

INSPECTION REPORT

ROLPH CofE PRIMARY SCHOOL

Thorpe-le-Soken, Clacton-on-Sea

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115248

Headteacher: Mrs Nicola Biddall

Reporting inspector: David Speakman
20086

Dates of inspection: 10 – 12 June 2002

Inspection number: 245320

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: High Street
Thorpe-le-Soken
Clacton-on-Sea
Essex

Postcode: CO16 0DY

Telephone number: 01255 861317

Fax number: 01255 861033

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Fr Paul Carter

Date of previous inspection: 16 March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20086	David Speakman	Registered inspector	Mathematics	<p>What sort of school is it?</p> <p>The school's results and pupils' achievements</p> <p>How well are pupils taught?</p> <p>How well is the school led and managed?</p> <p>What should the school do to improve further?</p>
19374	Wendy Sheehan	Lay inspector		<p>How well does the school care for its pupils?</p> <p>How well does the school work in partnership with parents?</p>
22452	Mary Farman	Team inspector	<p>Science</p> <p>Information and communication technology</p> <p>Music</p> <p>Equal opportunities</p>	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development
31029	Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	<p>English</p> <p>Art and design</p> <p>History</p> <p>Provision for pupils with special educational needs</p>	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
8839	Mike Egerton	Team inspector	<p>Design and technology</p> <p>Geography</p> <p>Physical education</p> <p>Foundation Stage</p>	

The inspection contractor was:

HeadStart & Associates

Higherland Bridge
49 West Street
Gargrave
Skipton
North Yorkshire
BD23 3RJ

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Rolph CofE Primary School caters for boys and girls aged between four and 11 years. The school is situated in Thorpe-le-Soken, a small village close to Clacton, Essex. It has 199 pupils on roll and is about the same size as other primary schools. Only about half of the pupils come from the village, with the others coming from other surrounding areas, seeking a village schooling or an education with a Christian foundation. The school admits up to 30 pupils each year, but some year groups are over subscribed and have up to 32 pupils. Twenty four per cent of pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs, which is above average. There are two pupils with a statement of special educational need. Most of the special needs relate to learning difficulties, but the school also caters for pupils with emotional and behavioural problems, and autism. There are four pupils of dual heritage, all of whom speak English as their first language. The remaining pupils of statutory school age come from a white UK background. The proportion of children known to be eligible for free school meals is, at seven per cent, below average. The socio economic circumstances from which the pupils come are average. Attainment on entry to the reception class has been below average for some years, but the children currently in reception entered with attainment at the level expected for children of their age. There have been significant staff changes in the time since the last inspection. The headteacher has recently taken up post and three other teachers are new to the school. This is half of the teaching staff.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. It provides good quality education and enables pupils to achieve well. Starting from a below average baseline, pupils make good progress and current Year 6 pupils are attaining standards that are in line with those expected for their age. The quality of teaching is good. Pupils are taught to develop very good attitudes to their learning and relationships between pupils and adults are very good. Pupils' behaviour is very good. Leadership and management of the school are good. The curriculum is satisfactory and there has been a satisfactory level of improvement since the last inspection. Taking account of the above average cost of educating each pupil, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards in mathematics, science, information and communication technology and physical education are above national expectations.
- The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs is good.
- The quality of teaching is good.
- Leadership and management are good.
- Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral and social development is very good and supports pupils' very good attitudes and relationships.
- The school takes good care of its pupils. Assessment procedures are good and pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored effectively.

What could be improved

- Setting challenging levels of work for all groups of pupils.
- Presentation of pupils' work and its marking.
- Provision for pupils' multicultural awareness.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has shown a satisfactory level of improvement since it was last inspected in March 1998. Standards in core subjects have generally kept pace with the national rate of improvement. Standards and provision in information and communication technology have improved. These are now all above those expected for pupils of this age. In the Foundation Stage, achievement in children's personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematics is better. The quality of teaching has improved. At the time of the previous inspection, 11 per cent of teaching was unsatisfactory. During this inspection, all teaching was at least satisfactory and most was good. The good quality of leadership and management has been maintained. The governing body has made satisfactory progress towards addressing the key issues raised at the time of the previous inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
English	B	C	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	D	C	D	
Science	C	C	B	C	

By the time children reach the end of the Foundation Stage, standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematics and personal, social and emotional development are above those expected for pupils of this age. The majority of pupils are well on course to meet the Early Learning Goals for children of this age in their creative development, physical development and the knowledge and understanding of the world. In the National Curriculum assessment tests in 2001, seven year old pupils achieved average standards in reading, above average standards in writing and well above average in mathematics when compared to all schools. When compared to schools with a similar proportion of children receiving free school meals, standards were well below average in reading, below average in writing and above in mathematics. Inspection evidence shows current standards for 11 year olds in English are average and in mathematics and science are above average. They are above national expectations in information and communication technology and physical education. Standards are as expected in all other subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school and learning are very good and make positive contributions to the standards pupils achieve. Pupils show high levels of interest and enjoyment in their work and, when given the opportunity to participate actively in their learning, they respond sensibly and with care.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is very good. They behave very well in class, around the school and on the playground at break times.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school amongst pupils and between adults and children are very good. Pupils' personal development is good. When pupils are given responsibilities they perform them to the best of their ability.

Attendance	Satisfactory.
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TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good, and promotes the good quality of learning. No teaching was seen during the inspection that was less than satisfactory. In two thirds of lessons seen during the inspection, the quality of teaching was good or better. There is no variation in the quality of teaching between infant classes, junior classes and the Foundation Stage. Teachers manage pupils well and mostly achieve very good standards of behaviour in their classes. Basic skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are taught effectively. Teaching assistants provide good quality support and are very effective in helping pupils make good progress. Teachers have realistically high expectations of pupils' behaviour and work. However some teachers do not demand sufficiently high standards in pupils' presentation of their work or of the attainment of some groups of pupils, particularly those of potentially higher attainment.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of opportunities for learning provided by the school are satisfactory. The school organises a good range of visits and visitors, which adds richness to the curriculum. The school makes good provision for the equality of pupils' access to the whole curriculum, with the staff making sure that no pupils miss their entitlement if they are working out of class. A good range of extra-curricular activities is provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Clear procedures are in place to support the identification and assessment of pupils. Individual education plans are carefully and thoughtfully prepared, and are of a very good quality. The targets clearly identify the main priorities and teaching and assessment procedures are very carefully arranged.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	This is very good. It is very good for their spiritual, moral and social development. Good provision is made for pupils to appreciate their own culture, but it is only satisfactory in the development of their knowledge and understanding of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school shows good levels of care for its pupils. The arrangements for the welfare, health and safety of all its pupils are good, and for the day to day personal support and guidance for pupils. Good assessment procedures are used satisfactorily in planning the work for pupils at different levels of attainment.

Parents' and carers' views of the school are good. They like the school and what it provides for their children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	This is good. The recently appointed headteacher already works effectively with her senior managers, and together they are establishing a clear vision regarding the next phase in the development of the school. This is clearly communicated to, and shared by, all members of staff. The work of subject managers is satisfactory.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have very good levels of involvement in the school. They are conscientious, well organised and fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher, key staff and governors are working well together to identify the school's strengths and areas for future development. The new headteacher is beginning to monitor teaching effectively, and has already made a good analysis of the quality of learning and standards.
The strategic use of resources	The financial management of the school is very good. The school takes great care to ensure that spending is targeted well and linked to priorities in the School Improvement Plan. Close monitoring of spending decisions reflects the careful consideration given to the impact of financial commitments on standards.

At the time of the inspection the headteacher had been in post for eight weeks. In this short time she is already showing a strong commitment to school improvement and good leadership and management qualities. The deputy headteacher works closely with her and supports her very well, together with other senior management team members. The governors have a very good understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and work effectively to support the headteacher and her staff in their work. Good attention is given to ensuring that the best value for spending is achieved.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children like school • The teaching is good, pupils are expected to work hard and are making good progress • The school is well led and managed • Behaviour of pupils in school • The school is helping their children become mature and responsible • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extra curricular activities • Homework • Information on how their children are getting on

The inspection team agrees with the parents' positive views on the school. However, they feel that the provision for extra curricular activities is good. Homework is used satisfactorily to support pupils' work. The team feels the information parents receive is satisfactory.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 In the National Curriculum tests in 2001, results for seven year olds in reading were average, above average in writing and well above in mathematics. Results in reading, writing and mathematics have improved at about the same rate as the national trend of improvement since the last inspection. When compared to similar schools, results in 2001 were below average in reading and below average in writing and above in mathematics. This is because fewer pupils achieved the higher levels in reading and writing, whereas the proportion achieving the higher levels in mathematics was above the national average.
- 2 The results for 11 year olds, when compared to schools nationally were average in English and mathematics and above average in science. These pupils have made satisfactory progress in English and mathematics, and good progress in science through the junior classes. When compared to schools with a similarly low proportion of free school meals, results were below average in English and mathematics and average in science. Again this is because only an average proportion of pupils achieved the higher Level 5 in English and mathematics, whereas more than the national average reached the higher level in science. The overall rate of improvement has been similar to the national trend in mathematics and science. Trends in English have not matched the national rate of improvement since 1998. The school achieved its Year 6 targets in both mathematics and English. For 2002, targets in English remain the same, but have been increased in mathematics and the current Year 6 pupils are set to achieve these.
- 3 There is evidence to show that, for some time now, children have entered the Foundation Stage with attainment that is below that expected for pupils of this age, but the current reception children entered school with attainment as expected for this age. Children make good progress in the reception class and most achieve the Early Learning Goals in all areas of learning by the time they start in Year 1 classes. The majority of pupils in the reception class are set to exceed the Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage in their personal, social and emotional development. In communication, language and literacy they are expected to exceed the goals in speaking and listening, and some also in reading and writing. A significant number will exceed the goals in mathematics.
- 4 Children in reception become used to taking responsibility, such as at snack time and during the inspection children in the class were confidently running the whole activity. They have very positive attitudes to their learning. They are confident and very happy to talk about their work. Children understand themselves and each other well and learn to work together as a group. Speaking and listening is a particular strength of children's communication, language and literacy skills. Children listen very attentively and are confident speakers. They read shared text with adults and begin to put expression into the words. They are developing a keen interest in reading. Writing skills are developing very well. Many children are able to write simple sentences to describe pictures. Letter shapes are well formed and children understand the need for correct spelling. Through a good range of high quality games, structured activities and lessons, children learn how to count up to 20, and use numbers accurately when, for example, they recognise coins and sort and match objects and numbers. Children use correct mathematical language well when answering questions or describing what they are doing. They understand how to compare length and, for example, place caterpillars in order of size, developing a secure understanding of the word 'bigger' when they are measuring. They understand the importance of accurate measuring.
- 5 Whilst developing their knowledge and understanding of the world, children gain a wealth of understanding about themselves and their bodies. They learn about the skeleton, the part that their heart plays in keeping them alive and about keeping healthy through having good food to eat and avoiding things that harm us. They are beginning to have a clear understanding of past and present and how things have changed over time. They study the weather and the effect it has on people

and how we have to begin to wear different clothes. Their physical development progresses well and by the time they enter Year 1 they are confident in manipulating scissors, paint brushes and glue sticks and control pencils well when writing. In physical education, children are learning satisfactory levels of control when rolling, jumping and moving on different parts of their bodies. In their creative work children are confident in using paint to produce lively and colourful self portraits. They explore pattern and colour and experience using different shapes for printing. When producing collage work, they use a range of materials that are appropriate for the task and produce effective artwork. Children enjoy singing and are developing a good repertoire of songs, which they sing with enthusiasm.

