

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ST. ANDREW'S JUNIOR SCHOOL**

Chelmsford

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115102

Headteacher: Jeremy Crook

Reporting inspector: Jacqueline Cousins  
22942

Dates of inspection: 14 - 15 October 2002

Inspection number: 247533

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

© Crown copyright 2002

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

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Foundation
Age range of pupils:	7-11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Road Hatfield Peverel Chelmsford Essex
Postcode:	CM3 2JX
Telephone number:	01245 380 131
Fax number:	01245 382 497
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	John Upson
Date of previous inspection:	January 1998

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		
22942	Jacqueline Cousins	Registered inspector
9010	Gail Ellisdon	Lay inspector
25455	Mary Summers	Team inspector

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House  
Station Road  
Cambridge  
CB1 2RS

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

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

## **REPORT CONTENTS**

	Page
<b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>	<b>6</b>
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
<b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>	
<b>WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>	<b>17</b>

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

St. Andrew's Junior School is situated in the centre of Hatfield Peverel and has been central to the village for the last 150 years. Two hundred and sixty-five pupils aged between seven and eleven years attend the school from this parish and other surrounding villages. This is a popular and over subscribed school. It now admits 60 pupils per year and nearly all transfer from the infant school. The number of pupils who are entitled to free school meals is below average. Most pupils live in privately owned homes, but some live in rented accommodation. Pupils' attainment on entry is average. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs and those with statements of special educational needs is below the national average. There are very few pupils learning to speak English as an additional language. Most pupils are white and of European origin. There are a few pupils from minority ethnic groups.

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

This is a successful school which provides a good education for children. Christian values are evident throughout the school. The leadership of the headteacher is very good and staff work hard to continue to improve the school. There is a good community spirit and all members of staff have a shared commitment to the pupils' personal development. Pupils make good progress as a result of effective teaching. There is a rich curriculum that keeps pupils' attitudes to learning very positive. The school's high expectations of pupils ensure that pupils behave very well. By Year 6 pupils achieve standards that are well above average in English, mathematics and science. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average due to effective teaching.
- The leadership of the headteacher is very good and so the school is effectively directed.
- Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good and their attendance in school is well above average as a result of very effective school systems and procedures.
- Teachers have very high expectations of pupils and teaching is good overall.
- Parents hold the school in very high regard and this supports the school's high standards.
- Activities after school and during lunchtime are very good and this allows pupils to social very effectively out of lesson times.

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

- The consistency of provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- The part of the school's curriculum that prepares pupils for life in a multicultural society.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school was last inspected in January 1998. Good progress has been made since the last inspection. The two key issues from the last inspection have been addressed. The school now has good provision for pupils' personal, social, health and citizenship education. The role of subject co-ordinator has been well developed. Standards in English have risen, while mathematics and science standards have been maintained. The high quality of teaching has been maintained and there is more very good and excellent teaching. Pupils' attendance has improved. An information and communication technology (ICT) suite and music room have been established. The open planned structure of the school has been developed to give greater opportunities for concentration by the addition of dividing walls. The collective act of worship now meets requirements. This is a self-evaluating school with the drive and expertise to make further improvement.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	A	A	B	C
mathematics	A*	A	A	A
science	A*	A*	A	A

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

Current inspection findings indicate that standards in English, mathematics and science are well above average. Standards in English are higher now for two reasons. Firstly, there are fewer pupils with special educational needs in the present Year 6. Secondly, improvements in the teaching of writing have resulted in higher standards of literacy. This is also confirmed by the 2002 test results which are well above average for English, mathematics and science. The proportion of pupils who attained the higher level 5 grade is well above average in all 2002 National tests. The school usually meets its annual targets in the national tests in English and mathematics. The annual targets set are sufficiently challenging. The school is improving standards broadly in line with the national trend.

More able and average pupils make good progress in all subjects whilst at the school. However, pupils with special educational needs only make satisfactory progress in their learning against targets set by the school and when compared to national standards.

