepping Stones' and clearly set out appropriate learning intentions for lessons. The activities are well matched to the needs of the children and they are precisely explained and demonstrated. Resources are very well prepared prior to lessons.

Creative development

75. By the age of five, the children's creative development meets the required standard. Children have daily opportunities to express themselves by drawing, painting, engaging in imaginative play, using malleable materials such as play-dough, and sand and water-play. They produce pictures using a wide range of techniques, such as finger and hand printing and creating collage pictures by using a range of materials. They explore the shapes and patterns found inside different fruits and vegetables and print a design or pattern using various colours of paint, working carefully and accurately. Good progress is made in developing the children's social skills in sharing colours, manipulative skills in handling fruit and sponges, speaking and listening skills in talking about what they are doing and creative skills in exploring pattern and colour. In music, the children join in an action song with enthusiasm. They memorise the words of many nursery rhymes and songs. The children successfully join the other classes in the school for a weekly singing lesson and understand the dynamics of loud and quiet. They learn new songs quickly and with enjoyment and find out how sounds can be made in different ways, by using the body. Carefully selected music from other cultures enhances their knowledge and enables them to appreciate differences in the world, for example, when they listen to and talk about African music. The role play area of a 'Cafe' provides stimulating opportunities for the children to play co-operatively and develop their imaginations by enabling them to take on the various roles and jobs. In addition, the children make a variety of chairs and tables to furnish their model cafe building and design a vehicle to carry provisions to the cafe. Information technology is used to reinforce the children's creative development. For example, they use a 'Splosh' program competently in order to paint colours.
76. Overall, teaching is good in this area of learning. Creative development is well fostered through a wide variety of activities. Teachers and support staff are well organised and use stimulating resources which are thoroughly prepared. They constantly talk to the children and ask relevant questions to enlarge their vocabulary and support their efforts. Staff work closely together and make positive contributions to the children's learning. For example, they participate in role play situations and they help the children to select the most appropriate materials for their models. Assessment opportunities are an integral part of the planning. Resources are thoroughly prepared prior to lessons.

Physical development

77. By the age of five, the majority of children make good progress and reach the expected standards in their physical development. There are many planned experiences for them to control small tools so that by the time they are five, the majority of children are beginning to control and manipulate such objects as pencils, glue spreaders, paint brushes, construction apparatus, modelling tools and scissors competently and safely. A weekly physical education lesson in the hall further enhances the children's development, when they find different ways of travelling. They are keen and enthusiastic and react well to the teacher's high expectations of their behaviour and response. They move about with increasing confidence, listen to their heartbeat and begin to understand that exercise affects their bodies. Effective opportunities are planned for the children to watch each other and make simple evaluations of what they see. The safely organised outdoor play area provides a good range of equipment to develop the children's ability to control and co-ordinate their bodies and gives them an awareness of space. This is an improvement since the last inspection when no secure outdoor facility was available.
78. Overall, the quality of teaching is very good in this area. The teacher makes good provision for the children's physical development. Very good teaching is characterised by clear and precise exposition and instructions so that the children know what is expected of them. Lessons are very well planned and structured, including a clear development of skills. They take account of the newly introduced 'Stepping Stones' for the Foundation Year. Teaching assistants are well deployed and understand what is expected of them. The teacher has a secure understanding of how young children learn and provides a rich learning environment in which the children develop well physically. All staff have a very sensitive awareness of the children's safety.

ENGLISH

79. Pupils reach expected standards by the end of both key stages. Standards in writing have improved since the previous inspection.
80. In the 1999 national tests, results were average at the end of Key Stage 1 both in comparison to national standards and standards achieved in similar schools. The school's performance in the national tests has improved over the past three years from very low results in 1997. At the end of Key Stage 2, the proportion of pupils attaining the expected level was close to the national average. However when compared with similar schools, pupils' performance was below average. Test results fluctuate from year to year because of the small numbers of pupils in each cohort. The general trend in English tests at Key Stage 2 matches the national pattern and overall results are average. The unvalidated results for 2000 show that standards have been maintained. Inspection evidence reflects this picture but confirms an improvement in standards in writing which were below average at the time of the last inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils make sound progress both in lessons and over a longer period of time. Progress accelerates in Years 3 and 4, due largely to the good teaching and the positive impact of the literacy hour. The pace and momentum of learning levels out again in Years 5 and 6.
81. At Key Stage 1, pupils reach the required standard in their speaking and listening skills. They are becoming skilled in answering and asking questions during the literacy hour. They listen attentively to instructions, to stories and to the contributions of others. At Key Stage 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are in line with the expected standard and sometimes above. In all years, individual pupils speak confidently in school assemblies, in planned discussions and to adults. Pupils generate ideas during

brainstorming sessions, for example, in design and technology and geography lessons. Pupils listen considerately to each other's contributions, for example, in a music lesson when contrasting voice sounds with instruments, and they follow instructions well. Progress across both key stages is satisfactory overall. Many opportunities are planned to encourage pupils to increase their vocabulary and use of spoken English. For example, during a discussion in religious education, Year 2 pupils compared the similarities of two stories taken from different cultures and faiths, while pupils in Year 6 commented on and evaluated their own and others' work in design and technology, giving points to improve their designs. All teachers use appropriate subject terminology well to extend the pupils' knowledge and vocabulary. Pupils also review their work at the end of many lessons and this adds to their confidence and ability to express themselves clearly. Skills in listening are fostered through the work planned for the literacy hour and in other subjects such as geography, religious education and music.

