

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **MILDMAY INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL**

Chelmsford

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114895

Headteacher: Mrs A M Wright

Reporting inspector: Mr B Tyrer  
23101

Dates of inspection: 11<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> November 2002

Inspection number: 247505

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

© Crown copyright 2003

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |                                  |
|------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Type of school:              | Infant and nursery               |
| School category:             | Community                        |
| Age range of pupils:         | 3 - 7                            |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                            |
| School address:              | Robin Way<br>Chelmsford<br>Essex |
| Postcode:                    | CM2 8AU                          |
| Telephone number:            | (01245) 250021                   |
| Fax number:                  | (01245) 284631                   |
| Appropriate authority:       | The governing body               |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mrs F Mountain                   |
| Date of previous inspection: | November 1997                    |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members |               |                      | Subject responsibilities   | Aspect responsibilities   |
|--------------|---------------|----------------------|--|---|
| 23101        | Mr B Tyrer    | Registered inspector | Mathematics<br>Music<br>Equal opportunities  | The school's results and pupils' achievements<br>How well are pupils taught?<br>How well is the school led and managed?   |
| 19798        | Mrs J O'Keefe | Lay inspector        |  | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development<br>How well does the school care for its pupils?<br>How well does the school work in partnership with parents? |
| 20614        | Mr D Kimber   | Team inspector       | English<br>Information and communication technology<br>Design and technology             | How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?  |
| 22113        | Mrs A King    | Team inspector       | Foundation Stage<br>Science<br>Geography<br>History                                      |   |
| 11353        | Ms J May      | Team inspector       | Special educational needs<br>Art and design<br>Physical education<br>Religious education |   |

The inspection contractor was:

PPI Group Ltd  
7 Hill Street  
Bristol  
BS1 5RW

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

|   | Page           |
|---|----------------|
| <b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>  | <b>4 - 7</b>   |
| Information about the school  |                |
| How good the school is  |                |
| What the school does well   |                |
| What could be improved  |                |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection   |                |
| Standards   |                |
| Pupils' attitudes and values  |                |
| Teaching and learning   |                |
| Other aspects of the school   |                |
| How well the school is led and managed  |                |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school  |                |
| <b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>   |                |
| <b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>  | <b>8 - 10</b>  |
| The school's results and pupils' achievements   |                |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  |                |
| <b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>  | <b>10 - 11</b> |
| <b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>                         | <b>11 - 13</b> |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>  | <b>13 - 14</b> |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>                                     | <b>14</b>      |
| <b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>  | <b>15 - 16</b> |
| <b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>  | <b>16</b>      |
| <b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>   | <b>17 - 21</b> |
| <b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b> | <b>22 - 35</b> |

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The school is situated in the Goat Hall ward of Chelmsford although many pupils come from neighbouring wards in the town. There are 172 full-time pupils in school and a further 49 children attend part time in the nursery. The school is about average in size. There is a unit for up to 18 pupils whose hearing is impaired. The attainment of children on entry to the nursery is broadly average. There is reasonably high employment for workers at a non-professional level and as a result the proportion of pupils who are identified as being eligible for free school meals is below the national average. The proportion of pupils having a statement of special educational needs is well above the national average; however the total number of pupils identified as having special educational needs is below average. The special needs of pupils are principally hearing impairment whilst others have moderate learning difficulties or emotional or behavioural problems. The school population is almost entirely of white ethnic background and only one pupil is recognised as having English as an additional language. The school has had a high turnover of teachers in the last two years due in the main to retirement and promotion.

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

This is a school with a good level of effectiveness and one which continues to provide good value for money. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is excellent and this contributes significantly to the high standards that pupils achieve. Teaching and learning are good overall and the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The school is careful to ensure that pupils of differing abilities are catered for so that all pupils make good progress. Those pupils who have special educational needs are very well provided for and supported and make very good progress. The school has effective policies to promote equal opportunity and racial equality and the governing body is effective in meeting its statutory obligations. Boys and girls achieve well regardless of gender.

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

- Standards in English and mathematics are above expectation for pupils in Year 2.
- Attitudes, behaviour and attendance are very good and relationships are excellent.
- Teaching and learning are good and the school is offering a good curriculum and very good provision is made for pupils' personal development.
- Procedures for child protection and welfare are good and the school has very effective links with parents.
- The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are excellent and the governing body supports the school well.
- Pupils in the hearing impaired unit receive excellent support.

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

- The school has a budget surplus that is unacceptably high.
- Some accommodation used mainly for hearing impaired pupils and the staffroom are too small.

*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 made a good improvement since the time of its last inspection in 1997. The quality of teaching has improved, as have standards. The school has successfully addressed the key issues from the previous inspection in that there is now a whole curriculum plan and teaching and learning are now being very effectively monitored. The school is well placed to continue to improve.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |
|                 | 2000          | 2001 | 2002 | 2002            |
| reading         | B             | B    | C    | E               |
| writing         | A             | A    | C    | D               |
| mathematics     | B             | B    | C    | D               |

  

| Key                |   |
|--------------------|---|
| Well above average | A |
| Above average      | B |
| Average            | C |
| Below average      | D |
| Well below average | E |

Children enter the Foundation Stage with levels of attainment that are broadly similar to those seen nationally and then achieve well as they progress through the school so that their attainment is as expected for children at the end of the reception year. The attainment of pupils aged seven in National Curriculum tests in 2002 was average in reading, writing and mathematics and teacher assessment for science was average overall. This performance was well below that of similar schools in reading and was below in writing and mathematics. The trend over time broadly mirrors that seen nationally and variations in year on year performance are accounted for by variations in the individual cohort ability. Inspection shows that all pupils are achieving well and those with special educational needs are doing very well as a result of the excellent support they receive. The attainment of pupils in Year 2 is now above expectations in reading, writing and mathematics and is in line with expectations for science. Standards for these pupils in other subjects of the curriculum and religious education are as expected for pupils of their age with the exception of art and design where they exceed expectations. The school has set challenging yet attainable targets for pupils taking National Curriculum tests in 2003.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school                | Very good. Pupils enjoy school and work hard.  |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Very good. Pupils understand what is required and behave well in all areas of the school.                    |
| Personal development and relationships | Excellent. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility. They are kind, careful and considerate to one another. |
| Attendance                             | Very good. Well above the national average with unauthorised absences lower than the national average.       |

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Nursery and Reception | Years 1 – 2 |
|------------------------|-----------------------|-------------|
| Quality of teaching    | 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 skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught and provision for the development of communication, language and literacy skills for children in the Foundation Stage is also good. The teaching of basic skills is good. The quality of teaching has improved and is now good, with the proportion of very good teaching having doubled. The quality of teaching in English and mathematics is good. The inclusion of pupils with hearing impairment is very effective and these pupils make very good progress. Lesson planning ensures provision for pupils of all abilities and relationships with pupils are very good. Pupils enjoy the challenge of their lessons and the extra dimension that signing brings to lessons and assemblies.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect  | Comment  |
|---|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum   | Good. The curriculum has improved and is now well planned providing a good balance for all subjects. Extra-curricular activities are good. |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs   | Excellent. This is so for pupils with hearing impairment and for others with different special needs.                                      |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development | Very good overall. The provision for social development is excellent.  |
| How well the school cares for its pupils  | Good. Procedures for monitoring progress are very good. The school has an effective policy for promoting race equality.                    |

The school works very well with parents, who in turn are very supportive and responsive.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff | Excellent. The headteacher is providing excellent leadership and is very well supported by the acting deputy headteacher and other members of staff with individual areas of responsibility. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities             | Good. The governing body is well informed, active and is meeting its statutory obligations well.   |
| The school's evaluation of                                       | Very good. The school has clear systems in place which are well understood and which are very effective in maintaining and raising   |



|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| its performance                | standards.   |
| The strategic use of resources | Good. The budget is generally well allocated but its surplus is too large. |

There is an excellent match of staff to the needs of pupils. The accommodation is generally of a high standard and is very well maintained but some of the spaces that hearing-impaired pupils use from time to time are too small. Because of the much larger than average number of learning support assistants and other special workers who are frequently in school, the staff room is physically incapable of accommodating them all at one time. Resources for pupils with special needs are very good and are generally good throughout the school. The school is careful to ensure that it secures best value when purchasing goods and services.

### **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>• That the teaching is good.</li> <li>• That the school helps their children to grow up well.</li> <li>• That their children like school.</li> <li>• That the school is approachable.</li> <li>• That the school has high expectations.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities outside lessons.</li> </ul> |

The response to the parent questionnaire was very positive and the inspection team agrees with those aspects that parents find most pleasing. It is felt that this, being an infant and nursery school with a specialist unit, is providing a good range of extra-curricular activity.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Children enter the Foundation Stage in the nursery with levels of attainment that are broadly what might be expected nationally. Because teaching is good the children progress well and are in line to achieve the expected standard by the time they leave the reception class. Their personal, social and emotional development is better and the children will exceed the expectation in this aspect of their learning. Because of the authority's procedures for admitting pupils into mainstream education some children will have spent as little as one term in the reception class before entering as pupils into Year 1.
2. Children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional skills. They are learning to be attentive and they work together well. Behaviour is good overall and is frequently very good. They quickly come to understand the rules and quickly pick up routines. Children in the nursery and reception class are learning about letter sounds and how to handle books correctly. They are encouraged to use a range of mark-making materials as they begin to develop their writing skills. Children develop their speaking and listening skills well through, for example, role-play and those children who have hearing impairment show very good progress in their ability to understand and comprehend what is going on around them. Children are making good progress in their mathematical development and can count to five and beyond and match numbers to sets. They recognize some two-dimensional shapes and can produce patterns with one or two variable elements. Their knowledge and understanding of the world enables them to look at similarities and differences and how some things change. They are developing skills with information and communication technology and are becoming aware of the fact that different groups of people celebrate different things at different times of the year. Children sometimes arrive with weak coordination skills but tend to make good progress because of the levels of support they receive. By the reception year they are learning to use bats and balls and they are moving in a variety of ways with increasing confidence and imagination so that they can climb, balance and jump effectively. They are encouraged to take healthy snack options and as well as learning to control a range of tools, to know that care should be taken when using them. There are good opportunities for music-making and singing, which children do with enjoyment and enthusiasm. They are able to express their ideas using different materials and can make collages, print and paint.
3. The results for National Curriculum tests for pupils aged seven in 2002 showed that :
  - standards in reading, writing and mathematics were average;
  - standards in science were average in teacher assessment at the expected level (Level 2 and above) but were above average at the higher level (Level 3);
  - in comparison with similar schools the results were well below average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics.
4. The attainment of pupils over time has varied depending on the particular cohort but for the two previous years was above average in reading and mathematics and well above average in writing. Approximately ten per cent of the 2002 cohort had statements of special needs and this figure is much higher than is seen nationally.
5. Inspection shows that the attainment of the current Year 2 cohort is better than the previous year and is above average in reading, writing and mathematics and is in line with expectations for science. This is mainly due to differences in the ability of the different cohorts. There has been quite a high turnover of staff in the last two years and whilst the post of deputy headteacher has yet to be filled permanently the good standards that the school achieves - particularly in the light of the inclusion of hearing impaired pupils - is a reflection of the good teaching and excellent leadership and management that is found in the school.