There are no marked differences between the performance of boys and girls or pupils from different backgrounds. Those pupils who are gifted and talented make good progress as a result of extra provision provided by the school in many subjects such as physical education and music. The very few pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language achieve well and attain satisfactory standards in relation to their abilities.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to learning and enjoy coming to school. They arrive punctually and complete homework on time.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in lessons and break times throughout the school. The two exclusions were isolated incidences.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is very good. They are co-operative and thoughtful to others virtually all the time.
Attendance	Attendance is very good and is well above the national average.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching is good overall and this is similar to the findings in the previous inspection. About one third of lessons observed were very good or excellent. Nearly half were good and one quarter were satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was seen. The teaching of English and basic skills is good. Teachers use all subjects of the curriculum to develop literacy and writing skills and, as a result, pupils' learning is effective. The teaching of mathematics and numeracy is good. The grouping arrangements made to support more able and average pupils ensure that they make good progress in mathematics. The very few pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language are supported well. Teachers and teaching assistants satisfactorily support pupils' with special educational needs. However, teachers' planning does not sufficiently establish structured guidance on how to develop pupils' with special educational needs. Teachers do not always take enough notice of individual educational plans in all lessons.

Where teaching is very good or excellent, teachers have high expectations of their pupils both in work and behaviour. Basic skills are very well taught using imaginative equipment. Resources are used effectively to make learning interesting and memorable. Teachers use paired discussion work well. Pupils make particularly good progress in their learning when they work independently with research homework projects. Their concentration and interest in work is very effective in promoting high standards. In less successful teaching the pace of learning is slow and teachers' subject knowledge is underdeveloped.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum offers pupils a good quality and range of activities. The strengths include a wide variety of after school activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs have satisfactory support from teachers and teaching assistants. They are not fully included in many lessons because the school does not provide structured strategies which would enable them to work more independently.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language is good. They are well supported by teachers and teaching assistants with specific programmes of study.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides very good opportunities for pupils' social and moral development. Spiritual development is well promoted in assemblies and lessons. Cultural development is satisfactory. It focuses well on local, British and European cultures, but pupils do not have well developed chances to learn about different beliefs found in our multicultural society. The school has worked hard to develop a good personal, social, health and citizenship education programme.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff know their pupils well and take a keen interest in their personal welfare. There are good procedures for ensuring the pupils' personal safety.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher	The leadership of the headteacher is very good. The deputy headteacher and staff provide good support and management skills. Co-ordinators



and other key staff	have worked effectively to develop their subject areas.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are supportive and fulfil their statutory duties. The procedures in the school are not systematic enough to ensure that the governors are fully aware of the schools' strengths and weaknesses.

The school's evaluation of its performance	Effective procedures are in place for monitoring teaching and learning. Very good use is made of observations of teachers and pupil data. This assists the school to identify areas of the curriculum needing improvement.
The strategic use of resources	The school has good systems to ensure that funds are used to obtain best value for its pupils. All financial planning is linked to priorities identified in the School Development Plan.

There have been considerable improvements to the building. Between each classroom there is now a partition, which allows pupils to discuss topics without disturbing other classes. However, leaking water through the roof has spoilt pupils' displays and recently over one thousand pounds worth of books was destroyed in this way.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.</li> <li>• I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems.</li> <li>• The school is well led and managed.</li> <li>• Behaviour is good.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• My child likes school.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My child gets the right amount of homework.</li> <li>• I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agree with many of the parents' comments and support their views that the pupils are expected to work hard at the school. Also the inspectors agree that this is an approachable, friendly and welcoming school that listens carefully to parents' and pupils' thoughts. However, the team does not agree with two of the parents concerns. Homework is used well to maintain high standards in the school. Suitable periods of time are given to carry out research projects which allow pupils to develop independent study skills. For example a recent Year 6 project allowed pupils to choose from a detailed written project, poster, leaflet or to make a model. The homework undertaken by pupils helps them to achieve high standards in national tests. Parents are kept well informed about pupils' progress. There are satisfactory annual reports to parents. An open day is held in the summer term and two parents' evenings held in the autumn and spring term. There is a weekly opportunity, on a Monday after school, for parents to discuss any concerns and pupils' progress with teaching staff.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL**

