

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **GOSBECKS PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Colchester, Essex

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114742

Headteacher: David Burrage

Reporting inspector: Ms R Frith  
2490

Dates of inspection: 1 – 4 July 2002

Inspection number: 245924

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Owen Ward Close Colchester Essex
Postcode:	CO2 9DG
Telephone number:	01206 575407
Fax number:	01206 369856
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Herring
Date of previous inspection:	27 – 30 April 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2490	R Frith	Registered inspector	Design and technology History Areas of learning in the Foundation Stage English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9457	G Bindoff	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
11901	P Lowe	Team inspector	English Art and design Music	
28170	I Chearman	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Religious education Special educational needs	
30717	G Tompsett	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Gosbecks Primary School is a community school for girls and boys aged four to eleven years. There are 340 pupils on roll, who mostly come from the surrounding area. The school is situated in the south-west of Colchester and serves the community of Shrub End, which contains a mixture of privately owned and social housing. Pupils come from families covering a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds with fewer coming from professional families. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is broadly average. On entry to the reception classes, children display below average levels of attainment, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy. Few pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds and currently only two pupils speak English as an additional language. The percentage of pupils with special educational needs is broadly average. Most pupils who require regular additional support have problems with speech or communication, are visually impaired or have moderate learning difficulties. Five pupils have a formal statement of special educational needs. At the time of the inspection, the headteacher was returning to work on a part-time phased basis after six months absence due to major surgery. During the inspection, an acting headteacher was in post. In March this year, the school again received recognition of its work through the 'Investors in People Award'.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

Gosbecks is a good school with many significant strengths. The quality of education is good and this is helping to raise standards. Pupils are encouraged to work hard and they enjoy their learning. Levels of pastoral care are also good. Pupils currently in Year 6 are achieving at least average standards in English and mathematics and above average standards in science. The very good leadership and management have resulted in a team of hard working staff who have developed good teaching skills. The school provides good value for money.

#### **What the school does well**

- Standards are improving in English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6. By the time they leave school, pupils attain above average standards in science, information and communication technology and art and design.
- The quality of teaching is good throughout the school with a high proportion of very good and excellent teaching observed during the inspection. Learning support assistants contribute well to pupils' learning.
- The school has a strong commitment to inclusive education and is effective in developing a harmonious community where all are valued and encouraged to respect others. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good.
- The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and results in pupils behaving well and developing very good relationships with adults and each other.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school and are interested and involved in their learning.
- Teachers provide an interesting curriculum and provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good.
- Pupils are well cared for.
- The school is very well led and managed.

#### **What could be improved**

- The standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of major world religions and pupils' spiritual awareness.
- Pupils' awareness of the range of cultures represented in Britain.

*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 successfully addressed the issues identified in the report following the last inspection in April 1998. Detailed schemes of work are now in place and this has helped to raise standards, for example in literacy, by ensuring that pupils build their knowledge, skills and understanding in a

systematic way. The quality of education for children in the reception classes has improved as here, too, staff have developed the curriculum, their own knowledge and understanding of how young children learn and improved resources. Staff have also improved provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development which is now satisfactory but more needs to be done in these areas. Staff have improved the quality of the arts and have plans for further developments. Other significant improvements include the quality of teaching, management and leadership, and support to include all pupils within the school community. Overall, good improvement has been made and staff and governors demonstrate a strong commitment to improve further.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	C	C	D
mathematics	D	D	C	C
science	D	D	D	E

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

Children are currently making good progress in the reception classes and by the time they start Year 1 are likely to reach average standards in all areas of learning except in their personal, social and behavioural development where standards are above those expected for pupils of a similar age nationally. Results of the 2001 national tests and assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 showed that standards in reading and writing were average and standards in mathematics were well below average. Early indications suggest that standards in the 2002 national tests will match the standards expected for pupils at the age of seven in reading and mathematics and will be above in writing and science. Results for the 2001 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 6 were average in English and mathematics and below average in science. There have been significant improvements over the last year and evidence available during the inspection indicates that standards in the 2002 national tests for eleven-year-olds exceed those in 2001. Over the last five years, the school's trend of improvement overall in these subjects has been in line with the national trend. In 2001, the school achieved its targets in English and science but not in mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make good progress. Higher attaining pupils are usually sufficiently challenged and consequently also make good progress. No significant difference was noted in the progress and attainment of boys and girls during the inspection. However, in the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds, girls did better than boys in English, mathematics and science.



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy their work and are interested in what they do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. Most pupils are polite and courteous towards each other and towards adults.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good and relationships between all members of the school community are very good.
Attendance	Attendance is broadly satisfactory and the rate of unauthorised absence is low.

The pupils' good behaviour and personal development and their very good relationships and attitudes provide a good basis for their learning and help them to make good progress.

## 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.*

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. It is consistently good throughout the school and during the inspection a high level of very good and excellent teaching was observed. The development of the school's Learning and Teaching Policy has been important in demonstrating to staff qualities of good teaching and giving them guidance. Senior managers have been successful in building a good team and staff are valued and encouraged to give of their best. They are well supported through a good programme of professional development. The teaching of children in the reception classes is particularly effective in settling them quickly into school life and developing their communication, personal and social skills, independence and attitudes to learning. These strengths are built upon successfully in the rest of the school. Teachers have adopted the National Literacy Strategy well and this has brought about improvements. They have satisfactorily adopted the National Numeracy Strategy. The quality of teaching and learning in English and mathematics is good. The school allocates valuable additional support for pupils with special educational needs and consequently they make good progress towards the targets set for them. Support staff make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The needs of the pupils who speak English as an additional language are well met. Higher attaining pupils are usually appropriately challenged.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Pupils are offered an interesting curriculum with a good range of learning opportunities that stimulate their interests and help to maintain their concentration. Provision for personal, social and health education is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and make good progress towards the targets set in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils speak English fluently and receive an appropriate and interesting curriculum. This enables them to make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal education through the development of their social and moral responsibilities is very good. Pupils have a good sense of responsibility for themselves and others. Provision to develop their spiritual and cultural awareness is only satisfactory because teachers do not systematically plan for this in their lessons.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff have good knowledge and understanding of their pupils and make good provision for their health and welfare.

The school's partnership with parents is good.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher has successfully created systems and structures to support school improvement and during his absence the acting headteacher, senior staff and governors have continued to maintain these developments well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are very effective in fulfilling their responsibilities and all statutory requirements are met. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good systems are used to monitor and evaluate the school's performance. Staff and governors have established a system that identifies areas for improvement and sets appropriate targets. This ensures that the school moves forward towards achieving its aims.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is good and takes account of the cost of implementing the school's plan for improvement. Correct financial procedures are followed and staff and governors indicate that they seek to obtain the best value for their spending.

There are sufficient, suitably qualified teachers to ensure that class sizes are not too large. Support staff are effective and the good support they provide is a contributory factor in the pupils' learning. The accommodation is well cared for but judged to be only satisfactory overall. This is due to the large proportion of relocatable classrooms in use. Resources are satisfactory overall and used well to support learning throughout the school.

## **PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL**

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pupils enjoy school and make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good and pupils are encouraged to work hard and behave well.</li> <li>• The school is welcoming and parents feel comfortable about approaching staff.</li> <li>• Pupils are helped to become mature and responsible. Good systems are in place to recognise children's successes.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The provision of homework.</li> <li>• A closer working relationship with the school.</li> <li>• More information about how their child is getting on.</li> <li>• The provision of activities outside formal lessons.</li> <li>• The teaching by some supply teachers.</li> </ul>

Inspectors endorse the positive views held by parents and the regard they have for the school overall. Although they acknowledge the concerns expressed by a minority of parents, they judge the provision of homework to be good. It supports the work done in class and those pupils spoken with felt it was appropriate. Inspectors also acknowledge the views of a minority of parents who would like a closer working relationship with the school and more information about how their children are getting on. However, inspectors believe that the school offers good opportunities for parents to talk with staff, as well as providing good quality written information. Inspectors do, however, believe that these features may have been affected by the absence of the headteacher over the last six months. Inspectors judge the provision of extra-curricular activities to be good compared with other similar schools. There is insufficient evidence for inspectors to judge the quality of teaching by supply teachers in the past.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1. Children enter school with a wide range of abilities and experiences and a small number are identified as having special educational needs. Assessments made by the school within the first few weeks of entering the reception classes indicate that children's attainment overall is below average, particularly in the areas of communication, language and literacy. Children are currently making good progress in the reception classes, particularly in the areas of personal, social and emotional development due to the good quality of the curriculum and good teaching. By the time they are ready to go into Year 1, most children are likely to reach the nationally expected standards in communication, language and literacy, mathematical, creative and physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children make particularly good progress in developing their personal, social and emotional skills and a significant number attain standards in these areas above those expected for children of the same age nationally.
2. Results of the 2001 standard assessment tests at the end of Year 2 indicate that in comparison with all schools, pupils' attainment was average in reading and writing and well below average in mathematics. When compared with pupils in schools with a similar take up of free school meals they attained below average standards in reading, average standards in writing and well below average standards in mathematics. Results of the 2001 standard teacher assessments in science indicate that the number of pupils reaching the expected level for their age was average. These results show that the school was effective in supporting pupils to reach the level appropriate for their age in these subjects but less effective in encouraging them to reach the higher levels. Information provided by the school indicates that in the 2002 national tests, pupils attained average standards in reading and mathematics and above average standards in writing and science. This shows an improvement in writing, mathematics and science from the previous year
3. By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment in the 2001 tests matched the national average in English and mathematics and was below the national average in science. When these results are compared with those of pupils in schools with a similar take up of free school meals, standards were below average in English, average in mathematics and well below average in science. Information provided by the school indicates that pupils in the current Year 6 made significant improvements on these results in relation to the percentage of pupils attaining the level appropriate for their age in English, mathematics and science. There was also a very significant increase in the percentage of pupils attaining the higher level in science. In 2001, the school reached its targets for English but not for mathematics but unconfirmed data indicates that they have achieved their targets in both subjects for the year 2002.
4. Evidence from this inspection indicates that the standards achieved by pupils in the current Year 2 are average in reading and above average in speaking, listening and writing. Pupils in the current Year 6 are reaching standards that are at least average with approximately a quarter attaining a level higher than that expected for their age nationally. Staff have worked hard to raise standards in writing since the last inspection and have been successful. The setting of targets for all pupils in writing, linked with regular assessments and the tracking of pupils' progress, has helped standards to improve. Pupils are now more aware of how they can improve their writing and reach

the next National Curriculum level of attainment. Standards in literacy continue to improve throughout the school.

5. Standards seen in mathematics for the pupils in the current Year 2 do not always match those of national tests. Although standards for these pupils have improved, some who are completing work at a higher level than expected for their age in lessons fail to attain the higher level in the national tests. Pupils in Year 6 are at least attaining average levels and approximately a quarter achieves above this. Improvements in standards reflect the good quality teaching and the effective setting arrangements. Grouping pupils by ability helps teachers to match activities to their learning needs more easily. Currently, standards in numeracy are improving throughout the school.
6. Standards for science in the current Year 2 and Year 6 are above average. There has been a rise in the percentage of eleven-year-old pupils reaching the standard expected for their age, and a significant increase in the number of pupils achieving a higher level than this. With the current rate of good teaching and learning, indications are that standards are likely to improve. This improvement reflects the focus that the school has placed on developing the learning and teaching in this subject and the determination of staff to succeed. Staff have improved their levels of knowledge and expertise and their planning so that work now more readily matches the range of abilities within each class.
7. During the inspection, pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 were displaying average levels of attainment in design and technology, geography, history and physical education. Standards were above average in art and design and information and communication technology. Pupils in Year 2 reach average standards in music but insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement for pupils in Year 6. Pupils were also matching the expectations for religious education as outlined in the programme of work for Essex schools, although coverage of the curriculum was narrow for the oldest pupils.
8. The pupils learning English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers and have full access to a broad curriculum. Their standard of English is such that they require no specific additional support. No significant difference was noted in the progress of boys and girls during the inspection but in the 2001 national tests for eleven-year-olds, girls did better than boys in English, mathematics and science. Higher attaining pupils are usually appropriately challenged and reach standards in line with their abilities.
9. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in their learning against the targets set for them in their individual education plans and in the completed work designed by teachers to meet their learning needs. These plans contain appropriate and manageable targets for pupils that are usually met because the learning opportunities planned by class teachers are appropriate and the support provided is good. By the time they leave school, most pupils on the special educational needs register reach standards that are in line with their abilities.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

10. Pupils enjoy school and have very good attitudes to their learning. Parents agree that their children are happy at school and that they work hard. Children in the reception classes are enthusiastic learners and sustain their interest well. They particularly enjoy sessions shared with parents, for example the family literacy lessons and the visit to the class by parents with small babies and toddlers. They talked confidently to a pregnant mother about the 'baby in her tummy' and responded very positively to their teacher who successfully channelled their excitement into the preparation of good

questions to ask the visitors.