6. Pupils in Year 2 not only speak and listen effectively but many of the hearing pupils are able to communicate through signing. In assembly they are able to talk about special events and the School Council gives even the reception children the opportunity to make points and listen to the views of others. They will engage adults in conversation with confidence and show an eagerness to do so. Older pupils read with expression and can talk about stories they like and have heard. They are beginning to learn the language associated with books such as 'title' 'author' and 'illustrator'. They can talk about what they have read, identify the characters and offer suggestions as to what might happen next. They are writing sentences that are demarcated with capital letters and full stops and handwriting shows letters that are well formed and which in some cases are being joined.
7. Pupils in Year 2 are able to recognise basic two and three-dimensional shapes and can talk about some of their qualities. They add and subtract numbers to 20 and can work using 2s, 5s and 10s. They can tell time to the hour and are beginning to measure using standard and non-standard units. In a practical situation they are able to use mathematics to time and record how long it takes to do different tasks. Pupils in Year 1 are learning about light in their science work and those in Year 2 can talk about different types of food. They also enjoy the practical aspects of learning about forces when they bring their bicycles and scooters to school.
8. The attainment of pupils in other areas of the curriculum is as might be expected for pupils of their age with the exception of art and design where it is above. In religious education pupils' attainment matches that expected for pupils of the same age who are using the locally agreed syllabus.
9. Pupils with special educational needs including those with hearing impairment make very good gains in relation to their prior attainment. They make very good progress towards achieving the targets set for them when supported individually, or when taught in small groups by the special educational needs teacher and support staff. In class lessons, the quality of support staff is very good and they provide the additional help that enables these pupils to do very well.
10. There is nothing to suggest that girls and boys are learning at different rates.

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

11. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour continue to be a strength of the school. Pupils are happy to attend this school and take an active part in all aspects of school life. Pupils are enthusiastic learners who always try their best. In lessons they settle quickly, listen very carefully to their teachers and many hands go up when a question is asked. Behaviour is very good both in classrooms and around the school. There have been no exclusions since the time of the last inspection. Pupils show respect for the school environment and are polite and friendly to visitors. Lunchtimes are relaxed social times where pupils demonstrate very good social skills and chat happily with their friends. In the playground, play is lively but good-natured. The very small minority of pupils who have been diagnosed with behaviour problems are showing impressive progress, with adult support and cause little disruption to lessons.
12. The quality of relationships amongst pupils is excellent. Pupils are highly supportive of each other, treating everyone with kindness and respect. There was no evidence of oppressive behaviour and pupils have confidence that, should an incident occur, it will be dealt with promptly and effectively. Pupils work very well together in pairs and small groups, concentrating and collaborating well. The social inclusion of pupils with hearing difficulties is absolute in the school. Everyone is treated as part of the school family and pupils are sensitively aware of the needs of others. This open and inclusive ethos is the school's most outstanding strength.
13. Pupils are outgoing and mature. Their personal development is very good. They respect the feelings, values and backgrounds of others and treat each other well. They confidently speak to visiting adults and speak proudly of their school. In the Foundation Stage younger children show

good independence as they choose activities and resources. Older children take their many monitor roles very seriously. Pairs of pupils observed returning completed class registers to the office in the morning move very sensibly around the building, being careful not to disturb other lessons. School Council members, some of whom are only five years old, sensibly discuss school issues with their classmates and make positive suggestions for improving the school at their meetings.

14. The school has a very good attendance record. Pupils clearly enjoy coming to this school and this is reflected in the consistently high attendance figures. There were no unauthorised absences during the past year and lateness is rare. Registers are completed promptly and efficiently at the beginning of each session and all lessons start on time.

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

15. The quality of teaching is good in both the Foundation Stage and for pupils in Years 1 and 2. The quality of teaching has improved since the time of the last inspection. The proportion of very good and better teaching has doubled. The proportion of good teaching is half as high again and, whilst a small amount of unsatisfactory teaching was seen at the time of the last inspection, none was recorded on this occasion.
16. The main reasons for the improvement stem from the introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the impact that planning and teaching these subjects has had on the way the rest of the curriculum is taught. The monitoring of teaching, the implementation of appraisal/target setting and the school's commitment to full inclusion has also meant that all staff have better skills and knowledge than previously.
17. Teaching in the Foundation Stage in both the nursery and reception classes is good overall. The staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum and how young children learn through play. They teach basic skills well and planning of lessons is very good. Expectations for behaviour and attainment are high and the staff use effective teaching methods. Management of children and their behaviour is very good and the children respond very well. Time and resources are used well and support staff are very well deployed to help the children learn. The staff assess the children's progress very effectively and use this information very well to plan what they will learn next, based on what they know and can do. There are good opportunities for the children to continue their learning at home, books are sent home regularly and 'Kipper', a toy dog and his adventures provide a good means of involving parents in their children's learning. Liaison between staff is good, both within classes and between the nursery and reception years and this effective partnership is particularly good in relation to learning for children who are hearing impaired or who have other special educational needs. The staff work well together as a team, they are a cohesive unit and the organisation and management are 'seamless'.
18. The teaching of English and mathematics for pupils in Year 1 and 2 is good. Strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are effectively in place and the teaching of basic skills is good in both subjects. Opportunities are taken throughout the curriculum to consolidate and develop these skills.
19. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to play a full part in class lessons. They make very good progress in English and mathematics as a result of effective teaching in sets within the class and through 'booster' groups. In addition, pupils are successfully taught individually or in small groups by the special needs co-ordinator. Work is consistently well matched to the differing needs of these pupils. Teaching assistants play an important role in the progress pupils with special educational needs make. They have a good knowledge of the pupils and provide skilled support often taking charge of small groups. The overall quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good.
20. The previous report noted that, on occasion, lessons were planned so that they contained too many activities. This is no longer the case. Teachers' planning is a strength and is especially

impressive where the class teacher and a teacher of the Deaf jointly undertake a lesson. An example of such a lesson was seen when a Year 2 class with five hearing impaired pupils undertook a study of forces. The lesson had been jointly planned and learning support teachers were fully briefed as to their role. The pupils had been asked to bring scooters or bicycles to school for the experimental phase of the lesson. The most impressive facet of this lesson, which was excellent, was the way in which both teachers and learning support assistants combined to enable all pupils, regardless of their needs, to make excellent progress in learning about the effect of forces. The ability and skill in signing shown by teachers and learning support assistants ensured that this was so for those pupils with hearing impairment.

21. The inclusion of hearing impaired pupils is the outstanding feature of teaching and the school's commitment to communication through signing is remarkable but notwithstanding that, teachers and learning support assistants also display many other skills that would be considered good in more mainstream situations.
22. Teachers have good knowledge and understanding of what they are teaching and have good strategies for doing so. They are able to assess how a lesson has gone and are prepared to alter their planning as a result. Teachers are very good role models for their pupils in many ways. They show through the quality of provision that they have high but achievable expectations for their pupils. They show that they have equally high expectations for conduct and behaviour and they show in their relationships with other teachers and staff how they want their pupils to react. Most importantly they show through their enjoyment of what they are teaching, the zest they have for it and the fun it can be, that what they are giving their pupils is important and valuable.
23. Pupils are in no doubt about what their teachers expect of them and they enjoy the security of knowing that their efforts are valued. The relationship between teachers and pupils is excellent so it is no surprise that pupils show themselves to be keen and hardworking.

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

24. The quality and range of the learning opportunities provided for all pupils are good and the statutory requirements are met. This is an improvement since the time of the last inspection. The school provides a curriculum that is broad and balanced and relevant to the needs of all pupils and there is good provision in the Foundation Stage. There are schemes of work for all subjects, and many have successfully adapted national guidelines from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. The school is quick to adopt new initiatives such as Early Literacy Strategy, Healthy Schools, and new approaches such as 'bubble time' in personal, social, and health education. The governing body has an effective policy for dealing with sex education and drugs awareness is also appropriately covered, often in the context of health and the careful and sensible use of medicines.
25. The school has a very effective approach to the curriculum in which many subjects are considered under topic headings. This enables good links between subjects to be made and they add to the quality of pupils' learning. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well and these are having a positive impact upon teaching and learning in many subjects across the curriculum. A good example of this is the sharing of clearly focused objectives with pupils, and the use of a plenary session in most subjects. Pupils also clearly understand their individual targets in literacy and numeracy.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is excellent and statutory requirements are met for pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs. The planning of work for these pupils is well considered and enables them to make very good progress. Pupils are occasionally taken out of class for additional support, but this is carefully planned and pupils do not miss lessons. There is no disruption to their learning. Through a careful balance of in-class support and withdrawal, pupils with hearing impairment are provided with full access to the

curriculum.

