

INSPECTION REPORT

**TANY'S DELL COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Harlow

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114939

Headteacher: Mrs Val Jones

Reporting inspector: Helen Hutchings
7541

Dates of inspection: 30th June – 3rd July 2003

Inspection number: 247512

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Primary and nursery, with a hearing impaired unit

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 - 11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Mowbray Road
Harlow
Essex

Postcode: CM20 2LS

Telephone number: 01279 866230

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Sean Foley

Date of previous inspection: 24th November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
7541	H Hutchings	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Music Religious education Educational inclusion	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9537	C Marden	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
20991	J Nelson	Team inspector	Foundation stage Science Art and design Design and technology English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
30244	R Tapley	Team inspector	English Geography History Physical education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
17171	M Last	Team inspector	Special educational needs Hearing impaired unit	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Tany's Dell Community Primary School is about the same size as other primary schools, with 106 boys and 73 girls on roll. It has a nursery with 43 children attending part-time. The school has places for 12 pupils in a designated hearing impaired unit. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is low. The percentage of children speaking English as an additional language is higher than most schools although very few pupils are at an early stage of speaking English. The school has a higher than average percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, including statements. A very high proportion of pupils enters or leaves the school at times other than the normal time of entry. Many of the pupils entering the school at these times have complex emotional and behavioural needs. There has been a relatively high turnover of teachers and it has been difficult to recruit teachers but the school is fully staffed.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Tany's Dell School is an effective school, with many strengths, including very good care and support for pupils' personal development. Most pupils enjoy school and behave well. Pupils enter the school with a wide range of knowledge, skills and understanding but, overall, their attainment on entry is well below what is expected. They make satisfactory progress overall during their time in the school. Pupils with hearing impairments and those with other special educational needs achieve well. The leadership and management of the school by the headteacher and leadership group are good. Given the positive attitudes of pupils, improvements in national tests in line with national trends and the quality of leadership, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well in reading, writing in other subjects and in art in Years 3 to 6.
- The good partnership between teachers and teaching assistants enables every child to learn.
- There is a spirit of harmony where pupils genuinely care for one another. Very good care, personal, moral and social development promotes positive attitudes and behaviour.
- Pupils in the hearing impaired unit and those with additional special educational needs make good progress.
- The curriculum provides interesting learning opportunities, including a good range of extra-curricular activities, which motivate pupils to achieve.
- The partnership with parents and carers is first rate.

What could be improved

- Standards achieved by pupils, particularly those capable of reaching higher levels.
- The use of assessment information to drive up standards.
- Consistency in setting and checking on targets for pupils and within subjects.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Since the school was last inspected in November 1997, improvement has been satisfactory. The issues highlighted in the last report have been followed up carefully so that the curriculum is now broad, meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and is well-planned to give pupils interesting first-hand experiences. Teaching has improved significantly. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been introduced successfully and attainment in English and mathematics has improved at a similar rate to the national trend. Improvements have been made in the school's systems for tracking pupils' standards and progress but more could still be made of the information collected. Attendance remains below the national average. The school meets the requirement for collective worship daily, not previously in place.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	E	E	C	A
mathematics	E	D	E	E
science	E	C	E	C

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

Similar schools means schools with similar levels of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

Pupils enter the nursery with skills well below the expected levels for their age. They make satisfactory progress overall during their time in the nursery and foundation stage, and by the time they enter Year 1, their attainment is below, rather than, well below average.

Results of national assessments for pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2002¹ showed that pupils' attainment was in line with the national average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. Standards, as measured by teacher assessments in science, were also below average. This represented a significant improvement in standards over previous years. Results were well above those of similar schools in reading, above average for writing and in line with attainment in mathematics. The standards of work of pupils currently in Year 2 are below national expectations in English and mathematics, although more pupils are working at higher levels than in 2002. In science, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations. In other subjects, pupils are working at the expected levels for their age and in games their attainment is at a higher level than normally seen for this age group.

Progress throughout the school is satisfactory. The standards of pupils currently in Year 6 are below national expectations in English, mathematics and science. However, as about a third of pupils joined the year group after the start of Year 3, many of whom had little settled experience of learning, this

¹ 2002 is the latest year for which comparative information is available

represents considerable achievement for the school. In 2002, results in national tests showed that pupils had achieved very well in English in relation to schools with similar levels of attainment in Year 2. In mathematics, however, their attainment was well below that of similar schools and in science performance was below average. Almost half of the pupils who took the test had joined the school after the start of Year 3 and many of these pupils had complex emotional and behavioural needs, as well as identified learning difficulties. The school exceeded its target² in English but did not achieve it in mathematics. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls or other groups.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils like school and enjoy their lessons. They work hard and are keen to take part in the activities the school provides.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils are open, courteous and friendly. They play well together at break times and behave well in lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on very well with each other and have very good relationships with staff. They respect views different from their own and conscientiously carry out their responsibilities.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory. Attendance is well below the national average. Eight pupils account for the very high proportion of the unauthorised absence. Punctuality is also unsatisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Teaching is satisfactory across the school. Whilst a small proportion is unsatisfactory, much teaching is good, very good or excellent. During the inspection two trainee teachers were teaching a number of lessons as part of their training programme and these have been included in the overall teaching profile. These include trainees from overseas and the experience of being taught by different teachers added to the overall learning experience for pupils. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught satisfactorily and information and communication technology is used to enable pupils to consolidate and enhance what they are learning in other subjects.

Teachers have sound knowledge for the age groups they teach and use this to plan lessons which are interesting for pupils. This enables pupils to enjoy their learning so that they participate well and are ready to contribute their ideas and opinions. Teachers generally match the work well to provide pupils with tasks which relate well to their previous learning and attainment but in some lessons work could be more challenging for higher-attaining pupils. The effective methods used by teachers are enhanced by the relationships they develop with their classes and the way in which teaching assistants are

² *Governors set targets annually for performance in English, mathematics and science*

involved in group work. This is used to create a sense of teamwork, so that pupils are able to work effectively in pairs or small groups and gain further from having to articulate their thoughts to one another and to the teacher or teaching assistant. The pace in some lessons is a little slow to allow enough time at the end to review what has been learned as fully as possible.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is planned effectively and importance is placed on the use of literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. Very good links with the community and other schools benefit pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The major strength is the commitment of all staff throughout the school to including pupils' additional needs fully into all lessons and activities.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The small number of pupils who are at early stages of learning English are well supported and making good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Provision for pupils' personal, moral and social development is very good and is consistently supported by staff. There is good provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very well. Staff know their pupils very well and provide a safe and caring learning environment. Assessment of pupils' work does not always identify what they have to do to improve clearly enough.

Pupils with hearing impairment or additional special educational needs receive good levels of support. The provision for pupils within specialist and integrated mainstream classes enables them to make significant gains in their personal, social and academic achievements. Specialist support is good and teachers are aware of the pupils' needs and are skilled in how they should be addressed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has established a welcoming school community and an effective staff team that work together to improve teaching and learning. Subject co-ordinators have developed their curriculum areas in interesting ways but do not focus systematically enough on monitoring the standards pupils achieve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. The governing body gives useful support to the school and understands its strengths and weaknesses. Statutory duties are fulfilled and its committees work effectively.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The leadership team is using relevant information from tests and it's monitoring of teaching and learning to judge the school's performance and set further goals for improvement. The systems for this are still evolving.
The strategic use of	Good. The school supports its educational priorities well through careful financial planning and uses additional funds, such as those for pupil

resources	mobility, well to provide extra teaching assistant support.
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The school's accommodation meets the needs of the curriculum, with some specialist teaching space and a newly-built nursery. However, there is no spare capacity in the building, limiting the usefulness of the library and space for pupils in the reception class is restricted. Subjects are generally well resourced and resources are first-rate for nursery children where exciting new equipment has recently been bought so they can develop their skills well.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good teaching. • Teachers having high expectations. • Children make good progress. • School is well led and managed. • Pupils' personal development. • Pupils' good behaviour. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • Range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team found that the school is well led and managed. Teaching is satisfactory with teachers having appropriate expectations for pupils and therefore pupils make satisfactory progress. Pupils do behave well and their personal development is very good. Homework is used well and there is a good range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children join the nursery with different, but generally limited ranges of experiences and skills across the areas of learning so skills are well below the expected levels for this age group.
2. Children make satisfactory progress throughout their time in the nursery and reception classes and many make better progress in particular areas of learning. By the time they enter Year 1, children have a good foundation for learning. Children have learned to concentrate for relatively long periods of time which helps them to consolidate their learning and they have developed good attitudes to school. Some children still struggle with aspects of their personal and social development and find it difficult to conform to the behaviour expected of them in school. Weaknesses remain in language and mathematical attainment. Overall, their attainment is still well below the national expectations for the age group.
3. The standards attained at the end of Year 2 have been improving gradually over the last five years. The most recent year for which national comparative data is available is 2002 when test results were significantly better than in previous years. Although pupils' standards overall were below national averages, results in the national tests, as measured by the average points scored, were in line with the national average in reading and writing. Attainment in mathematics was below the national average. There are no national tests in science. Standards as measured by teacher assessments were well above those of other schools for the expected level. Overall, the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 is lower than national averages in writing, mathematics and science. When comparisons are made with similar schools, the school's performance is well above that of other schools in reading, above average for writing and in line with attainment in mathematics.
4. Pupils achieve satisfactorily through Years 1 and 2. The standards of pupils currently in Year 2 are below national expectations in English and mathematics. There is a broad range of attainment in this year group, with an increased proportion working confidently within Level 3 but also a significant proportion not yet attaining Level 2. In science and other subjects, pupils are working at the expected levels for their age. In games, pupils' attainment is above that normally seen of the age group. Pupils are confident in answering questions and expressing a point of view. They select books to read appropriately and do not stick rigidly to the reading scheme. Higher-attaining pupils can sequence their stories into a beginning, middle and end and use different forms of writing, such as writing instructions and book reviews. Pupils count successfully in twos, fives and tens, although most have not internalised the concept of tables. They understand place value and can add numbers up to 100. Pupils have good knowledge about the characteristics of creatures in the four main animal groups and can carry out simple investigations, for instance, on shadows or making an electrical circuit.
5. As pupils move through the school from Year 3 to Year 6, they continue to make satisfactory progress. Pupils currently in Year 6 are working below national expectations in English, mathematics and science. In 2002, the results in the national tests were in line with the national average in English but well below the averages for mathematics and science. The proportion achieving the higher Level 5 was lower than the national average in these subjects. When compared with schools whose pupils had achieved similar levels at the end of Year 2, attainment was very good in English but still below in science and well below other schools in

mathematics. However, this does not take account of the high proportion of pupils entering the school at times other than the normal age of entry and whose continuity in learning is disrupted. In the current Year 6, about a third of the pupils have joined the school since Year 3. This is a very high level of mobility relative to schools nationally, though not quite as high as in the previous Year 6. In 2002, the school exceeded its target set for attainment in English but fell short of the target for mathematics.