82. Most pupils reach expected standards in reading across the school and a minority attain above average standards by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Most pupils read well enough to make sense of texts that are appropriate for their age and retell stories or the main points of non-fiction extracts. Younger pupils are beginning to build on a number of skills in order to read the text. Pupils in Year 2 use a variety of strategies to work out words they find difficult, such as sounding-out the letters and gaining clues from the illustrations. Lower-attaining pupils recognise some words in familiar text but are reluctant to try unknown words and wait for help. The majority of pupils have a sound knowledge of the structure of books and know about the contents page, the index and the difference between the author and the illustrator. Pupils across the range of attainment enjoy reading and have positive attitudes towards it. The majority of pupils in Key Stage 2 are enthusiastic about reading and appreciate opportunities to talk about what they have read. They explain how to use the library and how to look for information in books. In the literacy lesson, pupils in Years 3 and 4 show an understanding of what has been read and discuss, for example, the significance and power of words in the text and begin to develop character sketches. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils read longer texts silently and with good concentration. Most can name favourite authors and explain their preferences. They read an appropriate range of literature fluently and accurately, with good expression and understanding.
83. Raising attainment in writing is a school priority. The combination of well-structured literacy lessons, together with a whole school focus on improving skills and effective teaching, has had a positive effect on pupils' attainment in writing. Scrutiny of pupils' past work shows that the majority of pupils in Year 2 attain the expected standards. They write for a range of different purposes, sequence their ideas appropriately and use simple punctuation accurately, for example, higher-attaining pupils use capital letters and full stops correctly. They show an increasing understanding of exclamation and question marks and write more imaginative stories and make good progress in developing punctuation and spelling skills. Satisfactory progress is evident in a sample of pupils' past work.
84. Attainment in writing at the end of Key Stage 2 is in line with national expectations. Work is usually well presented, with most pupils being able to join their writing. Pupils are encouraged to concentrate on grammar, spelling and punctuation. For example, pupils of average attainment can use commas, inverted commas and the apostrophe correctly. Pupils use their skills for a suitable range of purposes, including letter-writing, collecting factual information and in writing book reviews. Although pupils

make use of their word processing skills to produce well presented pieces of work, they do not use them enough for drafting and redrafting work.

85. Pupils in both key stages are encouraged to apply the skills they have acquired in the literacy hour to their independent writing. Scrutiny of pupils' past work shows that across Key Stage 2 pupils have made satisfactory progress. They have learnt how to join letters correctly and their work is usually neat and carefully presented. Their writing is increasingly imaginative, with good use of similes to colour their language. For example, one pupil expressively wrote,

*“... I'm hungry for prey
Like a devil from the night
My rotating blade
As sharp as a knife...”*

The teaching of skills in literacy is good. These skills are used effectively in other subjects, particularly at Key Stage 2, for example, when writing accounts of science investigations; when designing and evaluating constructions in design and technology; writing poems to describe movements and when undertaking research work in art, history and religious education. At Key Stage 1 there are missed opportunities in science, history and geography to develop pupils' writing skills.

86. The school makes appropriate provision for pupils who have special educational needs and they make satisfactory progress when taking account of their previous learning. Teachers plan lessons so that these pupils have suitable work and adequate support whilst taking a full part in class activities. However, progress is inconsistent throughout the school year for a small minority of pupils who come from a traveller background.
87. The quality of teaching is predominantly good. It is always at least satisfactory with instances of very good teaching. This has a positive effect on pupils' attainment. Teachers have worked hard to implement literacy hour successfully. In the most effective lessons, teachers' good subject knowledge is shown in the use of correct technical vocabulary and the setting of challenging work which is carefully matched to pupils' differing capabilities. Teachers effectively use whole class sessions in the literacy hour to link all aspects of English and often include other subjects. Lesson introductions are used well to promote discussion and kindle pupils' interest. Skilful questioning and explanations ensure that pupils understand their work. Teachers plan thoroughly, lesson objectives are clear and skills are taught systematically. Praise is used well to show pupils that their work is valued and to encourage higher standards. Pupils' progress is monitored well, with assessment used by teachers to plan for pupils of different attainment. Targets are set for individual pupils that are clear and achievable. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Marking is generally thorough and conscientious. Often teachers act as an audience, writing comments on how they enjoyed pupils' writing. Written advice is given to pupils on how to improve their work, particularly in Key Stage 2. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Homework is set regularly which appropriately supports and reinforces pupils' learning in the classroom.
88. Pupils' attitudes to English are good and often very good, particularly in Year 3/4. Pupils approach writing tasks purposefully and take pride in their work. They listen attentively, answer questions sensibly and many sustain concentration and persevere until a task is completed. Behaviour is good and is based on the positive relationships amongst pupils and between adults and pupils.

89. The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator, who is influential in helping to improve standards. The co-ordinator monitors the subject effectively and has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses across the school. The careful approach to planning and monitoring has made a valuable contribution to maintaining standards. There are good assessment procedures and pupils' progress is monitored regularly. This information is carefully analysed to inform the teachers' future planning. Test results are analysed carefully to identify targets for improvement. This is a vast improvement since the last inspection. There is a bright and colourful library which is appropriately stocked. Resources for the subject are good: they are well organised, accessible and in good condition.