11. Pupils in all year groups are developing good work habits. They settle well to the tasks they are given and sustain their concentration. They respond very well to challenging work and are keen to succeed. They co-operate well together when they work in pairs or small groups and are able to take some responsibility for their own learning through their own research. Pupils with special educational needs have very good attitudes, are keen to learn, and take full advantage of the opportunities offered by the school because they have a keen sense of being valued and are fully included in all activities.
12. Pupils in Year 5 could not have responded better to some excellent teaching in music. They thoroughly enjoyed the work, developing their skills in rhythm and beat, and were totally committed to the activities in the lesson. At the end, one pupil said that his body was aching because he had used up so much energy.
13. Pupils are enthusiastic about the good range of activities the school provides outside lessons. Year 6 pupils had a wonderful time on their residential visit to Harrogate. The visit provided a very good opportunity for pupils to develop mature attitudes, and pupils who had some previous experience of staying away from home supported other pupils well. The favourite activity was the visit to a theme park but pupils were also able to explore their feelings about some of the other places they visited. At Fountains Abbey they were encouraged to think about the way of life of the monks and the impact of silence on their daily lives. Older pupils also enjoy after school clubs. The art club is very popular and the pupils who attend take the activity very seriously. They are very committed to their work and are proud of their achievements.
14. Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. At playtimes there is a friendly, relaxed atmosphere with pupils playing well together most of the time. There are occasions when older pupils do not resolve conflicts well, especially in football games, and tempers flare. Year 2 pupils who are 'playground friends' take their responsibilities very seriously. They look out for pupils who are on their own and would like friends to play with and they try to sort out any arguments between pupils which arise. Pupils are well aware of the school's expectations about behaviour and they value the 'pleased with you' notes they receive. Inspectors found no evidence of bullying or other oppressive behaviour. Pupils are confident to talk to adults in the school if they have any problems and say that the school acts promptly to deal with incidents when they occur. No pupils have been excluded in recent years and this reflects the success of the school's policies for meeting the needs of all pupils. The school has effective systems in place for promoting race equality and monitors its work in this area. Staff have recently developed a good race equality policy which reflects their practice and recent national guidance. Consequently, pupils from all ethnic groups get along well together and play a full part in the day-to-day life of the school.
15. Relationships between pupils and between pupils and the adults in the school are very good and these contribute significantly to the good environment for learning and pupils' good achievements. Pupils are very clear about the effects of their actions on other people and what they must do to be a kind and considerate person. They are learning to value differences between people and to respect people with different faiths. In Year 6 pupils listen to each other well and have the confidence to share their feelings with the class, for example their hopes and fears about moving on to secondary school.
16. Pupils value the opportunities they have to contribute to the life of the school through membership of the school council. They consult with their class groups and have made decisions about new play and games equipment. They take their responsibility

seriously and are learning about democratic processes.

17. Attendance is satisfactory and similar to most schools. Levels of unauthorised absence are low. Most pupils arrive promptly for the start of the morning session but a few arrive late and consequently are unable to start work on time.

#### **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?**

18. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection in relation to the increase in very good and excellent teaching and in the absence of unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is now good throughout the school and during the inspection a high proportion of very good and excellent teaching was observed. A key factor in this improvement is the development and implementation of a comprehensive learning and teaching policy, which outlines good practice and the school's expectations. Also, the recent focus on teaching and learning in subjects such as English and science has helped to identify key features and skills of good teaching which staff have transferred to other subjects. Teachers are also supported well through a good programme of professional development which helps to identify their areas of strength, and those areas which they need to develop further. There is a strong team spirit throughout the school and staff work hard to support each other and the pupils in their care. Support staff work well and are instrumental in encouraging pupils' progress and the standards that they achieve. Overall, teachers use time, resources and the expertise of support staff well.
19. The good quality of teaching in the reception classes is an important factor in the way children develop good personal, emotional and social skills, attitudes to learning and behaviour. Since the last inspection, staff have received training in relation to the learning needs of young children and the requirements of the Foundation Stage curriculum. This has helped them to provide a more appropriate curriculum with a greater emphasis on learning through play and discovery. The quality and use of resources has also improved. Lesson planning is good and reflects the national guidance for teaching children of this age. Teachers' expectations are high and the children's knowledge, skills and understanding are successfully developed. They are well prepared to start work in the National Curriculum, when appropriate. The support staff give valuable help to the children and this is a key feature in making children feel secure in their learning, particularly those with a statement of special educational needs. In both reception classes, these pupils were well motivated by the teachers and support staff who were enthusiastic and made learning fun. They used a range of equipment which captured the children's interests and ensured their full involvement. Appropriate attention has been placed on settling children into school and a good range of activities is provided that maintains the children's interest and supports their learning.
20. Throughout the school, teachers' knowledge and understanding are good and they use these to plan work that is well matched to the pupils' needs. Planning is very good and based on schemes of work taken from published materials and national guidance, including that in the National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies. Teachers have used these strategies to improve their teaching and this has helped to raise standards. Perhaps the most significant factors in improving teachers' practice has been the clear identification of what they want pupils to learn and the developing awareness of the range of learning styles. Throughout the school, a very good range of teaching methods were in use and this helps to cater for the wide variety of learning needs across the school. Teachers place particular emphasis on developing pupils' thinking skills and helping them to become independent in their learning. Staff have also developed their knowledge and expertise in relation to information and communication technology. This, together with improvements in resources, is helping to raise

standards.

21. In the best lessons, pupils are fully aware of what they are expected to learn and do, and at the end of the lesson assess how far they have come towards reaching the lesson objectives. This was particularly well managed in a Year 6 design and technology lesson where pupils were encouraged to identify whether they had met the lesson's objective of designing a model fairground ride. They were also encouraged to talk about their own personal achievements and what they could do to improve in the next design and technology lesson. Teachers provide appropriate support and challenge which ensure that pupils of all abilities maintain a good pace in their learning and build systematically on what they already know and understand. The next stages in pupils' learning are clearly identified through effective assessment and information gained from this is used to plan a series of related lessons. The best teachers do this well. In the few lessons that are generally satisfactory but fail to bring about good learning, there is a lack of pace, and progress is determined more by the pupils than the teacher.
22. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good and these help staff to manage the pupils in their care successfully. Teachers expect pupils to behave well and, in response, the vast majority do so. There is a good ethos in the school where, although teachers have high expectations, lessons are relaxed and supportive so all feel able to contribute. In several lessons, particularly those with the older pupils, staff used humour to good effect to stimulate learning and maintain the pupils' interests. Teachers also use their knowledge of pupils well, to encourage them to improve and work harder. Work is marked regularly and in most cases indicates how pupils can improve. Provision of homework is good overall and supports the work done in school, particularly in English and mathematics.
23. The quality of teaching and learning is generally good for all subjects except religious education where it is satisfactory. The best religious education teaching was observed in Years 1 and 2 where pupils were well supported and made good progress. A scrutiny of pupils' work indicates that they make better progress when in the reception to Year 4 classes where their knowledge, skills and understanding are systematically built upon. In Years 5 and 6, although individual lessons are never less than satisfactory, there is some inconsistency in the coverage of the religious education curriculum.
24. The following comments reflect the school's commitment to include all pupils in the life and work of the school and meet their learning needs. Staff identify the needs of higher-attainers and usually provide appropriately challenging work. A variety of strategies have been adopted to ensure that they receive an appropriate curriculum and teaching. Some lessons are set so that groups of pupils with similar abilities can be taught together, and some pupils receive additional opportunities to develop their talents and abilities. Staff have planned to identify more systematically the needs of gifted and talented pupils and this is to be a focus for some of their work next term. Teachers and support staff are aware of the specific needs of pupils learning English as an additional language and ensure that these pupils receive support, if necessary, in order for them to participate in all aspects of school life. No significant differences were identified in the teaching of boys and girls during the inspection. All were offered equal access to a good curriculum and were encouraged to participate fully and do well.
25. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Work is carefully set for them by teachers with reference to the targets identified in the pupils' individual education plans. Teachers and learning support assistants regularly consult with the teacher with specific additional responsibility for special educational



needs and each other to organise and evaluate pupils' learning. Assessment is used very effectively to determine the pupils' success levels against targets and to inform teaching strategies. The support from the learning support assistants is good overall, both in teacher led lessons and in their work with small groups. In a few lessons, the work of learning support assistants is not well planned by teachers and consequently best use is not made of their time when not needed to directly talk with pupils. However, some examples of good practice were seen frequently when learning support assistants assessed pupils' listening skills or monitored pupil's responses. During whole class discussions, teachers were observed successfully posing questions to challenge lower-attainers and those with special educational needs. Pupils with special educational needs feel valued and part of the school. They enjoy learning and make similar good progress to their peers.

### **HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS OR STUDENTS?**

26. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities are good. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection when they were deemed sound. The key issues from the last inspection have been addressed with all subjects now having schemes of work. The overall curriculum is now better because of the planning and thought that has gone into its organisation and teaching. The planning for the statutory subjects of the National Curriculum has been carefully interwoven with many good opportunities to enhance the moral and social development of the pupils. These opportunities are taken and the effect of this teaching can be seen in the good behaviour, relationships and attitudes of the pupils.
27. All subjects meet statutory requirements. There are effective strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. These are having a good positive effect on teaching and learning, particularly in literacy, throughout the school. The booster classes for the older pupils are having a very positive effect on the standards that Year 6 pupils attain.
28. Long and medium-term plans are written for all subjects and give a clear indication of what is being taught and how the needs of the different ability groups are being met. The skills taught in literacy and numeracy are also being used effectively in other areas of the curriculum such as information and communication technology, science and geography. For example, in geography lessons pupils develop their skills of using co-ordinates during map work and their speaking and listening skills when presenting their ideas and listening to those of others.
29. Provision for personal, social, health education and citizenship is very good overall. It is taught through religious education, science, and designated lessons and across the wider curriculum. The outcomes seen in the pupils' behaviour are good. The school has a satisfactorily planned programme for sex education and drug awareness. There is no written policy as yet for drugs awareness.
30. Pupils are fully included in all aspects of school life and staff demonstrate a strong commitment to equality of opportunity for all. For example, the school has a good policy for promoting racial equality and implements it well. Also, the school's organisation and practices for supporting pupils with special educational needs are very good and consequently pupils receive a good, relevant curriculum. The rare withdrawal of pupils from lessons for special support is carefully monitored to minimise any loss of curriculum experience. Other than this, they are fully included in all areas of learning and have full access to what is offered by the school. In addition, teachers provide work

that is matched carefully to pupils' individual learning needs. In most cases, higher attaining pupils receive work that is designed to ensure they are appropriately challenged and able to achieve their full potential.