27. There is very good provision for the development of pupils' personal, social and health education (PSHE). There is a well-developed PSHE scheme of work and PSHE lessons are timetabled regularly. 'Circle Time', when pupils agree that no interruptions should occur and only one person at a time will speak, provides opportunities to share feelings and to discuss topics such as responsibility and fairness. It also helps pupils to build confidence and have respect for themselves and each other. 'Bubble time', involving smaller groups of pupils working together, has also been successfully developed in school. Learning support assistants have also had training, and this is especially helpful for pupils who have behavioural problems. The school nurse contributes well to this work. The school ethos lays stress upon the importance of encouraging pupils to care for each other and to learn to work and play co-operatively.
28. The school provides a good range of extra-curricular activities. Activities included Top Games skills, Science club, and Recorder club. They are open on a termly cycle for Year 2 pupils. These club activities are well attended. The very effective Thursday club, run with fax buddies from Marconi, provides additional opportunities for social development for hearing impaired pupils.
29. The organisation of the curriculum and the ways in which staff work together throughout the school, ensure that excellent standards are reached in the equality of access and opportunity for learning experiences by all pupils. The inclusion of all pupils as fully as possible in all aspects of school life is at the heart of the school ethos. Approaches to teaching and learning consistently encourage all pupils to be actively involved as members of a learning community. The practice of signing has a positive impact for hearing, as well as for hearing impaired pupils and helps them to engage more strongly with staff. Taxis are arranged to ensure that hearing impaired pupils using them are able to attend after-school activities and the school is very well set up for wheelchair access.
30. The contribution made by the community is good and has a significant impact on pupils' learning and personal development. The school also has very good links with other institutions which help to enrich the curriculum.
31. Pupils visit senior citizens with gifts at harvest and sing carols at the homes of elderly residents at Christmas. Ministers from local churches, including the minister of the local Deaf community, visit the school and help lead assembly. The electronics company Marconi has initiated a 'fax buddy' link with the school. Pupils also help with fund-raising for local charities, as well as other efforts such as Children in Need. The very close links maintained with feeder play groups and with the Junior School, help pupils to settle and to learn more readily. Staff discuss aspects of curriculum planning with Junior School colleagues and occasionally share training days with them. The school is very active within the local consortium of 17 schools, which range from nursery to secondary. There are links involving trainee students, or staff development, with several further and higher education institutions including Chelmsford College, Anglia University, Institute of Education (Cambridge University) and University of Hertfordshire. 'Teachers of the Deaf' trainee teachers come to school. The hearing impaired unit in school is cited by the local authority as an example of 'good practice'.
32. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development, and excellent provision for pupils' social development. This is an improvement upon the good standards recorded at the time of the last inspection, when the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was identified as a strength of the school. The very good provision for spiritual development was evident in assembly, when the theme of celebrating the differences we have as individuals was explored. This helped pupils to accommodate difference and to learn to respect the integrity of individuals. The assembly underlined respect for others, offered a time for quiet personal thinking and provided a calm and supportive environment for all present. In lessons, teachers show pupils that their views are valued and encourage them to share their own ideas and feelings. The typical classroom ethos is one in which all pupils can grow, flourish, respect others and be respected.

33. Provision for moral development is very good. Teachers and staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour in the classroom as well as around the school. Each classroom displays its own rules. Teachers and other adults provide good role models and there is the daily underpinning of behaviour that is, or is not, acceptable. The programme for PSHE makes a good contribution to moral development and to social development, as pupils clarify their ideas of right and wrong.
34. The provision for social development is excellent. All teaching and non-teaching staff work hard to promote this. Pupils know from a young age in school that they are respected and valued and that in turn they should respect others around them. They are encouraged to take responsibility in a variety of classroom duties and in working to achieve personal learning targets. The School Council, now in its second year, has two representatives from Reception and each Year 1 and Year 2 class. Pupils are confident and outgoing as they contribute, and feedback, ideas on topics such as assemblies, healthy snacks, and keeping safe in the playground. In lessons, organisation often involves pupils working together in pairs or groups, and they do this extremely well.
35. The provision for the cultural development of pupils is very good. Pupils' appreciation of their own cultural traditions is developed through singing, stories and activities related to seasonal celebrations. Multi-cultural week is an established feature of the curriculum. In the most recent, the theme of African countries was linked to the music festival. Visitors included a storyteller, drummers and dancers and other activities involved foods and making pottery. Pupils have also gained much from the recent festival of Diwali. Hindu visitors to school have brought wedding saris and talking with pupils about Hindu weddings has enriched their appreciation of other cultural traditions. Also, in religious education, pupils were able to visit a synagogue when studying Judaism. The library has a good range of books on other cultures, beliefs and traditions and these all contribute very well to pupils' cultural development.

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

36. The school takes very good care of its pupils. All staff know pupils very well and give them individual academic and pastoral support. The school is very inclusive in its approach and those with hearing impairment and other special needs are very carefully supported. Most parents are happy with the care taken of their children.
37. The school has effective procedures for dealing with child protection issues. The headteacher is the person designated to deal with any concerns and all staff have had training on the necessary procedures to follow. Appropriate arrangements are made for welfare and first aid and pupils are aware of who to see if hurt or feeling unwell. A high number of staff have received first aid training. The monitoring and promoting of pupils' attendance is dealt with appropriately.
38. The school provides a very caring and safe environment where pupils with special educational needs are valued. The very good relationship that teachers and support staff have with pupils contributes to the good level of care for these pupils. The school's very good assessment arrangements ensure that pupils with special educational needs are identified early in their school career. Initial assessment is followed by the agreement of individual educational plans for pupils, in order to tailor learning and provision to their needs. Pupils' involvement in assessing their own progress towards targets in class is well developed. The special educational needs co-ordinator meets regularly with class teachers and learning support assistants and all these staff keep detailed records of the progress these pupils are making. This knowledge is very well used in the setting of future group work and class lessons. There are good links with outside professionals who are involved in contributing to the pupils' learning and annual reviews.
39. The arrangements for health and safety are very thorough. The school is fortunate in having a very experienced health and safety governor who is vigilant in ensuring the safety of all in the school. The hardworking site manager efficiently ensures that these safe working conditions for staff and pupils are fully maintained.

40. Strategies for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very strong, enabling all pupils to make progress in their learning. Pupils are aware of and value and respect the systems of rewards and sanctions. The few pupils with challenging behaviour are very well supported. Clear records are kept and their progress is carefully logged. The school has been successful in building up these pupils' confidence and self-discipline. Good use has been made of agencies outside the school, such as the behaviour support team. Likewise, rare incidents of bullying are effectively dealt with and the general caring supportive ethos of the school ensures this.
41. The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development. A strong emphasis is placed on personal and social development in the Foundation Stage and children settle well into school life. Children from age five upwards are able to develop a sense of responsibility when elected to be on the School Council or when doing monitor jobs around the school. The 'friendship bus' scheme, which enables any lonely or vulnerable pupils to be supported in the playground by their peers, is working well. Pupils are able to take responsibility for their learning when given their targets, which are usefully presented in graphic form so that they are accessible for all. The school has effective systems in place to foster and promote race equality.
42. The school has established very good assessment arrangements. In the Foundation Stage, procedures are used effectively to make initial assessments of children and to monitor how they progress in lessons and over time. Very good systems are in place for regularly monitoring pupils' progress as they move up the school. 'Target tracker,' a computer program designed to set targets for individual pupils using national test results, has recently been set up. However, this has not yet become fully effective or useful to the school. Pupils' progress in all subjects is carefully tracked. This information is used very well to inform future planning and also to inform parents through the annual reports. The headteacher and senior staff are vigilant in ensuring consistency, which aids the progress of all groups of pupils in the school.

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

43. Parents are very happy with the education and care the school provides. They spoke very positively about most aspects of the school and were particularly appreciative of the approachability of staff and the standards of teaching. A few parents expressed concerns about the range of extra-curricular clubs available for pupils, however this was considered appropriate for the age of the pupils by the inspection team.
44. The school has established very good links with its parents. Staff are friendly and welcoming to parents. The headteacher readily makes herself available to meet parents, should they have a concern. The school places a high priority on developing the partnership between parents and staff in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. Parents are encouraged to play a full part and are often given ideas for helping their children at home. The parents of hearing impaired pupils are given the opportunity to learn sign language and they all avail themselves of this. The special needs co-ordinator keeps parents fully informed of targets and work set and of the progress pupils are making. Parents are regularly invited to school to discuss matters and contribute to the reviews of progress and setting of future work. The school hosts a parent and toddler group once a week on site which ensures good personal support for parents as well as a relaxed transfer for the youngest children into the nursery.
45. The quality of information provided for parents is good. Very useful general information is provided in the form of newsletters and the prospectus, which are informative and clearly written. Both the governors' annual report to parents and the prospectus meet all the statutory requirements for their content. Two evening workshops are held each year to give parents information on different areas of the curriculum. Consultation meetings are held termly, with annual written reports issued in the summer term. These reports give good information on work covered in all subjects, with particular emphasis on progress in English, mathematics and science. Targets for improvement are also set for these subjects. The school has held courses for parents on areas such as parenting and sign language, which have been well supported.



46. Parents are very supportive of the school and its work. Attendance at assemblies, performances and consultation meetings is high. The 'Friends of Mildmay' association continues to provide very good support for the school. Regular and varied fund-raising and social events are organised and these are very well supported by parents and the local community. Funds raised are used well to provide extra resources for the school. Many parents help regularly in the classrooms, on outings and in the library. The parent governors' are committed and hardworking and represent parents well. Across the school parents support their children's learning well through the homework scheme.

## HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is excellent. The school is effective in meeting the needs not only of those pupils who might be regarded as the great majority but is also very effective in meeting the needs of the small number of pupils who are there as a result of hearing impairment. The fact that the inclusion of the hearing impaired pupils is total is a tribute to the exceptional skills and commitment of all staff and in particular to the vision, drive and management skills of the headteacher. For reasons that might include the high cost of housing the school has been unable to attract a suitable candidate for the position of deputy headteacher – the previous incumbent having been promoted some 18 months ago.
48. There has been an acting deputy headteacher since September and she has rapidly shown that she is able to offer very good support both to the headteacher and to the rest of this large staff. The acting deputy had also previously become responsible for the management of the provision for all pupils with special needs – the previous coordinator having been promoted. The school is meeting all the requirements of the New Revised Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. An appropriate register is kept which identifies pupils' levels of need and the arrangements made to cater for them. The individual education plans for pupils have precise targets and detailed measures for meeting them. The special needs co-ordinator is highly qualified. She manages the school's provision very well and has very good knowledge of all pupils who are identified as having special needs. She sets good standards and is a good role model for other staff to follow. She maintains a good and productive relationship with teachers in the hearing impaired unit.
49. The headteacher has shown a very good ability to delegate responsibility and this extends to the way in which all staff are given and carry out their responsibilities. Coordinators are making a very good contribution to the quality of teaching and standards in their subjects. Those with responsibility for specialist provision are most effectively incorporated, and highly skilled and motivated learning support assistants are invaluable in their contribution. The partnership and teamwork, particularly of teachers and learning support assistants, but which also includes all members of staff, is exceptional. The capacity of this staff to succeed and to continue to improve is excellent. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is very good. Its effectiveness can be seen in the fact that the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Monitoring is being increasingly shared by the senior management team with the coordinators. Coordinators are also being asked and welcome taking on the responsibility of preparing to bid for funding for their particular subjects.
50. The school knows what its aims are and the way in which progress towards them is to be made is clearly laid out in the school's development planning. The document that identifies the school's priorities is very well thought out and shows that the school's managers are able to be specific and detailed about the improvements they wish to make. The process of agreeing the priorities is one that involves the participation of all staff and governors and which is informed by many sources including not least the school's monitoring and appraisal systems. The school is most effective in the way in which its planning is implemented.
51. The school governors are dedicated and active in support of the school and devote a great deal of time in the effective pursuit of this end. The governing body is well organised and fully subscribed. The governors know the school well and bring to it, as individuals, a good range of skills, knowledge and experience. They are meeting their statutory obligations well.
52. The link between the establishment of priorities and the allocation of funding from the budget and the budget's subsequent monitoring is very effective. Information on budget performance is readily available from the school's finance and administration officer and the school is careful to buy into external monitoring and advice where the budget is concerned. The school and the governing body do well to manage the budget given that funding is not clear at the outset in as much as monies, often unannounced, are made available to the school throughout the year. This makes planning difficult and means that the school has to deal with these additional sums as they arise. The governing body is careful to seek the best value it can in the way it spends its

budget and is rightly unwilling to spend additional monies where the need does not arise. As a consequence of this and also as a result of the hitherto unfilled deputy headteacher's post, a budget surplus has accrued. This is now at an unacceptably high level and should be reduced. The school is aware of the unacceptability of this surplus and has suitable plans to reduce it.

53. The school has had a high turnover of teachers in the last two years but this has been due to both promotion and retirement. There is an excellent match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. A small example of the way in which the skills of learning support assistants impact is seen at lunchtime when pupils with hearing impairment are supported as they eat their lunch with the rest of the school. Because the school has unique and excellent features it is ideal for training mainstream teachers and teachers of the Deaf. The school has two newly qualified teachers who are doing very well and who are being well supported in their initial year.
54. The school is well resourced and particularly so in respect of provision for hearing impaired pupils (two of whom are children in the nursery). The school building is very pleasant and is very well maintained. The grounds are spacious, pleasant and well appointed. Classrooms are light and airy and the school's three demountable classrooms are of a decent size and in reasonable condition. The resource base for hearing impaired pupils is of a good size but the school lacks adequate space for them in regular one-to-one sessions, for small groups and for the accommodation of visiting specialists when they need to work with pupils. As a result pupils are sometimes asked to work in spaces that are quite restricted and which make moving around and getting past one another, to the white board for example, difficult. This particular aspect of provision sits ill with everything else that is done for these pupils and should be improved. The school staff is much larger than normal and whilst the staffroom would be adequate in other schools it cannot be said to be so in this instance as it cannot physically accommodate all of the staff at any one time.

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

In order to raise standards further the headteacher and governing body should:

- (i) make plans to reduce the school budget surplus to an acceptable level within a reasonable period of time;

*(paragraph 52)*

- (ii) seek, with others who might be able to assist, ways in which the particular inadequacies in accommodation for hearing impaired pupils and the staff, can be resolved.

*(paragraphs 54 and 128)*

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 63 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 30 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

|            | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number     | 2         | 15        | 36   | 10           | 0              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 3         | 24        | 57   | 16           | 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 – Y2 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)      | 18      | 166     |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 0       | 4       |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs   | Nursery | YR – Y2 |
|---|---------|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 0       | 12      |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 4       | 22      |

| English as an additional language                       | No of pupils |
|---|--------------|
| Number of pupils with English as an additional language | 1            |

| Pupil mobility in the last school year                                       | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 5            |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 1            |

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

|             | %   |
|-------------|-----|
| School data | 3.9 |

#### Unauthorised absence

|             | %   |
|-------------|-----|
| School data | 0.0 |

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| National comparative data | 5.4 |
|---------------------------|-----|

|                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| National comparative data | 0.5 |
|---------------------------|-----|

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

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

|  | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | 2001 | 29   | 35    | 64    |

| <b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b> |          | <b>Reading</b> | <b>Writing</b> | <b>Mathematics</b> |
|--|----------|----------------|----------------|--------------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above    | Boys     | 24             | 28             | 28                 |
|  | Girls    | 32             | 33             | 34                 |
|  | Total    | 56             | 61             | 62                 |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above  | School   | 88 (93)        | 95 (98)        | 97 (97)            |
|  | National | 84 (84)        | 86 (86)        | 90 (91)            |

| <b>Teachers' Assessments</b>                |          | <b>English</b> | <b>Mathematics</b> | <b>Science</b> |
|---|----------|----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 26             | 28                 | 28             |
|   | Girls    | 32             | 34                 | 33             |
|   | Total    | 58             | 62                 | 61             |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 91 (92)        | 97 (98)            | 95 (93)        |
|   | National | 85 (85)        | 89 (89)            | 89 (89)        |

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

| <b>Categories used in the Annual School Census</b>  |
|---|
| White – British                                     |
| White – Irish                                       |
| White – any other White background                  |
| Mixed – White and Black Caribbean                   |
| Mixed – White and Black African                     |
| Mixed – White and Asian                             |
| Mixed – any other mixed background                  |
| Asian or Asian British - Indian                     |
| Asian or Asian British - Pakistani                  |
| Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi                |
| Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background |
| Black or Black British – Caribbean                  |
| Black or Black British – African                    |
| Black or Black British – any other Black background |
| Chinese   |
| Any other ethnic group                              |
| No ethnic group recorded                            |

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

| <b>No of pupils on roll</b> | <b>Number of fixed period exclusions</b> | <b>Number of permanent exclusions</b> |
|-----------------------------|--|---------------------------------------|
| 108                         | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 1                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 2                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 2                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 0                           | 0  | 0                                     |
| 53                          | 0  | 0                                     |

*The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 12 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 19 |
| Average class size                       | 24 |

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 13  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 395 |

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

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 1  |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 25 |
| Total number of education support staff  | 5  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week    | 94 |

### ***Financial information***

|                |         |
|----------------|---------|
| Financial year | 2001/02 |
|----------------|---------|

|  | £      |
|--|--------|
| Total income                               | 777321 |
| Total expenditure                          | 740946 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 3139   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 53180  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 89554  |

|                                |     |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| Number of pupils per FTE adult | 6.3 |
|--------------------------------|-----|

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years     | 11 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 9  |

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

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 221 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 75  |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 72             | 21            | 4                | 3                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 51             | 35            | 8                | 0                 | 7          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 43             | 47            | 4                | 1                 | 4          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 29             | 48            | 4                | 1                 | 8          |
| The teaching is good.  | 59             | 37            | 0                | 0                 | 4          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 43             | 44            | 12               | 0                 | 1          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 71             | 21            | 7                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 53             | 41            | 1                | 0                 | 4          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 45             | 45            | 7                | 1                 | 1          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 49             | 41            | 4                | 0                 | 5          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 48             | 47            | 0                | 0                 | 5          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 28             | 28            | 19               | 3                 | 21         |

## **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**

55. The provision for the children in the nursery and reception years is good. Children can attend the nursery in the school and transfer to Reception in the term they become five years old. The children come into school with average attainment, they make good progress in their learning and are on line to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time they leave the Reception Year. They have average skills in all areas of learning and attain well in their personal, social and emotional development. The children identified as having special educational needs make very good progress, including those children with hearing impairment. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good, with a rich and varied curriculum. There is good breadth, balance and relevance to the curriculum and the provision for children with special educational needs is excellent.

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

56. The children make very good progress in their personal, social and emotional development, due to the very good teaching they receive. Their skills in personal and social interactions are very well promoted and they achieve at a high level and attain above the expectations for their age. The children are learning to be attentive very well. They concentrate and sit quietly when appropriate. Younger children in the nursery show curiosity, are keen to explore and are motivated to learn. There are good opportunities for the children to learn about a variety of cultures and traditions. The children work together well, learning to share and take turns and behaviour overall is at least good and frequently very good. They are learning the consequences of the impact of their actions on others, are encouraged to be independent and tend to their own needs wherever possible and are beginning to understand the meaning of respect, tolerance and understanding. The children with special educational needs make very good progress in learning how to deal with their strong impulses and emotions and hearing impaired children receive excellent support in their personal, social and emotional development. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is nurtured effectively.

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

57. The teaching in communication, language and literacy is good in both year groups and the children make good progress as a result. The staff make good efforts and use their skills well to ensure the children develop their skills in speaking and listening, especially for those children who are hearing impaired, in understanding and comprehension. The children have opportunities to be involved in role-play and in developing their imaginative ideas. The areas for this in the nursery are particularly good, with a range of activities for the children to extend their imagination and create their own stories. Both age groups are learning about the sounds letters make in words. In the Reception class this is tackled very systematically and linked to other work in literacy. In the nursery the staff ensure that incidental opportunities are used effectively to reinforce this aspect of learning. The children are learning to handle books correctly and are able to take these home to share with their parents and carers. Books are presented to the children in comfortable surroundings in the nursery. This is conducive to encouraging sharing books; there is an appropriate area for sharing books in the Reception class. The children are aware that print has meaning and use the clues in pictures and the text to gain understanding of the story. There are areas in both classes for the children to make marks and use pencils and crayons and their efforts in trying to write are encouraged and their skills in writing are emerging.