MATHEMATICS

90. Standards are average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. Although overall standards in the current Year 6 are in line with expected levels rather than above, pupils are achieving well, given their low starting points at the end of Key Stage 1. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
91. There has been an improvement in standards at Key Stage 1 since the previous inspection. Results in the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 were below the national average and in comparison to similar schools' results were also below average. However, these results represent an improvement on the very low results in the 1997 tests. Test results in 2000 show a further improvement and scrutiny of last year's work indicates that standards were average. Inspection evidence of the current Year 2 pupils also indicate that pupils' attainment is similar to that found nationally.
92. Test results at Key Stage 2 have been consistently better than at Key Stage 1. Overall performance in the three years to 1999 was above the national average and also above average compared to similar schools. Although no national comparative data for 2000 is available yet, the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level is above the 1999 national average. However, standards of work seen in the current Year 6 do not reflect these test results: attainment is similar to that typically expected. An analysis of the school's records indicates that most pupils made good progress from their Key Stage 1 results. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls.
93. Scrutiny of last year's work indicates that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' number skills are sound. Most pupils have a secure knowledge of numbers to at least 100 and know what each digit represents. They can do addition and subtraction with numbers to fifty. Pupils are beginning to understand multiplication as repeated addition and most pupils are developing a sound knowledge of the 2 and 5 times multiplication tables. They can solve simple problems with money and measures. They know the names and some of the properties of two-dimensional shapes and can read simple graphs. In lessons seen the current Year 2 pupils are working at expected levels. Many are challenged by the task of sequencing one and two digit numbers in descending and ascending order.
94. Scrutiny of last year's work indicates that by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' number skills are good. They use a variety of mental and written methods. Most pupils add and subtract decimals competently. They compare equivalent fractions and convert fractions to decimals and then percentages. Pupils classify shapes according to their angles and then measure different acute and obtuse angles using a protractor. Pupils

can calculate averages and have a sound knowledge of the properties of shape and angles. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have experienced a broad range of mathematical activities. Their work shows sound development of number strategies and investigations, and above average work on shape. They plot data and extract information from their block graphs but in general, work involved in handling data is unchallenging. In lessons seen, the current Year 6 pupils are working at expected levels. They can order six digit numbers in sequence and use appropriate strategies to round numbers to multiples of ten.

95. The previous inspection report identified a considerable proportion of unsatisfactory teaching. Since then the quality of teaching has improved significantly and the teaching of mathematics is now good at Key Stage 2 and satisfactory at Key Stage 1. When teaching is good, there is good pace, skilful questioning and management and challenging activities planned. Where teaching is less effective at Key Stage 1, it is because the pace of the lesson is slow and the plenary session is not used effectively to build on pupils' previous learning. The use of the numeracy strategy is having a positive impact on teachers' planning, classroom practice and pupils' progress. Teachers have a sound understanding of how to teach numeracy at both key stages. Lesson planning is good at Key Stage 2 and teachers generally ensure that pupils of all abilities work at appropriate tasks, though at Key Stage 1 planning for the higher attaining pupils does not always indicate sufficiently challenging activities. Learning objectives for lessons are clear and shared with pupils so they understand what is expected. This is a strength in the teaching. All lessons start with some mental or oral work. This is successful at Key Stage 2, because questioning is brisk and matches the needs of all the pupils. At Key Stage 1 questioning techniques are less successful and pupils can become restless. For example, in an otherwise satisfactory lesson, pupils took time to settle for the plenary session and the questioning used was not sharp enough or well focused on prior learning. The school provides support assistants for all numeracy lessons. All teachers make good use of this resource to reinforce pupils' learning, particularly with pupils with special educational needs.
96. The quality of pupils' learning at Key Stage 1 has improved since the previous inspection and pupils now make satisfactory progress. The quality of pupils' learning at Key Stage 2 is good, due to the effective implementation of the numeracy strategy and good teaching. Throughout both key stages, pupils' mental skills are being appropriately developed within numeracy lessons. The management of pupils is satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. Pupils have good attitudes to work and this contributes well to the quality of learning that takes place. Pupils enjoy mathematics lessons. Generally, pupils listen well to their teacher and at Key Stage 2 they work well with high levels of concentration. Equipment is used sensibly and pupils collect and distribute resources responsibly in lessons. Relationships between teachers and pupils are good.
97. Pupils with special educational needs make appropriate progress because work is carefully matched to their abilities. Children from traveller backgrounds are fully integrated into the classes, receive appropriate support where necessary and make appropriate gains in line with their prior attainment. There are good procedures for the ongoing assessment of attainment in mathematics, and this helps teachers to set work matched to pupils' abilities. Teachers offer feedback to pupils during teaching sessions, and in most lessons the plenary is used effectively to assess pupils understanding. Marking of work is satisfactory and, in one class, good because the teacher used the information from marking to provide short term targets for individual pupils. Homework is used effectively to support pupils' learning. Teachers' expectations on the presentation of work have improved since the last inspection and most pupils in Key Stage 2 present their work neatly. In both key stages teachers do

not plan sufficiently for pupils to use their numeracy skills to support other subjects, for example, pupils seldom record their results in both bar charts and line graphs. There is little evidence of the use of data handling in science or geography. Information technology is not used effectively to support pupils learning.