#### **Standards in English, mathematics and science are well above the national average due to effective teaching.**

1. Standards of the current Year 6 are well above average in English, mathematics and science; this is an improvement since the last inspection when standards were above average overall. This improvement has been achieved as the result of the headteacher and staff's determination to raise standards and to develop the use of the literacy and numeracy strategy.
2. In 2001 national tests pupils achieved well above average standards in mathematics and science. However, English tests were only above average. This was because there were more pupils with special educational needs in this year group. The 2002 national tests demonstrate that standards have risen again. As a result English standards are now well above average. Standards of mathematics and science tests have been maintained and are well above average. In this year's national tests nearly half the Year 6 pupils achieved higher level 5 grades in all these subjects. Nearly nine out of ten pupils achieved average level 4 grades.
3. In Year 6, speaking and listening are well above average. Standards are high because the school plans a wide range of opportunities for pupils to develop listening and oral skills. In most lessons pupils take part in paired discussion work before they are asked to speak to the class. Pupils listen very well and respond thoughtfully whether they are addressing their peers or adults. They express themselves in a very articulate manner with total confidence. They are used to voicing their opinions, which they do maturely as a result of having positive feedback from their teachers. A good example of this was seen in a personal, social, health and citizenship education lesson. School council representatives explained very clearly to the class what had been discussed at their recent meeting. Pupils make very logical suggestions about raising money for charities. They are used to making choices and adjusting their language for different purposes, such as during school productions and when discussing other subjects of the curriculum. During an English lesson, for instance, pupils in Year 6 shared their ideas of what made an effective story opening.
4. Standards in reading are well above average. These standards are very high due to the school's use of group reading sessions and the extra practice that parents regularly undertake in school hours as well as during the evenings. The literacy hour is used to teach reading skills effectively. Pupils learn to analyse texts effectively when they read extracts and highlight ways that the author builds suspense in a story. Pupils take obvious pleasure in reading a wide variety of texts. They use the Internet effectively to research projects and scan information accurately for key words. Older pupils study the T. S. Elliot poem 'Macavity' and they answer questions in detail about the text, also when articles about Howard Carter are carefully analysed.
5. Although the standard of pupils' writing in Year 6 has been high, it has not always matched the very high standard achieved in reading. Due to the school's focused work to improve the discrepancy, there has been a marked improvement which has significantly closed the gap. The school now uses many literacy hours to focus on the teaching of writing and teachers have benefited from further training. These lessons have a high interest level in order to motivate pupils and are often linked to topics under study in other subjects. For instance Year 4 pupils are learning about the Tudors in history lessons so in a literacy lesson they write a vivid newspaper article about the sinking of the *Mary Rose*. Some pupils who are experiencing difficulties are targeted and given extra support by teaching assistants. However, teachers do not always plan structured approaches that would enable these pupils with special educational needs to make effective progress.
6. In Year 6 pupils produce very creative, polished and well structured pieces of writing. Their range of writing is wide and includes fantasy stories, poems, manifestoes, leaflets, multi media presentations and factual accounts. Pupils have a very clear understanding of how to use

appropriate expressions for a different audience. This was evident in Year 6 manifestoes where pupils prepare speeches about why they should be chosen to be a house captain. More able pupils use sub-headings particularly effectively, highlighting their “personal skills” and “playground organisational skills”. They use expressions which would capture younger pupils’ interest. Pupils’ work is rich in the variety of vocabulary used and this results in lively and creative writing. An outstanding example is seen in pupils’ stories about a fantasy object. Pupils learn to plan their writing carefully to develop a logical argument. The arguments produced, about whether animals should be kept in zoos, are well balanced and very thoughtful conclusions are created. Homework is used well to develop pupils’ literacy skills. This was seen when, in Year 6, pupils were given a sheet to plan a story at home which would be used the next day to create an original narrative. Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language make good progress in their ability to write as a result of effective support.