6. By Year 6, pupils' standards in reading are typical for their age. Higher-attaining pupils have the skills necessary to use the index and contents pages of a book and locate a particular piece of information. Pupils understand the basic rules of grammar and use tenses accurately. They listen intently and can follow and make relevant contributions to discussions. Pupils have a good understanding of place value and understand the importance of estimating to find out whether or not their answers to calculations are realistic. They have a basic understanding of shape and can calculate areas and perimeters of simple shapes. Their ability to handle data is in line with national expectations. In science, pupils can explain reasonably accurately their work on micro-organisms, food groups and electricity. However, they are less secure in their understanding of how to set up and carry out an investigation.
7. Standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology (ICT), music and physical education are in line with national expectations. Attainment in religious education is below expectations because pupils have not had enough opportunities to cover all aspects of the locally agreed syllabus in sufficient detail.
8. The arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are very good. Pupils benefit from good targets with consistently applied, high quality educational support. As a result, pupils with special educational needs, including those with hearing impairment and those with English as an additional language achieve well in relation to their individual ability and targets.
9. An analysis of the school's results, for example, by gender and by the length of time pupils have been in the school shows that there are no significant differences in performance between girls and boys. Overall, pupils achieve in line with and frequently better than predictions based on initial assessments in the school's system for setting targets and tracking progress. However, pupils who have been in the school throughout Years 3 to 6 make more progress from their Year 2 attainment than those who join the school during the key stage. Until recently, the school has not held sufficient data to enable such detailed analysis to be undertaken and has still to find ways of using this information to best effect. Standards at the end of Year 6 have improved overall since the last inspection and by an amount which is broadly in line with the national trend.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils have good attitudes to school. They come into school happily in the morning and quickly settle to their work. Pupils enjoy books and are often keen to share them with their friends. In lessons, pupils listen attentively to the teacher and are keen to take part in class discussions or to answer questions. Pupils want to do well and try hard to complete the set task. For example, in a Year 1 religious education lesson in which pupils were learning about the Jewish Torah, they concentrated hard as they tried to reproduce Hebrew symbols.
11. Pupils behave well both in lessons and during play. They are friendly and helpful to visitors, courteously holding doors open for them. In lessons, most pupils behave very well and teachers manage those with identified behavioural difficulties skilfully, so that they change

their behaviour positively and do not disrupt others. Pupils move sensibly around school. They know and follow the school rules. Pupils believe that behaviour is usually good. They feel safe and well cared for because of adults' high expectations, kindness and strong sense of what is right. There have been no exclusions in the last year.

12. Attendance is unsatisfactory. Data suggest that it is well below the national average. At times, with high mobility, children remain on roll until the school is sure that they have left the area, which results in apparently high absence rates. Eight children account for a significant proportion of the very high unauthorised absence rate. The majority of children come to school regularly and arrive on time. However, a few are often late resulting in an unsettled start to the day. So, overall, punctuality is unsatisfactory.
13. A strength of the school is the very good personal development of the pupils. While at school, they learn to respect each other's views and faiths different from their own. In an assembly about Martin Luther King, pupils were genuinely amazed at how black people were treated in America at that time. Pupils are able to understand how other people might feel and distinguish right from wrong very clearly. In their writing, pupils show how the natural world has moved them, for example, when writing about the Garden Sculptures.
14. Tany's Dell School is a very harmonious community in which pupils value each other and respect the staff. Relationships between pupils are very good and there is no sign of discrimination because every pupil in the school is equally valued. The degree to which pupils include others with special educational needs in their activities is commendable. They work well together and share resources sensibly. Pupils are keen to take on responsibility and are conscientious in carrying out their duties. For example, the Children's Committee meets regularly; committee members discuss with their classmates issues to take to the committee and then report back on the outcome of the discussion.
15. Pupils with special educational needs are keen to complete their work and try hard to do well, benefiting from support from teaching assistants who help to maintain their concentration and motivation. In almost all lessons pupils with special educational needs mix well and take a full part in the lesson. They are confident, speak to visitors with ease are willing to answer questions and are able to talk about their work.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory throughout the school, with many good features so that pupils are prepared well for the next stage of education. During the inspection a third of the lessons seen were satisfactory, over half were good or very good and a small proportion of teaching was excellent. Only an occasional lesson, one in twenty, was less than satisfactory and these were in isolated lessons and not confined to any particular subject or area of the school. The proportion of teaching which is good or better is not as high as that found nationally but there has been good improvement since the last inspection when almost a sixth of teaching was less than satisfactory. During the inspection two trainee teachers were teaching a number of lessons as part of their training programme and these have been included in the overall teaching profile. These include trainees from overseas. The experience of being taught by teachers from other countries added to the overall learning experience for pupils by giving them access to first-hand discussions about different cultures.
17. Teachers have sound knowledge for the age groups they teach and use this to plan lessons which are relevant for pupils and form coherent sequences of work. This enables pupils to

enjoy their learning so that they participate well and are ready to contribute their ideas and opinions. Lessons have clear learning objectives and most teachers share these well with pupils in a written form for further reference during the lesson. Work is organised effectively and tasks explained clearly so that pupils know what is expected of them. As a result, pupils are interested in what they are doing and calm about their work. For example, during a session in the nursery, the teacher's enthusiasm and constant questions engaged children while she explained an outstanding range of activities. Children then followed a series of tasks, including using an egg timer to take turns while the 'lollipop man' stopped bikes. They named animals such as 'leopard' in the miniature jungle or watched how a marshmallow rose in the microwave. Children were clear about the expectations of them and finished the session well when they tidied up.

18. A positive feature of teaching is the number of opportunities planned for pupils to talk about their work and listen to others. Teachers use a range of open and closed questions to give pupils the opportunity to deepen their understanding by articulating their thinking and to improve their speaking skills. The effective methods used by teachers are further enhanced by the relationships they develop with their classes and the way in which teaching assistants are involved in group work. This is used to create a sense of teamwork, so that pupils are able to work effectively in pairs or small groups. Teachers manage pupils very well; they are caring but do not compromise on the demands they make of pupils, in a calm and supportive way, to help them to learn as much as they can.
19. Teachers generally provide pupils with tasks which relate well to their previous learning and attainment. For example, in a Year 2 science lesson, when pupils were observing the similarities and differences between mammals, birds, fish and insects, the teacher had organised three different tasks involving different numbers of creatures for classification and varying methods of recording their findings. With the support of the teacher and teaching assistant, all groups were able to experience success in the concept of classification, with one group placing features correctly on a chart, another choosing correct words to annotate pictures while another group wrote sentences about their findings. However, there are some lessons where pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to take their learning forward at a rate appropriate for them. For instance, where they are not given a suitable framework for recording their tasks, pupils do not focus properly on the intended learning as they are spending time trying to write in a form which is too difficult for them. By contrast, teachers often provide suitable tasks to help pupils improve their writing skills while studying other subjects, such as history and geography. The school has identified a group of pupils in its gifted and talented register and provides some enrichment activities, organised in conjunction with other schools, for them. Activities include a week long summer school offering cross-curricular challenges, as well as a day each term concentrating on English, mathematics, science and ICT. However, ongoing challenge for pupils capable of high achievement is not given enough attention in all lessons.
20. Careful planning and preparation result in good resources for learning. Most teachers use good quality information sheets and support materials. For example, in a Year 1 English lesson the teacher used a vowel rap poster well to interest pupils while they chanted vowels and improved their understanding of the differences between commas and full stops. Interactive whiteboards are used effectively to capture pupils' interest and to model solutions to problems; for example, in a Year 6 mathematics lesson, the teacher involved pupils in demonstrating how to reflect and rotate shapes about an axis, further improving ICT skills while making a visual impact on pupils' mathematical understanding.

21. Generally, effective plenary sessions are used to summarise key points and give pupils a chance to think about what they have learned during the session. Sometimes teachers do not give enough time to this or use limited strategies to help pupils to see what it is that they have found difficult and need to work on further.
22. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good and strategies for improving numeracy skills are satisfactory overall. Teachers use the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well for guidance. Teachers use ICT effectively to develop pupils' skills and enhance learning in other subjects. For example, in Year 4, pupils had to focus closely on the characteristics of the creatures and leaves that they were classifying before entering them into a database.
23. Homework is set routinely and marked regularly. Teachers give pupils encouragement through their marking and there are many examples of good marking which provides valuable guidance for pupils on how their work could be improved. Sometimes the length of teachers' comments makes it difficult for pupils to see exactly what they need to do next to improve. Homework books provide valuable opportunities for parents to see what their children are learning and how they are progressing. Teachers know their pupils well and are well aware of their strengths and weaknesses which enables them to give good oral feedback during lessons.
24. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good throughout the school. In the very best lessons, teachers challenge pupils to reflect on what they have learnt by asking probing questions. Teachers expect thoughtful answers on how pupils might improve their work and give useful hints and clues as to suitable strategies. Teaching assistants are highly effective, particularly where they know the pupils very well and are able to adapt the work provided by the teacher to meet the needs of the pupils. They explain methods of working so that pupils are successful in understanding how to complete their work with minimal help. In-service training has equipped all teachers with a good level of knowledge to support the range of ability in their classes and they work as an effective team with specialist teachers and assistants to ensure that pupils are able to do their best. For example, in a music lesson, the teacher maintained all the children's involvement and interest in playing their instruments, whilst at the same time reconnecting a pupil's hearing aid, thus enabling the lesson to continue uninterrupted.

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

25. The curriculum is very good. It is broad, covering all subjects in the National Curriculum. The time given to religious education is not enough to cover all aspects of the locally agreed syllabus in the appropriate depth. Overall improvement since the last inspection is very good. Coverage in art, design and technology, history and geography, which was a weakness at that time, is now consistent. Planning procedures are now detailed and helpful. Policies have been agreed for all subjects, relationship education and for equal opportunities. A drug education programme is taught regularly each year to the older pupils. The curriculum for English and mathematics is linked effectively to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and the skills of literacy and numeracy are well planned for in other subjects. The science curriculum is based upon national recommended guidance.
26. The school's success is partly due to it being involved in a Qualifications and Curriculum Authority pilot project on monitoring the curriculum and the school has used this involvement to build its curriculum on the school Intranet. This provides good support for staff, who also benefit from planning together in teams as part of the two-year topic programme. Teachers use the emphasis given to work based on a theme well to provide pupils with frequent

opportunities to write for a wide range of purposes, in order to develop a breadth of competencies in writing. Since the last inspection the school has increased the teaching time per week and spends extra time in teaching literacy, numeracy and scientific skills to pupils. A generous amount of time is devoted to physical education and swimming, which is beneficial to pupils. The annual integrated studies week based on a chosen theme and covering all aspects of the curriculum is an exciting event and increases pupils' interest in learning. A very wide range of imaginative activities was planned for the current year's theme of London Bridge and the work produced by pupils was of very high quality

27. The school's provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Clubs include football and art for both infant and junior pupils. There is also a signing club for the deaf for all pupils and many pupils without hearing impairment attend to help communicate with their friends in school. In addition, there are netball and orienteering clubs for the older pupils.
28. The school has very good links with other local schools. Pupils attend the district sports events with pupils from other local primary schools and Year 5 pupils have recently attended a mini 'Commonwealth Games Festival'. The school has a very good working relationship with a local secondary. Specialist staff share resources, help with the teaching of physical education and give additional support for music and drama. Older pupils sing in concerts organised by the secondary school. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 attend 'taster days' as part of their induction to secondary school. There is an electronic data transfer system that deals effectively with transfer of information for pupils attending the secondary schools in September. Pupils also follow bridging units of work in literacy and numeracy, planned with the local secondary schools. Induction arrangements for pupils transferring from the nursery into Year R are good, with each pupil attending six morning and afternoon sessions the term prior to their admission.
29. Links with the community are very good and enrich pupils' experiences overall. The school provides opportunities for the local vicar to visit the school regularly and he talks enthusiastically to pupils and leads assemblies. The junior choir sings at old people's homes in the locality and pupils stay for tea and a chat. All classes visit the local museum regularly. For example, during the inspection the curator gave talks to Year 3 and 4 pupils on historical artefacts in the town. Year 6 pupils have attended the William Morris Museum in Walthamstow as part of their studies. Residential visits to the Isle of Wight are arranged for older pupils. An artist who worked with pupils as part of an 'artist in residence scheme' created three striking sculptures of family groupings at work and play. One 'greet' visitors on entry to the school, reinforcing the school's social values and ethos. The significance of community is captured in watercolours of the school across the seasons painted by a friend.
30. Pupils with special educational needs follow the same curriculum as other pupils and have full access to the National Curriculum. Their attainment on entry is well below national expectations and they are therefore often working at levels below those of their peers. The inclusion of these pupils into age-related classes is a strength. The ability range is wide but curricular activities are organised with the needs of all the pupils in mind. This ensures that all pupils have appropriate opportunities to make maximum progress.
31. Arrangements for meeting the new requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice are very good. Individual education plans and targets are planned well to meet pupils' needs and promote progress. The targets are shared with all staff so that a consistent approach is assured. However, the format of individual education plans and targets differs between those for hearing-impaired pupils and those for other pupils with special educational

needs. This presents an additional challenge for teachers in familiarising themselves with information and strategies in two differing formats.