98. The management of the subject is sound as the co-ordinator provides effective support for her colleagues. She has led the school in the implementation of the numeracy strategy in providing model demonstration lessons. She observes colleagues teaching and provides appropriate feedback to teachers as a result of the monitoring exercise. She has a sound overview of standards at Key Stage 2 but less so in the early years. Curriculum provision has improved since the previous inspection. The curriculum is based on the numeracy strategy and is broad and balanced. There is sufficient emphasis on mental mathematics, problem solving and investigations and coverage of the other areas of mathematics is satisfactory with the exception of data handling. Assessment practices are good. The current arrangements for assessing pupils' progress are underpinned by an effective tracking system that is becoming well established. It requires some further development so that the school can build up a comprehensive picture of the individual progress of each pupil from entry. Governors are increasingly involved in monitoring standards and the system in place enables them to check the overall progress of each year group. Targets are set for each pupil and regularly reviewed. Teachers use assessment information well when planning their lessons in order to set work appropriately for pupils' needs. Resources are satisfactory and are well used in lessons and contribute well to the quality of pupils' learning experiences. Resources in information and communication technology are inadequate and the school is aware that this area requires attention. Display work in mathematics is good and links well with the current curriculum topics.

SCIENCE

99. Standards of attainment are in line with the national averages at the end of both key stages. Similar judgements were made at the time of the previous inspection.
100. The 1999 teacher assessments at Key Stage 1 indicated that pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding were above the national average and that their skills in investigative science were good. In the 1999 national tests at the end of Key Stage 2, results were above average. Although no national comparative data is yet available for 2000 the results show that pupils achieved well in tests. However, scrutiny of last year's work at both key stages shows weaknesses in the area of investigative science. The previous inspection also noted that pupils did not make sufficient progress in developing their experimental and investigative skills.
101. Scrutiny of last year's work indicates that by the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' scientific knowledge is sound. At Key Stage 1, visits to the school pond and other habitats help pupils develop a sound understanding of plant and animal life. They make simple drawings to show different features of minibeasts. They know some of the conditions necessary for living things to survive. They sort living things by simple features such as the number of legs. Pupils have a basic knowledge of electricity, magnetism, light and sound. Recording skills are variable. Pupils' observational skills are good and they produce good quality drawings, but they make limited use of tables and graphs to communicate their findings. There is very little evidence that pupils plan tests, make predictions, explain, give reasons, measure or record.
102. Scrutiny of last year's work indicates that by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' scientific knowledge is good. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have a good knowledge of many

aspects of science, for example, the properties of light and different types of forces. They write accounts of tests and investigations they have carried out, using appropriate scientific vocabulary. They can express themselves clearly, outlining how they conducted a systematic enquiry following teacher instructions and drawing appropriate conclusions. However, pupils do not design fair tests or systematically develop an idea from initial hypothesis to a sound conclusion. Their understanding of fair testing and their ability to distinguish between independent and dependent variables are not sufficiently developed. Inspection evidence of the current Year 6 pupils indicates that pupils' attainment is similar to that found nationally. However when compared to the standards that these pupils achieved at the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils have made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of scientific ideas, though not in their skills.

103. Teaching has improved since the previous inspection when it was judged unsatisfactory. The quality of teaching is now satisfactory across both key stages and is sometimes good. Lessons are well organised and the pupils are well managed; they are keen to learn and respond well to their teachers' efforts. Behaviour in lessons is good. Pace in most lessons is appropriate and often good. The teachers' subject knowledge is sound and there has been a significant improvement in the quality of teachers' lesson planning. Teaching is now supported by thorough and detailed planning. Learning intentions are clear and shared with the pupils. In the best lessons these are reviewed with pupils at the conclusion of lessons. Teachers make good use of assessment information to support future planning, though there is insufficient involvement of pupils in their own self-evaluation. Teachers keep continuous records of the pupils' progress. At Key Stage 2 there are sound opportunities for the development of writing skills as pupils produce good, descriptive writing but there are few opportunities for pupils to apply their number skills. Teachers do not make effective use of information technology to support learning. Although teachers provide opportunities for pupils to undertake investigations, these are very teacher directed. There are few opportunities for pupils to devise and conduct their own experiments.
104. Management of the subject is satisfactory. Curriculum planning has improved. There is a useful science policy and a scheme of work that supports teachers in their planning. However, the previous inspection report identified as a weakness the lack of clear guidance on expectations for each year group, particularly in terms of experimental and investigative science. This weakness remains. Assessment procedures have improved since the last inspection. The effective assessment procedures introduced last year provide an efficient way for teachers to monitor individual progress and are a useful tool to support short-term planning. The whole school tracking system is not yet as well developed for science as it is for English and mathematics. There are adequate resources and good use is made of the school's environmental area and local visits.

ART

105. The last inspection reported that pupils' attainment was generally sound. This standard has been maintained and is in line with national expectations.
106. There were no art lessons timetabled in Key Stage 1 because the subject is part of a rolling programme with design and technology. It was possible to observe only one class lesson in Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Other evidence has been taken from an analysis of pupils' previous art work on display and collected in a portfolio, teachers' planning and other documentation and discussion with the co-ordinator.