#### **Mathematical development**

57. The children make good progress in their mathematical development due to the good and sometimes very good teaching they receive. The children can count up to five and match a

group of objects to the correct numerals. They can talk about two-dimensional shapes and create patterns using these shapes and colours. They are learning to develop these skills to complete patterns of increasing complexity and their level of attainment here is very good. The children are learning to use and develop their ideas about numbers to solve simple problems. For example, to count the points of one star and then more stars, to find out the total numbers of points. There are good practical opportunities for the children to develop these ideas, such as through sand and water play. The children are beginning to relate adding and subtracting numbers of objects to a group, although opportunities to reinforce this type of work are sometimes missed.

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

58. The children are learning about the world in which they live and teaching in this area of learning is good. There is a good range of interesting activities provided to help the children understand the environment and to consider similarities and differences within it, for example looking at living things. The children look at change in materials, for example when making popcorn or icing for biscuits and they also consider how things work, for instance when making models that move. There is a very good range of equipment and opportunities for the children to make three-dimensional models and create their own designs. The children are developing good skills in using information and communication technology in their learning. The children identified as having special educational needs and those who are hearing impaired make good use of the range of technological equipment. The children are learning to share the events in their lives and to be aware of their environment. For example, in the nursery class they find their way about the indoor and outdoor spaces very well. The children are beginning to know about a range of cultures, traditions and beliefs.

### **Physical development**

59. The children have average skills overall in their physical development when they first start in the nursery. Teaching is good and they make good progress. A few children have skills that are slightly below average, with weak co-ordination skills. However, due to the very good support they receive, they progress very well alongside their classmates. Teaching is very good in the nursery in this area with tasks pitched at the right level, well organised sessions, with excellent behaviour management and the children progress very well as a result. Overall the children make good progress as they continue through the reception year, due to the good teaching they receive. They are learning to use bats and balls to practise their skills in games, throwing, catching and aiming. The children are learning to move with confidence, imagination and in safety. They use a range of equipment properly to climb, balance, jump and travel across, over and under objects. There are good links here to work in language to reinforce positional language. The children show an awareness of space, others and obstacles and negotiate these carefully. They are encouraged to consider healthy options, for example choosing fruit to eat at snack time. They handle an appropriate range of implements for writing and scissors and tools in designing and making models. There is a good range of opportunities for them to develop their manipulative skills.

### **Creative development**

60. The children's creative development is being well promoted by staff. There are good opportunities for them to explore sound and to make musical sound effects, for example to accompany stories. They have regular opportunities to sing to music which they do tunefully. They enjoy these sessions and take turns to provide musical accompaniments using untuned percussion instruments. They explore colour, texture, shape and form in two and three dimensions. For example, they use paper, tissue, crayons, paint and a variety of materials in their creative work to make collage, print and draw. They are learning a range of techniques to produce their own creations. Their efforts are valued and they are making good progress in developing their skills. There are good opportunities for the children to use a range of resources and props in their imaginative play and they use their imagination well in dance, music and role-play. The children have access to a range of materials to express their ideas and communicate

and use their imagination.

## ENGLISH

61. The consistently good teaching of English across the school makes a major contribution to the good standards seen. By the time they are seven most pupils are attaining standards in reading and writing which are above the levels expected nationally for pupils of their age. This represents an improvement overall in standards since the time of the last inspection. When compared to schools deemed similar in terms of the proportion of free school meals, the school's performance fell below average. However this does not take account of the above average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the school, nor the very good provision made for them and the very good progress they make in English.
62. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented successfully through the school. Pupils' understanding of their learning has been further boosted by the sharper focus given to objectives at the beginning of lessons, the review of what they have learnt at the end of the lesson, and by the recent introduction of individual targets for reading and writing. Pupils are making good progress in the infant years.
63. Pupils develop their speaking and listening skills well throughout the school and by the time they are seven most attain standards just above those nationally. Pupils are attentive and listen well in assemblies, where pupils, except the very youngest, also demonstrate their ability to communicate by signing. Year 1 pupils show increasing confidence in talking and many use sentences appropriately. Pupils in Year 2 showed they can express their own opinions and not be swayed by others when discussing a poem 'Monday's cat'. In another lesson, pupils showed they are confident in raising questions and can listen to others around them. They initiated a mini-discussion about punctuation in poems and facilitated by the teacher, three or four pupils exchanged comments within the whole class about full stops, commas, and no punctuation. Similarly in a religious education lesson, pupils exchanged thoughts concerning the use of a pencil for spinning a top when playing dreidl. The school is currently promoting story time and signing for all pupils is strongly featured. All pupils respond well during story time and most pupils are keen to offer their ideas and to join discussion.
64. The attainment in reading is just above the average standards achieved nationally. The enjoyment of books identified in the Foundation Stage is developed in Year 1. Pupils regularly take books home and read with family members. In Year 2, middle and higher attaining pupils talk about their favourite books and many know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books. Pupils read a range of materials including stories, poems, information texts and worksheets and the classrooms provide a word rich environment with labels, names, subject vocabularies and short pieces of text within wall displays. The school has increased the emphasis on teaching phonics and many Year 2 pupils make good use of sounding out simple letter strings to read an unfamiliar word and have a useful range of words they can recognise on sight. Higher attaining pupils are learning to read with good expression and good models are provided by readers and signers in the regular and very enjoyable class story times.
65. Writing standards are good overall. Most Year 1 pupils, working on a set of instructions for making a lamp, are able to follow the list and recognise the importance of having the correct sequence in the instructions. Higher attaining pupils can work well together part of the time on their own, sometimes joining together to read through the instruction. This work builds on writing skills developed in previous work on labels, captions and lists. Pupils are also beginning to show an understanding of capital letters and of full stops. The visit to the seaside at Southend by Year 2 pupils provided a great stimulus for their writing and it linked well with work in religious education and geography. Their enjoyment of the visit to the synagogue comes through in the detail in their individual accounts, as they focus upon particular features of interest - 'stained glass and they are beautiful', the work of 'polishing the scrolls' and 'drawers under the chairs'. Writing about their visit they develop the vocabulary of time - 'First I saw a pier and then we had lunch on the sand' (sand); 'it was so exciting'; and 'Finally we came back to school'. Pupils are able to try sounds when attempting to spell words. The school has identified spelling as an area for development. Several recent innovations having a positive impact upon standards include the introduction of spelling homework (Year 1), the adoption of the

Progression in Phonics strategy and a staff training session on spelling. In addition to personal targets, pupils' progress in writing is also promoted by the good use of literacy skills being practised across the curriculum in subjects such as information and communication technology, history, geography and religious education.

66. Most pupils in Year 2 achieve good standards of handwriting. Handwriting is taught within the literacy hour and within short lessons. Many Year 1 pupils are developing good standards of bold legible letters and most Year 2 pupils show consistent size and style in letter formation, with some practising joined writing successfully.
67. The quality of teaching was good and occasionally very good, in the lessons seen. Teaching teams, which include those colleagues with special responsibility for the hearing impaired pupils, plan lessons very well and learning is well supported by the learning support assistants. Together, colleagues provide a warm, supportive and usually challenging learning environment and work diligently to ensure the full inclusion of all pupils in classes. There is commonly very good management in lessons and pupils enjoy equal access to the curriculum.
68. The subject is managed very well. The co-ordinator offers very good support to colleagues, who in turn are keen to refine their own expertise and are able to share their own evaluations. New approaches such as the Early Literacy Support scheme for selected Year 1 pupils and increasing the range of books available in classrooms and the library further enrich pupils' learning. There are very good systems for monitoring teaching and for assessing pupils' progress. There is also very good use made of the analysis of the results of assessment to inform planning. These features all have a significant impact upon the good progress that pupils make.

## **MATHEMATICS**

69. Standards in mathematics are above expectations for pupils at age seven and this constitutes an improvement since the time of the last inspection. The great majority of pupils make good progress in terms of their previous attainment and those with special educational needs are making very good progress because of the very good quality of support they receive. Because the teaching for pupils in both Years 1 and 2 is good they are making steady progress across both years. Well-planned lessons and good assessment information contribute well to this progress.
70. The results of National Curriculum tests in 2002 showed that the attainment of pupils was average, and was below average when compared with similar schools. Performance over time reflects the varying nature of individual cohorts of pupils but is generally above the national average. The trend in improvement is upward and is similar to that seen nationally. There is no noteworthy difference between the way boys and girls are performing. Improvements in standards can be attributed to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and the improvement in teaching in a school which is deemed to have made good improvement since the time of the last inspection.
71. Pupils enter Year 1 with standards that are average and generally at the level expected nationally. Consistently good teaching enables them to make good progress and by the time they are in Year 2 they have good recall of basic number facts. They enjoy the challenge of number games and younger pupils in Year 1 are able to see how repeated addition links to multiplication. Understanding of number is used to solve problems with sums of money. They are developing a sense of the size of a number. Well planned teaching introduces pupils to a variety of experiences with shape, space and measures so that, for example, pupils can tell the time to the hour and can compare and measure the size of different objects. They are able to record their findings in simple graph form and can use the computer well to display such information.
72. The quality of teaching is good and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Teaching is equally good in both years. Good progress has been made with the teaching of mathematics since the

last inspection. Pupils' work is now well laid out and dated and teachers are very good at tracking the progress of their pupils. The integrated approach that was said to have curtailed direct teaching has now given way via the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, and short-term planning is now very clear about lesson objectives and the provision for pupils of different abilities. In one instance the pace of a lesson slowed not because, as previously, a task had been too undemanding, but for the opposite reason in that part of the task chosen for a higher attaining group was too demanding.