31. There is a good and wide range of extra-curricular activities available. These include sports, music, French, computer and drama, with pupils having opportunities to take part in a performance during the year. The pupils support all the clubs and activities very well by attending regularly, and this is having a positive effect on their learning. The school has a good reputation for their success in sporting tournaments and competitions. Provision has been improved since the last inspection when it was deemed sound.
32. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good, with visits from the local community providing valuable links. There are very good links with the local secondary schools, universities and colleges, with teachers from one of the secondary schools visiting and teaching science within the school. This helps to ensure continuity of provision when pupils transfer. The pupils in Year 6 have opportunities to attend a residential centre for a variety of good educational, social and cultural experiences.
33. Overall, the school makes good provision for pupils' personal development. There are particular strengths in the provision for social and moral development which is judged to be very good. The school's Golden Rules place an emphasis on treating people with respect, care and consideration, for example, 'treat others as you would like to be treated' and 'be kind, helpful and share'. A clear moral code is established which is actively promoted within the school. The use of 'pleased with you' notes reinforces the school's values and gives very positive encouragement to pupils to behave well, work hard and be sensitive to other people's needs. Pupils respond well and are pleased to be rewarded in this way.
34. Pupils have good opportunities to become aware of the importance of looking after the natural environment. There is a wildlife area in the school grounds and pupils discuss recycling issues. Year 6 pupils who went on the school journey to Harrogate were made aware of the importance of the countryside code when they visited the Yorkshire Dales National Park.
35. Pupils have very good opportunities to work together co-operatively in lessons. They are encouraged to listen to each other and to help each other and this helps them to achieve well. Pupils in Year 5 had interesting conversations about foods, which they either like or dislike, and this helped them to learn about foods that contribute to a healthy diet. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were asked to work together to devise a game using three pieces of games equipment. They collaborated very well and this contributed effectively to the development of their skills in catching and throwing. The shared reading activity with Year 6 and Year 2 pupils also supports the development of pupils' social skills. Class teachers manage the activity very well. Pupils are enabled to learn together and older pupils give good support to the younger ones, thereby encouraging them and contributing to their achievements. Very good opportunities are provided for some pupils to take on responsibilities in the school. The school council has members from each year group in the school and plays an active part in school life. Other responsibilities include 'playground friends' in Year 2 and running the tuck shop by Year 6 pupils. These responsibilities help pupils to gain self-confidence and self-esteem.
36. The provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development has improved since the previous inspection and is now satisfactory although there are still areas for further

improvement. Assemblies do not make a consistent contribution to pupils' spiritual development. One class assembly in Year 5 challenged pupils' imagination by relating aspects of sport to life experiences. The pupils were thoroughly involved in the concepts and responded very positively. An uplifting atmosphere was created and pupils had an opportunity to reflect on spiritual aspects of their lives. However, some assemblies seen by inspectors only just met the requirements for collective worship and gave few opportunities for pupils to think about the meaning of the theme or to reflect on its implications for themselves. The spiritual development of pupils is not included in teachers' planning but it does arise in some lessons. For example, pupils experience the thrill of creative effort in some music and art activities. In a music lesson, the pupils were so actively engaged in their work on different rhythmic patterns they were tired out at the end of the lesson.

37. The school is aware of the need to improve opportunities for pupils to develop their knowledge and awareness of different cultures and has improved its practice. There are currently some very good opportunities for pupils to extend their experience through work in art and music, through visits to museums and visitors to school and through special events such as the 'Arts Week' when the focus was on the Chinese New Year. However, these opportunities are not part of a wider planned scheme for cultural development and pupils are not systematically learning about the diverse cultures present in British society. However, pupils do demonstrate respect for people from cultures different from their own. Plans are in place for staff training and a working group has been formed to look at all areas of pupils' learning in order to plan for pupils' cultural development.

#### **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

38. The school provides a very caring environment where individual pupils are valued. Overall, provision for their welfare is good. There is a strong commitment to the inclusion of all pupils in the educational opportunities provided and provision for pupils with special learning needs is very good. Parents feel that the school is a happy place with a welcoming approach. Year 6 pupils about to leave the school say that one of the things they like best about the school is its friendly, welcoming atmosphere. Pupils are well known by staff and the good support they receive contributes to their good levels of achievement.
39. Arrangements for assessing pupils' learning are good and there are particular strengths in the areas of English and science. A policy for assessment has recently been approved by governors and this provides an excellent framework to guide future improvement. Analysis of outcomes ensures that all groups of pupils are achieving well. Excellent use is being made of a computer program to track pupils' progress in writing. This has been used throughout the school and is contributing very well to improvements in pupils' attainment. Six pupils in each class have been identified for additional support. This strategy is very successful in raising standards and has helped pupils across the range of ability, including high attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs. The provision of booster classes for Year 6 pupils has also been effective in improving standards. Assessment procedures have not yet led to significant improvements in levels of attainment in mathematics but the school has plans to address this and will begin detailed assessments from the beginning of the new school year.
40. Class teachers use a month by month timetable to monitor the progress of each pupil in English, mathematics and science. Progress is assessed against agreed targets and this information is shared with pupils so that they have a good understanding of

how they are getting on and what they need to do to improve. Good arrangements are in place for class teachers to work together to select examples of pupils' work which meet nationally agreed levels. This leads to a consistent approach in the school. The information gained from these procedures is used well in teachers' planning. Pupils' learning is monitored in other subjects at a basic level. The arrangements for assessing children in the reception year are good and information gained from these is used well.

41. Overall, provision for the health and safety of pupils, staff and visitors, is satisfactory. However, the school's written policy is out of date and needs to be reviewed. Risk assessments for all school activities are not yet in place. The risk assessments for out of school visits are, however, very thorough and make very good provision for pupils' safety. There are good systems in place for sharing information about health and safety issues and the school caretaker is very conscientious in monitoring the premises and in ensuring that it is clean and safe. There are good procedures in place for the treatment of minor injuries and staff training in first aid is very good. However, the area for treatment is unsatisfactory and there is no place where children who are unwell can lie down.
42. Arrangements for child protection are satisfactory and meet locally agreed procedures. An excellent booklet for staff has been prepared and circulated recently which gives guidance on the signs and symptoms of abuse. There has not yet been enough training to ensure that all staff are aware of the content of the booklet and of how to respond to pupils who may make disclosures to them. A good programme for personal, social and health education gives pupils opportunities to discuss important aspects of their lives and to make decisions for themselves. Good provision is made for pupils to learn how to keep themselves safe. Pupils' personal development is well supported and pupils have good opportunities to develop self-confidence and self-esteem. However, there are only informal procedures to monitor pupils' personal development and this partially limits the school's effectiveness in meeting pupils' needs.
43. Strategies for promoting good behaviour are very effective and pupils behave well. The standards of behaviour expected are clear to all pupils and they are well motivated by the 'pleased with you' notes they gain. Pupils who are given 'disappointed with you' notes understand what they have done wrong and what improvement in their behaviour is needed. Very good support is given to pupils who have problems managing their own behaviour and this helps them to remain in school and to improve their social skills.
44. Very good procedures are in place to monitor attendance. Patterns of absence and lateness are checked regularly. Prompt action is taken where needed and good support is given to help families ensure that their children's attendance improves. Some parents need continued encouragement to bring their children to school in good time for the start of the morning session.
45. Very good strategies are in place to help children to settle into the reception classes and these are supported by very good links with parents. Very good provision is also made for pupils with special educational needs. This reflects the school's strong emphasis on the inclusion of all pupils and contributes very well to these pupils' good achievements.
46. The teacher with specific additional responsibility for special educational needs ensures that pupils are identified early in their school life through screening, which takes place regularly. Consequently, emerging needs are identified and tracked, and

appropriate support given. Class teachers are very well informed, involved in assessment, and implement the pupils' individual education plans very well. These plans are good working documents that contribute to learning day-by-day. Learning support assistants carefully record small steps in learning and work closely with teachers. Formal assessment to identify gifted and talented pupils is not yet in place although higher-attainers and those with a particular talent are recognised and appropriately supported.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

47. Parents have positive views of the school. They say that their children like school and behave well. They think that teaching is good, that their children are expected to work hard and that they make good progress. They think that the school helps their children to develop mature attitudes. Parents also say the staff are approachable. Inspectors confirm these positive views. Between twenty and twenty-five parents expressed some concerns. They do not think they are well informed about their children's progress and feel that the school does not work closely with them. They are not satisfied with the arrangements for homework and think that the school does not provide a good range of activities outside lessons. A small number of parents expressed concerns about the quality of teaching by some supply teachers. Inspectors do not confirm these concerns. Compared with other similar schools, there are some good opportunities for parents to gain information about how their child is getting on and the school's links with parents are good. The provision of homework is satisfactory and the range of activities outside lessons is good. Insufficient evidence was available to make a judgement about the quality of teaching provided by supply teachers during the previous six months.
48. Parents at the pre-inspection meeting said that they find the school friendly and welcoming. There are good opportunities for parents to see class teachers informally at the beginning and end of the school day and parents say that it is very easy to talk to someone when needed. Good opportunities are made for more formal consultation meetings with class teachers and parents say that they are never hurried or cut short but that they are given the time they need. End-of-year reports have some very good features. Clear information is given about pupils' levels of attainment in English, mathematics and science and areas for improvement are identified. Information about achievement in some other subjects is less detailed and less useful. Overall, parents have access to good information about their children's achievements and about what they need to do to improve.
49. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are well informed of their child's progress and of the provision the school makes. There are good relationships between home and school and parents are able to contribute to reviews and assessments. They have good access to teachers and to learning support assistants to discuss their child's needs. Their involvement in producing the school's video recording for the Essex Parent Partnership, that features themselves and their children in daily school life, demonstrates the very good relationships and the very good inclusion of these pupils into the school's life and learning.
50. There are some very good opportunities for parents to be actively involved in their child's learning. The family literacy sessions in the reception classes and in Year 1 are very popular with parents and are very well attended. Parents work closely with their children sharing books and poems and a range of activities to develop pupils' literacy skills and this contributes very well to their achievement. Information about what pupils will be learning each term is circulated to parents but this is not consistent throughout

the school and the information is not detailed enough to help parents support their children most effectively. Reading diaries are used as a link between home and school but the opportunity for a useful dialogue about progress and good strategies to use to help at home is largely missed.

51. Parents have good information about the day-to-day life of the school and have good opportunities to support its work. Several parents help as volunteers in the classroom and at least one grandparent helps as well. Pupils benefit from this additional help. Parents also contribute well to learning by taking an active part in lessons. Parents of children in the reception year helped the children to understand what happens as they grow up by coming in to school with their babies and toddlers. This was a tremendously exciting session for the children and they gained a great deal from the experience. Parents also contributed to a stimulating history lesson for Year 5 pupils. They provided suitable clothes for the pupils to dress up in to take the part of Victorian children at school. The lesson succeeded in bringing the experience of Victorian children to life. The Parent Teacher Association is active and supports the school well.

### **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

52. Much of the recent success of the school stems from the very good leadership and management of the headteacher and senior managers, and the effective work of staff and governors. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school and central to this is the provision of high quality teaching to ensure good standards. Appropriate procedures and structures are in place, which support the good quality of teaching and learning and monitor and evaluate the school's development. Despite his recent absence, these established systems have continued to form a strong base on which others have worked well. The headteacher has been successful in uniting a team of professionals who are well motivated and display a determined will to succeed. He and his staff have a strong commitment to the school and the local community it serves.
53. The headteacher is supported in his management role by a team of four senior managers, three of whom also lead a phase within the school and a team of teachers. Although this structure is unlike most others seen in similar primary schools, it has been effective in developing practice, bringing about improvements and raising standards. A key feature of its success is the way staff are supported within phase groups and helped to develop their practice within a small team. Staff reported that this was particularly good when they were new to the school as they quickly developed good working relationships and felt supported by staff who teach pupils of a similar age. Planning is effective because staff share their skills and expertise within a small group and ensure that pupils of a similar age receive the same experiences regardless of which class they are in.
54. In addition, the senior managers have key responsibilities such as assessment, curriculum, learning and teaching and special educational needs. Within these areas, they display good levels of knowledge and understanding and their skills, expertise and experiences are well complemented. The senior managers have a clear view of the school's strengths and priorities for development and ably assist the headteacher. They share a clear knowledge of what should be achieved and have a good understanding of the pupils' needs and how they learn. These features are well demonstrated in the school where an ethos of care and concern, together with high expectations, are encouraged. By the time pupils leave school, most show positive attitudes and are sensitive to the needs of others. There is a good degree of mutual tolerance and respect. Staff and governors display a clear commitment to including all pupils' in the life and work of the school.