107. Examination of previous work shows that pupils are building on basic skills in art work and making good progress. For example, pupils in Year 1 have attempted to use pastel crayons for pattern making to experience a different medium, while pupils in Year 2 develop the use of this medium by carefully and skilfully drawing the inside of a piece of fruit, such as a pineapple. They are developing brush control through colour mixing. In Year 3, pupils use pastels to create a monster picture that is effectively linked to literacy, while pupils in Year 4 begin to layer different materials to produce an effect. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 paint a very atmospheric picture of a storm inspired by the style of a famous artist. They are also able to create an effective scene by using tones of one colour and then develop a skyline. Most of the other art work is composed of drawings, illustrations and diagrams to support different areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils in Year 6 have illustrated their design and technology work on 'movement' with different designs of windmills and rotary blades, while pupils in Year 2 have made collage pictures of scenes of a jungle story to support literacy. There are few examples of designing three-dimensional models and sculptures to show knowledge of shape, form and texture. However, scrutiny of photographs shows a few pupils working in the park on natural sculpture. Computer-aided art and design is under-developed, although there are graphic programs that are used in Key Stage 1.
108. In the lesson seen in Key Stage 2, the quality of teaching was good and had a positive impact on the pupils' learning, as was in evidence by the pupils' noticeable response to the teacher's clear exposition and good preparation of resources. The teacher creates a calm and purposeful atmosphere in which the pupils understand the established routines and clear expectations of behaviour. Pupils are given an appropriate amount of individual support whilst at the same time the teacher encourages them to be independent and to use their skill in, for example, making a skyline from the five painted backgrounds. Pupils respond well, showing real interest in their work. Overall judgements are not possible on the quality of teaching from this small sample.

109. The subject is well managed and skilfully co-ordinated. The co-ordinator has a clear vision for the development of the subject that includes, for example, developing an art portfolio to reflect continuity and progression across the eight points scale of level descriptors, planning the use of information technology to support the subject and developing assessment procedures. Such proposals have the potential to raise standards. The subject has an appropriate scheme of work. This is an improvement since the last inspection. There are some opportunities for the co-ordinator to monitor teaching and learning through scrutiny of planning, observing wall displays and feeding back to teachers. This is also an improvement since the last inspection when the co-ordinator did not have any opportunities to monitor the subject. Resources to support the subject are accessible and of good quality.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. At the end of both key stages, standards of attainment are in line with those expected of pupils of similar ages. This is a different judgement from the last inspection, when pupils were attaining below national expectations. Pupils' progress in design and technology, including those pupils who have special educational needs, is satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Key Stage 2. This has greatly improved since the last inspection when the rate of pupils' progress was judged to be unsatisfactory across the school. Inspection judgements are based upon observations of lessons at the end of both key stages, the scrutiny of photographs of pupils' past work, the work on display in the classrooms, discussion with the co-ordinator and the examination of teachers' planning. The subject is taught in half-termly rotation with art.
111. The weaknesses identified in the last inspection report have been tackled successfully. The subject now meets statutory requirements, skills are appropriately built upon from year to year, activities are thoroughly planned, appropriate assessment opportunities are in place and resources are adequate and well organised.
112. Pupils in Year 1 build successfully on good learning in the Early Years curriculum. Scrutiny of photographs show that pupils in Years 1 and 2 have drawn and made designs of homes for the three little pigs. They work with an appropriate range of materials to acquire skills such as cutting, shaping and joining. Pupils make simple evaluations of these designs. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make good progress in making a chassis frame for a trailer to carry corn. Suitably planned occasions are provided for the pupils to use tool, such as hammers and saws, and they do so with satisfactory accuracy. Pupils have useful opportunities to learn how to attach a wheel to an axle. A farm visit and the visit of a pony and trap enhanced the curriculum and supported the pupils' understanding of wheels and axles. They learn to identify the different kinds of fabrics, such as embroidered, woven, printed and appliquéd. In Years 3 and 4, pupils design and make a class pop-up book using letters of the alphabet, specifically designed for younger children to use. Pupils design a stand-up photo frame to practise and refine their designing and cutting skills. One pupil's evaluation of this task was, "I was confused at first, but I did it." Pupils in Year 6 understand that a designer needs to consider a number of elements before manufacturing his product. Good use is made of subject terminology, such as appearance, cost, construction, function, comfort and safety, to extend the pupils' vocabulary. Scrutiny of pupils' past work shows that by the end of Key Stage 2, these skills have been further developed. For example, pupils designed a windmill, a merry-go-round, trucks and cars, with the introduction of batteries to operate the blades or moveable parts. The process shows that the pupils were expected to produce ideas and draw designs, identify materials to make their toys and write an evaluation on

completion of the project. To raise pupils' awareness of safety, letters were sent initially to the Toy Safety Standards Officer to find out procedures. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated in the lessons and made progress similar to their peers. There are no examples of using computers in the design process.