32. The school has maintained the very good provision for pupils' personal development identified at the time of the last inspection and this continues to be a strength of the school. Planning for pupils' personal development is beginning to be incorporated into curriculum plans to ensure that provision is consistent across the school.
33. The very good provision for moral and social development is delivered through lessons and assemblies but the true strength lies in the learning environment underpinned by the 'Tany's Dell Promise', which details expectations of both school and pupils. Teachers provide very good role models, treating pupils with kindness and respect. In lessons, pupils have many opportunities to explore moral issues, such as whether to make a green area into a car park. Assemblies are planned very well so that they make a significant contribution to all areas of pupils' personal development over the year.
34. The school provides many good experiences to develop pupils' cultural awareness. During the inspection week, a local secondary school ran a music workshop based around 'The Blues' and Key Stage 2 pupils enjoyed the experience immensely. Religious education lessons contribute to pupils' understanding of different faiths and cultures, although the school does not do all it could do to prepare pupils for life in multi-cultural Britain. In art, pupils broaden their knowledge of cultures in other countries through their study of artists from Western Europe.
35. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to reflect upon their experiences, opinions and the natural world and these all contribute to the strong provision for spiritual development. Taking pupils to a sculpture garden gave them the opportunity to reflect on what they saw and they described their feelings in their writing, for example, "You can enjoy the bees flying about and get lost in your own thoughts". Visits to local places of worship allow pupils to experience the calm and sense of awe that is present in such buildings. One pupil wrote "it's Holy you shouldn't be noisy in a church".

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The school very successfully creates a happy learning environment where children flourish and parents feel confident that their children are happy and secure.
37. Teachers know and understand their pupils very well. They take very good care of them and respect their opinions. They promote good behaviour very effectively through consistently using the very good school procedures. The school takes all incidents of alleged bullying very seriously and pupils who were spoken to during the inspection were confident that any problems would be dealt with swiftly. The school's insistence on respect for every individual means that very few such incidents occur. The school takes pupils' views seriously and seeks them formally through questionnaires and the Children's Committee. This resulted in a request for a new drinking fountain, so one has been installed in the playground.
38. The school has very good procedures for encouraging good attendance and works closely with the educational welfare service. However, attendance is still unsatisfactory because a small number of pupils with particular difficulties have more absences than usual in spite of the school's best efforts to keep these to a minimum.

39. Child protection procedures are securely in place and there are good procedures to ensure the health and safety of pupils and staff. Governors take an active role in monitoring this aspect of the school's work.
40. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and guidance. The special educational needs co-ordinator shares information effectively and has highly relevant strategies for improving the support for pupils; for example, in a meeting with a recently appointed teaching assistant, she gave excellent advice on observing, recording pupils' responses and supporting pupils during literacy lessons, rather than simply listening to the teacher. These strategies form part of routine staff development and contribute to very effective use of time and resources. Assessment procedures are satisfactory, with good use of standardized tests in reading and spelling to monitor pupils' progress. The school is continuing to seek additional ways to track the progress of pupils with special educational needs more effectively.
41. Since the last inspection the school has made reasonable progress towards improving assessment procedures overall, and they are now satisfactory. Records of work covered and standards reached are kept well in English and mathematics and there are satisfactory procedures for ensuring that assessment is used for planning the next steps in learning. Science assessment is not as detailed, so that teachers do not always know what pupils have attained in previous classes, or where the next step in learning should be. Although there are no formal systems for assessment in other subjects, teachers know their pupils well and are beginning to make an attempt to track progress over time. The school has plans to extend its tracking system to include these subjects in future years. The use of assessment information is satisfactory in Year R, where effective use is made of information for planning work at levels that match the needs of pupils.
42. Pupils in Key Stage 2 take optional, national tests in English and mathematics each year, so the school is able to compare progress with national standards and predict pupils' likely performance in the national tests at the end of Year 6. The results in the English, mathematics and science tests for 2002 have been analysed to identify adjustments necessary to the curriculum and teaching methods to raise standards further. Teachers use assessment information to set targets for achievement in the Year 2 tests when pupils are at the end of Year 1. However, targets for improving learning are variable across the school; they are more precise in identifying the next steps for learning in mathematics than in English and science. Targets are not always included in the annual reports to parents so opportunities are lost to inform parents of the detail of what their children should do to improve their work at the start of the next educational year. Although pupils set targets for themselves termly, these are not often referred to within daily lessons and pupils do not have a strong sense of their content. For example, higher-attaining pupils in Years 5 and 6 do not always know where their strengths and weaknesses lie or which subject they need to concentrate on most so as to improve. Records of achievement, consisting of folders of work, are kept for each pupil and provide a useful record for pupils to look back over past work. Some of these are monitored to assess progress made, but it is not always clear what skills are being assessed.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. The school has outstanding links with parents that are based on the excellent day-to-day information about the curriculum and their children's progress in the home partnership books.

44. Parents are very supportive of the school. In particular they have confidence in the leadership and management of the school, teaching and the progress made by their children. They feel well informed about what how their children are progressing in school. Some parents would like more extra-curricular activities and would like homework improved. The inspection team found that homework is used well and there is a good range of extra curricular activities.
45. Information for parents is very good overall. The annual reports on pupils' attainment and progress provide useful statements about what pupils know and can do in English, mathematics and science. In the other subjects the quality of information is variable. The targets in these reports can sometimes be too general to be useful. For example, "should strive to build on this year's achievements and consolidate and further his understanding throughout the curriculum next year." However, the home-school partnership books and the homework books give parents excellent information about what their children are studying and their progress on a very regular basis. For example, in one weekly letter to parents, the class teacher was precise about the requirements for a homework task on writing a book review and parents were able to see for themselves how successful their child had been as the marked work followed immediately in the partnership book. These books enable parents to support their children's learning well at home. In some classes, teachers also send target sheets home to parents. These give clear measurable targets that teachers tick off when pupils achieve them. The reports for children in the foundation stage are good. The school has tried to involve parents in other ways, for example holding curricular workshops, but the vast majority of parents prefer the home-school partnership books as the main means of contact with the school.
46. The school seeks parents' views about its work through an annual questionnaire and responds to their views. For example, currently the school is considering introducing uniform as some parents have indicated they would like the school to have one. These questionnaires show the overwhelming support of most parents for the school. Parents are encouraged to help in school but very few do. The Parent Teachers Association works hard to raise money for the school and has recently purchased new carpets and furniture.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. Leadership and management were found to be good at the previous inspection and both remain good. The headteacher has established a welcoming school community and an effective staff team. She gives clear direction to the school's work, especially about the school's approaches to teaching and learning. The leadership team and subject leaders understand their roles well and generally follow them through effectively. For instance, recently, in consultation with the staff, a new senior management job description was drawn up to clarify the work of the leadership team. However, there is some confusion about who has responsibility for different aspects of managing assessment and this is hampering the task of getting the most from the new assessment system.
48. School self-evaluation is undertaken satisfactorily and the headteacher ensures it is a key element of the leadership team's work. The views of professionals, governors, parents and pupils are sought in order to measure successes and identify aspects that need improvement. The leadership team uses the data from its monitoring programme, assessment tests and other pupil information to set its improvement priorities and support the school's inclusive practice. The school's senior staff have identified how the new systems for tracking pupils' achievement will assist them to pick up and deal with under-performance by individuals or groups of pupils with additional needs, but this analysis is still in its early stages.

49. Subject leadership is mainly good and recent training has been provided for staff on developing this role. Co-ordinators lead on subject policy and training, produce annual action plans, take responsibility for subject budgets and have a brief to monitor standards. There are real strengths in the way co-ordinators have developed the school's curriculum schemes. However, the monitoring and evaluation of standards and progress is not done systematically or rigorously enough in most subjects to pick up on the weaknesses that need to be dealt with. There is good practice, for example in mathematics, in writing an action plan focused on raising standards, and in systematic monitoring, which provides a useful model for other subject co-ordinators to follow. Teachers work well together in small teams to share ideas and plan lessons and in doing so provide good support for one another. There has been little recent observation of teaching in subjects other than English and mathematics so that opportunities have been missed to share effective practice more widely across the school.
50. The school's long-term improvement plan, linked to its aims, is set out in a wide-ranging, costed three-year plan. The governing body has been involved at an early stage in this planning and the priorities for development are appropriate. However, the specific priorities for the current year, particularly for raising achievement, are not sufficiently high profile with sharp, measurable success criteria. It is not clear how the subject co-ordinators' annual plans mesh with the long-term plan.
51. Special educational needs has strong leadership. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the main issues concerning the identification of pupils' achievements and is currently reviewing the procedures for tracking pupils' progress and informing staff and parents so they may better understand and support the pupils' future learning. The organisation of teaching and learning across the school is good. The procedures for following the Code of Practice, reviewing statements and liaising with parents are all secure and meet statutory requirements. The school provides good accommodation for its pupils with additional needs although its location on an upper floor is potentially difficult for pupils or staff with mobility problems. This has been drawn to the attention of the governing body but a solution has not yet been found. Teaching assistants are very effective in their support of pupils with additional educational needs and they have a positive impact on learning.
52. The match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum is good. Teachers' performance management is well organised and staff are encouraged to build up their own professional portfolios. The school has successfully supported several of its teaching assistants in their training to become teachers. It has a large number of teaching assistants supporting pupils with additional needs, and many have developed specialist areas of expertise through further training. The arrangements for the induction of new staff are effective and teachers receive good levels of support. The school hosts placements for overseas students and during the inspection two Canadian students were teaching pupils and a large group of Canadian teachers and administrators visited the school as part of their study visit to Britain.
53. The governing body continues to give useful support to the school and works soundly to fulfil its strategic responsibilities. A weakness identified at the last inspection was lack of provision for collective worship; this has been remedied. The governing body's committee structure is well-organised and focused on gathering information to help monitor the school's progress. However, the arrangements for gathering first-hand information about the school's work have slipped a little. Governors have not had enough training about their roles and responsibilities. They are informed annually of the school's performance in national tests and where improvements need to be made. Key governors understand the challenges that face the school in order to get further improvements in standards and are involved in target setting procedures for national tests.