55. The school's aims of raising standards and improving the quality of education are increasingly reflected in its work. The school improvement plan indicates priorities, which are well matched to the needs of the school, and sets a clear agenda for development. The school has successfully addressed the issues resulting from the previous inspection although there is still work to be done on developing pupils' spiritual and cultural awareness. Governors give full support to the school and are well informed and involved in school development. They have good levels of knowledge and this helps them to be fully involved in discussions and developments. They undertake their duties diligently. Their support during the headteacher's absence was a key feature in maintaining stability, and the improved standards during this time are evidence of their hard work and that of the acting headteachers who also continued to teach during this period. The governors, headteacher and staff continue to show a clear commitment to maintaining the pace of improvement and have developed a system of monitoring and setting targets that keeps the school moving forward towards achieving its aims. Targets are realistic and reviewed appropriately. Significant improvements in the systems for monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning have resulted in staff having a clearer understanding of pupils' progress and what they can do. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities very well.
56. The management of provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective. The teacher with specific additional responsibility for special educational needs provides very good leadership and works closely with teachers and classroom assistants to meet pupils' needs by ensuring that targets are appropriate and progress regularly reviewed. The school has invested heavily in learning support assistants as a teaching resource and this is proving to be an efficient use of the budget. Their work is well managed and their relationships and sense of purpose are contributory factors to the very good provision for pupils. The leading learning support assistant also makes a very good contribution to the management of special educational needs provision. Governors are committed to the best practice in financing and evaluating the resources delegated to staff for this important provision. They are knowledgeable and aware. This can be seen in their very good report to parents for special educational needs. Funding for pupils with statements of special educational needs is used very well and supports their access to a broad and relevant curriculum. The requirements of the new Code of Practice have been implemented effectively. The teacher with specific additional responsibility for special educational needs is to lead the development of provision for identified gifted and talented pupils, which has been identified on the action plan.
57. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to ensure that class sizes are not too large and appropriate support is provided. Overall, the level of staffing is good. All members of the teaching staff are suitably qualified and experienced to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. Teachers in the reception classes have received training in teaching towards the nationally prescribed early learning goals. The level of staffing in the reception classes is appropriate and teachers and learning support assistants are experienced in meeting the needs of young children. Teachers are well supported by learning support assistants, who are deployed efficiently. They make a good contribution to the attainment and progress of pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language. Over thirty members of staff have gained qualifications in first aid. All teaching and non-teaching staff, including the visiting music teachers, office staff, kitchen staff, midday supervisors, caretaker, cleaners and the gardener make an active contribution to the development of the school and the very good relationships that prevail.
58. A few months ago, the school again received recognition of its work through the award

of Investors In People. Members of staff who are new to the school, including newly qualified teachers, are well supported. The induction programme and the support provided by senior staff are very good and much appreciated by new entrants to the profession. The school's strategy for appraisal and performance management is very good. Targets are agreed and opportunities for personal development are linked appropriately to the needs of the whole school which are identified in the school development plan. Staff who attend courses, subsequently share the knowledge and skills gained with their colleagues. The secretarial and clerical staff contribute very effectively to the administration and organisation of the school. A good feature of staffing is the strength of united teamwork that is noticeable in school.

59. Accommodation is satisfactory, overall, with some good features. Classroom accommodation for eight classes in the main building is good. A further five demountable classrooms are sited separate from the main building. These classrooms are adequate. The hall is adequate and is used for assemblies, physical education, lunchtime meals and school productions. An additional facility, the new computer suite, is suitable for whole class use. The library is spacious, well stocked and used well by classes, individuals and groups. Storage facilities in the classrooms, corridors and resource areas are adequate. The accommodation is well maintained and is cleaned to a very high standard by the caretaker and her staff. It is enhanced by good displays that support and value pupils' achievements. Outdoor provision is good, except that the hard play area is small for the number of pupils currently in the school. The field is an additional facility, which is used well. The school gardens are very well maintained by the school gardener and are an attractive feature of the school. Outdoor provision for the reception classes has undergone major improvement since the last inspection and is to be further developed. Climbing and balancing equipment, wheeled toys and a range of other resources support children's physical, personal and social development, as well as reinforcing learning in other areas of the curriculum.
60. Resources, throughout the school are satisfactory, overall but are good in English, science, art, information and communication technology and physical education. There has been an increase in the number of computers since the last inspection and these have been centralised in a new computer suite. Resources for special educational needs are good overall and used effectively, except for information and communication technology, which is still not fully utilised. In mathematics, design and technology, geography, history, music, religious education and the foundation stage, resources are adequate. They are generally accessible, of good quality and are used well.
61. The school's financial planning is good and grants are used effectively to support pupils' learning. School developments are appropriately prioritised and carefully costed. Accounting is carefully carried out, with regular checks being made with senior staff and governors. Issues resulting from the last audit have been addressed. The school applies the principles of best value well. Staff and governors are consulted on school development; standards are compared with those of other schools and careful consideration given to required improvement. Office procedures are efficient. New technology is well used, for example in accounting and keeping records of pupils' assessments and tracking their progress. The school provides good value for money.



## **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

62. Staff and governors should work together on the following areas to improve the quality of provision further and raise standards.

- Raise standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 by:
  - \* placing greater emphasis on extension work for more able pupils;
  - \* further analysing test results in order to identify the pupils' strengths and areas for further development;
  - \* identifying clear targets for the next steps in the pupils' learning.

(Paragraphs 5, 39, 87, 88)

- Develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of major world religions and strengthen their spiritual awareness by:
  - \* widening the topics and areas taught;
  - \* including activities in teachers' plans which would promote pupils' spiritual development.

(Paragraphs 36, 148)

- Increase pupils' awareness of the range of cultures represented in Britain.

(Paragraph 37)

**Staff have already identified in the school improvement plan the need to raise standards in mathematics.**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	83
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	27	37	12	0	0	0
Percentage	8	33	45	14	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 one percentage point.

### 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)		340
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		73

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

#### 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	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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*Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	24	28	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	20	22
	Girls	28	28	26
	Total	47	48	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (93)	92 (93)	92 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	19	23	22
	Girls	28	26	27
	Total	47	49	49
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (91)	94 (87)	94 (89)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	29	23	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	18	18	24
	Girls	19	18	20
	Total	37	36	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (75)	69 (69)	85 (75)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	20	19	24
	Girls	18	18	18
	Total	38	37	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	73 (72)	71 (57)	81 (62)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	4
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	283
Any other minority ethnic group	3

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	14.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.4
Average class size	28.3

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	15
Total aggregate hours worked per week	267.75

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **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	4
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1.4
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1.4
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

### **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.*

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	770,509
Total expenditure	778,825
Expenditure per pupil	2,226
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,042
Balance carried forward to next year	31,905

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	340
Number of questionnaires returned	189

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	53	43	3	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	44	3	1	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	48	4	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	52	9	5	1
The teaching is good.	54	40	2	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	43	12	2	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	60	38	1	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	37	3	1	2
The school works closely with parents.	41	44	12	1	2
The school is well led and managed.	42	48	6	2	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	49	49	1	1	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	26	51	10	4	9

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents at the meeting and others through comments on the questionnaire returns indicated that they thought the school had gone through a difficult period whilst the headteacher was absent. A few believed that there should have been a deputy headteacher who could have taken over the management responsibilities. Parents were particularly concerned about the disruption to teaching and the quality of teaching by some supply teachers.

## **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**

63. Since the last inspection, the school has made significant improvements in the quality of education provided for children in the reception classes. Staff have received training and used the knowledge gained from this to develop a good curriculum with a wide range of activities. They now ensure that the work set matches the children's abilities and builds systematically on their prior learning. These factors have resulted in a quality of teaching that is never less than good and frequently very good or better. Teaching is consistently good for communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical and physical development. Teaching is very good for personal, social and emotional development. Teachers and support staff have good understanding of how young children learn and successfully use this to develop the children's good attitudes to learning and good behaviour. Staff also have high expectations and work well together. This results in a consistent approach to teaching and learning and helps children to settle into school life. Support staff play an important role in developing the children's learning and in supporting their achievements. The curriculum takes into consideration the national guidance for the Foundation Stage and staff adapt it to meet the needs of the children. Staff plan work appropriately and use assessments of the children's attainment to inform their planning. Good records are kept to monitor the progress that children make in all areas of learning. By the end of their time in reception, children are well prepared for their work in the National Curriculum.
64. Children, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. They are well supported and the work for those that need additional help is well focused and relates to their individual education plans. Children with a statement of special educational needs are particularly well supported by both teachers and support staff. By the time they start in Year 1, children currently in the reception classes are likely to reach above average standards in personal, social and emotional development and average standards in all other areas.

### **Personal, social and emotional development**

65. Staff have developed good relationships with parents, who are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. This, together with a good induction programme, helps children to settle quickly into school routines. A caring and stimulating learning environment is created where children quickly understand the structure of the day and develop very good attitudes to learning. Children are also encouraged to play and work with each other and consequently, develop very good relationships. They were observed working well in the imaginative play areas and sharing resources, for example when making models of playground equipment. Teachers and support staff make appropriate comments to encourage co-operation and most children quickly learn how to share and take turns. Children recognise the importance of keeping healthy and are aware of personal hygiene issues.
66. Through their own behaviour and working relationships, staff display good examples of how children should behave and the children's skills are continually developed through the positive interactions between staff and children. Consequently, children behave very well. Girls and boys are encouraged to play together and take part in all activities so that they develop a good range of skills across all areas of learning. The tasks provided



ensure a good balance between teacher-directed activities and times when children are able to work without direct adult supervision. This develops the children's confidence and a growing independence and initiative when they are presented with choices. Children are polite and sensible and move easily from work undertaken as a whole class to group and individual activities. They sustain good levels of concentration.

### **Communication, language and literacy**

67. Staff provide an environment which encourages children's speaking and listening skills and supports the developing use of vocabulary. Good examples were observed, for example, during a religious education lesson, the teachers skilfully encouraged responses from children by encouraging them to think about people who wear uniforms. Children listened very well and were confident to put forward their views when asked why a nurse dressed the way she did. The provision of a range of uniforms and pictures that pupils could look at encouraged their participation. High expectations and excellent questioning developed children's skills well. In another session, staff and a voluntary helper encouraged pupils' speaking and listening as they investigated a range of fruits. In both these examples, the children were encouraged to respond to the adult and each other and develop their use of vocabulary. Children's speaking skills are also systematically developed through the provision of specific activities, such as in the imaginative play areas and the theatres. Pupils make good progress and have the confidence to speak with adults and each other.
68. Children are interested in books, handle them carefully and show enjoyment in a range of stories. Children have regular opportunities to listen to stories and they respond very well. Most were able to clearly talk about *The Enormous Turnip*, the class book they were reading during the inspection, identifying characters and how the story developed. Regular sessions support children well in their recognition of letters and the sounds that they make. This results in higher-attainers reading fluently and with good understanding whilst lower-attainers retell stories in their own words and recognise names and key words. All children are encouraged to read regularly with their parents at home, which has a significant effect on the progress that they make and the standards that they achieve.
69. On entry to school, children develop their writing skills by learning how to hold the pencil correctly and recognising and writing their own names. They become aware of writing for different purposes and are keen to display their work. These skills are quickly developed when children successfully write recipes and poems and contribute to developing class books. Children receive good support from staff, which encourages the development of their handwriting and presentation of work. Overall, a good range of resources to encourage writing and communication is available and results in the youngest children making marks on paper and the oldest writing sentences well. A good feature of learning is the provision of Family Literacy sessions where parents are invited to work alongside their children during one lesson a week, to support their learning and develop parents' own understanding of how children learn. In one very good lesson observed, children developed their reading and writing well, through taking part in activities which related to their class reading book. The shared writing session was led well by the teacher who used the children's previous work to stimulate more learning and encouraged them to use a range of strategies, such as using word cards, sounding out and 'thinking it out in your head'. Parents had previously supported their children well by the making of story boxes, for example, following the reading of *Cinderella* and *Where the Wild Things Are*.

## **Mathematical development**

70. The children's mathematical skills and understanding are taught during specific sessions, and consolidated through daily play activities. On entry to school, most children need help in recognising numbers and a lot of practice in copying numbers to five. Towards the end of the year in the reception classes, most recognise and count to 20 and some use larger numbers correctly. They recognise and correctly name a range of two-dimensional shapes and use standard and non-standard measures. Data handling skills and the use of the computer are also developed well, for example, during an activity when the children recorded how the class travelled to school. During the inspection, the children were developing their knowledge and understanding of height. In one good lesson observed, children were well prepared for their work in Year 1 as the lesson followed the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy. The mental mathematics session at the start of the lesson was well planned and organised so children of all abilities were fully involved. The teacher ensured that questions were at an appropriate level so that regardless of age and ability all children could answer confidently. Higher-attainers indicated knowledge of number bonds to ten and average attainers could count on accurately from a given number. The teacher skilfully linked the following mathematics work to the story read previously in the literacy lesson and provided a range of activities to encourage the use of 'taller than' and 'shorter than'. Lower-attainers were very well supported and the practical tasks ensured that they maintained full concentration.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

71. Children in the reception classes develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through taking part in a range of activities and during specific lessons. Their understanding of how humans grow was very well developed during a session when a few parents were invited to bring younger children and babies into the lesson and talk about them. Children were encouraged to ask questions and could clearly see development associated with feeding and mobility. As well as learning much, the children showed respect for the adult visitors by politely asking questions and to the babies and younger children by talking to them kindly and offering them toys to play with. Children's scientific skills are developed further as they understand the forces of 'push' and 'pull'. In addition, their geographical and historical skills are developed as they walk around the local area identifying key features and travel further afield to see places of historical interest. All these practical activities encourage the children's responses to learning and widen the range of their vocabulary. Children have a sound understanding of the uses of everyday technology. Opportunities are provided for children to assemble and take apart simple models, using a variety of construction kits. Their skills in using the computer are also developed well and in one good lesson observed, their skills exceeded those expected nationally. They already have secure keyboard skills and confidence with using programs which support data handling and painting. Mouse control was developed well as they clicked on an icon and dragged images around the screen. Children shared the resources well.