7. Throughout the school pupils learn spellings for weekly tests. The teacher chooses some words and others are taken from pupils’ errors in their work. Pupils write neatly, use an ink pen and join up writing beautifully. More able and average pupils are well included in English lessons and they make good progress in all aspects of the subject. The school’s focus on improving the already high standards of writing has not been confined to the English curriculum. Its success has strengthened planned opportunities for extending writing across the whole curriculum. History is particularly well used to develop literacy skills. In Year 4 pupils write detailed studies of Hans Holbein’s portrait of Henry the Eighth. They record the ways that the artist has made the King look rich, successful and powerful. In another Year 4 class pupils wrote about the features of Tudor houses such as chimneys and windows. Religious education work has very good links with literacy when Year 6 pupils summarise the key points in the Bible story of ‘David and Goliath’. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop knowledge and understanding of our own and other European cultures through subjects such as geography, history, music and English.
8. Standards in mathematics have remained well above average for many years. In 2001 and 2002 nearly nine out of ten pupils achieved average level 4 grades. Nearly half the pupils in Year 6 attained higher level 5 grades. The school has maintained high standards in a variety of ways. All teachers have embraced the numeracy initiative to good effect. Teachers have further developed pupils’ mental arithmetic skills so that pupils recall basic calculations quickly and accurately. Year 6 pupils effectively reduce fractions to their lowest common denominator. The school groups pupils according to their mathematical ability. In Year 6 there are three groups which enable pupils to work at a suitable pace and on appropriate tasks. Teachers have very high expectations that all pupils will achieve well. The school places a high emphasis on problem solving. For instance in Year 5 pupils learnt how to solve two step problems efficiently. Pupils added three amounts of money and then found the change from ten and twenty pounds. Wherever possible a practical approach is taken to the teaching of mathematics. This was seen in a Year 3 lesson where pupils were given a variety of shapes. The pupils learnt how to sort two-dimensional shapes and present their findings using a Venn diagram. Teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs, but these pupils only make satisfactory progress because of a lack of specific strategies being utilised. The very small proportion of pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language are suitably provided for and they make good progress. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are well integrated in classes and make effective progress overall.
9. Standards in science are well above average. This is due to the many approaches the school uses to teach this subject. Challenging investigations are used to make pupils think deeply about scientific knowledge and understanding. For instance Year 6 investigate the optimum conditions for yeast to respire and make predictions prior to carrying out the experiment. The pupils learn how to accurately set up apparatus for themselves. There are good opportunities for reflection and spiritual development when pupils discuss how to make their test fair on a scientific basis. Resources are creatively used to make learning exciting. This is seen when Year 3 use a variety of materials and investigate if they would let light through. Regular opportunities are provided for pupils to learn how to draw clear conclusions. A Year 6 pupil concludes *‘We found out that it took more force to pull Tom’s shoes across grass because there was more friction’*. There is a high emphasis given to the use of scientific vocabulary in lessons, so that pupils learn how to use technical vocabulary in the most effective way. For example Year 6 pupils learn the correct

vocabulary for human organs and parts of the skeleton. There are good links with numeracy when pupils use charts to collect data accurately. ICT is also used effectively to reinforce pupils learning when graphs of pulse rates after one and three minutes of exercise are created using spreadsheets. Teachers have high expectations of pupils which ensure that most pupils are effectively included in lessons. The best teaching utilises challenging questioning. For example one Year 6 teacher sought to deepen pupils understanding when they were investigating respiration rates in yeast. The teacher asked, "*Why do you think the yeast with lots of sugar will respire rapidly?*" Finally, teachers use assessment well to inform their planning so that any gaps in pupils' knowledge revisited and carefully filled.