54. The school supports its educational priorities well through careful financial planning and staff with responsibilities for financial matters are diligent in their roles. Its improvement plan has estimated figures for expenditure in most sections. Senior managers strive for best value in expenditure and good use is made of specific grants. For instance, additional funds for the high level of pupil mobility at the school have been targeted well to extra teaching assistant support. This year the school is projecting a small budget deficit. The governing body finance committee has already modelled a recovery plan for the coming years.
55. The school's accommodation meets the needs of the curriculum, with some specialist teaching space for ICT, a well-appointed set of rooms for the hearing impaired unit and an excellent, newly-built nursery facility. However, there is no spare capacity in the building so the library is positioned in a corridor, which limits its usefulness. Access directly to outdoors has recently been made for the reception class and Year 1 to extend their facilities but more needs to be done to create a suitable early years learning environment in this small classroom. At present it is too full of equipment for children to move easily between different activity areas. Several of the classrooms have very cluttered walk-in cupboards with sink areas that need some attention to ensure that they do not become a health hazard.
56. The grounds of the school are attractive and have been well set out to support pupils in their play and physical activities. The 'trim trail' is a particularly popular feature. The school is very welcoming to pupils and visitors with its interesting entrance hall and corridors bright and attractive with art and displays of pupils' work.
57. The last inspection found the school to be lacking in learning resources. This has improved. Subjects are generally well resourced and resources are first-rate for nursery children where exciting new equipment has recently been bought so they can develop their skills well.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to take the school forward the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Improve standards further, particularly by increasing the numbers of pupils achieving at higher levels by:
 - ensuring that the quality of teaching and learning is monitored in all subjects and good practice disseminated fully (*paragraphs 49, 132, 142, 148 and 157*); and
 - implementing specific strategies to provide greater challenge for those pupils identified as being capable of high achievement (*paragraphs 3, 5 and 19*).
- (2) Increase the contribution to be made by assessment in raising the standards of all pupils by:
 - extending the range of analysis undertaken by the senior team to include more focused analysis of the performance of different groups of pupils (*paragraph 9*);
 - extending the new systems for tracking pupils' achievement and implementing current plans to set individual targets in all subjects (*paragraphs 41, 42 and 48*);
 - ensuring that older pupils in particular know precisely what they need to do to achieve the next National Curriculum level (*paragraph 42*); and

- improving the consistency and quality of the targets reported to parents in pupils' annual reports to parents so that parents are clear about it is that their children have to do to improve their attainment (*paragraphs 42 and 45*).

(3) Improve management systems further by:

- clarifying the roles and responsibilities in relation to assessment (*paragraph 47*); and
- improving the frequency and rigour of the systems for all co-ordinators to monitor the quality of pupils' work in their subjects (*paragraph 49*).

Minor issues for consideration within the governors' action plan include:

- (1) continue to implement and extend existing strategies to improve levels of attendance (*paragraphs 12 and 38*); and
- (2) increase governors' capacity to monitor the performance of the school by ensuring full participation in the planned programme of local training to enable them to understand their roles and responsibilities more fully (*paragraph 53*).

HEARING IMPAIRED UNIT

58. The school continues to provide very good educational opportunities for all its pupils with hearing impairment. It has built upon and extended its high-quality provision for hearing impaired pupils since the last inspection. The admission of children under five to the school now provides the staff with an opportunity to address these children's communication and language needs from an early stage. The ongoing support they receive from staff, who have a comprehensive understanding of the education of hearing impaired pupils, is very good. The provision for these children and pupils within specialist and integrated mainstream classes enables them to make significant gains in their personal, social and academic achievements. For example, good support from teaching assistants and focused, careful guidance enables pupils to achieve well when working alongside hearing pupils in subjects such as mathematics.
59. There is a clear commitment throughout the school to ensure that pupils with hearing impairment achieve the very best they can and the special educational needs policy does much to support this philosophy. Pupils with hearing difficulties benefit from staff who understand their needs and equip them with strategies to help themselves and therefore succeed as independent learners. Pupils' behaviour is generally good and often very good in specialist classes. Pupils are polite, talk to visitors with ease and respond very well to the positive relationships they have with teachers and teaching assistants. These strengths are a major factor in their ability to concentrate and behave well during lessons.
60. The specialist teacher in charge has made very good headway in ensuring that the pupils' individual educational plans are an effective tool for focusing upon their major learning needs. Each plan, with the most recent targets for learning, is shared by all relevant staff. In lessons, all staff pay good attention to such targets and, in the very best lessons, show an outstanding commitment to teaching hearing impaired pupils. Teachers are confident in their communication, use of radio aids and liaison with specialist staff and external specialist advisors. This support helps the pupils to concentrate more effectively.
61. Teachers make very good use of specific strategies to promote the students' concentration and accuracy. A major feature for all hearing impaired pupils is the study of words, their composition and the setting of this work into context. To maximise pupils' involvement in lessons and ensure they understand the content, specialist staff provide a 'pre tutoring' time in advance of the lesson when they introduce pupils to the key vocabulary and concepts. For example, three Year 6 pupils listened attentively to the teacher and assistant showing them pictures of London Bridge past and present in preparation for work to follow. The staff sensibly allowed pupils to spend some time figuring out for themselves why there was not a photograph of the original structure. It took some time before they realised that, at that time, the camera had not been invented, but the major strength was the time that the staff allowed for them to come to their conclusions unaided.

62. The opportunities for hearing impaired pupils to mix with hearing pupils often serve to enhance their communication. For example, in a nursery class one hearing impaired child joined a group of three other pupils, followed the direction of the self-appointed leader when playing the jungle drums and spoke well using two or three words at a time, when earlier this had not been the case during a conversation with the teacher.
63. The specialist curriculum is very good and includes effective opportunities for hearing impaired pupils to undertake focused work on acquiring the subtleties of vocabulary which are so difficult for hearing impaired pupils to acquire. For example, an older pupil benefited from an individual session where the teacher extended understanding that several words can be used in one classification. Individual education plans showed work on specific words such as overcoat, raincoat, jacket and anorak.
64. Assessment procedures are good and pupils' needs are well defined in their individual educational plans. All records of pupils' progress, work with specialist staff, hearing assessments and other information are well organised and used effectively for pupils' annual reviews. Staff are currently considering alternative methods for tracking pupils' progress so that they might better identify progress over time for all pupils with additional needs and hearing impairment through a common format.
65. Pupils receive good support and guidance. Staff are generous with their time and ensure that all pupils are well prepared for their work in classes. Specialist staff have good relationships with other adults and hearing impaired pupils so that the inclusion of pupils into mainstream lessons is supported by caring and knowledgeable adults. Pupils are happy at school, enjoy good relationships and feel secure and well cared for.
66. Information from, and discussion with, parents demonstrates their complete satisfaction with the school and the progress made by their hearing impaired children. Parent often cannot speak highly enough of the care and ease with which children have been introduced to the school. For example, staff forge strong relationships with families and ensure that they all visit for social activities so that pupils are familiar with the school surroundings before starting. Sometimes progress exceeds all expectations for the parents so that in a year a pupil developed sufficient confidence to come independently into school from his mother's car.
67. Pupils are well prepared for their transition to secondary education. They are able to visit their new school several times before transfer. Staff ensure that they have understood the new arrangements by studying information leaflets and brochures. The differences in timetabling are explained to the pupils so that they are prepared well for the larger number of teachers that they will encounter. Staff from the secondary school receive all necessary records and are invited to pupils' annual reviews.
68. The teacher in charge of the hearing impaired unit is experienced and knowledgeable. She leads by good example and is committed to continuous improvement. There are sufficient staff and resources to ensure that pupils receive good levels of support and guidance. The accommodation provides a generous space for teaching and sufficient additional areas for individual work or testing. However, its location on the first floor is not ideal, although at the time of inspection no pupils were disadvantaged.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	47
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	6	16	13	2	0	0
Percentage	7	15	40	33	5	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	17	183
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	45

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2	7
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	36

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	9

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	37
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.5

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.7
National comparative data	0.4

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	16	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	14	25	16
	Girls	9	9	9
	Total	23	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (88)	96 (63)	100 (84)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90(91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	15	16
	Girls	8	9	9
	Total	18	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	72 (81)	96 (88)	100 (97)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2002	14	14

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	9	11
	Girls	12	7	12
	Total	23	16	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	82 (65)	57 (73)	82 (78)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	11
	Girls	10	9	11
	Total	19	19	22
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (59)	68 (57)	79 (65)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82(82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils***Exclusions in the last school year***

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	154	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	6	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	0	0	0
Black or Black British – African	0	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	2	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 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.24
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.8
Average class size	26.1

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	116

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	43
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32
Number of pupils per FTE adult	21.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	4
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	4

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/2003
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	£
Total income	764,610
Total expenditure	815,452
Expenditure per pupil	4,057
Balance brought forward from previous year	76,104
Balance carried forward to next year	25,262

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	237
Number of questionnaires returned	65

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	35	3	0	3
My child is making good progress in school.	54	42	2	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	45	5	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	40	12	2	9
The teaching is good.	68	29	0	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	37	8	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	69	25	2	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	34	0	0	3
The school works closely with parents.	54	37	9	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	71	28	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	63	34	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	55	25	9	2	9

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

69. There was only a reception class at the time of the last inspection and provision and teaching were judged to be good. A new nursery, with places for hearing impaired children, has been in use for just over a year and this provision is excellent. Approximately twenty children from age three attend each session, and groups of older children move on to the reception class termly. The reception class is small compared to the nursery and is too full of equipment and furniture to enable children to move around freely and have space to undertake foundation stage activities comfortably. More storage space is planned for, now that the class has access to an additional outside area.
70. The school supports children and parents very well at this early stage of education. There is plenty of guidance and help for parents who are sometimes unfamiliar with the education system. A particular strength is the use made of the home-school book with weekly, typed information for parents as well as individual handwritten comments.
71. Teachers are trialling a new assessment and tracking system linked to the ‘stepping stones’ of the national Foundation Stage curriculum. This is designed to give a clear picture of each child’s progress through the six areas of learning. However, due to a software failure, the outcomes of these assessments could not be accessed during the inspection. From lessons seen, examples of work and discussions with the reception teacher, it is evident that the present reception children started the reception year with basic literacy and number skills that were well below those expected for four year olds.
72. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall and the children are achieving satisfactorily and sometimes even better throughout this stage of their education. Six lessons were observed, two of which had outstanding teaching with expert management of children, highly skilled interventions and questioning and exciting activities. One unsatisfactory lesson lacked a range of different strategies to prevent a few children, with challenging behaviour, disrupting the lesson for the rest. The Foundation Stage team is led effectively by the co-ordinator. Teachers and assistants work very closely together, providing a very welcoming, secure environment for young children so they settle well, gain confidence and independence and flourish. Teachers plan broad themes, across the six areas of learning, picking the objectives in the Foundation Stage curriculum to suit the age range, skills and abilities of the children. Teaching assistants are fully involved, know the purpose of their work when supporting small groups of children and make observational assessments to build up the children’s profiles. They play a very important part in the progress that children make. The activities offered are interesting and usually motivate children so they remain focused for quite long stretches of time, consolidating their learning well. The policy and procedures for the Foundation Stage are clearly laid out and followed well by staff.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Teaching is very good in this aspect and staff are very good role models. Hence, most children make good progress in their personal development, from low starting points. Not all though will achieve the expected milestones by the time they enter Year 1 as they find it very difficult to conform to the behaviour that is expected in school. Good behaviour is gently reinforced with regular reminders and questions about what is expected. Children mainly

behave very well in the nursery, listening sensibly and responding instantly to the teacher's instruction to listen to her. In the reception class there is a good mix of whole class teaching, small group work and free choice activities. In the latter situations, children make decisions on what to do and stick with activities for a good amount of time. Some co-operate sensibly with one another, as seen when a small group of girls were involved in self-initiated role-play about frightening creatures. Circle time is used well to get children to value one another and there is a 'person of the week' who takes pride of place. Nursery children are encouraged to choose freely for most of their time and this is helping them to become independent. Numerous examples of good concentration and attitudes to learning were seen in the nursery; for instance, a group of children were engrossed in re-organising the animals in the mini-jungle and others took great care when they rolled and decorated their marshmallow snakes.