- 6 The inspection findings for this year's pupils in Year 2 indicate that attainment in English is average but that it is above average in mathematics and science. It is in line with expectations for pupils of this age in all other subjects, except in information and communication technology and physical education, where standards are above those expected for pupils of this age. Overall, the standard of work seen in Year 2 classes is above average and their achievement is good. By the time pupils are 11 their attainment in English remains average and in mathematics and science is above average. Standards in information and communication technology and physical education are above expectations for pupils of this age and in line in other subjects. This is an improvement on judgements made in science and information and communication technology on those at the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be average at the end of Year 6. Overall standards by the end of Year 6 are above average and pupils' achievement between the ages of seven and 11 is good, but higher attaining pupils could achieve better.
- 7 There is currently no variation of attainment between boys and girls, although results have varied in the past, with boys performing better than girls in the National Curriculum tests of attainment. Pupils that the school identifies as having special educational needs achieve standards that meet the agreed targets on their individual education plans. Most pupils make good progress in learning even though many achieve below average standards for their age.
- 8 Attainment in speaking and listening is good. The great majority of pupils listens to teachers with understanding and respond well, using spoken language with increasing confidence. By Year 2, the higher and average readers read simple texts fluently and with reasonable accuracy. Pupils develop good word building skills and recognise many basic, irregular words. They have a satisfactory knowledge of books and are aware that non fiction books have a contents page and an index that is set out in alphabetical order. By the age of 11 above average and average pupils read from a satisfactory range of books. Although they develop a preference for authors and types of book, their enthusiasm for reading is not particularly strong. Most pupils develop satisfactory advanced reading skills such as carrying out research, skimming text for information and they know the best research comes from using and comparing different sources. Lower attaining readers do not talk so confidently about the books they have read, and tend to lack expression and fluency in reading as they struggle with harder words. By the age of seven pupils are starting to write for a range of purposes, including stories, instructions, poems and labelling diagrams. High and average attaining pupils develop their ideas in a sequence of well formed and often descriptive simple sentences. They know basic punctuation rules and use capital letters, full stops and question marks accurately. Some are beginning to use speech marks. By the age of 11 many pupils sustain interesting ideas in their writing and choose words for effect, adding interest and style to their writing.
- 9 All pupils have a secure understanding of number and use this knowledge and understanding to solve a range of problems correctly. When working out the answers to these questions they explain the good mental strategies used. They have a good knowledge of shapes, knowing names and basic properties of common two and three dimensional shapes. Pupils work competently with symmetrical shapes and have a good understanding of line symmetry at levels normally expected of older pupils. By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of number remains good, including that of fractions, percentages and decimals. They apply these to good effect when they work out the answers to everyday problems. Pupils are good at investigating number situations. They look at patterns of numbers and make suggestions such as all square numbers are the sum of odd numbers. They test their hypotheses effectively. Most pupils have a thorough

understanding of shape and angle and use this well when, for example, accurately drawing a range of shapes such as regular octagons. Pupils handle data well and process samples of data to produce frequency diagrams. Pupils also read and interpret graphs well. Standards of numeracy in other subjects are good.

- 10 In science, Year 2 pupils of all abilities have a good early understanding of how to make and test predictions. They show an increasing awareness about the process of physical change and they understand the impact that a healthy diet has on their development. Pupils of all levels of attainment have a suitable understanding of different materials and use accurate scientific vocabulary as they sort materials into natural and manufactured, for example. Pupils understand about the change of state and that heat permanently changes some materials such as jelly, and some go back to their original state when cooled. The pupils continue to achieve well as they move through the junior classes. Older pupils develop their understanding of health further and they know the effect that smoking has on their lungs and understand the meaning of addiction. For example, pupils in Year 6 know and understand the differences and properties of solids, liquids and gases. They produce clear diagrams of how particles move and understand the principles of magnetic force. This is work that is expected of older pupils.
- 11 Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of the uses and applications of information and communication technology and have developed good computer skills. They use sensing devices well to monitor environmental changes, such as temperature. All pupils present their findings in graph form and draw conclusions. Pupils understand how to use the word processing program to edit their writing and change the way it looks. They make the presentation of their writing more effective by putting in a picture with the writing. Year 6 pupils work confidently together to solve problems and to compose and send emails. By Year 6 most pupils have a good understanding of the internet and use it for effective research to support work in other subjects.
- 12 Standards in physical education are a strong feature of the school. Younger pupils have good throwing and catching skills. They coordinate their movements well and have a good awareness of how to use the space. Older pupils develop quite sophisticated sequences of movements. Pupils understand why they need to warm up at the beginning of lessons and they cope well with the rigorous and challenging sessions. Pupils show agile and imaginative movements in a very controlled and flexible manner, using space well. A particular strength of standards in the physical education curriculum is swimming. Standards for the majority of pupils at the end of Year 4 are as high as those nationally expected for pupils at the end of Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 13 Pupils have very positive attitudes to school and learning. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is an improvement in the quality of relationships that the pupils have with one another and with adults. These are now very good. The pupils' behaviour in lessons and around school continues to be very good and there is no evidence of bullying or harassment. The positive and inclusive atmosphere of the school is very strong and has a significant impact on the quality of the pupils' learning. The very positive attitudes and behaviour are established early in The Foundation Stage. Children become self confident and develop very positive attitudes to their learning and very good behaviour. Relationships between children and adults, and between children themselves are very good.
- 14 The parents feel that behaviour in the school is good and that the pupils are helped to become mature and responsible. Parents are pleased that their children enjoy coming to school and say that they are happy and get on well with each other. Inspection findings confirm the parents' views. There were no exclusions from school in the year leading up to the inspection.
- 15 Attendance is satisfactory and has continued to remain at a similar level to the national average. Registration is taken quickly and efficiently. The overwhelming majority of pupils arrive on time and this ensures an efficient start to the day.

- 16 The pupils have very good attitudes to their learning and are enthusiastic about the activities the school provides. For example, there is a waiting list for the popular computer club. Pupils work hard in lessons, are interested in what they are doing and are well motivated to learn. All pupils are confident when taking part in discussions and answering questions. They concentrate very well and enjoy the interesting lessons. For example, pupils in Year 1 work very well together as they discuss and order photographs chronologically. The opportunities for pupils independently are limited in some classes, particularly in the middle of the school. Pupils enjoy the wide range of extra curricular activities the school provides. They are enthusiastic about cricket and other sporting activities, apply themselves well to playing recorders and show great interest in the computer club. This high level of interest and enthusiasm for all aspects of school life reflects the good progress that the pupils make.
- 17 Pupils' behaviour throughout the school is very good. The pupils are calm, orderly and attentive in lessons. They behave very well in assemblies and whole school gatherings and respond well to the established behaviour routines. The behaviour of the vast majority of pupils is never less than very good. Some of the younger pupils in Years 2 and 3 are less mature and occasionally disrupt lessons because they are too noisy and do not listen to the teacher.
- 18 At lunchtimes pupils are well mannered and sociable. They respond well to the lunchtime supervision and enjoy being lunchtime monitors. This is a position for which the pupils have to apply and give reasons for their application. For example, "Why would you be a good monitor?" "I want to help children if they are hurt and sort out problems". "I want to be responsible and help the midday supervisors." This develops their understanding of citizenship and the meaning of responsibility. There is no anti social behaviour because the pupils know that it will be dealt with seriously.
- 19 The pupils have very good relationships with each other and adults. There is a great deal of mutual respect within a calm and relaxed atmosphere. This effectively develops the pupils' maturity and gives them confidence to contribute to discussions in lessons. Pupils' personal development is very good. The vast majority of pupils listen well to others and plan experiments together in pairs. All pupils take much pride in their own and other's achievements and are self-evaluative about their own personal development. In all year groups the pupils enjoy taking responsibility for classroom tasks. Those pupils who are elected to the school council take their roles very seriously. They consider ideas and suggestions from their classmates and think of ideas to improve the school environment. For example, one implemented suggestion is that of providing a fence to separate the quiet areas from the main playing areas.
- 20 All pupils with special educational needs feel secure within their class groups. The teachers ensure that the pupils' work matches their defined needs. This enables the pupils to relate effectively to adults and their classmates and to make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans. Their good relationships give them confidence to explore new areas of learning and to join in all school activities.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

- 21 Teaching is good and promotes good quality learning. Two thirds of lessons seen were good or better. Out of 44 lessons, the quality of teaching in 29 was good or better and in seven it was very good. At the time of the previous inspection, teaching was judged to be good, but in 11 per cent of lessons it was judged to be unsatisfactory. During this inspection all teaching observed was at least satisfactory. Combined with the data that half of the teaching staff is new to the school since the previous inspection, there has been an improvement in the quality of teaching.
- 22 Teaching is good at all stages of the school. It is good in mathematics, science, history, information and communication technology and physical education throughout the school. It is satisfactory in all other subjects.
- 23 Teaching for children in the reception class is particularly good in the areas of personal and social development, communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. Staff make

very good use of informal activities, such as snack time to promote this area of learning. As children get older, they are given more responsibility, and during the inspection, children in reception were required to organise and run the whole activity, with teachers keeping a watchful eye. In the area of communication, language and literacy, teachers and supporting adults, have high expectations. They consciously promote conversation and encourage pupils to speak with adults and each other confidently. The high expectations placed on the children in their language and literacy work supports the progress pupils make in the development of speaking and listening, writing and reading skills. In the mathematical area of learning, activities are of high quality, rigorously planned and well supported. Activities are interesting and promote pupils' enthusiasm. The activity on measuring was interesting to the children because it involved dressing a giant. The clear way in which the learning activity was presented enabled children to understand straight away why accurate measuring was important when it came to making a belt that would fit the giant.