## Physical development

72. The school has developed the outside area adjoining the reception classes and has plans and finance to develop it further for the next academic year. Children get regular opportunities for physical education through playing outside where they learn to balance, climb and run. They also develop their skills through playing with small equipment and using wheeled toys. The outside area provides a full range of experiences, including the growing of plants and the care of small animals. Children also have regular formal physical education lessons and make good progress in them. In one very good lesson, they responded well to the teacher's instructions and thoroughly enjoyed the activities. The teacher started the session well with a warm-up activity and in response, children agreed that they might hurt their bodies if they didn't warm-up properly. Children were encouraged to use the space in the hall well and be aware of others. They responded positively by moving around, stretching, curling and stopping in a variety of ways. Expectations were high and the pace of learning very good. The teacher clearly demonstrated what she wanted the children to do and health and safety issues were addressed appropriately. Both members of staff worked well together to encourage the children to do the best they could. This resulted in most pupils reaching standards above those expected for their age. The key factor in the children's development was the way in which the teacher gradually built up the activity in small and achievable steps so that all could feel successful. By the end of the lesson, children moved across a beam, jumped off safely, followed with a curl and moved across the mat in a variety of ways. The children's use of small objects, such as pencils, construction equipment and paintbrushes, is satisfactory, and they handle them safely and appropriately.

## Creative development

73. The children's creative development is successfully fostered through a range of activities. In one very good lesson, the teacher systematically built up the children's skills both in designing and making models of playground equipment, following a visit to a local playground. From the photographs taken during the visit, the children's observational skills were developed well as the teacher asked them to talk about the shape and range of the equipment. This was developed further as children were encouraged to draw their own designs. The quality of this work was good, as children were able to give indication of shape and form. Children also spoke about the safety aspects of the equipment, for example, referring to the bars at the top of a slide 'to stop children falling'. The good adult/child ratio offered by support staff and a voluntary helper ensured that the children received appropriate support when making their models from malleable material. The high expectations of staff, good planning, preparation and teaching resulted in the children achieving well. A good variety of art and design work was displayed well in both classrooms, including collage, models from recycled materials and clay tiles. Children had also used the computer well to create pictures in the style of Jackson Pollock.
74. The children's responses are also developed through specific music sessions and through singing rhymes and songs. In a good music lesson, children's knowledge and understanding of pitch was well developed by listening to a range of notes played by the teacher on chime bars and a glockenspiel. By the end of the session, children talked confidently about high and low pitch. Literacy and learning skills were developed well as the teacher talked about the word *pitch* in relation to both football and music. This helped children to remember the term and resulted in them using the term correctly by the end of the lesson. The class was also encouraged to learn a new song and children were enthusiastic to do so. The way the teacher built up the words and music in small

steps resulted in their full participation and concentration. The role-play areas in both the reception classes provide opportunities for children to play co-operatively and develop their imagination. They extend their language skills by re-enacting familiar situations or making up their own.

## ENGLISH

75. Standards observed in English in the current Year 2 match the standards expected for pupils of this age. The attainment of pupils in the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the age of seven matched the standards attained by pupils of that age nationally in reading, and were above the standards in writing. The percentage of pupils who achieved the higher Level 3 was below the national average in reading and writing. Standards matched those achieved by similar schools in writing, but were below in reading. The school's performance in the national tests at the age of seven broadly follows the national trend. The trend in the achievement of boys has been slightly below that of girls. The school carefully monitors the gender difference and seeks to reduce it. Inspection findings show that the difference in the attainment of boys and girls is not significant at present. Early indications suggest that standards in the 2002 national tests are average for pupils at the age of seven in reading and above average in writing. There has been a good level of improvement in pupils' attainment since the last inspection, particularly in writing. The school is continuing to focus on increasing the number of pupils who achieve the higher levels.
76. Standards observed in English in Year 6 match the standards expected for pupils of this age. The attainment of pupils in the 2001 National Curriculum tests at the age of eleven matched the standards attained by pupils of that age nationally. The percentage of pupils who attained the higher Level 5 was above the national average. Standards were below those achieved by similar schools. The school's performance in the national tests at the age of eleven broadly follows the national trend. The trend in the achievement of boys has been slightly below that of girls. The school monitors this and seeks to reduce the gap. Inspection findings show that there is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls at the present time. Early indications suggest that standards in the 2002 national tests will at least match the standards expected for pupils at the age of eleven. There has been a good level of improvement in pupils' attainment since the last inspection. The emphasis on reasoning skills is continuing to raise standards at the higher level.
77. The majority of pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make good progress and achieve well. Teachers and teaching assistants work closely together to provide good learning opportunities for pupils who experience difficulties and to plan work to match the abilities of all pupils.
78. Standards in reading match those expected at the ages of seven and eleven. The regular use of structured reading schemes aids the progressive development of pupils' skills. In addition, guided reading, the use of the school library, Family Literacy sessions, paired reading between pupils in Years 2 and 6 and the study of texts in the literacy hour have been instrumental in raising standards in reading, by the age of seven and eleven over the past three years. Pupils read to teachers and learning support assistants regularly and this is noted in their reading diaries. The majority of pupils also read regularly to an adult at home. The school places early emphasis on pupils learning the sounds made by letters and most pupils use this to read new words and understand their meaning.

79. A significant factor is the motivation shown, and the progress made, by some pupils in reading in Year 1 is the attendance of their parents at a literacy lesson each week. During the inspection, the parents of 10 out of 28 pupils in a Year 1 class observed the text level work based on two poems, 'When Jacky's good' and 'Honey Bear', and word sentence level work on blending and segmenting words in order to decipher new or unfamiliar words. They worked with their child on poems or stories, selected by the child, to identify and sequence the significant incidents. Pupils whose parents are not able to attend the weekly Family Literacy session are given support in two small groups. In a well-structured paired reading session, Year 6 pupils helped pupils in Year 1 to read a non-fiction book and express what they had learned and what they thought about. Relationships were very good. These weekly sessions contribute to the development of pupils' literacy and social skills.
80. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils read fluently, with good expression. They use meaning to predict, offer opinions about books and authors that they like or dislike, make comparisons with other books that they have read and show understanding of non-fiction texts. Pupils are introduced to a wide variety of fiction and non-fiction texts, including poetry and playscripts. Most pupils competently retrieve and collate information from a range of sources, including library books, CD Roms and the Internet. Pupils understand library classification and are able to find information independently. They have a good understanding of the use of indexes, tables of contents and glossaries. Pupils in Years 6 demonstrated their proficiency in scanning for information, as they scanned extracts from two stories in order to contrast two very different characters. Higher attaining pupils use inference and deduction and summarise a range of information from different sources. Average attaining pupils select relevant information to support their views. Lower attaining pupils show understanding of significant ideas, themes, events and characters. Story Week engages pupils' interest and enhances their learning, as teachers and parents read stories to them, by a variety of authors and from different cultures. Parents make up stories with their children in Family Literacy sessions and pupils write class stories and dress up as their favourite character.
81. Following the last inspection and a series of literacy audits, writing became a focus for development, with more opportunities to write for specific purposes, provided across the curriculum. In addition, attention was given to improving pupils' handwriting and phonics skills. Staff training on the development of reading and writing was given, and the need to focus on writing in all areas of the curriculum received greater recognition. This initiative, together with the shared commitment of all staff, has been instrumental in raising standards in writing and is beginning to raise standards in reading. The setting of targets, for all pupils in writing, linked with regular, focused assessment of pupils' progress and pupils' own knowledge of what they need to do to reach the next National Curriculum level are significant factors in improving standards.
82. During the inspection, pupils demonstrated an increased understanding of poetry in Year 1. Year 2 pupils identified the key features of information books and learned to use them more efficiently. Pupils in Year 3 discussed the dilemmas faced by characters in stories by Anne Fine. In Year 4, pupils identified moral and social issues in stories from other cultures, such as 'The Warning', a story about Japan. Year 5 pupils demonstrated their knowledge of the features of persuasive writing. They wrote letters, addressed to the Minister for Agriculture on the subject of cruelty to animals. For example, one pupil described the behaviour of people who are involved in the long-distant transport of sheep as disgusting and bloodthirsty, describing how the sheep trembled as they strove to get a breath of fresh air. Another pupil wrote about the cruelty of keeping animals in dark, dingy, dirty concrete pens, where they are in danger

of contracting diseases. In Year 6, the opportunity was taken to ease the transition of pupils to the two main secondary schools, by a unit of work which will be further developed in Year 7, on the use of reading journals to raise and refine pupils' personal responses to contrasting texts. The majority of pupils demonstrated a developing ability to use reading journal language features, technical vocabulary, quotations, evaluation, analysis, complex sentences, reference to the text and an appreciation of the devices used by the two authors.

83. The attainment of pupils in speaking and listening is above expectations for their age at seven and eleven. This represents very good progress since the last inspection, when standards were well below those expected nationally at the age of seven and below those at the age of eleven. The structure of the literacy hour is applied in most subjects and there are planned opportunities for the development of literacy skills during whole class discussions and paired and grouped activities. Pupils listen well to one another and to adults and they appreciate the contribution of others to discussion and their beliefs and values. The skilful use of questioning by most teachers encourages pupils to listen well and respond enthusiastically to questions and discussions. In the best lessons, there is a strong emphasis on the use of subject-specific vocabulary. Pupils have the opportunity to perform in annual productions each year, for example, 'Jack and the Beanstalk'.
84. The school has successfully addressed an issue at the last inspection to raise standards in literacy. The National Literacy Strategy is implemented well. An interesting curriculum is in place and the quality of learning opportunities is good. There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make good progress towards their individual learning targets, when they receive additional support in the literacy hour. Additional literacy support is given to pupils who need extra support to raise their levels of attainment and booster work is provided in Year 6. Pupils learning English as an additional language are monitored well but require little additional support due to their good levels of fluency. Regular monitoring is carried out to ensure that all pupils are working at the right level and are receiving appropriate support. Learning objectives are shared with pupils each lesson and opportunities are provided for pupils to assess what they have learned. Work sampling and lesson observations during the inspection indicate an improvement in all aspects of literacy.
85. The quality of teaching and learning is good, overall. Good or very good teaching is characterised by very detailed planning and good teaching methods which engage pupils' interest, concentration and independence. Pupils are motivated by teachers' high expectations and apply intellectual and creative effort to their work. Teachers show good subject knowledge and understanding and teach the basic skills of phonics, reading, writing, spelling and handwriting well. Pupils' acquisition of knowledge, skills and understanding is good, as a result. Very good class management and relationships lead to good behaviour and promote good learning. Time and resources are used very well and pupils' productivity and pace of working is good. The quality and use of ongoing assessment is good and is instrumental in pupil progress. Pupils are encouraged to carry out self-assessment; as a result, they have a good knowledge of their own learning. Marking is good and guides pupils towards further progress. Homework is used well to improve standards in reading and spelling and to extend the work in the lesson.
86. Senior leaders manage the subject very well. There is a strong desire to raise standards and a clear sense of educational direction. The checking of teaching and learning is undertaken regularly and provides an overview of provision. Test results are

carefully analysed and lead to changes in teaching and learning. Pupils sometimes use their satisfactory word-processing skills to present their work and younger pupils use computer programs to develop their reading skills. Pupils make good use of their literacy skills in other subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