Communication, language and literacy

74. Children are taught soundly in this area of learning and achieve satisfactorily. As this is from a low starting point, they are still below average in communication by the end of the reception year. Good emphasis is placed on children learning new vocabulary. In the reception class, good opportunities are made for children to talk in small groups about things that are familiar to them; for example, they successfully asked questions of each other after they had listened to one another's weekend news. However, when pupils were looking at books in small groups, their progress was marred by the difficulty some children had in taking turns.
75. Children have a good range of books in their classes and some were absorbed in re-telling stories to themselves. However, the restricted space makes it difficult to display books enticingly in the reception class. Most listen with enjoyment when stories are read to them. The higher-attaining reception children recognise and find words in text, and read simple sentences but, generally, early reading skills are less advanced than expected. Observational assessments show that children have made reasonable progress during the year in learning sound and letter relationships. The early stages of word building are closely supported in group work in reception literacy sessions and most children write their own first name and other recognisable letters in their emergent writing, and a few can write short sentences with help.

Mathematical development

76. Fewer reception children than is normally expected of this age group are achieving the counting and calculating goals because of the high level of additional learning needs in the class. Children enjoy counting spots on dice and can do this quite accurately with support. The role-play area has been carefully developed to help children count money and give change for low coinage. The topic of 'Holes' gave a good opportunity for children to learn about different mathematical shapes and this was followed up practically in the children's ICT activities and in sewing shapes to make a house. In the nursery, children have regular counting activities and those spoken with were quite confident at counting items up to five. The teacher and assistants make opportunities for children to name colours and shapes and count informally when they are playing. The children readily use the egg timer to ensure that there are fair turns on the bikes.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

77. Display and photographic evidence shows that teaching is good in this area. Children make good progress. Many children start school with very limited experiences and a significant

number in the reception class will not fully attain the wide-ranging goals before moving into the next stage of education, due to their additional learning needs. Through the year, a variety of themes and visits are organised that support this area of learning. Photographs provide evidence of a wide range of activities such as visits to the local supermarket, cooking, role-play of the world of work, topics on growth and on holes, and experiences of their own and other cultures and religions. Children use computers to draw pictures, such as growing plants, and organise basic shapes into houses and have independent access to machines to build up their skills. The current nursery 'jungle' theme is being thoroughly enjoyed by the children as the teacher has set up lots of interesting experiences to stimulate their curiosity, such as the introduction of parakeets and a tarantula spider to the classroom. The children can name a very good number of jungle creatures. Children's knowledge of the wider world is being built up well as teachers and assistants take every opportunity to provide key vocabulary and to ask children what they know.

Physical development

78. The outdoor activity area for the nursery is first-rate and children have lots of opportunities to develop their climbing and balancing skills. The reception class outdoor area is still under development, but the children use the nursery area and its equipment regularly. There is a good variety of large apparatus and wheeled toys, and children use these with confidence. No teaching of physical development was seen but outdoors several reception children were independently throwing, catching and batting balls with the level of skill expected for this age. In other aspects of physical development, where fine movements are needed, several nursery children showed good hand/eye co-ordination for their ages when making their marshmallow snakes. However, in the reception class a small but significant group of children do not yet have the pencil control that is usually seen at this age and are unlikely to achieve the physical development milestones by age five.

Creative development

79. The wealth of photographic evidence gathered since September 2002 shows this area is being taught very well. Children are given a comprehensive range of activities to explore colour, texture and shape in two and three dimensions, to sing and to be imaginative in role-play. Consequently, they achieve well and most will gain the goals for this area by age five. Following on from a visitor's talk and the experience of making 'volcanoes' from bicarbonate of soda and vinegar, reception children produced some interesting models of volcanoes using tissue paper and paint. The nursery children have been involved in making their jungle role play area. This has captured their imaginations and its theme has spilled over into other aspects of their play. The reception children's role-play area of a supermarket has to be sited in the cloakroom due to lack of space. This prevents it getting maximum free play use. Children in both classes enjoy singing rhymes and various songs that support learning in other areas. Nursery children concentrated very well in a jungle music circle activity, playing different instruments to represent jungle sounds and trying hard to move from quiet to loud playing.

ENGLISH

80. Standards in English remain similar to those reported at the time of the last inspection. Within different aspects of the subject standards vary; overall, standards are below average at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 6.

81. When pupils enter the school they lack confidence in speaking and many find it difficult to listen well and concentrate on what is being said. The good teaching in Years 1 and 2 improves this. In the national tests in 2002, pupils achieved standards in line with the national averages in reading and writing. When comparisons are made with similar schools, pupils had achieved well and were doing much better than other pupils in reading and better than others in writing. The standards of work seen among the current Year 2 pupils are lower than the previous year's test results. These lower standards reflect the large proportion of the pupils with poorly developed language skills. In Year 1, standards in reading are above that typical for their age, but standards are not so high in Year 2 because of the large number of pupils with learning difficulties. Given the limited skills on entry to the school, these pupils are doing well to reach these standards. Pupils enjoy discussions and all are confident in answering questions and expressing a point of view.
82. The school's results in the national tests at the end of Year 6 have improved after a fall in 1999. In the national tests in 2002 pupils achieved standards that were in line with the national average. Pupils did well to achieve these results and they did significantly better than pupils in similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was low when compared to national averages. Trends over time show that girls have achieved slightly higher standards than boys. In 2002, girls did better than boys in reading, but not so well in writing. Overall, there is no significant difference when pupils' prior attainment is taken into account. The standards of work seen among the current Year 6 pupils are lower than those indicated by the previous year's test results. These lower standards reflect the mobility of pupils entering and leaving the class and the high proportion of pupils who have special educational needs. Due to effective teaching, pupils' progress in lessons is often good, but overall the rate of progress is slower than might be expected because teachers have to concentrate on teaching basic skills. They frequently have to go back to reinforce what has been taught.
83. Throughout the school, the teaching of reading is well organised and managed. Teachers give attention to teaching letter sounds and patterns and pupils are beginning to use this knowledge to tackle unfamiliar words. Shared reading sessions are used effectively to discuss features of texts, which are well chosen to interest both boys and girls and to match the pupils' reading levels. The most able pupils in Years 1 and 2 are encouraged to select books that appeal to them and not to stick rigidly to the reading scheme. In Years 3 to 6, higher-attaining pupils enjoy reading. They talk with enthusiasm about the books they have read and show good insight about the characters and plots. They give reasons for their choices; for example, one pupil explained her dislike of books written about horses because she had fallen off one and hurt herself. The range of books, especially fiction, is not extensive and is too narrow to satisfy the most avid readers.
84. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 read regularly to older pupils. This increases their enjoyment as well as giving older pupils more responsibility for helping their friends to learn. Progress amongst pupils in Key Stage 2 is good and standards in reading are typical for their age. This is a result of good teaching of reading skills. The school has recently extended the time spent during lessons to teach reading and it is having the desired effect. Governors are keen to become involved in the curriculum. A governor acts as a reading mentor and hears pupils read who are not heard regularly at home. The higher-attaining pupils in Years 3 to 6 have the reading skills necessary to use the index and contents pages of a book to locate a particular piece of information. Due to English being taught well through other subjects, pupils are adept at finding information from different sources. A Year 6 pupil very quickly located a science source book from the library shelves and found information on the human heart by using the contents and index pages.

85. The teaching of writing has also improved since the last inspection. There is now a better focus on teaching pupils how to organise their writing by using good quality children's books as guides. For example, in Years 1 and 2, pupils write stories in the style of 'Billy Goats Gruff'. Higher-attaining pupils can sequence their stories into a beginning, middle and end. They understand how to use different forms of writing, for example, when writing a book review and when writing instructions on how to grow a sunflower seed during a science lesson. The progress of pupils with learning difficulties is good because work planned for them is simpler to understand. In contrast to the national test results, no difference was seen between the standards of boys and girls.
86. In Years 3 to 6, pupils also make satisfactory progress in writing. Generally, pupils understand the basic rules of grammar and use different tenses accurately. Higher-attaining pupils give good attention to plot and ending when planning stories. They use different forms of writing well, for example, when writing letters or when reporting on their science experiments and visits to places of interest. All pupils are supported well with writing aids, for example, the worksheet framework used to record pupils' views on character and plot in preparation for the writing of a book review. The writing of average-attaining pupils and those with learning difficulties is satisfactory. They are well supported by being given examples of good quality writing to use as models, to improve the quality of their work, for example, using an Allen Albergh rhyme scheme to write their own poetry.
87. Pupils throughout the school listen intently and can follow the thread of a discussion in a variety of contexts; for example, in conducting discussions in a Year 4 class debate and by questioning the teacher at the end of a lesson on why a fictional character is arguing with himself. The sensitive and constructive support given to pupils with learning difficulties, and pupils who have hearing impairments, mean that they are also confident in expressing views in class discussions.
88. Teaching is good across the school. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have an extensive knowledge and love of literature and use it to very good effect to motivate their pupils to read widely and extend their understanding of complex texts. In a Year 4 lesson, an enlarged page of a reading text was used effectively to show how different punctuation and speech marks can show expression between characters in a story. There is a strong element of writing for a purpose, particularly in Years 3 to 6. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, pupils wrote some persuasive articles on the pros and cons of wearing a school uniform; this is currently under review by the governing body and pupils knew that their views would be taken into account. There is good teaching of higher-level writing skills. A teacher in a Year 6 class used a writing frame effectively to help pupils write a balanced argument on the topic of whether smoking in public places should be banned. The good teaching has also led to pupils writing succinctly and emotively about significant events in their lives. For example, a Year 6 pupil had written about her trip to the Isle of Wight; "As I stood waiting for the coach my heart was torn in two ways I was excited but sad at leaving my family". Pupils in a Year 5 lesson posted letters to Harlow Council complaining about the proposed building of extra car parks on grassed areas in the town. They had carefully written and checked their work to make sure their writing would both impress and persuade the council so that it would change its decision. In a few lessons, pupils with learning difficulties were not given time to share their work with others and opportunities were lost to increase their speaking and listening skills.
89. A great deal of thought goes into preparing activities that capture pupils' interest, so that they find learning fun and are motivated to do their best. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils were taught the letters and vowel sounds effectively by getting the pupils to sing the 'rap

- vowel song'. All thoroughly enjoyed the lesson and made good progress. Lessons are well planned. The whole-class session at the start of the lesson is used to remind pupils of what they have already learned and to set the scene for what is to come. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils wrote some good poems entitled 'Ten things to do with a Frisbee' because they were given clear instructions and knew what was expected of them. Consequently pupils feel secure, work hard and behave well. They make every effort to meet their teacher's expectations. ICT is used effectively to start many lessons. The data projectors are used well to display texts, which are used as good exemplars to demonstrate a teaching point.
90. Pupils both with learning difficulties and those with hearing impairments make satisfactory progress because of the good support they receive. Teachers are skilled in encouraging pupils with learning difficulties and pupils who have hearing impairment, so they join in and contribute successfully. Additional staff encourage them to make valuable contributions to class discussions. For example, when a child with a hearing impairment entered a class and the lesson was under way, the teaching assistant made sure that the pupil had covered the part of the lesson she had missed. As a result, the child made good progress.
 91. The school has attempted to improve the quality of handwriting since the last inspection but with limited success. In the lessons to teach this skill, pupils are beginning to write neatly and with fluently joined letters. However, this standard is not maintained when writing in other subjects because pupils' attention is not drawn enough to the need for good handwriting.
 92. The quality of marking is variable. It is detailed in Years 5 and 6. Errors are identified and targets set so that pupils know what to do next. However, advice is written in a narrative style, which is difficult for pupils with learning difficulties to read. In other classes work is marked to record facts learnt. Opportunities are lost to remind pupils what the next steps are.
 93. Teachers are alert to developing pupils' literacy skills through subjects other than English, including design and technology, geography, art and history. For example, pupils have written comparisons of the town from photographs taken in the past, and compared them with the present day. Higher-attaining pupils are given opportunities to reflect upon their feelings. After visiting Frederick Gibberd gardens a Year 6 pupil had written 'You lose track of time because there is (sic) no clocks and it's relaxing'. There is little evidence of pupils developing their literacy skills in science.
 94. Management of the subject is good. The subject co-ordinator has been in post for a relatively short time, but has carried out an audit of the library and reading texts used in the lessons. The policy has been reviewed and linked closely to the National Literacy Strategy. Since her appointment she has observed staff teaching and written an action plan to improve standards. She has achieved much in a short time. She has not used information from tests to plan appropriate support for the teaching of literacy, as the senior management team deals with this matter. Opportunities have been lost for her to form a clear picture of standards in each year group. She has rightly identified the monitoring of the pupils' progress towards their targets set from assessments made by the teachers as a priority for further development.