- 24 Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects is satisfactory overall. This enables them to lead confidently and move pupils forward at a good pace. Their knowledge in information and communication technology is particularly good. Staff have recently completed their approved course of training and all adults are confident in supporting pupils at the computers. They pass their good subject knowledge and enthusiasm on to the pupils and support the good level of achievement.
- 25 Basic skills are taught well and this provides pupils with a secure base on which to progress. The development of literacy and numeracy skills plays an important part in the school and all adults promote this effectively. In information and communication technology these are very well taught and this gives pupils confidence when working at the computers. Their good computer skills enable them to concentrate on new programs, rather than having to concern themselves with routine manipulation techniques. In science planning places a clear focus on practising and improving key skills. Teachers ensure that these build systematically on what the pupils know.
- 26 Teachers' planning is good, especially in English, mathematics and science. Weekly and daily planning is frequently amended, showing that teachers are evaluating lessons and making ongoing assessments. This was evident in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, when pupils had some difficulty in understanding the process of solving complicated everyday mathematical problems. The teacher rightly adjusted her planning for the following lesson to ensure that these difficulties were revisited and overcome so that the pupils could move on confidently. However, teachers do not all make sufficient use of lesson evaluations in this way. In science these are not used enough to guide teachers' planning, despite the systematic development of key skills. There is not enough use of the summing up session at the end of some lessons to let the pupils explore their learning. The marking of pupils work does not sufficiently point out where the weaknesses are in pupils' work or give clear points for improvement.
- 27 Teachers' expectations vary. In English they are not always sufficiently high enough to get the most out of pupils, particularly the higher attaining pupils. Often, too little indication is given of expectation of the amount of work that should be completed within the set time. This does not offer sufficient challenge to pupils or set a good pace for the lesson. Sometimes untidy and disorganised work is too readily accepted. Some overuse of worksheets, often untidily filled in, is also evident. This is also a characteristic of the work of younger pupils in mathematics, where work is often untidy and disorganised. The quality of teachers' marking is inconsistent through the school. It does not tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Conversely, activities in physical education are rigorous and challenging and teachers use pupils to demonstrate good quality work. Expectations of pupils in information and communication technology lessons are high, with pupils being introduced to new developments in technology such as the internet and the use of email as a means of communication.
- 28 The management of pupils is good. Teachers make their expectations of behaviour quite clear. Through a positive approach to behaviour management, teachers establish and maintain good standards of behaviour in lessons and very positive attitudes. Relationships between staff and pupils are good and these also encourage good behaviour.

- 29 Good, well focused learning opportunities are provided for pupils with special educational needs, allowing them to meet their individual targets, particularly those related to literacy and numeracy. Classroom assistants generally provide competent and confident support, carefully evaluating the sessions they take and recording the progress made. They make sure that all pupils are fully included in the lessons and have the same learning opportunities as other pupils. Teachers' support assistants provide valuable levels of support in lessons for other groups of pupils to who they are attached.

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

- 30 The school provides a satisfactory curriculum that results in all pupils having full opportunity to learn and make progress. This has been satisfactorily maintained since the last inspection. The curriculum promotes pupils' intellectual, physical and personal development, and prepares them for the next stage of education. All subjects of the National Curriculum are taught. The school meets all of the statutory requirements, including those for sex education and drugs' awareness.
- 31 The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. It is properly planned taking account of the recommendations of all of the Early Learning Goals for children in the Foundation Stage. Emphasis is placed appropriately in the areas of communication, language and literacy, mathematics and the personal, social and emotional development of children, to build, effectively, core skills and provide a secure foundation for further learning.
- 32 There are effective strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills. The National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies have been soundly implemented, and national guidelines have been introduced in other subjects. However, even where assessments are carefully made and recorded, and learning targets are set, the curriculum has not been sufficiently adapted to provide appropriate and challenging work for the full range of ability within classes, that takes careful and full account of National Curriculum levels.
- 33 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The support given individually and within groups generally allows pupils with special educational needs full access to the range of learning opportunities provided. Within literacy and numeracy pupils receive support that is relevant to their needs, and teaches them the skills which help them to access the full curriculum. The provision for pupils with behavioural needs is made through the schools' behaviour management strategies, including the discussion of issues in 'Circle Time'. These pupils also meet with the special educational needs coordinator and class teachers to discuss their behavioural targets.
- 34 The provision for extra curricular activities is good. There is a wide range of clubs on offer and many clubs operate a waiting list due to the enthusiasm of pupils to participate. Currently there are no extra curricular activities for pupils in the infant classes.
- 35 Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Many opportunities occur, for example through teaching in science, physical education, assemblies, 'Circle Time' and extra curricular activities, to help promote pupils' personal development and citizenship. There has yet to be an audit to ensure full coverage of all aspects of the personal, social and health education and citizenship curriculum. There is a good contribution from the community to help support pupils' learning. Father Paul, the chair of the governing body and local priest, is a frequent visitor and often takes school assemblies. Ministers from the Baptist and Methodist churches visit the school regularly. The elderly people living in nearby sheltered housing are frequently invited to watch school productions. The 'Thorpe Charities' is a supportive benefactor and helps finance specific school projects. Year 2 pupils have recently produced a 'Visitors Guide to Thorpe' to develop their own knowledge of the local community.

- 36 Relationships with partner institutions are good. The majority of pupils transfer to the neighbouring secondary school and there are good opportunities to visit the school and teachers from the secondary school visit the primary school. The local playgroup shares the site with the school and this helps promote a smooth transfer of these children to the reception class.
- 37 The school's provision for the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good throughout the school and their cultural development is good. This makes a positive contribution to the very good attitudes and behaviour of the pupils across the school. The school makes very effective use of these aspects to develop, broaden and deepen pupils' understanding, values and experiences. The school makes very good provision for the moral and social development of its pupils. There is direct teaching of the principles that distinguish right from wrong. The provision of clearly defined school rules in each classroom reflects this. The emphasis on belonging to a supportive community develops pupils' awareness of social responsibility very well.
- 38 The provision for the spiritual development of pupils is very good. This is an improvement from the previous inspection. The youngest children in the school experience a range of activities that give them many opportunities to reflect on feelings. An example of this is when children exclaim in wonder at the giant footprints around the classroom. The school provides a very good range of opportunities for reflection in the daily act of collective worship. For example, pupils reflect on the meaning of vocation as they consider the feelings of the disciples when Jesus calls them. This effectively reinforces the message of being aware of their own and other's needs. The school incorporates spiritual opportunities naturally into lessons such as music. Here, the Year 5 pupils considered and reflected on feelings evoked by 'The Planets' by Gustav Holst. They wrote moving and sensitive poems about the effects of war in response to 'Mars'. This made a positive contribution to their spiritual development. There is a very strong spiritual ethos in assemblies and many lessons. This provides a firm base for the development of pupils' spiritual awareness.
- 39 The school's provision for the moral development of its pupils is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school is very effective in teaching pupils the principles that distinguish right from wrong. This begins on entry to the reception class and develops well as the pupils' move through the school. There is a strong code of conduct that is implicit in all actions and on display in each classroom. All members of the teaching and non teaching staff ensure that their dealings with issues are firm but fair. They talk through any transgression of the school's code of conduct with pupils and, when necessary, with parents. All adults ensure that the pupils understand what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable behaviour. The pupils have many opportunities to explore and develop moral issues within the curriculum and assemblies. For example, in one assembly pupils recognised the moral issues of thinking before taking action. This leads to increased awareness of the impact of their actions on themselves and others. From an early age pupils learn to tidy away and look after equipment carefully. They take great care of the work and artefacts on display around the school and are eager to talk about them. This enables them to begin to appreciate moral issues concerning other people's property. The school takes every opportunity to teach pupils respect and appreciation for each other. This manifests itself in lessons and the after school clubs where the pupils are considerate, courteous and polite to each other and adults. Consistently high expectations of behaviour from staff promote a calm, orderly and secure environment. As a result, the pupils contribute to the warm, welcoming and friendly atmosphere in the school.
- 40 The provision for the social development of pupils is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Children who are under five have many opportunities to develop independent attitudes to learning and to relate well to each other and adults. As the pupils progress through the school the teachers build on and increase these opportunities. Pupils develop their ability to work cooperatively and collaboratively in lessons very well. In science, for example, pupils work very well together when planning investigations. This makes a positive contribution to the effective development of social skills.

- 41 The pupils take great pride in the work of the 'School Council.' This makes a valuable contribution to the development of social awareness and responsibility. The pupils are eager to show visitors the results of their ideas for example, the fencing round the quiet areas in the playground. The school prepares pupils very well for their transfer to the receiving secondary school. It makes very effective use of visits and performances to enable pupils to develop a sense of group identity and acceptable group behaviour. All members of staff foster very good relationships between pupils and between pupils and themselves. Pupils play together well and develop their social skills further during lunchtime. The older pupils help the younger ones and ensure the hall is left clean and tidy. The pupils have a very good level of involvement in the wider community. Examples of these are the links with the annual village festival and the very close links with the local church.
- 42 The school makes good provision for the cultural development of its pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils have many opportunities to develop awareness of their own culture. They visit local places of interest as part of their work in history and geography. This develops their awareness of their local cultural heritage very well. They learn about the different past invasions of Britain and develop a good awareness of their mixed cultural development in the past. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to increase their awareness of the rich cultural diversity within present day Britain. The school is aware of this shortcoming and has well developed plans to improve this aspect of the pupils' development.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 43 The school has sustained the good standards of care for its pupils reported at the time of the previous inspection. The school is a caring community where pupils flourish and develop in an atmosphere that supports, encourages and values pupils as individuals. Pupils feel safe and secure, and able to seek help and support whenever they need it. The majority of parents who returned their questionnaires felt that the school helped their children to become mature and responsible.
- 44 Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare are good. The school is clean, tidy and in good repair, and provides a safe environment for pupils. There were no health and safety issues evident during the inspection. The school's health and safety policy has recently been reviewed and clearly outlines the specific responsibilities of staff. The governing body is actively involved in monitoring the health and safety aspects of the premises through regular visits and any concerns are carefully recorded. The school is currently working to gain validation of the Essex Healthy Schools Award and this raised profile of health within school helps to promote a healthy lifestyle. There is an appropriate number of staff trained in first aid skills, as well as good procedures for recording accidents. The school promotes pupils' awareness of their own health and safety through healthy eating topics in science, physical education, personal and social education lessons, and through visitors to school including the school nurse, and police.
- 45 Child protection procedures are firmly in place and training of staff including all non teaching staff is up to date. This ensures good consistent vigilance.
- 46 There are good procedures for monitoring and analysing attendance. The school secretary checks registers every day and if by 9.15am she has received no reason for absence, she contacts the parents. This demonstrates a good level of concern and care for the welfare of pupils. Holidays during term time have a significant impact on reducing the school's attendance levels. Although the school has introduced a holiday form, the impact of holidays during term time is not stressed sufficiently through the school prospectus or newsletters.
- 47 The school has very good arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The behaviour and anti bullying policies promote clearly the aims and strategies that the school adopts. The main reward scheme of badges is supported by other schemes, including certificates and house points which are specific to the age and needs of pupils. These make a valuable contribution to pupils' very good behaviour. The presentation of certificates and badges in weekly assemblies positively promotes the high standards expected by the school. There are good procedures in place for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. Any incidents are taken

seriously and dealt with efficiently and appropriately. The headteacher closely monitors any incidents that are recorded in the incident book.