87. Standards in mathematics, as demonstrated in the 2001 test results, were well below those expected nationally by the end of Year 2 with fewer than average pupils reaching the higher levels. By the end of Year 6, standards were average. These results compare favourably with the test results for eleven-year-olds at the time of the last inspection. There is an anomaly between the attainment of pupils in Year 2 and their test results. All the pupils, including the most able, are attaining appropriate standards in lessons but not achieving enough of the higher grades in tests. Insufficient emphasis is placed on extension work for the most able seven-year-olds to encourage them to achieve the higher grades in the national tests that they are capable of and show in lessons. Also, staff are not consistently using the analysis of previous national tests results for seven-year-olds, to identify possible gaps in their learning.
88. The very thorough and extensive assessment data from the school indicates that most pupils make good progress as they progress through the school. This was supported by the teaching and learning that was seen during the inspection where most pupils made good progress in the lessons. Currently, pupils' work is regularly checked for progress, but individual targets are not made known to the pupils. Staff are aware of the need to provide accurate targets for pupils' future learning and have plans to develop this in the near future.
89. Year 2 pupils count up and down in twos and know odd and even numbers to 100 and beyond. Most pupils count accurately in tens and fives. The pupils are starting to be able to explain the stages of thinking and working out a mathematical problem. Satisfactory work was also seen on measurement, shapes and their properties, coins, time and place value to 1000. Many of the pupils add and subtract three digit numbers and know simple fractions. Currently, they are working on techniques of how to solve problems by identifying the key words.
90. The oldest pupils in Year 6 have a good knowledge of fractions. The properties of fractions and equivalent fractions are understood well with an awareness of the correct mathematical vocabulary. They also understand the links between fractions, decimals and percentages. Pupils add, subtract and round up and down decimal calculations to three places confidently. Most of the pupils know their tables and have a sound grasp of the four rules (addition, subtraction, division and multiplication) and place value. This enables them to be able to calculate long division and multiplication successfully. Very good work was also seen on solving problems using all four rules of number with written methods, and then checking the answers by reverse calculations. These involved problems with thousands and up to three decimal places. The pupils are encouraged, and able, to use the correct mathematical vocabulary when dealing with problems in the subject. Evidence indicates that Year 6 pupils reach at least the standards expected nationally and approximately a quarter achieve above this level.
91. Pupils complete a good quantity of work in lessons and the standards of presentation are good. The National Numeracy Strategy has been satisfactorily implemented and all staff have received effective training. Time is used appropriately in numeracy lessons with a session at the beginning to encourage mental arithmetic and an appropriate section at the end of each lesson when learning is reviewed and consolidated. Pupils

are aware of their own learning, with lesson objectives being made clear at the start of each session. Homework is set and supports learning satisfactorily. There is good use made of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in this subject. The booster classes for the older pupils have had a very positive effect on the results for eleven-year-olds.

92. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good, with many teachers employing a good variety of teaching techniques. Where teaching is very good the mental arithmetic sessions are lively, have a sense of urgency and all pupils participate fully. In the best lessons the teachers have a clear idea of their objectives, use the correct mathematical language and set realistic, achievable and challenging targets. In these lessons the higher attaining pupils are given good extension work that takes their learning that stage further. In one lesson observed, the higher attaining pupils were working at a level above that normally expected for their age.
93. There is a satisfactory range of resources that are well used and this has had a good effect on teaching and learning. Planning across the school is very good and the teachers have adopted an extensive system of assessment, tracking and targeting pupils' progress. The weekly assessments are used and recorded so as to develop and inform daily planning. There has been subject monitoring of the mathematics teaching by the senior staff and this has helped to raise standards. The pupils are encouraged to work on a good range of mathematical activities with good emphasis being placed on their understanding and ability to explain and apply their calculations.

## **SCIENCE**

94. Standards in the 2001 National Curriculum tests were below the national average for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 with fewer than average pupils reaching the higher levels. The findings of this inspection indicate a very marked improvement in pupils' achievements. Standards are above average for the pupils in the current Year 2 and Year 6. More pupils attained the higher levels of attainment this year and consequently overall standards improved significantly. This improvement is due to the very good planning, the quality of teaching, teamwork, determination of staff, enthusiasm of pupils for their work, and the vision of leadership and the will to succeed.
95. In Years 1 and 2, pupils get off to a good start in understanding science. By the end of Year 2 their work exceeds the standards expected for their age. Pupils learn that scientific processes can be understood through careful observation and investigation when they investigate the properties of different materials such as wood, plastics or paper for bending, squashing or twisting. This helps them to understand that these properties are used for a variety of purposes and some are man-made and others natural. In a good Year 2 lesson, much enjoyed by pupils, they classified animals by their own criteria, for example whether they have scales, are insects or fly. They confidently stated their reasons and displayed their findings in a pictograph, recognising important differences. One pupil grouped a slug and a sea creature together and challenged others to say why. Pupils' scientific thinking and their good relationships and curiosity ensure good learning. Past work in exercise books demonstrates that they undertake many practical investigations. They have observed well, recorded what they have seen in simple tables or graph and measured accurately. Their good understanding of forces was demonstrated by their measuring and recording of the effect of different materials on a ramp and the distance travelled by a toy vehicle on each. Pupils in this exercise and in studying the melting rates of ice cubes in the classroom had made thoughtful predictions. They were able to deduce from their results whether their predictions had come true. For example, they understand that the



method of starting the toy rolling, or in melting ice cubes must be the same in all cases for the test to be fair.

96. The oldest pupils show a good breadth and depth of scientific understanding. They have good understanding of the effect of exercise on their bodies and the importance of what they eat, drink and ingest for their health. Teachers create challenging interactive displays such as that in Year 5 of a chest cavity which when opened up revealed pupils questions and answers about the human organs within. This stimulates pupils' curiosity and consolidates learning. They understand the logic of electrical circuits with switching mechanisms and outputs. Their past work shows a good understanding of the differences between solids, liquids and gases and the conditions that may cause a change from one state to another, such as through condensation or evaporation. Their experiments on forces indicate good knowledge of floating, sinking and gravity. They clearly have a balanced view of fulcrums and states of equilibrium. As with the younger pupils, during Years 3 to 6 they undertake many practical investigations which stimulate their interest and demonstrate practically and clearly the scientific processes they study. This helps them to achieve a good understanding of the importance of conducting a fair test, to observe and measure accurately and record their results systematically.
97. A very positive feature of the pupils' work is the quality and the accuracy of the written work they do. They write accounts of experiments in increasing detail, many older pupils producing well constructed paragraphs of their own. This gives them practice in literacy skills and reinforces understanding of the scientific work they do. Information and communication technology skills are consolidated in the production of tables and graphs of results and in using the electronic microscopes to examine minute detail. Teachers also give useful opportunities to consolidate mathematical skills through measuring and again through the use of graphs. These opportunities are there because teachers thoughtfully plan and construct them and know their value in broadening pupils' learning in this way. This cross-curricular consolidation of learning is a good example of whole staff's commitment to raising standards further.
98. Teaching is never less than good and frequently very good. The teachers' very good knowledge and understanding of the subject allows them to plan appropriate work and explain and demonstrate ideas clearly so as to reinforce understanding. A major strength in the teaching is the skilful questioning which challenges pupils of all abilities and allows them to develop technical vocabulary which underpins learning. Very good organisation, use of resources, equipment, and good pace in the lessons ensures the activities are completed. Tasks are very well matched to pupils' different abilities and marking overall gives good feedback to pupils about their work. Teachers are fully supportive of those with special educational needs and those learning English as a second language so that they progress equally well. Teachers expect pupils to work hard and do their best, and use effective strategies of reward to manage pupils. Consequently, there are very good relationships between pupils and teachers. Pupils have very good attitudes; they concentrate very well and work hard for their teachers. They take very good care both in their practical work when they observe and measure carefully, and in their written work which is neatly and carefully presented.
99. In a very good lesson in Year 5 on plant germination and growth, the teacher managed the collaborative investigation by pupils into factors affecting plant development very well. He modelled the problems they might face and showed them he understood the demands placed on them for learning and what it is like to be a pupil. At the end of the lesson, he shared one pupils' insight when the idea that seeds would germinate in packets if they didn't need water was offered. Pupils' experimental thinking was valued

and this increased confidence.

100. Teachers have responded very well to a weakness noted in the last inspection by providing more and much better quality opportunities for pupils to undertake practical investigation. They are very effective in stimulating pupils' interest as a very good lesson in Year 6 showed. They brought science vividly into the real world for pupils using the very good links with a secondary school. A teacher from this school posed as an employee of a tea company, inviting pupils to contribute to research investigating the perfect cup of tea. His excellent acting and scientific skills were used very well by the class teacher to inspire pupils in their investigations. Pupils were able to formulate experiments using fair testing of high quality. Nearly all knew that only one variable could be changed at a time to determine factors for good flavour. They were able to design their own investigations with some guidance and select equipment. They could measure the outcomes of fair tests and identify patterns in results from which they were able to deduce significant relationships or causation. Standards were high for pupils of this age.
101. The subject is well led and managed. Teaching, learning and planning is evaluated each half-term and this means that teachers can act upon information gained from this to maintain and improve standards of attainment. The very good cross-phase input from the secondary school is well organised to benefit pupils. Good displays of pupils' work around the school show good use of information and communication technology and generate interest. Target setting, so that pupils have greater self knowledge of steps to improve their learning, is not yet in place but this initiative is contained in action planning for the coming year. There is a good range of resources and these are used well to support learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

102. The attainment of pupils in art and design, at the ages of seven and eleven, is above the standards expected for pupils of this age. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were unsatisfactory. There has been good improvement in teaching and learning. Most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress and achieve well. The good standard of work throughout the school is reflected in the quality of the displays.
103. Pupils have the opportunity to use a variety of media and to develop a wide range of techniques. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 explored and developed their ideas about similarities and differences in the work of artists and photographers. They identified ways in which pupils were represented in portraits, photographs, pictures in magazines and prints. They looked at portraits by Picasso and the art club, which are displayed in the library, and enthusiastically discussed how people were portrayed, what they were wearing, what pose they were in and what they revealed about their character. Pupils in Years 3 examined visual and other information to help them to develop ideas, before planning a journey using shapes and symbols. They made links with literacy, as they discussed journeys relating to characters in stories, and with geography as they examined maps and aerial photographs. They used information and communication technology to research the work of Paul Klee and other artists. Some pupils were interested in linking their journey to history and had researched symbols used by the ancient Egyptians and native American Indians. In Year 4, pupils discussed the materials that Paul Klee used and how they were applied. They identified the patterns and themes used in his work. In creating a background for their work, they explored painting techniques to give texture, the surface patterns and textures of a

range of materials, and print making.

104. Although it was not possible to see any direct teaching of art in Years 5 and 6, due to timetabling arrangements, a scrutiny of pupils' work, sketch books, displays and discussion with pupils show that the good standards in Years 1 to 4 are maintained, and built upon, in Years 5 and 6. Year 5 pupils have produced drawings and paintings of objects that have meaning for them, based on the work of artists such as Renoir and Matisse, and have successfully designed and made containers, to hold something special. They have explored how stories are represented in textiles in different times and cultures, and have communicated their own ideas in a story, using a range of materials, techniques and textile processes to create surface patterns and textures. Using a variety of methods and techniques, they have shown figures in movement. Pupils in Year 6 have made masks, linked to design and technology, created a buggy park and undertaken close observation of umbrellas, shelters and patterns in brickwork on buildings. They have communicated their own ideas of urban and rural landscapes, through sketches and painting.
105. Teaching and learning are good overall. Teachers' subject knowledge is good. Their planning is very good and focuses on the development of skills and techniques. Very good teaching methods lead to the good acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding by all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs and pupils for whom English is an additional language. Teachers' expectations are high and pupils respond with a very good level of interest, concentration and independence and apply creative effort to their work. All pupils maintain sketch books for visual research purposes; these are generally of a high quality. Creativity is encouraged and valued, and pupils are motivated to achieve well. The management of pupils is very good and, together with pupils' very good attitudes, good behaviour and very good relationships, leads to good learning. Time and resources are used well and pupils' productivity is good. The quality and use of ongoing assessment is good. Pupils are encouraged to assess and improve their work, thus developing a good knowledge of their own learning.
106. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good. The curriculum is enriched by teachers' knowledge, the emphasis on skills and techniques, the work of a range of great artists and a weekly art club. There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils and provision for special educational needs is very good. Pupils' cultural development is enhanced through their study of aboriginal, native American Indian and ancient Egyptian art and works of art by great artists from many different periods and cultures. Links with literacy are made, as pupils discuss starting points for their work, compare ideas, methods and approaches, and assess their own work and that of others. They develop their mathematical knowledge of shape and space through work in two and three dimensions. Information and communication technology is used well to explore colour, shape and pattern, to find out about the great artists, to record pupils' observations using digital cameras and to create abstract, repeated images. Social development is enhanced through groupings and work with each other and the development of respect for the ideas and work of others.
107. Staff successfully check how pupils are progressing. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good, with emphasis on the skills pertinent to each National Curriculum level. The use of assessment to guide curriculum planning is also good.
108. The subject is managed very well by senior leaders. A very clear sense of educational direction is apparent, and the school's aims and values are reflected in the work of the

subject. The school's priorities for development, particularly the emphasis on the development of skills and techniques are good. The way the teaching, learning and standards in art and design are developing is monitored well and the taking of effective action is very good. Resources are good and are used well. There is a shared commitment to high standards.

## DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

109. Pupils aged seven and eleven attain standards that are broadly in line with those expected for pupils of the same age nationally. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the last inspection. For example, there is now a good scheme of work in place that ensures unnecessary repetition. However, standards for the older pupils are not as high as they were at the time of the last inspection when the school bought in the services of a specialist teacher. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress throughout their time in school. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to that of their peers and reach standards in line with their abilities. No significant difference was noted in the attainment and progress of girls and boys.
110. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 and only three lessons in Years 3 to 6. However, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' plans, discussion with pupils and observations of these lessons show that designing and making activities have taken place and the curriculum overall has improved since the school adopted the national guidance and developed the scheme of work. Discussions with pupils indicate that they have a clear understanding of the designing and making process and are learning to evaluate their work and the work of others, although standards in evaluation are lower than in designing and making.
111. Some design and technology work is related to other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 developed their skills when designing and making Joseph's coat of many colours. Their designs were developed through the use of an art program on the computer but the finished products did not always reflect these designs. When spoken with, some pupils did not fully understand the connection between the two. The finished samples seen were generally of a satisfactory quality and some were good. Pupils have used a range of fabrics and materials and appropriate joining techniques such as sewing and sticking. Other work in Years 1 and 2 related to the topic on *Homes*, where pupils designed rooms and made them from recycled materials. Here, the finished products reflected the designs more clearly. Designs were generally of a good quality with parts labelled appropriately. This work interested some pupils so much that they told inspectors of the additional work they had chosen to do at home.
112. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 made satisfactory progress in developing their skills of moving mechanisms when making pop-up cards. Pupils were keen to work and by the end of the session had developed their skills of measuring and cutting, and could fix parts together to make a lever action. Pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties were well managed in this lesson and kept motivated due to the practical nature of the activities. Pupils in Year 5 used design sheets to produce plans for making a range of musical instruments as different as a violin and rainmaker. The designs helped pupils to create finished products of a satisfactory standard. Pupils in Year 6 enjoyed their work when designing and making slippers. They were aware of the importance of the design specification and took into account the client, style, size, warmth and safety. No evidence was available to make judgements on the pupils' work in food technology.
113. The teaching and learning in the two Year 6 lessons observed were judged to be of a high quality. Lessons were well planned and prepared and were linked to the pupils'

experiences of visiting a theme park during their residential school visit. This helped to maintain the pupils' interests as they reflected on what they had seen and learned. Teachers were very clear about what they wanted the pupils to learn in the lessons and provided a good design brief which encouraged pupils to design and make a fairground ride. Pupils worked well in pairs, sharing ideas and skills and making reference to the success criteria when making their initial designs. Pupils took into account the problems they might face in relation to building the model and the resources available. These initial designs were good because the pupils focused on issues of strength and stability rather than presentation. The time was well used to provide a clear link between the designing and making processes. Pupils were also encouraged to evaluate their work and the work of others. In one excellent lesson, the end of the session was used very well to assess understanding and evaluate learning.

114. Teachers and support staff have good relationships with the pupils and manage them well. They encourage pupils to work together and this results in pupils sharing resources. The behaviour in the lessons observed in Year 6 was very good because pupils were interested in the tasks and wanted to complete the work. Although individual teachers use design and technology to further the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills, this is not always planned in a systematic way across the school. Also, it is not always clear how computers are used systematically to support pupils' learning in this subject. However, some good examples are evident, particularly in Year 6. The school is aware of the need to ensure appropriate progression of pupils' skills now that the scheme of work is established.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

115. Pupils attain average standards by the ages of seven and eleven. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress in their learning.
116. Year 6 pupils have a sound knowledge of the world, the continents and the different climate zones. They are able to discuss environmental issues and comment on ways to improve their local area. They are familiar and confident in the use of atlases and globes. Currently, they are studying traffic problems in their own town of Colchester and comparing them with the city of York, which they visited on their recent school journey. Work seen in the other classrooms and displays, particularly in Year 5, and around the school indicate that much good work on environmental issues and physical geography has been completed. Year 2 have been studying Scotland; the mountains, lochs and weather, and looking at the effects of weather on people's lives. They have also completed work on the local area.
117. Due to the nature of the timetable all lessons observed were in the upper part of the school. The teaching in these lessons was generally good with one being very good. In the latter, the management of pupils and time was very good and the work challenging. The pace of learning was brisk with pupils correctly using geographical language. Consequently, the pupils achieved well. They were attentive, well behaved and achieved the objectives set by the teacher. In the best lesson the use of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology skills greatly enhanced the lesson.
118. Teachers' planning indicates that good use is made of local resources, visitors and visits and these opportunities enrich the curriculum. The residential visit to Yorkshire is an important element in the Year 6 geography curriculum. There are also good, planned

opportunities for cross-curricular links between not only history and geography but also with numeracy through co-ordinates in map-work, literacy through written and spoken presentations of ideas, and the use of information and communication technology with displays of finished work and a cam-corder to video report presentations.

119. A professional programme of work is followed which includes the teaching of skills, geographical interpretation and the use of source materials. This variety of work helps to ensure that pupils enjoy their geography and work well together in groups.
120. The subject makes a very good contribution to the pupil's cultural development by extending their knowledge of the world and its peoples' present and past. Their awareness of social and moral issues, particularly in their environmental studies is being very well developed. The level of resources is satisfactory.

## **HISTORY**

121. Pupils in Years 2 and 6, reach average standards of attainment. This indicates an improvement since the last inspection when standards of the older pupils were below average. Most pupils achieve well because they are interested in what they do and the quality of teaching is good. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers as the work set is appropriate and they receive good support when needed. Those pupils learning English as an additional language also make good progress. Their fluency in English is similar to their peers so they are able to contribute well in class and work on the same activities as others of the same age. No significant differences were noted in the abilities and contributions made by girls and boys. Teachers ensure that all are included in the activities and take equal part in class discussions.
122. The teaching and learning of history are good overall. In Years 1 and 2, pupils develop a satisfactory sense of chronology by studying old and new housing and identifying, for example, the development of technology that brought about changes in the home. Pupils also use timelines and compare features of the past with those of today. Pupils know about famous people and key events. In a good Year 1 lesson, the teacher introduced the life and work of Florence Nightingale in such a way that pupils were interested to know more. Similarly in Year 2, the very good questioning of the teacher resulted in pupils developing their own ideas about the subject through looking at pictures of Florence Nightingale even though the majority had not heard of her before. They responded well to the teacher's enthusiastic approach and the way in which she developed their skills of enquiry and observation. In both lessons, the good range of teaching methods was a key feature in the way pupils maintained concentration and progressed well.
123. In Year 3, pupils further develop their sense of chronology through the use of timelines and the study of differences between houses of today and those in the Tudor period. The work here builds on that in Years 1 and 2 when pupils are encouraged to identify changes in technology over time and the use of materials within the home. The work of Year 4 pupils indicates how literacy skills are reinforced, for example, when pupils wrote a letter in the role of adviser to Henry VIII concerning his proposed marriage.
124. Pupils in Year 5 have sound knowledge and understanding of Victorian Britain and their knowledge of education during this period was well developed during the inspection. Some very good and excellent teaching was observed when teachers changed their classrooms to reflect those of the Victoria period and encouraged pupils to engage in role-play activities. Teachers and support staff had high expectations and prepared well

for these lessons. All pupils were thoroughly involved and learned much from 'experiencing' the harsher regime of the times. By the end of the lesson, pupils were aware of the differences in the curriculum, the importance of hygiene and cleanliness, the respect given to the teacher and differences between rich and poor and girls and boys. Good links were also made with geography when pupils gained knowledge of the countries of the British Empire. These lessons also played a significant role in developing pupils' moral, social and cultural understanding.

125. Although no lessons were observed in Year 6, pupils spoken with, and their work, show that they reach average standards and are well prepared for their work in secondary school. They have good knowledge and understanding of Britain since 1930 and are particularly interested in the events of World War Two. They are aware of the key figures who influenced the war years and how people were affected in their everyday lives. For example, well-written letters in the role of an evacuee indicate how pupils can empathise with children of their own age during this period.
126. Pupils are aware that the past is divided into historical periods and they understand how historical evidence can be gained from a variety of sources. They realise, for example, that historical artefacts are important for finding out about the past and understand that historical events can be interpreted in different ways. Visits to local places of historical interest motivate pupils well and extend their learning. Also, pupils gain much from speaking with, and listening to, others. A visitor who spoke about his experiences of war obviously captured the interest of pupils and helped them to retain knowledge and develop understanding.
127. Although history has not recently been a key subject for development, senior managers have ensured that the curriculum has been appropriately developed in the light of national guidance. Pupils are provided with a good range of learning opportunities and the work set matches the variety of abilities within each class. Although in the best lessons pupils are encouraged to develop their literacy and numeracy skills in history, this is not identified in a planned way across the school. Also, teachers' plans do not always clearly indicate how information and communication technology is used to support the teaching of history. The school's commitment to include all pupils is reflected in its teaching of history where all are encouraged to take part and achieve. Relationships are good and this helps teachers to manage the pupils well. Most pupils have good attitudes to their learning.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

128. The standards of work when pupils reach the ages of seven and eleven are above those expected nationally. Pupils make good progress and achieve well. This indicates significant improvement since the last inspection, particularly since the introduction and development of the computer suite. The school is well set to continue this improvement. There is clear vision for development of the subject which is translated into a clear action plan which includes the use of the school website for home learning. The use of audio and visual media in learning is also good. The use of computers in the classrooms to support all pupils' learning in subjects is in need of improvement. Opportunities are lost because resources are not yet well enough organised for learning support assistants, in co-operation with teachers, to provide yet more challenging learning tasks for those pupils with special educational needs. Other than this, the provision for these pupils and for those with English as a second language is good. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in other subjects is good in the computer suite. It is used well by teachers to enhance and consolidate learning.

129. By the time pupils are seven most have good skills in using the mouse and operate simple programs with understanding and control. They manipulate images to make choices in modelling three-dimensional rooms such as a kitchen. They know that robots and electronic equipment in the home can be programmed to repeat a set of instructions. Pictograms and bar charts are used to represent data, such as information about favourite foods. Word processing skills are secure and they show they have sound control of the keyboard, deleting, resizing, modifying text and selecting fonts. The good software in the computer suite allows them to draw and paint good quality on screen pictures and patterns using the toolbar, icons and menus. They print and store their work confidently.
130. When they are eleven, all the basic skills that allow access for good learning are in place for most pupils. The few who are still insecure receive good support. Pupils have a good knowledge of spread sheets and handle data well using graphs or tables. Most can operate *Excel* using cells, repeats and formulae to assemble and manipulate or change data. More importantly, they learn about the usefulness of this in real life, saving time in stock taking or pricing for instance. This is because of the teachers' good knowledge and understanding of information and communication technology who use projectors or a tutor facility with ease, to teach all pupils well. Pupils are confident in using electronic mail to both send and receive, and understand the systems by which electronic mail works. They interrogate CD-ROM for information, and use search engines on the Internet to refine searches for web-sites. They are aware of the need for sites to be filtered for suitable content. All are familiar with the use of screen control devices to create a series of commands and assemble these into a procedure that can be repeated. Many can program and control devices such as traffic lights. Most are able to use multimedia to construct a presentation incorporating images, text and sound in to a set of linked pages.
131. Pupils achieve well and work hard because of teachers' high expectations and their good knowledge of the learning potential of the hardware and software. Learning support assistants have good skills and are a valuable aid to learning. They are able to participate in some training activities and are keen to improve their competence further. They are familiar with lesson planning and objectives for learning, thereby working effectively with teachers and contributing to the good standards seen.
132. Teaching and learning was of a high quality in the lessons observed in the computer suite. Teachers have worked hard to develop their skills and knowledge and they are confident in using the new hardware and software. Good features of teaching are the effective planning and pace of lessons, high expectations, and well-organised resources. Pupils are supported well in tasks and as a result make good gains in their learning. They are skilful in using the projector as an electronic blackboard. Clear, well structured introductions ensure that pupils know what they are to do and learn during the lessons. Good questioning makes pupils think about their use of information and communication technology. Discussion at the end of the lesson assesses how well the pupils have learnt. In the very good lessons different abilities are challenged with well-matched tasks and the targets for learning are shared with pupils at the beginning and end of the lessons. This ensures pupils have good knowledge of their learning, and where they are in the next steps to understanding or in developing their skills. In the excellent lesson where pupils were creating a presentation about their visit to Harrogate, the tasks were matched very well to pupils' abilities and all pupils' creative efforts were valued and shared. Very good modelling by the teacher of the problems they might encounter and how to learn from mistakes, makes them laugh because the high level of trust and quality of relationships gives them confidence to take risks and



cope with self doubt. This produces very high levels of learning, effort and concentration. Pupils are encouraged to explore and try out program contents for themselves and they often learn more in this way. They are enthusiastic and confident in sharing ideas and generous in their help and concern for others. This is because of the very good relationships and the high quality learning environment generated by teachers. The new computer suite is generating much 'catch' up learning. There is presently good assessment that defines pupils' learning outcomes against a national scheme of work for components of the taught curriculum.