113. Pupils' attitudes to the subject are good. They are well behaved and keen to talk about their work. In Year 2, for example, they are proud of their patterns for Joseph's coat of many colours, while in Year 6, the pupils are suitably encouraged to make quick observational sketches of a slipper; to consider who it is for and what materials have been used. Pupils remain focused on the task and work with purpose.
114. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and good at Key Stage 2. This is a great improvement since the last inspection, when teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory overall. Strengths include very clear and detailed planning with appropriate stages of development to build on pupils' design skills, very good relationships with pupils, secure knowledge and understanding of the subject, clear explanations and skilful questions to check the pupils' understanding, good management and control of the classroom, good use of time and the use of well prepared and stimulating resources.
115. The co-ordinator provides strong leadership of the subject. She monitors the subject through lesson observations, informal discussions with staff, collection of samples of pupils' work and examination of teachers' planning. The subject has had a high profile for development since the last inspection. Planned training courses have been arranged to help the teachers to gain confidence and become secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. The school has adopted a nationally recognised scheme of work to support the teachers' planning and ensure continuity and progression.

HUMANITIES – GEOGRAPHY & HISTORY

116. The school has maintained standards since the previous inspection and pupils' achievements are satisfactory in the lessons seen. Pupils' books from last year show that they have made satisfactory progress in acquiring the expected levels of historical and geographical knowledge. However, the development of skills in both subjects is less secure.
117. No history lessons were observed during the inspection, because history is not taught in the first half-term. Judgements on history are based on a scrutiny of pupils' work completed last year and discussions with pupils. At Key Stage 1, pupils' books show that they have a sound sense of the past. They look at how children played in past times, comparing how things change over time, for example, farm equipment and houses. They make comparisons between then and now. Generally their work consists of annotated drawings, but there are some sound examples of pupils' writing on historical topics. They also did a history walk around the village looking at how houses change, and visited the local church. At Key Stage 2, pupils study a range of topics including the Vikings, Victorians and World War 2. Their books show some sound examples of individual research and are often well presented. Younger pupils have a satisfactory understanding of aspects of the Viking way of life and are developing a sense of chronology through the use of timelines. Older pupils undertake a mixture of whole-class topics and individual research. Their knowledge and understanding is satisfactory, though their historical skills, for example, in using historical artefacts, are not sufficiently developed. Pupils' knowledge of local history is good.

118. In geography at Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge of local farming and there is some development of map skills. They draw routes and plans and can mark the location of physical and human features. Pupils in both years do similar work which generally consists of labelled drawings. There are very few examples of writing in their books. At Key Stage 2, pupils' achievements are satisfactory and their understanding of environmental issues is appropriate for their ages. They can express their opinions with confidence. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 understand the concept of pollution, can give examples of different kinds of pollution and give suggestions to improve their environment. The development of pupils' map skills is satisfactory; pupils draw plans of their classrooms and bedrooms and maps of the local area showing appropriate features with satisfactory use of map keys. In Years 5 and 6, pupils use maps to locate places and extract relevant geographical information. They recognise and make accurate observations about physical and human features of places. They use Ordnance Survey symbols and locate features on maps, confidently using four figure grid references.
119. Teaching of history is satisfactory. Teachers plan a sound range of activities to consolidate pupils' understanding of change, for example, at Key Stage 1 pupils consider how forms of transport have changed. Teachers' planning ensures a broad range of activities. There are some effective cross-curricular links, for example, in their work on Vikings, pupils made shields, helmets and swords. Planning is less effective in building upon pupils' history skills, and at Key Stage 1, developing their writing skills. Pupils in mixed aged classes generally follow the same work and there is insufficient challenge for the more able. At Key Stage 2 there are sound opportunities for pupils to undertake individual research and develop their research skills. There is little evidence that teachers use information technology to support pupils learning in history at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 there are limited opportunities to use word processing with infrequent use of CD-Roms. Teachers make good use of local visits to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding.
120. Teaching of geography is satisfactory and lesson planning is satisfactory. There is a specific geographical focus to lessons and teachers make the objectives of lessons clear to pupils. However, there are some shortcomings in planning. Pupils in mixed aged classes generally follow the same work so sometimes there is insufficient challenge for the more able. There are insufficient opportunities for promoting information technology and numeracy skills. Teachers use resources effectively to stimulate pupils. In one lesson the teacher made good use of local maps and focused questions to help pupils appreciate some of the issues involved in proposals for local road improvement. Pupils worked well in their groups to identify on maps those features likely to be affected by the A120 road improvement. Pupils made sound contributions to discussions and, as a result, made gains in their knowledge and understanding. Where the teacher is clear on what pupils are likely to achieve and has chosen relevant resources, pupils' learning is good. In one lesson at Key Stage 2 the teacher's high expectations, clarity of purpose and stimulating questioning had all the class eager to answer questions on sources of pollution, and to make suggestions to improve the environment. Teachers' management of their classes is good so pupils behave well and are enthusiastic and maintain good levels of concentration.
121. Both co-ordinators are enthusiastic advocates for their subject. Although both subjects have a low profile in terms of school development, improvement in provision since the previous inspection is satisfactory. Assessment and planning are better, especially in the sharpness of lesson planning. There are detailed schemes of work for both subjects which provide a broad range of learning opportunities, but planning does not take sufficient account of the mixed-age composition classes. The school has not

identified the opportunities the subjects offer for the development of literacy, numeracy or information technology skills. Pupils' learning is enhanced by visits to places of interest such as Walton on the Naze and by visitors to the school. These include the Year 6 residential trip to the Isle of Wight. The school benefits from its location, as the village is a valuable source of geographical and historical interest.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