- 48 Monitoring of pupils' personal development is very good and is based on the very good knowledge which all staff have of the pupils and the behaviour award scheme. This scheme provides graded levels against which pupils measure their behaviour performance. For example, one of the criteria to receive a silver badge is to show initiative. The class teacher and pupils decide who is awarded the badges. The system is very good as pupils are using a method of self assessing their own personal development against a structured set of criteria. This scheme promotes very good behaviour, maturity and consideration in pupils.
- 49 At the time of the last inspection, assessment was identified as a key issue for improvement in order to raise standards. A good deal of work has been done since that time and satisfactory improvement has been made. The school has implemented a variety of good systems for assessing pupils' attainment. Progress in implementing and further developing the systems has been slower than the school would have liked due to the number of changes in staffing. This has meant that newly appointed teachers have needed time to become familiar with the school systems and appraise their effectiveness. The assessment policy identifies systems for the effective monitoring of standards.
- 50 Schemes of work are now in place and the use of national schemes has helped the development of assessment procedures, particularly in the foundation subjects. There is a good level of year end assessments in place and day to day assessment is used to inform short term planning. Each pupil has a record of achievement file and these contain targets that are agreed between the teacher and the pupil each term. Target setting is in place throughout the school. The setting of targets is becoming an established and effective feature of the school's working practices. The range of targets for individuals is appropriate and reflects the teachers' good knowledge of the pupils. In the reception class assessments are carried out during the first few weeks of entry so that the school has a secure baseline against which it can measure pupils' progress over time. As the year progresses, formal and informal assessments of the children are carried out in order to monitor progress towards the Early Learning Goals.
- 51 Baseline assessments for pupils starting school are carefully analysed. From this analysis and careful observation of pupils in class, initial concerns are expressed and pupils with special educational needs then identified. The special educational needs coordinator draws up individual education plans in conjunction with class teachers. Realistic and manageable targets are set for pupils and these are reviewed each term. Annual reviews of pupils with statements are carried out thoroughly. The school meets fully the requirements set out in their statements.
- 52 The school makes satisfactory use of the assessment data that it collects to gain an overview of what pupils know and can do and to identify where groups of pupils can make improvements. The data is also used satisfactorily to make changes to the curriculum to improve those areas and raise standards even higher.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 53 The school has continued to maintain the good relationships with parents reported at the previous inspection. Parents have positive views about the school and the majority of parents feel their children like school. Most parents who replied to the questionnaire agree that their child is expected to work hard and achieve his or her best. They feel that behaviour and teaching are good and this is supported by the inspection findings. Some parents feel that the range of activities outside lessons is unsatisfactory. However, inspection evidence shows that the range of extra curricular activities provided mainly for junior aged pupils is good. Clubs include information and communication technology, rounders, recorders and cycling proficiency. A third of parents who completed the questionnaire expressed concern over the amount of homework their child receives. The school has a homework policy, which is included in the schools' prospectus. During the inspection, homework was frequently referred to during lessons and includes reading, spelling

activities and research challenges. Some parents also feel they are not kept sufficiently well informed about how their children are getting on at school. The inspection found the range and variety of information provided for parents, and the opportunities to meet teachers, to be satisfactory.

- 54 The contribution of parents to children's learning at school and home is good. The school encourages parental involvement through information evenings on National Curriculum assessment tests, the introduction of the new reading record scheme and training courses for parents on the internet. These help parents to gain some understanding of what the school is providing. In addition, social opportunities through the Parent Teacher Association further strengthen this partnership. Parents raise substantial funds which are currently being invested to help pay for the building of a much needed new library extension. Class assemblies enable the school and parents to worship and celebrate together.
- 55 The quality and quantity of information provided for parents are satisfactory. The regular newsletters are detailed, and provide good information about the activities happening in school. The school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents meet statutory requirements and are, overall, well written in a clear informative format. However, in the school prospectus the method of reporting attendance is confusing and details about the schools' special needs policy are too brief. Parents have frequent opportunities to meet teachers both through weekly time put aside after school and through opportunities each term to discuss their children's progress. The school sends out yearly curriculum information, which is very detailed in numeracy and literacy and a general overview in other subjects. However the school provides minimal information on how parents can help support the work of their children. The pupils' annual reports are well written for English and mathematics with targets for improvement but the quality of reporting of other subjects varies.
- 56 Parents are kept very well informed of children with special educational needs. They are invited to reviews and receive a written account of them along with copies of new individual education plans. The support of parents is very well promoted, and suggestions for their support and involvement are shown on individual education plans.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 57 The leadership and management of the school have seen changes recently. At Christmas, a member of the teaching staff with significant management responsibility left the school at short notice. The present headteacher took up her duties at the start of this term. Changes in responsibility have altered the dynamics of the management of the juniors and of the senior management team. The new management of the school is currently settling into role and looking towards future further development of the school.
- 58 In this short time the headteacher, with the good support of the deputy headteacher and other members of the senior management team, has established the foundations for the way forward for this school. She has a clear vision of what she wants the school to provide. Priorities include improving standards and the achievement of pupils, particularly those capable of higher attainment, whilst not losing sight of how other groups of pupils are progressing, including those of average attainment; developing independent learning systems and consequently pupils' skills in this area and ensuring that the quality of the provision, particularly teaching, is good. She has also started to build a relationship with the community and the headteachers of other primary and secondary schools in the locality. Building links with the community and with other schools is a priority of the governing body. The headteacher's monitoring of teaching, planning and teachers' assessment files has provided an early overview of the school and she already has good ideas of where the strengths and areas for development lie. A good start has been made and staff, governors and parents express confidence in the headteacher's leadership and management skills.
- 59 With the new management responsibilities, the monitoring of the performance of teachers is to be further developed. Curriculum coordinators support the headteacher satisfactorily in the monitoring process. They scrutinise planning and assessment data where it is available. Not all have been

given the opportunity to watch other teachers teach in their subjects but some, such as the mathematics curriculum coordinator, have had the opportunity to observe. Feedback is provided and the outcomes are discussed with teachers. The headteacher has plans to further extend the monitoring of teaching and learning.

- 60 The schools' priorities for development and targets for improvement are appropriate and are identified clearly. All members of staff contribute to this process. The school priorities are first established and are then considered alongside national initiatives. These are presented to the governors, who add any of their own recommendations and then priorities are decided upon and ranked in the light of available finances and any constraints. Curriculum coordinators make a good contribution to school development. Based on their scrutiny of teachers' planning and the results of National Curriculum assessment tests they identify strengths and areas for improvement. These are written into subject development plans, which then form an important part of the school development plan. Progress towards meeting their targets is satisfactorily monitored. The headteacher is fully involved with the curriculum coordinators in the assessment and analysis of attainment data. They have a good knowledge of strengths and weaknesses of the school and these are effectively reported to governors.
- 61 During the recent staff changes, particularly with reference to the changes in the leadership and management of the school, the governing body has provided a stable influence. They have effectively supported the changes and guided the school through turbulent times. Governors have a very good knowledge of the school through their involvement with it. In addition to governors meetings, there are other committees that meet and report back to the full governing body. The chair of governors meets frequently with the headteacher, both formally and informally. There is also much contact between governors with responsibility for specific subjects and other areas such as special educational needs. Governors regularly visit the school to visit classes either informally or more formally observe provision in their area of responsibility. The governors have a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and play a very important part in shaping the direction of the school. They fulfil their statutory duties very well.
- 62 The school's use of financial resources is very good. The school retains the services of a bursar part time. She was bursar when the school had grant maintained status and much of the good practice from that time has been kept. She is also a teacher in the school part time and is on the governing body. She therefore has a very good knowledge and understanding of the school and its needs and is able to advise very well on financial planning, and exercises very good management of spending throughout the year. Educational priorities are very well supported through careful financial management. Funds for specific purposes are used appropriately. Priorities for development are carefully considered alongside available finance.
- 63 Financial matters are very well managed throughout the year. The highly efficient bursar keeps the headteacher and governors well informed about the status of the budget at regular intervals throughout the year. She also carefully monitors spending on a daily basis. The office is run efficiently. New technology is used satisfactorily to streamline processes and the members of the office staff are well informed. Computers are used to monitor finances, maintain pupils' records, word processing and the school receives email.
- 64 The school fulfils the requirements of the Code of Practice in having a register of special educational needs, consulting with parents and holding reviews. The special educational needs coordinator has a clear picture of the needs within the school and how they are being met. She provides good leadership and management for the school's special educational needs provision. Funding for special educational needs is used fully and appropriately.
- 65 The number and qualifications of teachers and support staff are good and they effectively meet the demands of the curriculum. All members of staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities within the team and take an active part in all school activities. The school gives good support to pupils with special educational needs and deploys learning support assistants well. As a result, the pupils make good progress in their learning. The school has taken over its school meals' service and manages it successfully. Pupils enjoy a hot meal in pleasant surroundings. The

caretaker and cleaning staff work unobtrusively to ensure that the pupils and staff are able to work in clean surroundings. This contributes well to the comfortable learning environment. The administration of the school ensures that the day to day organisation is smooth and efficient.

- 66 The school has moved from appraisal to performance management. All teachers and the headteacher have clear targets and there is full involvement of the governing body. There is careful and effective support for newly qualified teachers and staff new to the school. The induction tutor ensures that newly qualified teachers have suitable time release and attend the necessary courses.
- 67 The accommodation is good. The provision of a new computer suite is having a positive effect on the standards that pupils are able to achieve. Staff work hard to produce an attractive learning environment and the caretaker and his staff give effective support by keeping the building in good condition. All classrooms are of a good size and the outdoor environment is good. The hall, although of a sufficient size, has become too cluttered with a small library in one corner and dining tables in another. These restrict the area available and could be a possible hazard in physical education lessons. Provision for pupils in the Foundation Stage is good with a safe outdoor activity area.
- 68 Educational resources across the curriculum are satisfactory. They are good for science, art and design, information and communication technology and music. The library and non fiction provision is unsatisfactory. The school has plans to address this in the very near future and to improve pupils' library and research skills. The successful fund raising by parents has provided the school with a good information and communication technology system throughout the school. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection and the school makes full use of this facility.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

To further improve the standards and the quality of education, the governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

- 1 Improve the challenge for higher attaining pupils by:
 - using assessment data more effectively to plan a curriculum that fully meets the needs of these pupils;
 - providing further challenging opportunities for writing in literacy and across the curriculum that more consistently reflect the levels at which pupils are capable of working, and steer them towards their targets;
 - setting challenging work that enables pupils to reach, more effectively, their full potential.

(paragraphs 1, 2, 6, 49, 58, 87, 109)

- 2 Identify areas for development in teaching by rigorously monitoring its quality through direct observation, scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning by:
 - continuing to develop the monitoring of teaching and learning in order to recognise current strengths and areas for development;
 - paying particular attention to the marking of, and teachers' response to pupils' written work and to their expectations of what pupils can do;
 - raising the expectations of the quality and presentation of written work.