**The leadership of the headteacher is very good and so the school is effectively managed.**

10. Since his appointment in 1999, the headteacher has given the school very good leadership. He has established a very purposeful team spirit and approach amongst staff. The headteacher has a very clear insight into the immediate needs of the school and, with the governing body, he has made priority decisions that are having a positive impact on the quality of work and standards. His priorities have been to develop the teaching of writing and so improve standards further. The headteacher and deputy have correctly identified that the development of art and the multicultural curriculum are amongst the school's priorities. These improvements are very well expressed within the three-year development plan that the headteacher and staff have produced following a careful analysis of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The school has produced a race equality policy although it has not yet been discussed and agreed by governors. The whole staff works together well as a team under the headteacher's leadership, incorporating aspects of evaluation in their work. Performance management is well established at the heart of the school's self-evaluation process.
11. The clear aims of the school are well explained in the school's mission statement. "*To achieve high standards of learning, within a broad and varied curriculum and to establish a feeling of well being and responsibility in a caring school community that reflects the Christian values of the school's foundation.*" The headteacher embodies the values of the school in every interaction he has with pupils, staff and governors. The school is a welcoming place which aims to "*provide a friendly, supportive environment within which all staff and children have equal opportunity in all aspects of school life.*"
12. Under the strong leadership of the headteacher many improvements have been achieved since the last inspection. The improvements have already had an impact on standards. The partitions constructed between open planned classrooms mean that pupils are now able to take part in paired discussion regularly without disturbing others. The higher emphasis on developing pupils' speaking skills has helped to promote higher standards in speaking and literacy. Money has been well spent to establish an ICT suite and music room which are regularly used. All pupils use the ICT suite for at least one hour a week and this means that standards are high in this subject. The school has improved the collective act of worship so that it meets requirements. Assemblies include a suitable period of reflection and refer to a higher deity. The provision for personal, social, health and citizenship education has been developed so that all classes have a weekly lesson to learn about these aspects of life.
13. The identified priorities for development have been appropriately costed by the headteacher with a time scale for action. The school's financial planning takes good account of immediate needs. The headteacher, with the governors, has established careful oversight of the finances and budget. The school is aware of the need to obtain good value for money and to consider the effects of spending decisions on standards when considering improvements. The school often consults parents about the provision within the school. For instance they have asked them about their concerns about homework in the past. Money obtained through the standards fund is used effectively. There is a large amount of money which was not spent last year. This was partly due to extra government grants which were not expected, and planned savings. The school wishes to fund three small classes of twenty-six in Year 6 for the next two years and so this money has been put aside to achieve this.

14. The management of the school is good overall. The co-ordinators' roles have been well developed so that most subjects have good leadership and management. Schemes of work have been reviewed by most co-ordinators. A new detailed programme of work for ICT has been introduced. Most co-ordinators have monitored the quality of teaching of their subject. The personal, social, health and citizenship education co-ordinator has observed all teachers teaching this aspect of the curriculum. All co-ordinators have files detailing activities undertaken in recent years. The numeracy co-ordinator has observed the quality of teaching and fed back to staff individually. She then explained her findings to the whole staff in a staff meeting and to the governors. An analysis of pupils' mathematics books led to further developments in teachers' marking so that they are now expected to write a developmental comment at least once a week. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching is well established. Each teacher is observed formally every term by the headteacher, subject co-ordinator or an independent adviser.

**Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good and their attendance in school is well above average as a result of very effective school systems and procedures.**

15. Pupils' attitudes to work, behaviour and relationships are very good and a significant factor in the good progress that pupils make in their learning.
16. Pupils' attitudes to work are very good. They arrive at school in good time and quickly settle to their tasks. Pupils take pride in their work and they keep their workbooks neat, tidy and well presented. They talk with enthusiasm about what they have done and what they have achieved. They confidently ask for help when it is required. Pupils concentrate very well in many lessons which allows them to make considerable gains in each session. This was seen when a Year 4 class worked so intently on their articles about the sinking of the *Mary Rose* that they did not want to stop. Many participate in after school activities and those who represent the school in games or other activities are proud to have been selected. Pupils demonstrate an effective level of spiritual awareness when they talk about the problems their grandparents experienced during World War Two. They say that people in World War Two had food rationed and that some mothers went without foods so that they could make sure that their children were well fed. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop spiritual awareness in many subjects as well as in assemblies. For instance religious education lessons allow pupils to explore their ideas of what 'God' looks like. 'God's' personal characteristics are very well presented when Year 3 pupils produce posters. After a visit to the church graveyard Year 4 pupils wrote very touching poems that demonstrated real understanding of how people would have felt during the Second World War. One child of average ability wrote a poem called '*Brave Men*',
- "I see the names of the dead,  
I feel upset  
About brave men dying,  
Were they frightened?  
Wives, families heartbroken left alone."*
17. Pupils are keen to complete challenges set by teachers. For instance Year 6 pupils were very motivated to make paper patterns for Egyptian sandals due to the enthusiasm of the teacher. Pupils work effectively on independent tasks. Homework is usually fully completed on time. Attendance has improved and is now well above average.
18. Pupils' awareness of our culture is strong. They write well about rich and poor people's lives in Tudor times. Pupils record statements such as "*The people who lived in that house must have been rich because they decorated the walls*". They talk about famous Tudor people such as Henry the Eighth and Catherine of Aragon. In physical education lessons pupils learn to do country dancing. Geography projects have enabled pupils to learn about their own village and local traffic problems. Although pupils study other cultures such as the Ancient Egyptians they say that they do not spend much time learning about other beliefs or people from our own multicultural society.
19. The pupils' behaviour is very good both inside and outside of classrooms. Pupils are polite and friendly to peers, visitors and adults. They are very courteous, trustworthy and treat others'