122. The standards achieved in information technology are below nationally expected levels and have not improved significantly since the time of the last inspection.
123. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are below the level expected for their ages. They have basic mouse skills and are able to point and click, and can perform some functions on the keyboard such as typing simple words, using the spacebar, shift and delete keys. With help, they can save and print their work. In most cases, they are unable to retrieve, process or display information on a computer. There is little evidence of information technology being used in displays or as part of other curriculum areas. Little or no evidence was found of control or modelling work as required by the national curriculum, although other evidence suggests Year 2 pupils have programmed a floor turtle. However, none could say what they did with it!
124. Although some pupils have computers at home, they get insufficient exposure to computers at school. This renders them unable to explore the use of computer systems in everyday life or to discuss their experiences of using information technology. As they move up the school they make slow and insufficient progress. The gap between their knowledge and understanding and the levels required mean that that by the end of Key Stage 2 they are well below the expected level for their age. At this age they are confident in very limited areas: most can use the mouse to point, click, drag and drop; they can manage the basic keyboard functions and know how to word process adequately, changing formats, reducing and enlarging fonts and altering page layout. They are unable to organise, analyse and classify information satisfactorily, or select and interpret it, because they have not had enough experience in doing so. There is little evidence of information technology being used to produce displays or as part of other curriculum areas. Pupils are unable to load a CD-ROM without help, but can use one that has been set up for them. There is little evidence of control or modelling work, though some have distant memories of programming a floor turtle. They are, however, unable to use the equivalent software to program a screen turtle. The national curriculum requires the ability to reflect critically on the use of information technology, but by the age of eleven pupils have had insufficient exposure to allow them to organise, analyse and classify information or to use information technology to solve problems, assess its value or consider the effect of its use in an informed way.
125. Little direct teaching of information technology was observed during the inspection, but scrutiny of teachers' planning files reveals a variable picture. An overview of the place of computers across the curriculum has been produced but is not yet being utilised fully. In the best case, the use of information technology had been identified and added to every area on the curriculum plan. However, opportunities to fully utilise what is currently available are being missed. A combination of teachers' own lack of knowledge and therefore confidence, and limited, outdated computers means that information technology does not play a full part in teaching and learning across the curriculum. Pupils always demonstrate good attitudes to work when dealing with computers. They enjoy the activity, co-operate well and treat the equipment with respect.

126. The school is fully aware of the limitations imposed by the computers which are outdated, limited in number and, in some cases, incompatible with each other. However, even this limited equipment is not always being used to its full potential, as shown both by the lack of evidence of work produced by individual pupils and by the variable use of information technology observed during the inspection. Assessment procedures are underdeveloped and the information from monitoring pupils' progress is not included in the schools' tracking system. The co-ordinator, newly in post, has a sound management plan for the subject based on individualised staff training to run in tandem with the arrival of the new computer suite. Once staff knowledge and competence has been improved, monitoring of teaching will take place. There is a significant need among the staff for knowledge and skills to be upgraded, which has a consequent effect on standards attained by pupils.

MUSIC

127. It was possible to observe only one music lesson in Year 3/4 during the inspection due to the constraints of the timetable. Instrumental lessons have not commenced for the autumn term. Further evidence has been gleaned from scrutiny of photographs of past performances, concerts and celebrations, an end of term report on music by the previous co-ordinator, an interview with the current co-ordinator and an observation of an assembly singing practice.
128. Music provision is good and pupils gain a number of different experiences as they move through the school. Many opportunities are provided to develop the pupils' performance skills, for example, concerts shared with parents and other schools and class assemblies where instruments are often used to produce the right atmosphere or background to a theme. Listening and appraising skills are appropriately developed in singing practice and through assemblies, where many pieces of music are chosen to reflect the multicultural aspects within the curriculum. However, there is insufficient evidence to judge the overall quality of teaching or the progress pupils are making.
129. The majority of pupils sing tunefully and maintain the rhythm of the songs as was seen in the whole-school singing practice. Older pupils learn the words of the songs quickly, while younger pupils need support. Teaching here provides the pupils with a very good role model, strong and confident. In the observed class lesson, the teaching was good. The lesson was well planned, stimulating and motivated the pupils to explore contrasting sounds. The pupils are very responsive, keen to learn and sustain concentration throughout the lesson. In both lessons the pupils made good progress, including those pupils who have special educational needs.
130. The subject is suitably managed by a newly appointed co-ordinator. The school follows a recognised published scheme of work. Pupils take part in performances at Christmas and at the end of the school year. Specialist music tuition is provided for pupils to learn to play the violin, guitar, flute, clarinet and piano at Key Stage 2. Recorders are taught in class and there is a weekly recorder club for older pupils at lunch time. The work of these extra musical activities greatly enhance the music curriculum. Resources are good and are kept centrally in the small hall. Information technology is not currently used to support the curriculum, but planned opportunities have been identified when the new computer suite is set up.
131. The school has maintained the quality of provision since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection and are broadly at expected levels at both key stages.
133. At Key Stage 1, standards in the observed lessons were broadly in line with those expected for pupils of this age. Year 1 pupils listen and follow instructions sensibly as they find different ways of travelling. They stretch, curl and make animal shapes and are beginning to put movements together in a simple sequence. They show varying degrees of ability in controlling their movements with some pupils unable to change direction confidently or avoid others when moving. Year 2 pupils use space appropriately and show sound control and co-ordination in their movements, but their movements are simple and lack challenge. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 practice skills at sending and receiving balls with varying degrees of accuracy. Years 5 and 6 pupils practice basic gymnastic movements creating their own simple sequences. Pupils of all ages understand the importance of exercise and warm up.
134. All pupils have an opportunity to swim. The school has its own pool which enables it to offer swimming lessons to the younger pupils, while older pupils travel to a larger pool. Pupils make satisfactory progress and most meet the target to swim 25 metres by the time they leave the school. Extra-curricular activities enhance the provision for physical education and the school takes part in competitive games with other schools in football, netball and athletics. Local football professionals provide coaching for pupils in Key Stage 2.
135. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lesson planning has improved since the previous inspection and teachers now plan lessons with greater clarity. Sound demonstrations give pupils a clear idea of what is expected. The quality of learning has improved since the previous inspection, when a minority of pupils showed some inattentiveness and inappropriate behaviour in observed lessons. Teachers have appropriate expectations of pupils in terms of behaviour and the pace of their learning, so pupils stay well on task and show sound levels of application and concentration. In all lessons pupils' behaviour is at least satisfactory and often good. All lessons are appropriately organised and conducted at a sound pace. Teachers make the appropriate teaching points during lessons but do not provide sufficient opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own or others' performances.