(paragraphs 26, 27, 58)

- 3 Improve provision for pupils' cultural development, paying attention to their awareness, knowledge and understanding of different cultures by:
- planning opportunities within the whole curriculum for the promotion of a good range of aspects of multicultural awareness;
 - developing, implementing and promoting an anti racial policy

(paragraphs 37, 42)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	22	15	0	0	0
Percentage	0	16	50	34	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	199
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	48

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	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	7

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	21	9	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	20	20
	Girls	8	9	8
	Total	29	29	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (88)	97 (92)	93 (92)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	19	21
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	28	27	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (88)	90 (92)	97 (96)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	16	16	32

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	12	14
	Girls	14	13	16
	Total	26	25	30
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	81 (78)	78 (75)	94 (84)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	12	14
	Girls	14	12	16
	Total	25	24	30
Percentage of pupils	School	78 (72)	75 (75)	94 (81)

at NC level 4 or above	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)
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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	174
Any other minority ethnic group	4

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)	9.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.2
Average class size	30

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	58.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/a
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/a
Total number of education support staff	N/a
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/a
Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/a

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
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	£
Total income	488,960
Total expenditure	478,170
Expenditure per pupil	2,299
Balance brought forward from previous year	10,163
Balance carried forward to next year	20,953

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	199
Number of questionnaires returned	78

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	35	3	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	42	45	9	1	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	47	3	1	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	45	18	15	0
The teaching is good.	49	41	5	3	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	49	13	5	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	54	37	3	5	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	44	1	4	1
The school works closely with parents.	35	53	6	6	0
The school is well led and managed.	36	51	6	3	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	44	42	6	4	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	24	44	8	12	12

Due to the rounding up of percentages, not all lines will add up to 100.

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

- 69 In the reception class, the children receive a good start to their education particularly in the areas of personal and social development, communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development. In these areas they make particularly good progress and acquire very positive attitudes to learning. This year, the children who entered the reception class both in September and in January had average levels of attainment. In previous years, however, statistics show that the majority of the children had below average levels of attainment when they entered the school. The majority of the children in this year's reception class will achieve the Early Learning Goals set for the age group by the time they are ready to enter Year 1. This means they make good progress in all the areas of learning when account is taken of the short period some of the children spend in the reception class. This includes those children who have special educational needs. They make good progress due to the good support they receive which fully includes them in all aspects of the curriculum. Through good teaching and a sound curriculum, the school has maintained the standards reported at the time of the last inspection and improved pupils' performance in personal, social and emotional development, communication language and literacy, and mathematics.
- 70 The school has a clear policy for the education of children in the Foundation Stage and provision covers all the required aspects. Activities are very well structured and have clear learning objectives, regular assessments are carried out to monitor the progress of children and these are at times identified as specific tasks within the planning. The quality of teaching in the reception class is never less than satisfactory and at times it is very good. Relationships between adults and children are very good and there is an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect in which the children receive excellent care and respond to the staff with enthusiasm and very positive attitudes to their activities. The work of the teacher is extremely well supported by the contribution made by the nursery nurse, the classroom assistant and parental help. Working as a team, they have very clear roles and responsibilities and carry them out in a very effective manner. Links with parents are very good and many of them drop in at the beginning of the morning to chat with the staff in a very relaxed manner. Comments made at the parent meeting show the high regard they have for the work of the staff in the reception class.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 71 The school places a strong emphasis on the personal, social and emotional development of the children. The success of the staff's approach in this area of learning can be clearly seen in the very good skills the children acquire. By the time they leave the reception class, the majority of children will have easily exceeded the required goals. Those children with special educational needs will have made similar progress because the staff make good use of interesting and lively activities to make each child feel valued and to help them to gain in self confidence and use their own initiative. Snack time is an excellent example of how these aspects of personal, social and emotional development are skilfully achieved. At the beginning of the school year, snack time is organised and supervised by the staff. By the time children have been in school for a few months, they are becoming used to taking more and more responsibility for aspects of snack time. At the time of the inspection children in the class were confidently running the whole activity.
- 72 Self confidence gives the children a very positive attitude to their learning and the way in which they relate to adults. They are very happy to talk about their work and are delighted when an interest is shown in what they are doing. Skilful use of stories helps the children to explore feelings. In the story 'Jack and the Beanstalk' the teacher used questions sensitively to explore how the giant might feel. When the children decided he might be sad, they suggested ways in which they could help him to be happy. Sensitive discussion on a whole range of issues helps the children to come to understand themselves and each other and learn to live together as a group.

Communication, language and literacy

- 73 Children make very good progress in this area of learning, with speaking and listening being an area of particular strength. The majority of children will exceed the Early Learning Goals in speaking and listening and achieve them, with some exceeding them, in reading and writing. Children with special educational needs are fully included in all activities and receive excellent support. During all activities the children listen very attentively and if, at times, they are not listening it is because they are engaged in a conversation. During snack time the teacher had to reprimand a girl for talking too loudly to which a small boy replied, *"I quite agree, we are trying to hold a conversation over here."* Much of the success in speaking and listening comes from the quality of the adult conversation with the children and also the insistence of the staff that children answer in sentences and give appropriate explanations.
- 74 Displays throughout the reception area place a strong emphasis on words and this means that reading and writing are very much part of their everyday world. They confidently read a shared text with the teacher and immediately begin to put expression into the words. Books are well displayed to encourage children to look at them and they are developing a keen interest in reading. Reading progress is carefully monitored. Writing skills are developing very well. Many children are able to write simple sentences to describe pictures; for example, *'Tadpoles turn into frogs'*. Letter shapes are well formed and they understand the need for correct spelling. When the teacher read out a letter from the giant, it included some spelling mistakes, which were quickly spotted by the children. One child pointed out that you can't say *'upt'*, you've got to turn the *'p'* and the *'u'* round because *'p'* comes before *'u'* in put. The high expectations placed on the children in their language and literacy work pays high dividends in terms of the quality of speaking and listening, writing and reading.

Mathematical development

- 75 Children, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress in mathematical development and the majority will achieve the Early Learning Goals with some exceeding them by the time they leave the reception class. As with personal and social development and language and literacy the school regards this area as one of prime importance, particularly as some children have such a limited time in the reception class. In order to achieve the maximum amount of success, activities in this area are of high quality, rigorously planned and well supported. The work on measuring was an excellent example of a high quality activity. It was immediately interesting to the children because it involved dressing the giant. They understood straight away why measuring was important, particularly accurate measuring, when it came to making a belt for the giant and a watch that would actually fit the cardboard giant.
- 76 Through a good range of high quality games, structured activities and lessons, children learn how to say and use numbers up to 20, recognise coins and sort and match objects and numbers. Teachers make good use of every opportunity to emphasise mathematical understanding and throughout the time of the inspection the computer was regularly used to help the children to understand and use different aspects of number. At all times when doing their work, children use the correct mathematical language when answering questions or describing what they are doing. When children were placing the caterpillars in order of size, the parent working with them quickly intervened if they used the word *'bigger'* when they meant *'longer'* than the one underneath. Once again the classroom reflects in its displays the importance placed on this area of learning and also its importance in everyday life.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 77 All the children make good progress towards the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning and the majority of them will achieve the required standard by the end of the reception year. Through effective teaching and interesting topics such as the one on 'All about our bodies' the children gain a wealth of understanding about themselves. During this particular topic, they learn about the skeleton, the part our heart plays in keeping us alive and about keeping healthy through having

good food to eat and avoiding things that harm us. A display of spinning tops in the classroom involves the children in discussing which one they think is the oldest. They are developing a clear understanding of past and present and how things have changed over time.

- 78 Opportunities are taken to look at how things change in the natural world and during the Autumn term they look at the changes in nature, making good use of the camera and photographs to record the changes. As part of this study they look at how the changing weather has its effect on people and how we have to begin to wear different clothes. Currently the children are excited about the caterpillars they have just received and what is going to happen to them. During this kind of study, clear links are made with other areas of learning and although the study has only just started children are already familiar with a new vocabulary and are using and understanding such words as cocoon, pupa and chrysalis. When cooking, the children produce their own recipe book to encourage purposeful writing. Children are confident in using the computer and in small groups are learning how to direct and control programmable robot.

Physical development

- 79 All the children, including those with special educational needs, will achieve the required goals by the end of reception. Through well planned activities and good support from adults, children learn how to use a range of tools and construction materials with increasing control and safety. Although many children lack fine control when they first enter school, by this time in the year they are confident in manipulating scissors, paint brushes and glue sticks. When forming letter shapes, they control the pencil with confidence and produce well formed letters and numbers. Staff recognise that as children become more skilful in using their hands and coordinating their hand and eye control, this promotes progress in reading and writing. Subsequently, teachers very carefully plan activities that will help to develop these skills.
- 80 In their physical development, children learn how to control their bodies when rolling, jumping and moving on different parts of their bodies. A number of children are already able to do a forward roll and keep a straight line and control the roll. Children are challenged to try hard and high expectations are set for them. They respond by working hard and putting a great deal of effort into their movements. A prominent feature of their work is the way they listen with great care to the instructions given by the teacher. They organise themselves well into groups and, when working in these groups, take turns, help each other and behave in an excellent manner. The activities planned for children's physical development make a significant contribution to other areas of learning.

Creative development

- 81 There is good provision for children's creative development and the majority of children will meet the required goals by the end of reception. Children are confident in using a wide range of materials. They use paint with confidence, producing lively and colourful self portraits. Often their work with paint is used to illustrate a story such as 'Goldilocks and the three bears'. They explore using pattern and colour and experience using shapes for printing. The display on 'What can we see through the window?' shows how children have observed what they can see and then produced exciting and imaginative collage pictures to illustrate what they have observed. In producing the collage pictures, they have been introduced to the idea of using a range of materials that are appropriate for the task. For example, they have used cellophane for the windows and then a mixture of fabric and colour to produce the picture they can see. In the role play area, which is a doctor's surgery, they engage in imaginative play and again this provides an appropriate link with the work on 'All about our bodies'. One wall has been turned into a very large animal collage, where the animals are related to particular letter sounds, for example, E stands alongside the picture of the elephant. This is not only a lively piece of artwork but also a stimulus to reading, writing and learning letter sounds. Children enjoy singing and are developing a good repertoire of songs, which they enjoy and sing with enthusiasm.