MATHEMATICS

95. Standards in mathematics have been variable since the last inspection in both key stages, but have improved overall. Whilst standards are below national expectations, the improvement trend is generally in line with the national rate of improvement. Pupils have not achieved as well in mathematics as in English and science.

96. In 2002, the results in the national tests for pupils in Year 2 were below the national average, but in line with the average for similar schools. Those pupils now in Year 2 are also working at levels below national expectations overall, but a higher proportion of the year group are achieving at the higher Level 3 than in previous years. Many pupils had not reached the counting and calculating goals for pupils of their age on entry to Year 1 and the year group has a high proportion of pupils with identified learning difficulties, so overall, pupils have made satisfactory progress and some pupils have achieved well to reach the higher levels of attainment. Pupils currently in Year 1 are working at levels that are closer to national expectations overall.
97. Pupils in Year 2 are confident in counting in twos, fives and tens, although most have not yet internalised the concept of tables. They understand place value and higher-attaining pupils are confident in adding three numbers up to totals under 100. Pupils know the names of common regular shapes; lower-attaining pupils recognise simple two-dimensional shapes from a description of the number and size of edges and higher-attaining pupils recognise many three-dimensional shapes from a description of the number and shape of its faces. Most pupils also recognise symmetry within squares, circles, rectangles and some triangles. They extract information accurately from bar charts and construct charts successfully for themselves. Pupils are beginning to tell the time and understand the difference between digital and analogue clocks. They use their understanding of addition successfully when applied to money problems and most pupils understand that it is only possible to use specific combinations of coins to find a given total. Lower-attaining pupils are applying their knowledge of coinage to find the correct coins for simple shopping transactions.
98. In the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2002, results were well below the national average and the average for similar schools. Pupils currently in Year 6 are working to levels which are slightly higher than this but still below national expectations overall. However, this does not take into account the high number of pupils entering and leaving the school through the key stage and the higher level of pupils entering than leaving the school with identified learning difficulties. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory, bearing in mind the challenges they have faced in their learning. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are working at levels which are closer to national expectations overall.
99. By Year 6, pupils' understanding of place value extends to decimals. They understand the importance of estimating to know whether or not their answers to problems are realistic. Pupils understand angles and higher-attaining pupils recognise acute, obtuse and reflex angles. They calculate areas and perimeters of simple shapes made up of rectangles and can apply this to complex problems, for example, the calculation of the amount of paint required to paint a room, taking account of windows and doors. Lower-attaining pupils add hundreds, tens and units successfully and have a number of methods for finding totals. They produce simple pictograms from given data and find the lines of symmetry of simple shapes. Higher-attaining pupils order decimal numbers, calculate percentages successfully, produce frequency graphs and pie charts and calculate the mean, median and mode of a set of discrete data. They also work accurately when reflecting complex shapes in horizontal, vertical and diagonal lines.
100. Teaching assistants work closely with individual and groups of pupils to ensure that pupils with identified special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make good progress in mathematics. There are no significant differences in the achievements of boys and girls when their achievement is measured against their prior attainment.
101. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, with good features. The National Numeracy Strategy is used effectively to provide a systematic programme of work. Teachers have a good understanding of the underlying principles of the strategy and the three-part lesson is

- embedded well in classroom practice. All mathematics lessons are structured with clear learning objectives, mental and oral starters and plenary sessions. Teachers use their good subject knowledge well to focus work appropriately on pupils' prior attainment and provide work at different levels for groups of pupils. This enables pupils to learn effectively by working on tasks which challenge them appropriately, although there are instances when higher-attaining pupils could handle larger and more complex numbers in addition and multiplication than they are required to do. Teaching is helping pupils to develop a range of strategies for computation. Lessons are resourced well with necessary equipment; for example, Year 1 pupils were given plastic covered squares to experiment with totalling numbers when investigating the special nature of a 'magic' square.
102. Teachers give pupils good opportunities to talk about what they are doing so they can deepen their understanding by explaining to others how they have thought through solutions to the problems set. Pupils generally are given the chance at the end of the lesson to reflect on what they have learned, though in some lessons insufficient time is allowed for this. Most classrooms display a list of questions to help pupils to think about 'How Have I Learned' but these are not regularly used by all teachers for this part of the lesson.
103. Teachers use a practical and investigative approach within their lessons and are using the 'workshop' lessons well by, for example, using a variety of games to reinforce skills and understanding or using recent skills to investigate a broader issue such as when Year 4 pupils found the number of ways a 4 x 4 square could be divided. Investigative work is given a clear structure and pupils are expected to predict what will happen before testing their ideas out. However, there are limited examples in pupils' books of the use of real life contexts to provide a relevant focus to their work. Too often problem solving is limited to word problems and completing worksheets, which are often abstract in their approach.
104. As a result of secure teaching, pupils have positive attitudes to mathematics; they enjoy their lessons and know that they can do the activities set for them. When challenged with harder work, pupils show that they have perseverance and are confident to try things for themselves. For example, when Year 4 pupils were given the challenge of finding a rule to recognise multiples of 2, 4, 5 and 10, they discussed their ideas confidently as a whole class before focusing quickly on their paired tasks to apply the hypotheses they had formulated earlier in the lesson. However, this level of challenge is not apparent in all lessons. For example, during the inspection short, fast mental and oral sessions were underused as a way to speed up pupils' number skills, by putting them under pressure to answer quickly. In some lessons, the overall pace is slower than it might be during the introductory session so that too little time is given to the main activity when pupils practise and learn a new skill for themselves. The school strategy for presentation is having a positive impact on the quality of the presentation of pupils' work across the school. Pupils date their work carefully and generally try to explain clearly how they have achieved their answers. In the most effective classroom displays, teachers challenge pupils' thinking through the use of questions to provide additional interest; for example, in a Year 4 display with the question 'Can you arrange these in order?', pupils were given good prompts to extend earlier work on fractions.
105. Teachers mark pupils' work carefully and provide written comments which show praise and appreciation of what pupils have done. Misunderstandings are pointed out and in some cases there is a written record in pupils' books of how these errors have been dealt with, for example, by pupils making corrections. During lessons, teachers monitor pupils' understanding well using a range of strategies including whiteboards for pupils to record their answers quickly so teachers can change the lesson if progress is slower or faster than expected.

Homework books show that mathematics tasks are set regularly and used well to reinforce learning from lessons.

106. Pupils use number competently in other subjects when required to do so. However, other subjects such as design and technology and geography could be used more to develop pupils' numeracy skills. When given interesting activities to use their numeracy skills, pupils apply them successfully, such as in the Year 6 project to design a banquet. Pupils have used their understanding of ratio and measures well to adapt quantities in recipes as they prepare food for the whole year group and have used properties of reflection by drawing a mirror image of part of a painting in art. New ICT resources are increasing the range of learning opportunities. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, pupils enjoyed using the interactive whiteboard to show others how to exchange one set of coins with another of an equivalent amount. In some lessons, appropriate software is used in the computer room to improve pupils' skills and understanding in the topic being covered in other lessons during the week, but this is limited to timetabled sessions. Opportunities are missed to use the computers available in each classroom regularly. Specialist software, Successmaker, is used to support pupils with special educational needs in improving their general levels of numeracy and pupils enjoy experiencing success in its use; the diagnostic aspects of the programme could be used more effectively to focus on specific areas of weakness.
107. The subject is well led and managed by the co-ordinator. The curriculum covers all aspects of the National Curriculum. Teaching assistants have been given training and teachers' planning gives a clear focus to their work. The co-ordinator monitors the development of the subject well through scrutiny of teachers' planning and classroom observations. Appropriate action, such as additional training for teachers, has been taken to improve performance where weaknesses were identified. The school assessment and tracking system introduced recently is successfully implemented in most classes. The use of key learning goals and targets gives pupils good feedback and allows them to monitor their own progress and know what is expected of them next. The collection of performance data is already providing valuable information and its analysis is identifying precise areas of weakness for future development. For example, the school is currently trying to improve pupils' interpretation of questions as a way of improving their test results. Improvements since the last inspection have focused well on the introduction of national initiatives and the training of staff and this is beginning to impact positively on the standards, although these still remain below national expectations overall.

SCIENCE

108. At the last inspection, pupils in Year 2 were reaching the national average in science and those in Year 6 had well below average science attainment. Findings at this inspection are that Year 2 pupils' standards are similar to the national expectation and standards in Year 6 are below average. Given the starting point of children when they begin school, pupils in Year 2 have achieved well over three years. Although Year 6 pupils' attainment is better than that of some previous Year 6 groups and taking account of the number of pupils entering or leaving the group, these pupils have still not achieved sufficiently during their time in school.
109. In 2002, teacher assessments at Year 2 showed that all pupils gained the expected level, which was much better than the national average, although no pupils reached the higher Level 3 standard. Almost all of the present group of seven-year-olds have also gained Level 2 and a sixth of pupils have reached Level 3.