133. Computer work in the suite has been carefully planned so that the work covered is well linked to other subjects in the curriculum, particularly literacy and numeracy. For instance, in a Year 4 lesson good use was made of new software to produce good learning about number patterns and products to reinforce tables knowledge. Others received an E-mail from a Tudor king asking for information about poor peoples' lives. Pupils use video cameras to compare places and produce good word processing of their poems "In the Woods". This good quality of cross-curricular enrichment using information and communication technology is due to the teachers' high quality planning as a team. Their good use of information and communication technology for display of pupils' work stimulates learning.
134. Staff have identified new initiatives which are planned to further improve provision and cross-curricular opportunities. The school website and the computer club is planned to involve parents in learning. The school is piloting a local education authority project for improvements in data handling. The good standards are firstly the result of vision and very good leadership and management by the teacher with specific additional responsibility for information and communication technology, and his organisation of in-service training and coaching in techniques for staff. Secondly, they derive from the staff's determination to adopt the new technology and use it well to improve teaching and learning.

## **MUSIC**

135. The attainment of pupils in music, at the age of seven matches those expected nationally. This represents good improvement since the last inspection, when attainment was below national expectations throughout the school. Attainment in Years 3, 4 and 5 matches expectations for their age. It is not possible to make a judgement on attainment at the age of eleven, since no music was observed in Year 6, due to timetabling arrangements. The new scheme of work has increased teachers' confidence in the teaching of music. This has led to an improvement in teaching from satisfactory to good. Most pupils, including pupils with special educational needs now make good progress, compared with unsatisfactory progress at the last inspection. All pupils achieve well.
136. The quality of singing in assemblies and music lessons is good. Pupils sing in tune with good expression and with a sense of shape and melody. A range of music is often played as pupils enter and leave the hall for assemblies and singing practices, and this contributes to pupils' cultural development.
137. During the inspection, pupils in Years 1 and 2 learned the song, 'Mama Paqueta' a carnival song from Brazil, making links with geography and broadening their cultural development. They sang the song with the recording, articulating the words rhythmically. Pupils took turns to respond to the rhythm and pulse, by accompanying the singing with claves, maracas and shakers. Most pupils moved rhythmically to the beat as they danced. Year 4 pupils made links with history as they listened to

'Dargason', a dance tune from Tudor times. They used their literacy skills to brainstorm words to describe the song. They sang the song tunefully and then took it in turns to play a steady beat on percussion instruments, whilst half the class sang. When they confidently achieved a steady beat, they learned to play the repetitive long/short skipping pattern that typifies the 'Dargason'. They demonstrated their prowess in the last part of the lesson, as one-third of the pupils kept a strong, steady beat on the drums, a third clapped a skipping rhythm and a third sang the song. During an excellent music lesson in Year 5, pupils developed their rhythmic skills and singing ability, as they performed a rhythmic accompaniment to the song, 'Everybody's Got a Little Rhythm'. They described the music as enjoyable and exciting. Pupils kept a steady beat accompaniment by alternately stamping one foot, and finger clicking to a rhythm that the teacher had composed on the computer. They then added another rhythm pattern on top, by slapping their knees and using a word pattern from the song, 'You stamp your feet, we'll keep the beat'. When pupils were confident and could switch from the steady beat to the rhythm, they divided into two groups and performed the patterns together, demonstrating excellent progress in the lesson, due to excellent teaching by a talented musician.

138. The overall quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 1 to 5 and, in some cases, very good. It is not possible to make a judgement on teaching and learning in Year 6. Teachers' good subject knowledge, teaching of basic skills, very effective planning, high expectations, very good teaching methods and very good class management lead to good learning on the part of all pupils, including pupils with special educational needs, who receive appropriate support. Pupils' very good attitudes towards music, their good behaviour and very good relationships are instrumental in enabling them to make good progress. Time and resources are used well to promote learning. The quality and use of ongoing assessment is good and pupils have a good knowledge of their own learning.
139. The quality of learning opportunities is good. There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make good progress, because music transcends the boundaries of spoken language. The curriculum is enriched through annual workshops, for example from a professional drummer. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend the 'Youth Orchestra for Children' workshops. There is an annual Christmas production by pupils in Years 3 and 4 and a production by pupils in Years 5 and 6. Examples include *Cinderella* and *Jack and the Beanstalk*. The school choir recently joined choirs from other schools at 'The Charter Hall Extravaganza', in honour of Her Majesty The Queen's Golden Jubilee. The songs represented each decade of her reign, starting with 'Rock Around the Clock' and concluding with 'Reach For The Stars'. There were also songs from the Commonwealth, such as 'Waltzing Matilda', 'Land of the Silver Birch', 'Blue Lake' and 'Rocky Shore'. In addition, there are opportunities for parents to pay for their child to learn the violin, keyboard, flute and guitar. Gifted and talented pupils are invited to attend courses and musical activities organised by the County Music Service. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' social development through its groupings and activities. It contributes to pupils' spiritual development through opportunities for worship and praise at assemblies. Access to music from around the world contributes to pupils' cultural development. There are links with literacy through the words of songs and opportunities to perform. The use of information and communication technology is well developed in some classes, but its use across the curriculum is inconsistent.
140. The monitoring of pupils' subject performance is good. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are also good. There is ongoing assessment of pupils'

composing, performing and appraising skills. This assessment is used well to guide curricular planning.

141. Senior leaders manage the subject well. The way the teaching and learning in the subject is checked and the taking of effective action, such as introducing a new scheme of work, is very good. Management ensures clear educational direction and reflects the school's aims and values well. A number of teachers work very hard to maintain the high quality of school productions, giving willingly of their time and expertise. Resources are good. They are readily accessible and are used well. Priorities for development, namely to raise the profile of percussion and to fully implement the use of information and communication technology in music, are appropriate.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

142. The standards of achievement seen in physical education are similar to those expected nationally for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. This reflects the findings of the last inspection.
143. Pupils experience the full National Curriculum programmes of study. In gymnastics, movement and games lessons, all pupils make good progress in the development of their skills. They are taught to improve their skills, and work collaboratively throughout the school. Swimming is part of the curriculum for Year 5 and 6 pupils; they make good progress and enjoy the sessions. However, the school reports that only 72 per cent of the pupils achieve the national target of being able to swim 25 metres by age eleven. Staff have not reviewed this provision recently to judge whether it provides good value for money. Pupils are given the opportunity to experience some outdoor activities on a residential visit in Year 6 and orienteering in Year 5.
144. In all lessons observed, pupils were encouraged to warm up, and were aware of the importance of exercise and safety. They are also taught to cool down correctly at the end of a period of exercise. Some of the teachers provide a good example by changing for the lessons. All of the pupils change into suitable clothing.
145. In Years 2 the pupils are given appropriate opportunities to perform different moves, jumps and stances. They move around the hall with increasing control and poise and are then able to successfully join the individual movements into a short sequence. In Years 4, 5 and 6, the pupils are practising their ball skills of throwing, catching and fielding for playing cricket and rounders. Lessons observed in Year 5, which focused on developing the skills needed to play a straight drive in cricket and in Year 6 on fielding, were particularly good in their lesson structure and development. Skills were broken down into small sections, practised, and then pupils built up the sections back into a realistic game situation. The pupils are starting to learn how to improve their performance by evaluation and discussion, though this is not developed well enough.
146. Teaching is good overall. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when some unsatisfactory lessons were seen. The teachers encourage pupils to take part with enthusiasm and challenge them to think about their performance and how to improve. All pupils enjoy physical education. Their responses are good and, so too, is their behaviour. The lessons are planned well to gradually develop the skill or sequence that is the lesson objective. Teachers have good subject knowledge, give clear instructions, which emphasise how improvements can be made and give encouraging and appropriate praise. In the satisfactory lessons there were times when the pupils were not physically involved enough.

147. The school has a good range of modern resources and equipment that are well used. The school holds an annual competitive sports day that is thoroughly enjoyed by all. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. There is also a good range of after-school sports activities with competitive matches in which the school has been successful. The school does not yet have a system for checking the quality of teaching, learning and standards throughout the school.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

148. Pupils throughout the school achieve satisfactory standards against the requirements of the religious education programme of work for Essex schools. This reflects the findings of the last inspection. In addition, there has been a satisfactory improvement with regard to how the subject develops pupils' spiritual education. However, teachers' planning for the study of world religions makes only basic provision for pupils' cultural development. The scrutiny of older pupils' work shows that teachers are inconsistent in providing opportunities for learning. Consequently, pupils have limited knowledge of cultural and religious traditions. This is an area of learning that requires improvement. The focus for improvement on priority subjects such as English, mathematics and science in order to improve performance in the National Curriculum tests has limited the attention this subject has received. A scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they make better progress in the first four years of school than in the last two where the work seen shows that teaching of the curriculum is inconsistent. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well included and make satisfactory progress.
149. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the Bible and its roots in the Christian and Jewish faiths through the study of religious stories and famous people. They compare this with the Qur'an and Muslim's beliefs, thus understanding some of the similarities and differences between major world religions. Through the study of Sikhism they know that some books and places are special and that feasting and sharing food are an important part of religious belief. They make a traditional Hindu decorated bracelet and know it is a symbol of caring. Pupils understand that actions have consequences and learn about helping others and sharing feelings. Their work on festivals and celebrations such as Christmas as a mark of special times, shows that they are beginning to understand the importance for others and themselves in respecting others family traditions and ceremonies.
150. By the end of Year 6 pupils have a developing understanding of the importance of some of the world religions, for example, Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. They contrast and compare beliefs, practices, and places of worship in different religions and know about the religious symbolism of food and candles for a Jewish meal. For the Hindu faith they know about the cycle of life, for instance in Year 5 they plan a ceremony for the death of a pet in this spiritual context. They study the famous people of the Christian faith and have good knowledge of the induction practices of Baptism and Confirmation. In Year 6 they studied the symbolism of church vestments during their school journey to York Minster. Year 6 pupils recalled with pleasure the experience in an earlier class when a member of the kitchen staff prepared Indian food for them. They talked about religious beliefs and of their enjoyment when learning about the Chinese New Year celebrations in Year 5. They have good knowledge of Jewish and Christian beliefs and practices but are unsure of Hindu equivalents and of the story of Rama and Sita and the festival of Diwali as a celebration of good over evil. They did not know any Muslim countries or that a Mosque is a place of worship. They barely remembered a visit to the local church in Year 2.

151. Overall, teachers plan satisfactory opportunities for pupils to consider the question of why we are here and how different faiths have similar or contrasting structures to explain this. The five lessons seen were at least satisfactory and three were good. None were seen in Year 5 and 6.
152. The best teaching seen was in Years 1 and 2 where pupils were well supported in their learning. The lessons were presented in a stimulating manner and gained their interest. Teachers used questioning effectively by challenging pupils' thinking and developing their understanding. For example, in a Year 1/2 class, the teacher used the story of Jesus and Zacchaeus to explore the pupils' experiences of how encouragement helps people to be better. The teacher modelled responses skilfully so pupils learnt well and understood how important it is to be valued. This was possible because of the high quality of relationships. The pupils concentrated well and were inspired because of the teacher's sincerity.
153. Overall, the management of the subject is satisfactory. The school has reviewed its curriculum and recently revised the programmes of work. The support the subject gives to literacy is satisfactory and better in the lower half of the school. Personal and social learning in the context of religious education is good. There are too few visits to religious buildings of different faiths or visitors to the school to widen pupils' perceptions. The school's resources and artefacts for world religions are sound except for those for the study of Sikhism.