ENGLISH

- 82 At the ages of seven and 11 pupils achieve standards that are average, showing that standards have been maintained since the last inspection. There is no significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls. Taking into account past low attainment on entry to the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school.
- 83 Attainment in speaking and listening is good. Throughout the school, particularly where teachers' questioning skills are good and involve all pupils, the majority of pupils listen and respond well, using spoken language with increasing confidence, talking around ideas and so developing their knowledge and understanding further. Although younger pupils listen attentively to stories and instructions, they do not always listen to the contributions of others, for example when sharing ideas or talking about what they are going to do.
- 84 Pupils across the school have regular opportunities to develop their reading skills both in guided and quiet reading lessons, and at home. By Year 2, the higher and average attaining pupils read simple texts fluently and with reasonable accuracy. Pupils develop good word building skills and recognise many basic, irregular words. They know the meaning of technical words such as 'author' and 'illustrator'; they know that non fiction books have a contents page and an index that is set out in alphabetical order. By the age of 11, above average and average pupils read from a satisfactory range of books. Although they develop a preference for authors and types of book, their enthusiasm for reading is not particularly strong. Pupils' research skills are soundly developed, but few know how to locate non fiction books in a library. They skim text for relevant information, recognising the need to use and compare different sources. They make satisfactory use of dictionaries and thesauruses to support their reading. Below average pupils do not talk so confidently about the books they have read, and tend to lack expression and fluency in reading as they struggle with harder words.
- 85 By the age of seven, pupils are starting to write for a range of purposes, including stories, instructions, poems and labelling. High and average attaining pupils develop their ideas in a sequence of well formed and often descriptive simple sentences. They know when to use capital letters, full stops and question marks; some start to use speech marks. As pupils get older they write for a wider range of purpose and audience, and begin to produce more extended pieces of writing. By the age of 11 many of them sustain interesting ideas in their writing and choose words for effect. They begin to extend meaning in complex sentences using a range of connectives. Throughout the school pupils are systematically taught spelling, handwriting and grammar. However, the use of these developing skills is not sufficiently evident in their written work both in English and other subjects.
- 86 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. One good and one very good lesson were observed. No lessons were unsatisfactory. Lessons are generally well planned, in line with the National Literacy Strategy, showing the different parts of lessons and the activities for the range of ability. Weekly planning is frequently amended, showing that teachers are evaluating lessons and making ongoing assessments. The whole class parts of lessons do not always sufficiently involve all pupils. Where questioning is not targeted, pupils who know the answers and can give explanations tend to respond, leaving others often quietly passive. In one lesson, despite a good use of recorded radio advertising to demonstrate persuasive techniques, pupils called out answers enthusiastically, leaving little opportunity for the class teacher to draw others in and to make assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding. A feature of the very good Year 1 lesson was the very good questioning skills of the teacher that involved and challenged all pupils, setting a very good pace for the lesson. As a result, pupils made very good progress in their work on phonemes and animals in poetry.
- 87 Teachers' expectations are not always sufficient to get the most out of pupils. Although the time that pupils have for an activity is given, often little indication is given of the work that should be completed, to challenge pupils and set a good pace for the lesson. From previous work the expectations of presentation, including handwriting, spelling and grammar, are not high enough. Some overuse of worksheets, often untidily filled in, is also evident.

- 88 Pupils are managed well in lessons. There are good relationships between staff and pupils that encourage good behaviour. Even at those times when pupils are not sufficiently engaged, they just sit quietly. Opportunities are provided in lessons for pupils to discuss work with each other and to work together cooperatively, so helping their social development. Classroom assistants are used well in lessons, giving effective support to pupils, particularly those with special educational needs. This support is particularly effective when assistants take more responsibility for the groups they are working with, helping with introductions and demonstrating activities, as well as supporting individual pupils within the group.
- 89 Pupils' work is marked consistently but the quality of marking is variable. Where it is good, there are comments that refer to learning objectives and inform pupils how well they have done and what they need to do to improve. The conclusions to lessons do not sufficiently involve pupils in an evaluation of their learning. Teachers do, however, set writing targets that are shown in exercise books and mostly dated when achieved.
- 90 There are sufficient opportunities for pupils to use and practise literacy skills across the curriculum. However, these opportunities do not always encourage pupils to use their skills at an appropriately challenging level. Non fiction big books and texts are used in literacy that make relevant and purposeful links to other subjects. For example, Year 6 pupils used texts on the ear and blood circulation, linking with their studies in science on the human body. The use of information and communication technology is becoming more apparent, and pupils are starting to use their skills in lessons to word process, practise basic skills, such as spelling, and research information.
- 91 The role of the English coordinator is well developed, and she provides good leadership and management for the subject. In the past there has been some observation of lessons and written feedback given, with a view to improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards. The English action plan has recognised areas for development, for example, the need to hear individual readers regularly and to improve the presentation of pupils' written work. The recording of reading has been reviewed and a booklet compiled that provides guidance for teachers and records the progress being made.
- 92 The results of national and other testing are carefully recorded and analysed for strengths and weaknesses, and are beginning to inform future planning for the subject and target setting for pupils. However, the curriculum is not yet sufficiently matched to individual target levels, to provide appropriate and challenging learning opportunities for all pupils. Pupils' progress is carefully tracked as they move through the school, identifying where further support is required through some setting in Year 6, booster groups, early and additional literacy support. Overall resources for the subject are satisfactory. The school has recognised the need to review its book provision, and a new library is soon to be added to the school, which will enable books to be centralised and better displayed, so raising the profile of reading and encouraging stronger attitudes to it. Pupils have the opportunity to take part in whole school and key stage productions, giving further speaking and drama opportunities.

MATHEMATICS

- 93 Current standards are above average for both seven and eleven year olds. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection, when they were also above average. This represents a satisfactory level of improvement since the previous inspection. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs is good. Overall achievement is good because the majority of pupils start in Year 1 with above average standards, and these are maintained throughout the school. This does not reflect the results of the National Curriculum assessment tests in 2001 at the end of Year 6, which were average. There have been some changes in staffing and the curriculum coordinator for mathematics currently teaches Year 6 pupils. She is making a conscious move towards ensuring that pupils at all levels of attainment receive equal focus and that all groups make the best progress. This target is also written into her subject development plan. Standards in the scrutiny of work for the current Year 6 pupils and their performance in class are above average.

- 94 Current standards in Year 2 are above average. All pupils have a secure understanding of number and are able to calculate using addition, subtraction and multiplication. Pupils use their knowledge and understanding of number to translate a written problem into a mathematical sum, being able to choose the appropriate operation in order to solve the problem correctly. When working out the answers to these questions they show good mental strategies, for example mentally adding and subtracting two digit numbers accurately. They also apply their knowledge and understanding of number well when finding missing numbers in sums such as $30 = 14 + ? = 50$. This demonstrates their secure understanding of the link between addition and subtraction. Most pupils are able to work out the answers to problems that have more than one step to them and explain clearly the method they are using. They have a good knowledge of shapes. They know the names and basic properties of common two and three dimensional mathematical shapes and how to sort them into different groups using these properties. They are able to work competently with symmetrical shapes and have a good understanding of line symmetry at levels normally expected of older pupils.
- 95 By 11, higher attaining pupils are working at levels above expectations. Average attaining pupils are working at levels as expected for their ages and occasionally above these. Lower attaining pupils are generally working at average levels for their age. This means that attainment is above what would be expected for a class of this age. This picture is reflected in other year groups.
- 96 By the end of Year 6, pupils' knowledge and understanding of number is good. Pupils can calculate, using all four operations, with numbers to two decimal places and they apply these skills well when solving problems. Higher attaining pupils have a very secure knowledge and understanding of fractions, percentages and decimals, and apply these to good effect when they work out the answers to everyday problems. Pupils at all levels of attainment use their knowledge and understanding of number well whilst investigating number patterns. They are able to look at patterns of square numbers for example and make suggestions such as all square numbers are the sum of odd numbers. They test their hypotheses effectively.
- 97 Pupils have a thorough understanding of shape and angle. Most can draw and measure angles to the nearest degree and have a very good knowledge of the properties of different triangles and quadrilaterals. Higher attaining pupils use this knowledge and understanding to work out areas of shapes and volumes of solids. They have gone beyond simply counting squares and cubes, but accurately use formulae in their calculations. They also use this knowledge and understanding well when constructing regular pentagons and when looking at slopes and gradients. Pupils handle data well and process a sample to produce frequency diagrams. Pupils read and interpret graphs and also draw their own graphs from tables of data.
- 98 The overall quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, teaching was consistently good and there was no unsatisfactory teaching seen. The good quality of teaching reported at the time of the previous inspection has been maintained. Teachers have a secure understanding of mathematics. They use mathematical terms accurately and encourage pupils to use them in their replies to questions. Basic mathematical and numeracy skills are taught effectively from an early age and are systematically developed as pupils get older. Planning is appropriately based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Group work that follows the main teaching session is carefully planned so that it extends pupils of all abilities. Teachers use day to day assessment of pupils' work well. This was seen in a Year 6 lesson, when the teacher identified difficulties in the previous lesson and took good steps to ensure that pupils overcame these at the beginning of the next. This involved a change of planning.
- 99 Most teachers have appropriate expectations of their pupils, but some of the work of younger pupils is untidy and often difficult to follow. Some teachers do not show sufficient rigour in expecting pupils to organise their work well and to present it neatly. All teachers manage their classes effectively and relationships are good. Good use is made of computers to support work and to raise the profile of teachers' presentations. One teacher, for example, used PowerPoint to introduce the work on timetables in Year 5. This was effective and contributed well to the pupils' understanding, through the clear presentation.

- 100 The overall quality of learning is good, especially in the lessons when the group work challenges pupils at different levels of difficulty. Good learning is seen when pupils are intellectually and creatively tested, such as Year 6 pupils working through very secure problem solving strategies. Pupils enjoy explaining their answers in mental work and benefit from the good level of skills teaching they receive. Pupils with special educational needs or of lower ability make good progress in all lessons. This is because teachers take care to include them in all the activities, alter the level of difficulty in questions, and ensure that they receive good quality support from an adult in their group work. Teaching assistants make a significant contribution to the progress that pupils with special educational needs make, either through supporting their learning difficulties or offering good levels of support in the management of behaviour. Learning was good or better in virtually all of the lessons observed because the pupils concentrated hard, they learned new skills and had a clear idea of how well they were doing and what they needed to do to improve. However, some younger boys find concentrating difficult, require a significant amount of behaviour support and their learning in lessons is not always as good as some other pupils.
- 101 The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable and keen coordinator. She has a clear understanding of the strengths and areas for development within mathematics and is committed to achieving high standards for all pupils and improving them where needed. These are reflected in the good subject development plan. She has carried out a helpful evaluation of practice and standards through direct observation of lessons and by looking at teachers' planning and pupils' books. She is using this information, and the school's records and analyses of pupils' attainment in national and other tests, as the basis for future improvement.

SCIENCE

- 102 By the ages of seven and 11, standards of attainment exceed those for most pupils of similar ages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The improvement is a direct result of the school's recent emphasis on developing pupils' investigative skills. Pupils of all abilities have well structured opportunities to develop their enquiry skills and plan scientific investigations. The school also uses satisfactorily the results of analysis of the national test results to identify and address areas of weakness. For example, the school is taking steps to provide work that interests and motivates girls. There is an improvement to the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. This is having a noticeable effect on standards. The subject leader knows what is needed to enthuse and motivate pupils and has a clear commitment to achieving high standards. There is a good quality policy and scheme of work in place. This is increasing teachers' knowledge and skills and is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils have a good start in the reception class, build on this, and achieve well throughout the school. This reflects the quality of teaching.
- 103 The analysis of work confirms the evidence from lessons of above average achievement. This also applies to the pupils with special educational needs. They have good quality support that enables them to achieve well as they move through the school. Science makes a positive contribution to improving literacy skills through discussion sessions and the pupils' writing reports on their experiments. There is some lack of care over the presentation of the pupils' work in Years 2, 3 and 4. This does not help the pupils to read and understand what they have learnt. The pupils use their numeracy skills effectively in science by producing tables and graphs to display their findings. A good example of this is the spreadsheets Year 5 pupils convert into graphs to measure and record temperatures. This makes very effective links with information and communication technology through the use of computer generated spreadsheets and graphs.
- 104 In Year 2 pupils of all abilities have a good understanding of how to make and test predictions. They show an increasing awareness about the process of change as they grow. Most pupils have above average understanding of what makes a healthy diet. Careful questioning by all adults in the class moves pupils' learning forward. It ensures that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, join in classroom discussions. For example, 'Why do you think ice cream is good for you?' 'Because it's got dairy products in and they're good for you'. The teacher moves

the pupils' thinking on by discussing other ingredients in ice cream. This enables the pupils to draw their own conclusions about the value of different foods.