136. Physical education is not a current school priority so the school has not allocated time for the co-ordinator to monitor the effectiveness of planning and teaching. However, teachers know their own pupils well through informal ongoing assessment. The new headteacher has assumed responsibility as the subject co-ordinator and has a clear idea of what is needed to further improve provision. While the curriculum is broad, there is insufficient focus on the development of skills. Facilities for physical education are good. The subject contributes positively to pupils' social and personal development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. Pupils at the end of both key stages meet the requirements of the locally Agreed Syllabus. This has been maintained since the last inspection. Pupils develop a sound knowledge of the practices of major world religions with an appropriate emphasis given to the study of Christianity. Pupils of all ages, including those who have special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in religious, moral and social understanding. Judgements have also been based on additional evidence from discussion with staff and scrutiny of photographs of religious events and visits. The weaknesses highlighted in the previous report have been addressed. The provision for religious education has improved considerably. It now has a suitable framework for planning within the school.
138. Pupils' work reflects satisfactory progress in developing positive attitudes towards relationships and values through discussions about friendships and school rules. They are acquiring a suitable understanding of similarities and differences among religions. Year 2 pupils are beginning to understand the Christian principle of love after a sensitive discussion following the telling of the story of 'The Lost Sheep', comparing this with a Buddhist story. In Years 3 and 4, pupils are beginning to understand that certain places are special to each of us. For example, one pupil said, "School is special because my friends are there." Year 6 pupils are effectively learning about the different kinds of writing found in the Bible, for example, history, law, teaching, poetry, prophecy and letters. They are learning the order of the books and how to access information by finding a chapter and verse. The curriculum is further enhanced by visits to the local church, for example, all classes take part in Harvest and Christmas services. The local vicar and lay-reader visit the school weekly to participate in the assemblies.
139. The majority of pupils are well behaved and attentive when they listen well to the story telling. Pupils usually show respect for other people's belief and culture, for example, when pupils in Years 3/4 discussed the altar set up in the home of a Hindu family. Most pupils are willing to answer questions and offer opinions, when, for instance, pupils in Years 5/6 shared information about stories of Zacchaeus, Moses and Joseph recorded in different passages in the Bible. Several pupils made thoughtful contributions. Relationships with teachers are good.
140. Overall, the quality of teaching is good and never less than satisfactory. In good lessons, class activities are well matched to pupils' different levels of ability, thus providing challenge and high expectations. All teachers have sound subject knowledge that is effectively communicated to pupils and increases understanding. They interact well with pupils and make good use of questioning to encourage them to develop their thoughts and to keep focused and interested in what is being discussed. Collective worship and lessons on personal, social and health education help reinforce pupils' understanding and contribute to their spiritual, social and moral development. These

make a satisfactory contribution to religious education. Pupils' individual needs are met and the teachers' caring approach builds up pupils' confidence and self esteem. The teaching of religious education makes good contributions to pupils' literacy skills. Recording of information in lessons often involves sequencing events in a story for younger pupils, while older pupils are encouraged to record their knowledge through writing their own accounts. Effective opportunities are provided to extend pupils' understanding of world faiths through drama and role-play.

141. The subject is ably co-ordinated. Teachers plan their work appropriately from the themes suggested in the locally Agreed Syllabus using additional guidance for planning individual lessons contributed by the religious education adviser. This ensures that planning builds on pupils' learning systematically as they move from year to year. Suitable opportunities are provided for assessment and recording of pupils' progress which are included in both the teachers' daily and half-termly planning. This is a great improvement since the last inspection when there was no effective system for assessing pupils' attainment or recording the progress they make in the subject. The school is adequately resourced with books and artefacts from different religious cultures. At present there are no information technology opportunities planned into the curriculum.