110. Year 2 pupils have good knowledge about the characteristics of creatures in the four main animal groups and can describe the differences and similarities between groups. Their books show that during the year they have learned about a good variety of science, including several simple investigations, for instance, one on shadows and another on making an electrical circuit. Year 1 pupils have also learned well from the science experience they have had this year. They confidently described the different distances a model car will travel when the slope of a ramp is increased. They also predicted very thoughtfully which of several surfaces would allow a car to travel the furthest distance.
111. In the 2002 Year 6 national tests, standards slipped back from the average results of 2001 and were well below the national average, but in line with the average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 was half the national average.
112. Year 6 pupils' work, this year, shows fair coverage of topics but not in the depth that is needed to challenge pupils of this age to attain high standards. Those who spoke to inspectors were positive about science and had enjoyed learning about micro-organisms, food groups and electricity. They can explain a reasonable amount about these topics. However, they are less secure in their understanding of how to set up and carry out experiments. Science investigations have not been recorded with sufficient accuracy and detail by pupils for them to be confident of the stages involved in these enquiries. There are too few examples of accurate drawing, or measurement of results, or of pupils recording these independently on charts and graphs. At the same time lower-attaining pupils with weaker writing skills have been expected to record without a framework to write to, so work is often poorly set out and incomplete.
113. In contrast, the work of pupils in Years 3 and 4 shows they have been challenged well this year and achieved well. They have undertaken numerous scientific enquiries, such as separating different solids, investigating absorption of water and finding materials that are good insulators; this work has been carried out to a good standard for their ages.
114. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Two lessons seen were taught by Canadian students and supported by class teachers. All the lessons were practically based and pupils were expected to investigate in different ways. Year 6 pupils were guided through an investigation comparing the flight potential of different shaped wings on paper planes. They refined their designs to make the planes travel further and learned soundly as the teacher provided clear guidance for modifying and testing the planes. The recording sheet they were provided with was very useful, but the pupils' methods of measuring a 'successful' plane flight were crude and subjective, highlighting their lack of experience in gathering information accurately.
115. Teachers provide a good variety of resources for science, making lessons interesting and motivating for pupils. For instance, in a well-organised Year 3 lesson, pupils were introduced to 'branching keys', and the overhead projector, animal cards and questions were used for a simple game. Pupils quickly learned how to answer the questions and tease out which creature was being thought about. Pupils in Year 2 learned well and enthusiastically because their tasks on animal groups were attractively presented with colour pictures and were very well matched to the learning needs of different ability groups.
116. Pupils' work shows some use has been made of ICT to gather information about different topics. In Year 2, pupils researched for their growth topic on the Internet. Links with literacy lessons have also been made for these pupils as they have written instructions about growing

plants from seeds. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have undertaken research and used a data-handling package to record the results of an investigation. There are missed opportunities to use mathematics to measure results of investigations.

117. Science is well led and managed. A very well organised and detailed curriculum programme has been produced and is available on the school Intranet. Resources for each topic are provided and again are in very good order. National test results have been analysed and the lack of higher levels of attainment have been noted but not yet adequately addressed. There has not been enough monitoring of pupils' work in the past year to pick up those capable of doing better. In Year 2 and Year 6, some pupils need more demanding work so that they reach higher standards. The new assessment and tracking system is just starting to highlight where pupils are not achieving as well as they could be. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

118. At the time of the last inspection, standards in art could not be judged as there was too little evidence and the subject was not taught for enough time. The school has worked hard to remedy this previous position and there is now a wealth of evidence on which to judge standards. Year 2 pupils are producing work in a range of media that meets the expectations for their age. They have made sound progress in building their skills in their three years in school. Standards at the end of Year 6 are also in line with those typically found at this age and achievement has been good for these pupils.
119. No lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2 but displays and photographs show pupils have had the experience of trying out tools and techniques in different media and produced some lively work. 'Holes' has been a recent school topic. Year 1 pupils used the theme of 'A hole in my bucket'; they looked at Jackson Pollock's work and emulated it by spatter painting from their own 'holey' buckets; the results are well controlled and colourful. Year 2 pupils showed dexterity in cutting out and used this technique to build up different layers of paper to represent different types and sizes of holes.
120. Year 6 pupils have been studying the designs of William Morris during the year and have been able to see these on a PowerPoint presentation created by the subject co-ordinator. They have made their own prints of flower and leaf designs using lino and polystyrene blocks and printed these to decorate paper tablecloths. From brief sketches and colour washes in their sketchbooks, pupils have developed their own mixed-media art work, which have been carefully executed and are highly individual and colourful. Cross-curricular links in a topic on India have been used well in Years 3 and 4, for pupils to produce some excellent modroc masks of different Hindu gods. They were assisted to use their own faces as the base models for their masks. The oldest pupils have used watercolour effectively in pictures related to their visit to the Isle of Wight.
121. Teaching of art is good. In the lessons seen, teachers explained precisely what they wanted pupils to achieve and consequently pupils were well focused and successful in learning. They applied themselves sensibly to the tasks, in Year 6 using a graphics computer program to design a menu for a Victorian meal and in Year 3 painting flowers using watercolours. The younger pupils showed a sound understanding of how to create different shades of colour to alter the mood of their pictures. Pupils' knowledge and understanding about art is developing well. Copies of art works by a range of artists are around the school and beside some are questions to provoke their thinking. Groups have visited local gardens where there are exciting sculptures and they have drawn and written their feelings and views about these objects. Year 4 pupils have painted enlargements of small sections of famous garden paintings and have done this with real flair and attention to exact colours and detail.
122. At the last inspection resources for art were limited; there was no scheme of work or clear teaching of practical skills. All these deficits have been improved on very well. The subject is very well led and managed. Skills development sheets have been produced for all the areas of art and design studied. There is an extensive scheme of work for each year group, carefully linked to the school's topic framework and with the cross-curricular use of literacy and ICT noted. In addition, teachers have PowerPoint picture presentations that they can use for several topics. This quality of organisation is making a real impact on the standards pupils achieve and there has been very good improvement in the subject since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

123. At the time of the last inspection there was not enough evidence available to judge standards in the subject. Currently, standards at Year 2 are similar to those seen nationally. In Year 6 also, standards are typical for pupils of this age. In both year groups, pupils have achieved satisfactorily over the past few years to reach these standards. Judgements are based on one lesson and some group activities, displays of work, discussion with pupils and teachers' planning.
124. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have designed and made a good variety of artefacts this year as part of their topic activities. Their skills have been developed satisfactorily, working in wood, paper and with soft materials. For example, in Year 2, as part of a story theme, they made the 'Wicked Stepmother's Mirror'. They had to measure and cut a wooden frame and join the pieces with special card corners before covering the mirrors with foil. The results are carefully executed and attractive. These pupils are also working carefully on making puppets. They have been expected to make choices about the style, design and materials for their puppet and have done this quite capably.
125. Year 5 and 6 pupils have designed matching games for younger children and tried these out with them. They made clear evaluations on what was successful and what could have been improved. Year 4 pupils have achieved some high quality design work as part of their India topic. After looking at Hindu symbols they designed their own, which they transferred to printing blocks to decorate heavy-duty paper in repeating patterns. The final artefacts are attractive and the carrier bags are made well.
126. From the range of evidence seen, teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. In a well-taught lesson, Year 1 pupils were evaluating their finished products of 'Rapunzel's Tower' paper constructions that they had decorated. The questioning effectively drew from the pupils what they thought about their designs and the problems they found when making them. Year 6 pupils were keen to explain their current design project, an end of term 'Victorian Banquet'. This is a culmination of a variety of work during the term, linking art, history and several aspects of design and technology. They have planned a menu, made table displays and designed individual card menu holders. A group was seen preparing and cooking the main course ingredients, supported by teaching assistants. All the pupils worked well together, with plenty of good humour, on the preparation and cooking. Pupils with special educational needs were fully involved with their peers on this activity.
127. Good leadership and management have led to a strong improvement in curriculum planning since the last inspection and planning for progression in skills is now secure. The resources for the subject are good and the new food technology area is well laid out and easy for pupils and staff to work in.

GEOGRAPHY

128. During the inspection geography was observed in one lesson only. There is insufficient evidence for a judgement to be made on the quality of teaching. However, other inspection judgements are made following examination of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and teachers, and scrutiny of planning documents and pupils' records of achievement. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations.

129. By Year 2, pupils can describe human and physical features when they study the different shops in Harlow and the type of people who work in them. Higher-attaining pupils compare the effects of rainfall in Harlow with rainfall in India and the Sahara desert. One pupil had written, "they have rain in India in summer, sometimes in a monsoon they have thirty feet of water". Year 1 pupils can express their views on places they have visited. They can identify on a pictorial map journeys they have made on their holidays. They describe their feelings of happiness when visiting a beach and begin to use adjectives to describe the texture of the sand and the feel of the sea when they go paddling.
130. By Year 6, pupils understand and can explain their views on how people can cause damage or improvement to the environment. They have identified weaknesses in their locality and compared these to international problems of pollution. They have recently written to Harlow Council concerning the dangers of waste, outlining their views for improvement. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have an understanding of contrasting localities. They have compared Harlow with Chembakolli, a small village in India. They have identified areas the villagers might want to improve and have carried out surveys of Harlow to compare results.
131. Pupils' attitudes to geography are good. This is because good use is made of literacy, physical education and art to reinforce geographical concepts. For example, Year 5 pupils participated in an orienteering park challenge. This involved team building sessions, reading and using maps, and map drawing in creating a route. After a visit to Harlow gardens, a Year 3 class painted pictures of flowers and experimented with colours to show different moods these created. These good experiences enable all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, to make satisfactory progress.
132. The management of the subject is satisfactory. Since the last inspection the scheme of work has been re-arranged to fit National Curriculum requirements within the schools' thematic approach. This is an improvement because planning was judged unsatisfactory then. The school policy has been reviewed and an action plan correctly identifies pupil assessment to be a priority for development. Good use is made of ICT. Portfolios of work for each pupil have been produced with some assessments being made on the pupils' geographical skills. However, there has been limited training since the last inspection and opportunities have been missed to develop teachers' knowledge further. Overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

HISTORY

133. During the inspection the subject was not being taught because none of the topics included an historical focus and there is insufficient evidence to support a judgement on teaching. Other inspection judgements are made following examination of pupils' work, discussion with pupils and teachers, scrutiny of planning documents and pupils' records of achievement. Standards are broadly in line with national expectations and all groups of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection when progress was unsatisfactory. This was due to uneven coverage of the subject in each class, which has now improved and is satisfactory.
134. By Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of history being a study of the past. They are aware of the past and present in their own and other people's lives. They can describe the different characteristics of old and modern toys and group them according to their age. For this they use their mathematical skills by placing pictures on a time line. They use their investigational skills when handling historical artefacts to identify the differences in wooden

toys as opposed to plastic. Higher-attaining pupils can give reasons why some toys from the Victorian era still exist in museums, and why some have decayed and have been destroyed over the passage of time.

135. By Year 6, pupils have a satisfactory understanding of primary and secondary sources of information. They use their literacy skills well to collect information on Victorian seaside resorts, and can identify differences in calotype with modern photographs advertising places of interest. There is some evidence of pupils evaluating their work; for example one pupil had written "I would like to get better at researching information and the way I present my work". Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have an understanding of historical vocabulary. For example, pupils know what an archaeologist does and can explain the terms 'artefact, replica'. They explain successfully the reasons for the Romans invading Britain to gain more power and control. Pupils with learning difficulties are supported well by being given simpler tasks during the lessons.
136. Management across the school is good and there has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection. The subject co-ordinator is new to the post and has achieved much in a short time. The previous co-ordinator led the subject well after the last inspection and identified key skills for development. The present post holder has observed teaching in all classes. Teachers make the subject interesting for pupils and use an appropriate range of artefacts during lessons. The co-ordinator has started a portfolio of work, some of which is linked to National Curriculum assessment criteria. She has established a good working link with the museum in Harlow where both pupils and teachers visit regularly. Opportunities are made to broaden curriculum experiences and the museum curator also visits the school to talk to pupils about historical artefacts. Resources have improved since the last inspection. Artefacts are stored in cabinets in the school entrance and are displayed in an imaginative way to attract visitors' and pupils' attention, but taken into classrooms when a particular topic is studied. The co-ordinator has recently written an action plan that appropriately identifies the purchase of more sets of history books for each class as a priority.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

137. At the time of the last inspection, pupils' attainment was on course to meet national expectations, but some limitations were present and pupils were not covering all the required areas of work. The standard of pupils' work throughout the school is now in line with expectations and all groups of pupils are achieving well in developing their ICT skills. The school has made good progress in developing the subject and many new opportunities for the application of ICT have been introduced to improve pupils' learning.
138. By the end of Year 2, pupils can save, retrieve and present their information and are familiar with ICT terms such as scroll up and down and Internet. In a mathematics lesson for a group in the computer room, pupils used an Internet address very efficiently to access the activity they required. They used their reading skills very effectively to identify the appropriate area of the site and the task was designed well to provide an opportunity for pupils to develop their skills in totalling money. They had more success in this activity than in a similar task in the classroom when they were dealing with the concept in a more abstract form than was possible without the access to good graphic representation. In Year 1, pupils had responded well to a task completing a 'Once upon a time....' prompt and produced accurate word-processed stories.