73. The integration of hearing impaired pupils into two of the six classes that comprise Years 1 and 2 is a most singular accomplishment in the teaching of mathematics. Pupils in these classes are supported through signing not only by a teacher of the Deaf but by the class teacher and the learning support assistants. As a result they enjoy access to learning that is comparable with the rest and because of the very good levels of support make very good progress. Teachers show that they have many good qualities. Planning provides for different levels of attainment and need and shows clearly what its objectives are. There is good reference to key vocabulary and how and where information and communication technology is to be incorporated. Assessment is effective and so teachers are able – with help from learning support assistants to evaluate and if necessary change, their planning. Because the planning is good and teachers have good general and specific skills in teaching the subject, the lessons proceed at a good pace. There is challenge and pupils respond well.
74. Teachers make their expectations clear to their pupils who then know what they are going to do and how they are going to do it. The partnership between teachers and learning support assistants is very strong and effective. Relationships with pupils are warm and secure so that pupils are in no doubt that what they say will be listened to and valued. Teachers clearly enjoy their work with their pupils and their enthusiasm is infectious. Classrooms are typically purposeful and productive but are also places where humour and fun are to be found.
75. The subject is being very well supported by the coordinator who has a clear and relevant action plan. She is able to contribute to the raising of standards by monitoring the teaching of the subject in the classroom – something that was not the case at the time of the last inspection – and by looking at planning and work in books. Consequently she is in a position to contribute to staff development and the school development plan. It is planned that in future she will be responsible for bidding for funding for her subject. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils and makes good use of information and communication technology, for example through the use of the computer and programmable robots. Mathematical knowledge and understanding is effectively used and consolidated in other areas of the curriculum. The school has adopted a commercial tracking system for the recording of progress and the setting of challenging, yet attainable, targets for individual pupils.

## **SCIENCE**

75. Standards in science are in line with expectations for the pupils by the time they leave Year 2. In 2002, the results of teacher assessments in science were that the pupils' attainment is average, but above average for those pupils achieving higher levels of attainment (Level 3). When compared to schools in similar circumstances the pupils' attainment is at the expected level, including pupils who are higher achievers. There is no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. There has been good progress in improving science in the school since the previous inspection. The schemes of work and systems for recording the pupils' progress have been developed and are now good. The role of the co-ordinator, in conjunction with other co-ordinators in the school, has been developed successfully. The school has clearly identified the national levels for attainment in science and effectively incorporated these into assessment of progress and attainment in science.
76. The pupils in Year 1 are learning about light sources, dark and light and they have average skills here and make satisfactory progress in lessons. However sometimes the pace of lessons is too slow, the pupils' slight restlessness impacts on progress and there is not enough challenge or

reinforcement of scientific language and vocabulary. Pupils in Year 2 have recently studied food groups and can identify these correctly as 'protein', 'carbohydrate' or 'fat'. In Year 2, the pupils can give very reasonable suggestions about forces and make comparisons, between those that push and those that pull objects. Through a very good range of practical activities, the pupils are learning how the impact of a force can change how quickly or slowly an object moves. As the practical tasks were developed during the inspection week, the pupils' rate of progress increased and the staff's enthusiasm and organisation benefited the pupils' learning. For example, the pupils were very keen to bring their bikes and scooters to school, with the help of their parents' and carers' involvement and these were used very well to demonstrate and give the pupils very good experiences in their own investigative work. There was an effective risk assessment conducted prior to the tasks, which was comprehensive and identified any potential risks and procedures for dealing with these.

77. The quality of teaching is good overall, with no unsatisfactory teaching and examples of good to excellent teaching in Year 2. Pupils' learning is good overall, due to the good teaching they experience. In teaching that is good or better, lessons have a good match of different tasks to the pupils' levels of ability. Overall, the staff have good knowledge and understanding of the curriculum for science and basic skills are taught well. Lessons are well planned, with good opportunities for promoting the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and appropriate opportunities for using information and communication technology are identified clearly within written planning. There are appropriate teaching methods and expectations for what the pupils are to achieve. There is very good management of pupils, good assessment of progress and effective use of resources.
78. The pupils have good attitudes and behaviour in science lessons, personal development is very good and those pupils identified as having special educational needs make very good progress, especially those pupils who are hearing-impaired. The curriculum is good, covers all expected elements, with very good levels of inclusion and follows national guidelines. Topics for Year 1 include 'ourselves', growing plants and animals in the local environment, materials, studying light and dark forces and sound and hearing. Pupils in Year 2 study health and growth, plants and animals in the local environment, materials and how they change, forces and movement and using electricity. The scheme of work is comprehensive, with good guidance for staff, for example about the use of scientific vocabulary, how to extend the pupils' thinking and the acquisition of skills. The policy for teaching science in the school is up to date, clearly written and covers the necessary aspects.
79. Leadership and management of science are good. There are good procedures for assessment, through a scheme that covers the National Curriculum levels for Year 1 and 2. There is good monitoring of the provision for science across the school, which has identified improving the match of activities to their differing needs and abilities of pupils as an area for further development, especially to extend higher achieving pupils. The role of the co-ordinator is effective, supported by a clear job description, in identifying how to improve standards and teaching in science in the school, with a very good commitment to continuing improvement. Resources are satisfactory overall; new resources for information and communication technology in science have been purchased recently.
80. There are good links to other subjects through scientific work, for instance through literacy and numeracy in recording observations and through visits to support geography. For example, a Year 1 trip to Boydell's Farm involved the pupils very well, as they observed animals at feeding time and their different features and characteristics. Artwork on collages of natural materials found on the beach and three-dimensional models of moving vehicles in design and technology also support scientific work. There is a club for science which is part of the extra-curricular activities. Year 1 also visit Langdon Hills to promote their scientific work, Year 2 pupils visit Colchester Zoo as part of their work on classification and variation and also go to a 'discovery centre', where they have very good 'hands on' experience.

## **ART AND DESIGN**



81. Judgements are based on the three lessons seen during the inspection, scrutiny of planning, work on display, photographic evidence and discussion with the co-ordinator. This indicates that standards are above average by the end of Year 2. Pupils are achieving well. Art and design is a strength of the school. The school has maintained standards seen at the previous inspection. The range of imaginative and colourful artwork displayed around the school celebrates the pupils' achievements.
82. Samples of work show that pupils develop a good range of skills. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, experience a range of activities and media enabling them to explore pattern, colour and shape. They are introduced to paint, brush and crayon and learn to control these well. Pupils in Year 1 looked at patterns and shapes in local buildings and using graphite sticks they reproduced a range of effective and fascinating patterns. A visiting artist, using a variety of different objects, extended their knowledge to produce colourful printed patterns on to material. Following a visit to the farm, these pupils made a large collage of lifelike farm animals using a variety of different media to create stimulating textured pictures. Year 2 pupils working with the artist made clay faces demonstrating the increasing development of their observational skills. The school has regular art days with visiting artists. A wide range of activities embracing the use of different materials and techniques is organised for all pupils. The opportunities and stimulus provided by these days contribute considerably to the high standards and good achievement in the subject.
83. The quality of teaching is good. In the three lessons observed, the quality of teaching ranged from very good to satisfactory. Teachers successfully promote pupils' creativity and confidence and skills are well taught. Teachers have good subject knowledge. All lessons were well planned, class management was effective, materials were carefully prepared and explanations were clear. This led to highly motivated pupils who made good progress. For example, Year 2 pupils used a viewfinder to successfully produce realistic backgrounds of flames in their pictures of the Fire of London. They evaluated their paintings and also made good links to their work on churches in religious education and in their history studies about the Great Fire of London. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Interest and concentration are sustained throughout the lessons. Corridors and classrooms display good examples of pupils' artwork, which assists learning and makes a major contribution to the ethos of the school.
84. The use of information and communication technology to support learning in art and design through programs on drawing and painting is well developed. For example, Year 1 produces self-portraits and Year 2 produce illustrations for their books using paint spray and magic paint programs. There is a scheme of work which ensures that pupils develop their skills systematically. Teachers plan in year groups. Art and design is well integrated to enhance work in other subjects. Pupils' work is regularly assessed and individual portfolios of work support these assessments. The co-ordinator provides very good leadership and monitors and maintains standards of work. There has recently been whole school in-service training at the National Gallery which was shared with the Junior school. Resources are good and well organised but storage space is limited.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

85. Pupils in Year 2 attain the standards expected for their age which is the same as the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils generally make sound progress in the skills of planning, using tools and evaluating products they are working on. They also progress well in their knowledge about differences in characteristics of materials.
86. The response of pupils to work in design and technology was very good overall and occasionally excellent, in the lessons seen. Staff enable all pupils to participate fully and have equal access to appropriate learning activities. They also help pupils recognise the importance of health and safety aspects. Pupils are shown that they are valued and respected by adults. Pupils with special educational needs including those with hearing impairment make good progress in their learning.
87. Following a farm visit, Year 1 pupils design shelters for animals. They discuss animals' needs

and develop their making skills and their ability to use tools safely. The practice of good hygiene and appreciation of healthy diets is involved in their making fruit salads. Year 2 pupils learn how levers can be used to create movement by make moving pictures of owls. Designing skills are developed when making puppets and a vehicle. When choosing their vehicle and the purpose for building it, they demonstrate a wide variety of ideas: bus – ‘for bus driver’; car – ‘for mummy’; scooter – ‘for me’; and limmo – ‘for rich(er)’. In the vehicle-building activity, teachers successfully involve them in developing their ideas through discussion; measuring and cutting materials; assembling, joining and combining materials; and evaluating their progress against their design criteria.

88. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and in some of the lessons observed it was very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was sound overall. Very good relationships and classroom management are consistently strong features of lessons. Signing, where appropriate, makes for the excellent inclusion of all pupils and helps ensure that all pupils have equal access to the learning activities. Lessons are well planned.
89. Improvements since the last inspection include the development of a scheme of work to underpin learning through the school. There is now a wider range of resources such as tool kits, puppets and construction kits. There are good procedures for assessing pupils’ progress. The good links made with other subjects, including English, mathematics and information and communication technology, have a positive impact upon standards attained.
90. The coordinator does not currently have sufficient release time to monitor the quality of teaching and learning formally. The subject has been identified as an item in the school development plan for 2003-04. The use of the school grounds has been identified as a topic for curriculum development and the involvement with colleagues and pupils in the junior school is intended to enrich pupils’ learning.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

91. Pupils attain at the expected level by the time they are seven-years-old and both boys and girls achieve at a satisfactory pace. They have appropriate attitudes to geography and complete their work properly, with reasonable presentation and tidiness. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress.
92. Since the previous inspection the subject has been maintained and progress overall in improving geography is satisfactory. In Year 1 topics covered include looking at the school building, the local area and safety in the local environment. This work is linked to stories such as 'Rosie's Walk' and visits, for example to a farm; the pupils then record and illustrate their work, supporting their learning in literacy and also art and design. Pupils in Year 1 are also involved in recycling projects and study human and physical geography.
93. In Year 2, the pupils study a variety of topics; these include an island home, a 'global eye' and contrasting localities here and overseas. They have visited Southend as part of their geographical study. There are links to information and communication technology, through the use of aerial photographs of the seaside and the characteristics and features of the environment. Graph work also links well to mathematics and numeracy. The Southend trip included a visit to a synagogue, the pupils also studied terrain at the beach and how this compares to Tile Kiln and they are able to describe the coastline and the discoveries they made in the sand. There were good links to science and religious education during this trip, the pupils enjoy geography and the visits they make and have appropriate levels of attainment.
94. It was not possible to observe any lessons in geography during the inspection, as the subject was not being taught this half term. It is therefore not possible to come to a firm judgement about the quality of teaching, although from curriculum planning the subject is given appropriate coverage. There is good use of ongoing assessment of what the pupils are to learn next. The curriculum for geography offers a good range of learning opportunities with good breadth, balance and relevance and adheres to the National Curriculum. Pupils who are gifted and

talented and those who have special needs are making good progress. The policy for geography is up to date and relevant and the scheme of work follows national guidelines. The provision for pupils identified with special educational needs is very good and there are very good levels of inclusion in geography in the school. Geography is used well to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

95. Leadership and management of geography are good; the co-ordination of geography is well developed. The monitoring of the subject forms part of the school's overall procedures for reviewing the curriculum, teaching and learning. There are good procedures for assessment, which are linked to national descriptors for the expected levels of attainment. Resources are satisfactory overall but the co-ordinator has identified that there is a need for more maps and globes for incidental use in classrooms. The purchase of more resources for information and communication technology such as CD ROMs is a recent development and is yet to impact fully on lessons.

## **HISTORY**

96. Standards in history are at the expected level by the time the pupils are seven years old. Both boys and girls are learning at an appropriate rate, have good attitudes to history and behave well in lessons; personal development is also promoted very well. Pupils identified as having special educational needs make good progress and those pupils who are hearing-impaired are very well supported in lessons. Since the previous inspection the role of the history co-ordinator has been improved, with some time allocated to monitoring the pupils' progress, through planning, assessment and reviewing pupils' work, supported by a clear job description. Monitoring of classroom practice has not been undertaken as yet, but this forms part of the school's monitoring plans for the future. Assessment procedures have also been improved and there has been good progress overall in improving history since the previous inspection.
97. In Year 2 the pupils study a variety of topics, these include the 'Great Fire of London' and famous people, such as Samuel Pepys. The pupils have a secure idea about the sequence of events of the fire and empathise well with how people would have felt at the time. They study Samuel Pepys' diary, London and Charles II, with types of dress worn then and different socio-economic circumstances. The pupils in Year 1 are learning about the past, for example by making a timeline of events in history. They make comparisons between different features and characteristics of houses and buildings 'now and then'. They have appropriate understanding about historical ideas with regard to old and new houses, for example thinking about the appearance of their own home and making comparisons and they are attaining at the expected level for their age. The pupils use their skills in literacy and numeracy effectively to record their findings and observations.
98. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of historical facts and teach basic skills appropriately. The planning in lessons is good, teachers' expectations and teaching methods are appropriate and the management of pupils is very good. There is appropriate use of time and resources and support staff are used very well. There is good use of ongoing assessment to identify what the pupils are to learn next. The pupils are learning at a reasonable rate overall. They are acquiring appropriate skills, knowledge and understanding in their study of history topics. The pupils make good efforts in their research and finding out about events and people in history. They work at a reasonable rate and have sound interest, concentration and independence in their history lessons.
99. There is a good curriculum for history, with good breadth, balance and relevance based on guidelines and a scheme of work, which reflect the National Curriculum. There is a clear and up-to-date policy for history in the school. Topics include toys and homes in the past for Year 1 and studies of Florence Nightingale and seaside holidays for Year 2; the topics are organised in blocks of time in conjunction with studies in geography. The provision for pupils identified with special educational needs is very good and there are very good levels of inclusion within history. History is used well to promote the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

100. Leadership and management of history are good. There is a comprehensive programme of monitoring of the subject, in conjunction with the roles of other co-ordinators in the school, reviewing planning and the pupils' work. There have been no observations of classroom practice as yet, but this forms part of the monitoring programme for the future. There are good procedures for assessment, with good links to levels within the National Curriculum to assess the pupils' progress and attainment. Resources are satisfactory overall, however some posters and pictures, although of appropriate topics to support learning, are too small to make a good impact on the pupils' learning. The co-ordinator is very aware of the need to offer larger and more 'eye-catching' resources for pupils. Information and communication technology is used appropriately in lessons; additional resources to support learning in history have been purchased recently.

### **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

101. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 2 is broadly in line with the expectations for pupils of their age. This maintains the standards noted at the time of the last inspection. A computer suite has been developed and there are two computers in each classroom. Appropriate staff training and the use made of the expertise of other support staff, have made a major contribution to the progress pupils make.
102. Planning provides for progression in computer skills for children in the Foundation Stage through to Years 1 and 2. Year 1 pupils assemble text, using the mouse to select words to make up sentences. They can delete text and print their work and some are beginning to learn how to save it. Year 2 pupils can select and use graphic tools in an art program and produce artistic images in the style of Mondrian. Brush, pencil and spray tools are used when they compose pictures of the Great Fire of London. Word-processing skills are developed in writing about their visit to the seaside and in surveys in mathematics. Year 2 pupils have their own personal computer files and learn to save their work in them. In conversation they appreciate computers are used outside school such as in supermarket checkouts and traffic light systems.
103. Pupils greatly enjoy their work in information and communication technology and apply themselves well. Pupils with special educational needs get fully involved and the very good support they have helps them to make very good progress in their learning.
104. Information and communication technology contributes well to other subject areas. English is well supported on many occasions, such as in Year 2 pupils' writing about the Great Fire of London – in history, or a synagogue visit. In mathematics, pupils use 100 number squares in Year 1 and complete graphs of pets or of television programmes in Year 2. ICT also contributes well to the social development of pupils as they take turns and will often support each other in, for example, showing ways of using particular icons or commands.
105. The quality of teaching is good overall, with satisfactory and good teaching observed in lessons. This is an improvement since the last inspection when some teaching was unsatisfactory. All lessons are planned well and staff ensure that all pupils have equal access to use of the computers. In the best lessons, teachers maintained a good pace to activities and offered appropriate levels of challenge to pupils' skills and thinking. Following whole class introductions, teachers subsequently organise pupils well to work at the two machines in class, or in the computer suite under the skilful direction of learning support assistants.
106. The enthusiastic and well-organised subject coordinator provides good subject leadership. A scheme of work has been developed drawing in part from national guidelines and from commercially produced sources. There are good assessment procedures in place to enable the progress of pupils to be recorded systematically. The computer suite sometimes is a little cramped, but overall the good quality resources have a positive impact upon pupils' progress.

### **MUSIC**

107. Pupils' attainment in music was in line with expectations by the end of Year 2 at the time of the

last inspection and this remains the case today. Evidence is taken from lesson observations and interviews with pupils and the subject coordinator. There has been a good improvement in the subject since the last inspection in that staff are confident in their subject knowledge. Good attention is now paid to how and where pupils are seated in order that they may see clearly and evidence was seen of pupils composing and recording their music.

108. Pupils in Year 1 were seen to be making very good progress in a singing lesson taken by a visiting musician. This was also the case for a separate session with Year 2 pupils. These sessions were signed and hearing pupils showed that they were both keen and able to participate in this way. Whilst hearing impaired pupils also have music sessions with teachers of the Deaf who form part of the hearing impaired unit, they were able to be fully included in the singing lessons which were enjoyed by all. The pupils are able to sing tunefully with the piano and, on occasion, without. In class lessons, pupils in Year 1 learn about the duration of sounds and select and play instruments that they feel will show its difference. They can suggest what sound duration properties different percussion instruments might have. Pupils in Year 2 are able to distinguish between pulse and rhythm and can clap the rhythm of nursery rhymes very convincingly. Instruments are handled with care and restraint.
109. The quality of teaching is good and on occasion is very good. Teachers combine to work very well with unit teachers and learning support assistants in class lessons and in year group sessions with a visiting pianist. This means that hearing impaired pupils can be given very special treatment in withdrawal sessions and yet can experience some music in the same way as the rest. Inclusion is extended to the point where hearing pupils, through their willingness to learn signing, can be given some of the experiences that are so vital to their hearing impaired friends. Another strength of the teaching of music lies in the meticulous planning that is involved. Music is presented in an interesting and enjoyable way and teachers take advantage of opportunities to make music more accessible. Such an opportunity occurred when the hearing impaired pupils were taken to meet the internationally renowned deaf percussionist Evelyn Glennie. The pupils have also had the opportunity of seeing and hearing drummers from Africa in action.
76. The subject is well led by a well-qualified coordinator. She is able to offer help and advice and has an action plan that shows careful thought has been given as to how the subject is to be developed. There is good provision for pupils who want to learn to play the recorder and opportunities for pupils to hear music are presented in morning assemblies and at lunchtime. The subject makes a very good contribution to pupils' cultural and multicultural development, as well as offering them spiritual experiences. The subject is making reasonable use of information and communication technology and there are plans to increase its use. The inclusion of hearing impaired pupils is very well achieved and they make good progress as a result.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

110. By the end of Year 2 most pupils attain average standards and a few pupils attain above. Judgements are based on teachers' planning, photographic evidence and lesson observations. In these lessons, pupils, including the hearing impaired and those with special educational needs, were achieving well. These standards have been satisfactorily maintained since the previous inspection. The pupils demonstrate good body control over a range of movements and good awareness of the use of space. Well-planned lessons and good and sometimes very good teaching ensure a good quality of learning and contribute to the standards attained.
111. Pupils in both Years 1 and 2 show good understanding of using different parts of their bodies, in gymnastics, to move in a variety of ways and in travelling in different directions at different speeds. They travel successfully on hands and feet, demonstrating a variety of balance, positions and shapes. Pupils develop dance movements confidently in response to music, introducing suitable variations in speed, shape and direction into their work. For example, Year 2 pupils demonstrated a sequence of movements to represent a firework. They showed appropriate co-ordination and imagination. All pupils understand the need to warm up for and

recover from, exercise. In both year groups, pupils can transfer their ideas of movement using different parts of the body to create simple sequences of movements on the apparatus and higher attainers show polish and control for example, when jumping and landing. Pupils enjoyed all physical education lessons and noticeably made a great effort to improve performance and develop their skills. They show good understanding of how to set up and put away apparatus, taking account of safety issues and, in both year groups, undress and dress very quickly for physical education lessons so that time is used to the best advantage. Dress is appropriate and earrings are not allowed.