- 105 Pupils of all abilities have a suitable understanding of different materials. For example, they use accurate scientific vocabulary as they sort materials into natural and manufactured. Pupils' experiments show they understand that heating permanently changes some materials, such as jelly. They know that others, such as chocolate, return to their previous state when they cool down. Pupils know about the life cycles of plants and animals and the main differences between various animals found in the world. Careful teaching enables them to make effective use of information and communication technology. For example, pupils in Year 2 use simple branching keys to classify a range of animals.
- 106 The pupils continue to achieve well as they move into Year 3. The teacher encourages them to ask questions that leads to clear understanding of the construction of the heart and its function. This rate of progress continues through Year 4, where the pupils have a good understanding of the need for fairness in their scientific investigations. By Year 5 the pupils conduct a wide variety of experiments. Careful questioning ensures that all pupils understand that science is based on evidence. This work builds effectively on work in personal, social and health education lessons. For example, the pupils know the effect that smoking has on their lungs and understand the meaning of addiction.
- 107 Teachers encourage pupils to increase and apply their learning from Years 3 and 4. This ensures a good level of achievement in understanding and is developed further in Year 6. Here, pupils work together to plan investigations into how muscles work. They know that they can change only one variable or their results could be inaccurate. This engenders much lively and thoughtful discussion about safety issues and how muscles work in pairs. The analysis of work confirms the above average achievement. For example, pupils in Year 6 know and understand the differences and properties of solids, liquids and gases. They produce clear diagrams of how particles move and understand the principles of magnetic force. The clear emphasis on practical and challenging activities develops a questioning approach that deepens the pupils' understanding. This is an improvement since the previous inspection.
- 108 The quality of teaching is good and ensures that pupils learn and achieve well. Teaching improves as the pupils move through the school and no teaching is unsatisfactory. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers are secure and confident in their teaching and use their subject knowledge effectively to develop the pupils' thinking. They make effective use of questions to test pupils' understanding and develop a suitable scientific vocabulary. All the teachers' planning places a clear focus on practising and improving key skills. The teachers ensure that these build systematically on what the pupils know. For example, in a Year 5 lesson the teacher used an anatomical model to revise the pupils' knowledge of internal body organs. A very profitable question and answer session enabled the pupils to explain their learning and gave the teacher a clear insight into what the pupils already knew.
- 109 The teachers generally provide demanding work for the higher and lower attaining pupils but in some classes there is little difference between the tasks for the majority of pupils. This restricts learning and achievement for those pupils who find the work too difficult or too easy. Teachers do not make consistent use of lesson evaluations and assessments to guide them in what to teach next in order to ensure good quality learning for all pupils. There is not enough use of the summing up session at the end of some lessons to let the pupils explain their learning. The analysis of work shows that there is inconsistent use of marking across the school. It does not tell pupils what they need to do to improve their work. The regular setting of carefully planned homework gives effective support to work done in lessons. Teachers use the results of trends in performance to ensure that the work provides interest for boys and girls. This is leading to improved achievement by girls.
- 110 The new subject leader is enthusiastic and determined to improve standards further. The effective monitoring of planning ensures coverage of all elements of the National Curriculum for science. This provides the pupils with a broadly based and well balanced curriculum that meets their developing needs interests and abilities. An area for development is the monitoring of written work

and teaching to judge standards and effectiveness of the curriculum. There are effective assessment procedures in place for all elements of the science curriculum. These give a clear picture of the pupils' achievements but are not yet used effectively to plan future work. There are many good quality displays of pupils' work, both around the school and in classrooms. These greatly help to raise the profile of the subject and show pupils how much their efforts are valued.

ART AND DESIGN

- 111 At the ages of seven and 11, standards in art and design are broadly in line with those expected nationally. A scrutiny of photographic evidence and displays shows all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress across the school. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.
- 112 Pupils in Year 2 have developed a sound range of skills, having worked with different media such as pencil, chalk, paint and collage. Their skills in observational drawing are good. They have closely observed and made drawings of each other and of themselves. Their sketchbooks show that skills, such as shading with pencil and mixing colours to achieve different tones, have been practised. In the Year 2 lesson observed, pupils were able to talk about their work and suggest how improvements could be made.
- 113 By Year 6 pupils have satisfactorily built on and developed previously learnt skills. However, the use of sketchbooks across the junior years is inconsistent, often showing little attempt to plan work or practise skills. Much of the planned art work is used to support studies in other subjects, for example producing Aztec designs and making Tudor rose plaques in history, so that the actual development of skills in art and design is not given sufficient focus.
- 114 From the scrutiny of past work and the lessons observed, teaching and learning are satisfactory. One lesson was very good. In this lesson, resources were well prepared. Photographs had been taken of pupils to encourage them to look carefully at their own faces before attempting a self portrait. Pupils were able to talk confidently about previous work and relate previously learnt skills to what they were now doing. The class teacher had high expectations of the work to be produced and demonstrated good subject knowledge. In all lessons, pupils are managed well, resulting in good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. The use of information and communication technology is starting to be explored as some paint programs are used and a digital camera produces images on which to base pupils' work.
- 115 National guidelines have been introduced to help ensure continuous and progressive development of skills. These are being adapted to the needs of the school, particularly to link in with a cross curricular approach to learning. However, there is little recorded assessment of pupils' developing skills on which to base and plan future learning, resulting in some lack of achievement. There has been no monitoring of teaching and learning with a view to improving quality and raising standards.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 116 By the ages of seven and 11 pupils attain standards that are in line with expectations and they make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs are fully included in all aspects of design technology and make good progress. The majority of pupils have acquired a range of appropriate skills by the time they transfer to secondary school and they have had the opportunity to use a range of different materials in their work. The school has maintained the standards that were reported at the time of the last inspection.
- 117 There is a clear and well structured scheme of work in place that draws on national guidelines and that ensures pupils' skills build progressively throughout Years 1 to 6. Most Year 2 pupils know that it is important to draw a plan of what they are going to make and they can do this successfully. They know a good range of techniques for joining materials together, such as stapling, gluing and sewing and once they have made the object they can sensibly evaluate and discuss what they have made. This was clearly evident in the vehicles they had constructed with moving wheels and the puppets they had made. The vehicles had been carefully built out of cardboard and then decorated in a variety of designs. Once they had made them they had discussed how successful they had been and how they could have improved their finished product.
- 118 By the time pupils reach Year 6 they have progressively extended the skills they learned when they were in the infants to a wider range of materials. In the project on making a pair of slippers, they

drew detailed designs for the footwear and then wrote out, with considerable care, instructions for making them. Once the slippers had been made, they evaluated each pair taking into consideration such things as comfort and safety. Their work in design and technology has a positive impact on many other areas of learning and in each of the year groups, pupils are presented with interesting challenges. In Year 1, pupils work on designing their ideal school. In carrying out this work, they have to draw on their skills of simple mapping and getting things in the correct position. This directly benefits the work they do in developing their mapping skills in geography.

- 119 Pupils in Year 3, who carry out a project on making sandwich snacks, not only improve their food technology knowledge, but at the same time learn about food hygiene and the care they must take over personal hygiene when dealing with food products. Work by Year 5 pupils on musical instruments helps them to realise the importance of pitch and tone as they design pipes and drums that can be played to accompany music. The work they do on investigating a range of breads and then making their own bread has a direct impact on their use of language as they find words to describe the texture of the crust, the colours in the bread, how the bread smells and finally it's taste.
- 120 Because of timetable arrangements, only two lessons were seen during the inspection. Samples of pupils' work, photographs and displays in the school indicate that the teaching is satisfactory. Pupils have regular opportunities to design and construct. Tasks are well matched to the age and levels of attainment of pupils. Consequently pupils derive a great deal of enjoyment and self satisfaction from being able to produce their models.
- 121 The subject leader is new to the role but he has a clear understanding of what needs to be done and the first step will be a review of the current policy to identify ways in which standards can be improved.

GEOGRAPHY

- 122 Standards in geography at the end of Years 2 and 6 meet the expectations for pupils of these ages. This is much the same as it was at the time of the last inspection. Through systematically reviewing the subject, and discussing the outcomes, significant changes have been made to the curriculum. Units are now included that are more appropriate to the needs of the pupils and the school anticipates this will have a positive impact on standards. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout the school. Those pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they receive good support and this enables them to have full access to the geography curriculum.
- 123 By the end of Year 2 pupils have a sound knowledge of simple map work. This is introduced in Year 1 by asking the pupils to make plans of their houses. This develops into hand drawn maps that show the way each of the pupils come to school. On these route maps the pupils identify features that they pass such as the roundabout and the road to Clacton. In doing this work, they are beginning to understand how important it is to have particular landmarks on maps that people can recognise. Pupils in Year 2 label the countries of the United Kingdom on a map and discuss which part of the country they live in. A key feature of all the work is the detailed discussion that takes place between the teachers and the children. During these discussions, pupils are encouraged to express their opinions, talk about things they like and dislike within the environment and to begin to develop enquiring minds. Year 2 pupils carry out a comparative study where they look at a different environment at Brightlingsea. In carrying out the study they are able to identify the similarities and differences between the two environments and compare and contrast such things as shops, locality on the map and the kind of jobs people do in the different places.
- 124 In Year 6 pupils are able to investigate water and its effects on landscapes and people. They learn about the features of rivers and where the water actually comes from. Interesting cross-curricular links occur as pupils study the River Nile and the reasons why the river provided such a fertile environment for growing crops. In doing this work, they develop a clear understanding of the effect nature has on the environment and then how people exert their influence on the natural

environment. In a lively lesson in Year 6, pupils investigated the influence of weather on tourism. Armed with tourist information on a number of resorts, the pupils worked in pairs to use the information to decide whether they would choose to take a holiday there and how much the weather would influence this decision. Earlier work in Year 4 gave pupils an understanding of physical and human geographical features. In their research on coastal settlements, the pupils look at Scarborough and study how bays were formed and the effect of coastal erosion on the area. The teacher was able to bring the topic alive by drawing on his own personal knowledge of the area. In carrying out their topics, pupils use reading skills well to extract information from text in order to learn facts about the topic they are studying. The curriculum places a strong emphasis on the skills of interpreting that information.

- 125 The teaching of geography is satisfactory. During the inspection some good teaching was observed. Teachers use questioning well to reinforce learning, and to challenge and extend pupils' thinking. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy discussing their work. When it is appropriate, good use is made of information and communication technology to research information and to provide an effective extra dimension to their learning.