139. By the end of Year 6, pupils have developed their word processing skills effectively to enhance the presentation of work. Pupils at this stage use a variety of software and applications as part of their everyday response to topic work. In art, for example, pupils used the zoom facility to achieve greater detail in some aspects of their portrait work. Year 3 and 4 pupils used an art program to make repeating patterns. Pupils use computer facilities with ease, as a tool to enhance their learning. For example, pupils had imported pictures to publish a newspaper recording their visit to Colchester Castle and an information sheet about Hadrian's Wall. Year 4 pupils were observed loading a program from a menu and using a CD Rom and a database to identify insects and leaves found when a tree was shaken as part of a science lesson. Pupils also evaluated the usefulness of the programs in the lesson and how, when some creatures could not be identified, they could be added to one program to expand the database but not to another.
140. Generally, teachers have adequate subject expertise to use ICT confidently to improve learning across a range of subjects. Teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Where these are available, teachers use the interactive whiteboards well to demonstrate lessons. Teachers plan well for the inclusion of ICT and prepare available computers with appropriate software. On one occasion during the inspection, problems were experienced with the network. Good relationships with pupils enabled a solution to be found so that it became a shared learning experience for pupils and adults alike. In the lessons observed, higher-attaining pupils were able to extend their learning using additional features of programs. Pupils' attitudes to ICT are very positive. They enjoy lessons and concentrate well to complete tasks quickly and confidently. Pupils behave very well and respect the equipment both in the computer room and in classrooms.
141. Pupils develop their literacy and numeracy skills effectively through the use of ICT. For instance, a specialist programme is used in mathematics for lower-attaining pupils to improve their basic numeracy skills. Pupils develop the range of their writing, for example, by using word processing for instructional writing in the form of posters.
142. The management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has established the computer room as an effective and reliable resource for learning. The room is well-organised and an appropriate environment for learning. However, it can only accommodate a small number of pupils at a time and further limited access to interactive whiteboards restricts opportunities for whole-class lessons. The school uses appropriate national and local guidelines but pupils in Key Stage 2 have limited access to control and sensory equipment as part of their entitlement; the school recognises the need for further development of this area and has invested in some software as an interim solution to provide a minimum level of experience for pupils. A system for assessing pupils' progress against key skills has been used for some elements of work but has not been developed sufficiently to track or make assessments across the full range of ICT experiences or monitor standards. In addition, there has not been any recent monitoring of ICT lessons to focus the next stages for improvement. Overall, resources for the subject are adequate with additional equipment, such as scanners and digital cameras. However, difficulty in recharging the laptop batteries is restricting the use of this valuable resource fully across the school. Budget planning for the next stages of development of equipment has been thought through carefully.

MUSIC

143. Music is a very important aspect of the school's planning for pupils' cultural and social development. The available evidence indicates that standards throughout the school are in line with what is expected nationally, which is similar to that at the time of the last inspection.
144. In class lessons, pupils work through a structured programme of activities, based on commercial schemes, and linked well to give pupils access to music across a broad range of cultures. By the end of Year 2, pupils have developed good listening skills and are able to respond successfully by clapping to changing rhythms. Pupils understand the early stages of music notation and recognise a meaning in the notation for quavers and crotchets, although they have not been formally given their names.
145. During the inspection, Key Stage 2 pupils attended an extended music workshop run by the performing arts faculty of a secondary school. By the end of the workshop, pupils had been given very good opportunities to understand the background and characteristics of 'The Blues', provided with structured opportunities to apply their new learning to write verses and used a wide range of instruments for their own compositions. Adults worked well with groups of pupils to enable them to refine their work. The final performances were impressive and demonstrated clearly that even the youngest pupils had understood the technique of making their words rhyme. All year groups performed with a high degree of confidence. Their performances were clearly heard over and enhanced by the professional backing provided by the adults. Pupils showed that they had absorbed the style well and listeners responded very well and showed a genuine appreciation and enjoyment of the efforts of their peers. The sense of whole school enjoyment of music was shown by younger pupils as they walked past on their way to assembly and began to move well to the beat from the music in the workshop.
146. Pupils throughout the school are involved well in singing in assembly and sing with verve and enthusiasm. Year 5 pupils, heard singing in a class lesson, were equally enthusiastic, responded well to singing an Australian song and used the opportunity effectively to develop their understanding of Australian animals and culture. The school choir regularly performs in concerts organised by a local secondary school in front of large audiences. Recordings made at these concerts show that pupils sing well in harmony and that the overall performance is of a high quality. Groups also take music into the community when they perform at a local elderly people's home. Recording of pupils' performances of their compositions in Year 5 were not so polished but demonstrated clearly pupils' enthusiasm and enjoyment of music.
147. As very few formal sessions of music were observed, it is not possible to assess the overall quality of teaching in the school but those seen were at least satisfactory. The wider range of activities observed show that pupils respond well to the opportunities provided and make satisfactory progress as they move through the school. Teachers make good links with other subjects, such as making musical instruments using simple items including salt, spaghetti, beads and paper clips after listening to music.
148. The co-ordinator provides clear leadership and has developed a clear structure for the subject. The scheme of work is still in draft form as it is being trialled but is planned to give pupils a wide range of experiences with an appropriate focus on composing and performing, as a way of instilling a sense of enjoyment in making music together. Other priorities in the school have meant that there has not been any direct monitoring of teaching and the co-ordinator has not been able to develop teachers' confidence in the teaching of music, other than through written guidance or informal discussion about the scheme of work. Resources are satisfactory overall and enhanced greatly during the inspection by access to a number of additional electronic keyboards in the workshop. Some pupils take additional guitar lessons outside class lessons and an important and valuable part of the school's provision is a block of guitar lessons for all Year 6 pupils in the summer term, as part of their transition to secondary school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

149. No lessons were observed in dance, gymnastics or athletics so no judgement is possible on the attainment of pupils in these aspects of the programmes of study. Pupils' attainment in games is above that expected of pupils by the end of Year 2 and in line with expectations for pupils at the end of Year 6. School data suggests that, by the time they leave school, all pupils will be able to swim at least five metres, with about half being able to swim at least 25 metres.
150. Games lessons and a swimming session, led by swimming instructors at the local leisure centre, were seen during the inspection. Overall, pupils enjoy lessons and behave well. The quality of teaching was satisfactory overall, and ranged from very good to satisfactory. In a very good lesson, Year 1 pupils made very good progress in developing their throwing and catching skills. The teacher's guidance was very precise and helped them in passing, rolling and throwing objects at a target. The step-by-step approach for teaching the skill of throwing maximized progress for all pupils and meant that they acquired throwing and catching skills which were advanced for their age. Year 4 pupils' catching skills are not developed well for pupils of this age but they are better at hitting a ball. In a games lesson, the teacher spent too much time explaining how mini games could be played, rather than teaching skills directly. As a result, the pupils made satisfactory rather than good progress. Swimming was well taught to Year 3 pupils. Pupils were grouped according to their ability and swimming techniques improved in most groups. Pupils in the top group are strong swimmers and can swim up to ten lengths of the pool without interruption. They use a variety of swimming strokes ranging from front crawl, to breaststroke and backstroke. During the lesson, they were not fully challenged to improve a technique, so did not make as much progress as expected. Pupils in the 'beginners' group made good progress as they were given simple tasks to achieve that gave them confidence in the water so that most were able to put their heads under the water to retrieve an item on the pool floor. Pupils in the intermediate group were given challenges that improved their stamina to achieve swimming greater distances.
151. The subject co-ordinator has only been in post for part of this academic year. The scheme of work meets National Curriculum requirements. It enables teachers to plan for pupils' progress year on year and a system to assess pupils' skills is being developed. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The scheme of work is more effective in Key Stage 1 but the co-ordinator has plans in action already to improve provision for Key Stage 2. Good links have been made with a local secondary school for the performing arts and a sports college for support. Teachers from the sports college help with planning work for differing abilities of pupils and this is beginning to improve the pupils' skills. The issue of providing better planning for dance at the time of the last inspection has not been fully addressed. This is managed better in Key Stage 2 classes, where pupils have attended clubs at a secondary school. The after-school football clubs are well attended by pupils of all ages and older pupils are also given the opportunity to attend the 'High Fives' netball clubs. The school enters teams in the local primary school district sports events and these events give pupils the opportunity to develop their skills and measure them against a broader group of their peers. A generous amount of curriculum time is given to this subject. Overall, management of the subject and improvement since the last inspection are satisfactory.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

152. The available evidence indicates that standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus at the end of Year 2, but below expectations at the

end of Year 6. This level of attainment shows a slight improvement in the younger years to that reported in the last inspection.

153. By Year 2 pupils have an understanding of the Bible, Torah and Qur'an as special books and have been given opportunities to develop their understanding of the significance of some of the festivals and rituals of the Christian faith, such as Christmas, Easter and marriage. They also have an understanding of the importance of some festivals of other faiths, such as Hanukkah. Pupils gained an understanding of some Hindu symbols when Year 3 and 4 pupils provided a puppet show for younger pupils.
154. During Years 3 to 6, pupils deepen their study of a range of faiths, for example, of Hinduism. By Year 4, pupils understand the role of the Mandir in worship. However, pupils in Year 6 have a superficial recall of previous study; their understanding of Judaism is confined to historical events rather than any understanding of faith. Pupils in Year 4 display a deeper understanding of aspects of faith and are achieving at levels more in line with expectations for their age; for example, they know that a vicar is likely to have followed his calling because he "trusts God". As part of their study of the local church, pupils in Years 3 and 4 understand the symbolism of Holy Water and the purpose of various elements of church architecture. The questions they wrote to ask the Vicar on their visit were relevant and appropriate.
155. Throughout the school, pupils make sound progress in developing their understanding of the implicit aspects of religious education detailed in the local Agreed Syllabus. Pupils have a good understanding of their place as members of a community and are introduced well to aspects of ethics and morality, so that the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development. However, pupils' progress in their understanding of the teachings of the main beliefs of Christianity and other religions and the role that faith plays in the lives of many people is more limited, particularly in Years 5 and 6.
156. Very few lessons were observed during the inspection but indicate that the teaching of the specific aspects covered is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen, work was planned carefully. However, as during the last inspection, there are insecurities in teachers' subject knowledge so that their approach to the purpose of religious artefacts means that some important details are overlooked which may convey insensitivity to the beliefs of others. Planned approaches include many appropriate opportunities for discussion of opinions and ideas and the use of role play to explore and develop empathy.
157. The curriculum covers the basic requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus but not enough time is given to the subject overall for pupils to undertake study at the required depth. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory overall, with some strengths but also weaknesses in the management. The co-ordinator has begun to develop systems for formal assessment of how well pupils do in religious education and has used interviews with pupils at the end of a topic well to assess the level of understanding and monitor the effectiveness of teaching. Teachers are given good written and individual guidance of how they can approach the teaching of the scheme of work, but have not been observed teaching to improve their confidence in the teaching of the subject. Long-term planning places insufficient emphasis on the teaching of other faiths and Judaism is not addressed in the scheme, as required by the locally agreed syllabus. The use of Bible stories is planned effectively to reinforce learning in religious education. The time given to explicit religious education falls far short of the time allocated to foundation subjects.