112. The quality of teaching is good overall with examples of very good teaching in Year 1. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers undertake good planning and they provide a most appropriate range of resources. This helps pupils develop their various skills. Clear instructions are provided and this allows all pupils, including the hearing impaired and those with special educational needs, to make good gains in their learning. Classroom assistants are well used in these lessons. All members of staff change appropriately for lessons and they all join in and demonstrate for pupils. They have good subject knowledge and high expectations. Lessons are conducted at a brisk pace, with pupils being kept busy throughout and being encouraged to develop their movements. Work builds on previous lessons and pupils are given the opportunity to reflect on and develop their learning and improve their performance. Pupils are keen to demonstrate and discuss the quality of the work seen in demonstrations. They show very good attitudes, behave well and work well alone or with a partner or in a group. Opportunities for pupils to celebrate the achievements of others are well established within lessons.
113. Good use is made of a nationally recognised scheme of work that guides teachers and enables them to plan their lessons well. Pupil progress is assessed weekly with emphasis on targeting the higher and lower attaining pupils. The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the future educational direction for the subject. She organises an after-school 'Top Play' games skills club for Year 2 pupils. West Ham Football Club offer game skills coaching. The resources are good and are well organised.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

114. By the end of Year 2, pupils attain standards that are in line with the requirements of the Essex locally agreed syllabus - as was found at the time of the last inspection. Evidence is drawn from lesson observations, assemblies, photographs and from scrutiny of work. The morality of the Christian faith forms the basis of the 'Golden Rules' of the school. The wider aspects of promoting independence, self-esteem and care for others form the basis of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils. They are promoted across the curriculum, through religious education, assemblies and 'circle time'. Assemblies encourage spiritual development in an ethos in which all pupils can grow, flourish and respect others and be respected. Time for reflection is carefully introduced and silently observed by all pupils. All pupils are achieving well in their knowledge and understanding of different faiths.
115. Pupils have an understanding of the concept of God, of Christianity and of other world religions. They know that there are customs and festivals associated with them and have handled artefacts from different faiths. For example, Year 1 pupils know that Sikhs have five items demonstrating adherence to their religion. In the Christian faith, they have recently looked at the ceremony of baptism. The religious education curriculum is well supported by a range of visits; for example, Year 2 have visited a synagogue. Pupils are able to explain the importance of the Torah to the Jewish faith and the origin of the dreidl game played during Hanukkah. Pupils understand the need to belong to a variety of groups and they recognise the importance of their own family and friends.
116. The standard of teaching is good and sometimes very good and this has a positive impact on pupils' learning. Teachers have good subject knowledge and planning is good. They have a sensitive approach which gives pupils confidence to share views and ideas. For example, Year 2 learning about Hanukkah eagerly recalled the story of Judas Maccabeus and the teacher

successfully helped the pupils to link this story with why candles and the dreidl game are so important in the festival of Hanukkah. Pupils' understanding of the Jewish faith and their learning were successfully extended by the teacher's sensitive approach and good use of questions. A good range of teaching approaches is used thereby effectively capturing the interest of pupils. Classroom assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning. For example, they assisted Year 1 pupils in making baptismal candles and through good questioning ensured that the pupils understood the significance of the candle. By using sign language they involved all pupils in making the candles. As a result those pupils with special needs are seen to be making very good progress.

117. Management of religious education is very good. The subject co-ordinator is very enthusiastic about developing her role and has a clear view of how to raise attainment in the subject. The policy has recently been reviewed and planning is being monitored effectively to ensure continuity and progression of skills. The scheme of work meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The assessment procedures track individual pupils' knowledge and understanding. Resources are good and well organised to support teaching of the different topics. Good use is made of literacy skills in reading and recording work. Information and communication technology is being developed well to support pupils' learning.

## **UNIT FOR HEARING IMPAIRED**

118. There are 13 children in the unit, of whom two children are in Nursery, one in Reception plus five pupils from Year 1 and five from Year 2. These pupils have significant hearing loss and have not had the benefit of early experiences of hearing or of normal communication development. The Local Education Authority Special Needs Panel selects pupils for the unit based upon a full assessment of their particular educational need.
119. The hearing impaired unit is a strength of the school and provides excellent support for all of the pupils. Achievement overall is very good and by the end of Year 2 most pupils will reach national expectations in mathematics and in reading and writing. They make very good progress from a low starting point working from clear and effective targets set out in their Individual Educational Plans and statements. In the previous inspection, targets within the Individual Education Plans expressed generally clear learning objectives but targets overall were inconsistent. All targets are now consistently very good.
120. The pupils' very good attitudes to their work and their efforts to do as well as they can contribute very positively to the progress they make in school. There are excellent relationships between pupils and with staff and this makes a significant contribution to the excellent personal development of the pupils. Pupils are fully integrated into mainstream classes. They participate in all lessons and activities and this fully inclusive policy has excellent benefits for both mainstream and hearing impaired pupils. For example, in a Year 2 physical education lesson using a range of apparatus, a hearing impaired pupil with limited motor skills was appropriately selected by the class teacher to demonstrate a sequence of movements and for his efforts the class gave spontaneous applause. The pupil was delighted by his success and the personal development of other pupils in the class was greatly enhanced.
121. Teaching in the unit is always very good and sometimes excellent. In small groups in the unit pupils are well supported in English, mathematics and music. Planning is very well linked between the unit and mainstream classes so that pupils are prepared for class work in the unit and are then able to integrate with their class to participate fully in a class lesson. For example, a group of Year 2 hearing impaired pupils worked on writing a poem together in the unit and in the next class literacy lesson were able to share in a similar activity with other pupils with the support of the classroom assistant. The work of classroom assistants is of a very high standard and provides excellent support for all pupils, especially the hearing impaired. They are well briefed by unit teachers and by class teachers and work in a close and productive partnership sharing planning and assessment. Planning is very good and lessons are taken at a very good pace which motivates and fully involves the pupils. Expectations for all pupils are high and pupils from the unit meet these expectations very well. Normal speech is accompanied by

sign including British Sign Language and this is a whole school policy which is clearly successful and impacts very well on the progress hearing impaired pupils make. Hearing pupils are given the basic understanding of sign language and are able to communicate with hearing impaired children to support the fully inclusive ethos of the school. Pupils are able to learn and play together harmoniously.

122. The curriculum in the unit is appropriate and fully supports the National Curriculum. Pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills in information and communication technology and do so with enthusiasm. The balance of withdrawal and integration is very effective. The music curriculum is especially well adapted for pupils from the unit and specialised musical equipment together with effective teaching enables pupils from the unit to make good progress. The extra-curricular activities which support and extend class work are also well organised for pupils from the unit. There is a very good after school club for unit pupils each week in which they are joined by older hearing-impaired pupils from the juniors. The club is organised by the unit staff and makes very good use of a hearing impaired artist and volunteers from Marconi, all of whom provide very good role models for pupils. Pupils from the unit experience a rich range of learning opportunities outside the classroom including visits to theatres and trips around the local area and to places of cultural or historic interest.
123. There is very good liaison with outside agencies and there is particularly good support from the speech and language therapists. Information from these agencies is used well to plan pupils' individual targets. There are very effective procedures for assessing pupils' needs. Monitoring of pupils' academic achievement is very good; progress is continually monitored by teachers, who involve parents very effectively at every stage. Recording is detailed and thorough and is used well for monitoring and planning not only academic progress but also personal development. Classroom teachers and teaching assistants are fully involved in the recording and assessment process. There is an open door policy in the unit and parents are welcomed at any time. Reviews are well planned and good information is provided for parents so that they have a complete understanding of the progress and attainment of their child.
124. Leadership and management of the provision for hearing impaired pupils are excellent. The two unit teachers work in close partnership to provide excellent support for pupils and to ensure that they participate fully in all classroom and extra-curricular activities. Pupils have their own planned programme of personal and social education called 'PATHS' planned to enable young people to make sensible decisions and encourage positive feelings about themselves as Deaf young people. Such planned provision makes an excellent contribution to the personal development and maturity of the pupils. Linkages with the main school are very good. All parents and pupils are encouraged to participate in developing signing skills during the Deaf Awareness Week which is organised by the unit teachers. Unit teachers and classroom assistants are well trained for their work and regular appraisals are fully in place to ensure the maintenance of high standards of teaching. An equally close and productive partnership is maintained with the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to ensure a broad range of provision for pupils from the unit. Resources are good and well managed but accommodation is not satisfactory. The small group teaching room is too small and poses limitations for the range of learning activities which should be used to support pupils learning. For example there is insufficient room for pupils to move around or even go to the board to write their answers for others to see.