HISTORY

- 126 Standards achieved by pupils at the ages of seven and 11 are in line with national expectations, and have been satisfactorily maintained since the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress across the school.
- 127 By the age of seven, pupils compare present day objects and facilities with those of the past, gaining a sound understanding of change over time. For example, they consider life without cars and how swimsuits have developed. They understand the need to seek and examine evidence, for example, by finding out the past memories of people alive today and by examining artefacts such as old seaside souvenirs. They have a satisfactory knowledge of famous people and past events, such as Guy Fawkes and the Gunpowder Plot.
- 128 At 11, pupils understand that the past can be divided into different periods of time, such as the Tudors and the Victorians. They know that archaeological evidence provides clues to past civilisations, but are unsure of the lasting impact, for example, of ancient Egypt and Greece. By Year 6, most pupils have developed satisfactory research skills. Higher attaining pupils are aware of the need to compare different sources of information in order to build up an accurate picture of the past. Pupils have a sound knowledge of historical events, but are unsure how these have altered the course of history.
- 129 The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, although some good teaching was seen during the inspection. Lessons are well planned with clear learning objectives that are shared with pupils so that all know the purpose of lessons. In the better lessons pupils are provided with good speaking and listening opportunities, both during introductions and group work, that encourage them to think and reason and therefore develop their knowledge and understanding further. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, by talking about a set of photographs showing the construction stages of a building, pupils were able to sequence them chronologically. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were working on different aspects of the Tudors. Good questioning by the teacher and adult helpers stimulated pupils' interest and curiosity, encouraging them to look further in their reading and research. Relationships in lessons are very strong. The consistent use of praise and encouragement helps pupils to build up their confidence in the subject and raises their self esteem. It also results in very good behaviour and positive attitudes to learning. Good opportunities to work within groups aid pupils' social development. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent, and often does not inform pupils of how well they have done or what they need to do to improve. In the conclusion to lessons, little time is given for pupils to evaluate their own learning.
- 130 Literacy skills are used satisfactorily, for example, when pupils research topics and record what they have found out. These activities, however, do not always provide sufficiently challenging opportunities for pupils to use and develop their particular writing skills, and thus demonstrate their

understanding and interpretation of history. Good links are made with art and design and design technology. Much of the history work displayed around the school draws on pupils' artistic skills. In their work on the Tudors, pupils disassemble Tudor hats and create a template to make their own. Developing use is made of information and communication technology. Pupils get information from the internet, transferring relevant parts into a Word document. Year 6 pupils made a multimedia presentation on World War II.

- 131 Since the last inspection, when the scheme of work was limited, national guidelines have been introduced that now help to ensure continuous development in pupils' learning. However, there has been no formal monitoring of teaching and learning to evaluate their impact. The school recognises the need to establish formal assessment procedures to record the progress made by pupils and to help plan appropriate future learning opportunities. Resources for the subject are adequate, although more artefacts would benefit pupils' historical enquiry. Visitors to the school are interviewed to gain first hand evidence of recent history. Visits to places such as Kentwell Hall for a Tudor re-enactment day provide memorable experiences for pupils.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 132 Standards by the ages of seven and 11 exceed those expected for most pupils of these ages. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. There is a significant improvement in the provision for information and communication technology since the previous inspection. The school has a well equipped information and technology suite, supported by parents' fund raising efforts. This, and the consistently good quality teaching, is having a positive effect on standards and the pupils' achievement. The school has carefully structured assessment of pupils' progress and achievement and their work is thoroughly monitored. This gives a clear picture of how well the pupils are learning. The teaching of skills and techniques is well developed across the school. This enables the pupils to use their skills effectively in all subject areas. There is no significant difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. All members of staff take great care to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities to use computers and their related equipment. The subject leader is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and has a clear determination to raise standards even higher.
- 133 Pupils make good progress with their learning in lessons and achieve well. This is because of the consistently good teaching. For example, in a Year 5 lesson the pupils developed above average understanding of how sensing devices are used to monitor environmental changes. The teacher carefully reviewed and revised previous work, gave precise instructions and asked probing questions to draw out the pupils' understanding. The teacher's very good relationships with the pupils, expectations of high standards of behaviour and achievement motivated them to work hard. All the pupils enjoyed their work and responded enthusiastically to the task. By the end of the lesson the pupils were eager to share their findings. "Look at my results, I've done it 'cool'." All presented their findings in graph form and drew conclusions.
- 134 Other examples of good lessons include Year 2 pupils using the computers to compose nonsense rhymes. Again, good relationships, high standards of discipline and a careful explanation of the task meant that pupils knew what to do and what was expected of them. The pupils achieved well and understood how to use the word processing program to edit their writing and change the way it looked. They also knew how to put in a picture with the writing. Similarly, in the computer club, Year 6 pupils work confidently together to solve problems and compose emails. Relationships are good and the teacher gives unobtrusive support whilst promoting interest and independent learning. This enables the pupils to consolidate what they already know in a social situation. The teachers make effective links with work in literacy when the pupils prepare multimedia presentations. This increases their awareness of how to present information to a wider audience. By Year 6 most pupils have a good understanding of the internet and are using emails confidently. They have above average computer skills. For example, pupils can log on to the network with ease, draft email messages and exchange information with others. The school has suitable systems in place to ensure that there is secure access to the internet.

- 135 The quality of teaching in lessons, by the specialist teacher and others, is consistently good. All adults are confident in supporting the pupils and increasing their skills and techniques. They pass their good subject knowledge and enthusiasm on to the pupils. As a result, the pupils enjoy their learning and quickly realise the advantages of using computers. For example, pupils research material independently and produce very effective posters to support their work on World War 2. The good quality support for pupils with special educational needs enables them to achieve well and work alongside their classmates. This increases their self esteem and independence.
- 136 Information and communication technology is managed effectively by a dedicated, hard working and knowledgeable subject leader. The policy is detailed, supportive and gives helpful guidance to teachers and support staff. The school uses a carefully adapted version of the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority scheme of work. This effectively meets the defined needs of each year group within the school. The subject leader has a very clear vision for the future development of the subject. This includes increasing the already good supply of overhead projection equipment and developing a school website to link in with the village website.

MUSIC

- 137 By the end of both Year 2 and Year 6, attainment in music matches what is expected for most pupils at age seven and 11. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2, the pupils investigate and arrange sounds and create simple compositions. They have a suitable awareness of rhythm and tempo and know that sounds are made in different ways. By the end of Year 6 the pupils perform accurately and confidently, sing two part songs, appraise their own and other's work effectively and clearly identify areas for improvement. All pupils, including those with special educational needs take a full part in all musical activities and performances. This increases the pupils' confidence and self esteem. Assessment of achievement is informal and does not provide consistent information about progress across the school. This shows no improvement in assessment since the previous inspection. The school has a suitable range of instruments and music from western and non western cultures. This helps in raising the pupils' awareness of cultural diversity. There are not enough opportunities for pupils to use keyboards to support their work in music. The range of extra curricular activities is similar to those at the previous inspection.
- 138 The teachers ensure that, by the age of seven, all pupils have opportunities to increase their ability to sing melodically. This is evident in a lesson where pupils recall and sing a song about a tadpole with clear diction and acceptable tune. The pupils increase their ability to understand and use musical language such as 'rhythm' and 'composition' because of the skilful teaching. The infant pupils and Foundation Stage children are taught together in one large group. This makes effective use of the teacher's specialist skills but does not provide for better progress over time because all the pupils do the same work. The teacher ensures that all pupils take part in the planned activities and have opportunities to use musical instruments. This means that the pupils are interested, behave well and enjoy music making. There are no opportunities at the end of the lesson for the pupils to discuss and share their achievements with each other. This limits their knowledge of what they have learnt.
- 139 This satisfactory rate of learning and achievement continues as the pupils move through the school. By Year 6 the pupils compare different pieces of music and explore the moods and feelings they evoke. The class teacher uses classical, popular, Ukrainian and African music. This has the potential to increase the pupils' awareness of different cultures but there is no mention of where the music comes from. The brief summing up session at the end of the lesson does not give enough time for the pupils to explore contrasting moods and the origins of the music. Carefully targeted questioning ensures that all the pupils have opportunities to join in discussions. This increases the self esteem of pupils with special educational needs and ensures they make progress similar to their classmates. The pupils sing well with clear diction, correct phrasing and posture, accurate pitch and great enthusiasm. This is apparent in the whole school singing session where the pupils behave very well and enjoy singing along with adults.

- 140 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, although much good teaching was seen during the inspection. This has a positive effect on pupils' interest, enthusiasm and achievement. The teachers are confident, make their expectations clear and ensure the pupils understand the tasks. As a result the pupils work with a clear sense of purpose and take pride in their achievements. The teaching of reception children and Years 1 and 2 together does not give a clear picture of achievement and progress for the younger pupils. This means that standards are restricted for the older pupils and some work is too difficult for the youngest.
- 141 The good extra curricular provision of recorder clubs and choir enriches and broadens pupils' experiences in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6. This, and participation in the village festivals and school performances, effectively increases the pupils' skills and self esteem.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 142 Pupils' attainment is above that normally expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. A particular strength of the physical education curriculum is the work done in swimming where standards by the end of Year 4, for the majority of pupils, are as high as those nationally expected of pupils in Year 6. Standards in physical education at the time of the last inspection were deemed to be satisfactory, this is therefore an area of improvement. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress and all pupils are fully included in every aspect of the work. Only three lessons were seen during the time of the inspection but the quality of work produced by the pupils is a clear indication that teaching is good. Teachers make good use of national subject guidance and this ensures that all aspects of the subject are covered effectively. The physical education programme is enhanced by a good range of extra curricular activities, some of which have a waiting list, and by involvement in local sporting activities. In these competitions the school has a considerable amount of success in spite of the smallness of its size and again this is testament to the good work in physical education.
- 143 Pupils in Year 2 are developing good throwing and catching skills. They are given the opportunity to choose at what height and distance they choose to throw the ball according to their confidence and skill. During this activity, the teacher made good use of ongoing assessment, watching carefully what the pupils did and then drawing them together to discuss points for improvement. In this way pupils made good progress in their learning and in improving their skills. Throughout the activity the pupils worked well together, cooperating with each other, listening carefully to instructions and at the same time thoroughly enjoying the activity. The work in Year 2 builds very successfully on the earlier work in Year 1 where the pupils have developed a range of good basic skills including muscle control, coordination of their movements and an awareness of how to use the space in the school hall.
- 144 By the time pupils are in Year 5 they are able to draw on all their previous experiences to develop quite sophisticated sequences of movements. They show a very clear understanding of why they need to warm up and what the warm up session achieves. In the lesson observed, the teacher gave very clear instructions to those pupils who have any health problems and then led the warm up session with clear demonstrations of the movements the pupils had to follow. Everyone enjoyed the rigorous and challenging session. When asked to work on a sequence of three movements that contrast with their partner's sequence, they show how agile and imaginative they can be moving their bodies in a very controlled yet flexible manner and using the space well. Very good use is made of pupil demonstration, not only to evaluate the work being done but also to encourage other pupils to work on the quality of their sequence. Interesting use is made of discussion to encourage pupils to clarify in their own minds what they are going to do. In all the observed physical activities pupils showed a genuine appreciation of each other's efforts.