belongings with respect. Pupils listen carefully to teachers and other adults and they respond positively to instructions. The pupils in Year 6 set a good example to pupils in other year groups.

20. Pupils' relationships are very good within classes and throughout the school. The older pupils work well with younger pupils. For instance Year 6 pupils are responsible for serving drinks at lunchtime to the infant school. Relationships between pupils and adults are also very good. Pupils hold teachers and adults who work in the school in high regard. They are keen to please and do their best, not only for themselves, but to please others.

### **Teachers have very high expectations of pupils and teaching is good overall.**

21. The teachers' good relationships with the pupils and their purposeful approach create a positive atmosphere for learning right from the start of lessons. Teachers give lively introductions that often revisit previous lesson topics ensuring that pupils learn to link prior knowledge and understanding. The good quality teaching that most pupils receive results in the majority of pupils making good progress in their learning. The best teaching incorporates the following aspects:
- very effective teaching of basic skills;
  - very high expectations of pupils;
  - good quality teacher subject knowledge;
  - effective management of pupils;
  - good use of paired pupil discussions;
  - effective use of practical activities;
  - good use of resources and time;
  - effective use of learning methods.
22. Effective learning methods incorporate the sharing of learning objectives and success targets so that pupils are clear about the focus for learning. Basic skills of literacy and numeracy are well taught which are then effectively applied to all areas of the curriculum. For instance this was seen in a Year 4 literacy hour where pupils learnt well how to add adjectives and adventurous vocabulary to their newspaper articles. Very high expectations of teachers mean that pupils learn to carry out complex calculations rapidly and accurately. In one good science lesson seen there were many significant strengths. Firstly, these include the use of practical activities which help to make science knowledge more memorable. For example pupils set up their own investigation to discover 'what were the optimal conditions for yeast to respire'. As a result pupils make knowledgeable predictions and carry out fair tests. Secondly, basic skills are well taught when pupils accurately draw diagrams. Thirdly, resources are effectively used when pupils learn how to combine apparatus effectively. Homework is used well to enable pupils to develop independent research skills. The extra teaching that more able and average pupils receive through ability grouping and extra tuition promote effective learning. Pupils who are learning to speak English as an additional language receive satisfactory support from staff. Teachers do not consistently address pupils with special educational needs individual education plan targets in lessons.
23. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen. All lessons were satisfactory or better. However, less successful teaching does not plan specifically for pupils with special educational needs. The teacher's planning does not give sufficient guidance to teaching assistants as to how they can support pupils and allow them to develop more independent skills. Teachers' subject knowledge occasionally reduces the progress made by pupils in one physical education lesson. Less effective teaching can result in a rather slow pace of learning. Teachers do not often use resources from other cultures in English, physical education, music, religious education or art lessons.

### **Parents hold the school in very high regard and this supports the school's high standards.**

24. The pre-inspection questionnaires and discussions with parents all highlight that they have extremely positive views of the school and hold the headteacher and his staff in very high regard. Parents are particularly positive about the expectations the school has of their children to work hard and achieve high standards. They also say they would feel very comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns. Any parental worries are met with immediate

responses that they greatly appreciate. Parents gave several examples where the headteacher or staff had really made an effort to rectify problems effectively. They appreciate the way that the school deals with sensitive issues that arise. They say that staff always treat the pupils in a mature manner and handle all situations well. Parents like the regular new letters and information about what pupils are doing in and out of school. New initiatives are often introduced in consultation with parents and questionnaires are used effectively to gather parents' thoughts.

25. Parents voiced some concerns about the information that they received about how their child is getting on. The inspection team did not support the parents' comments. Parents receive a good range of feedback on their children's progress. They receive an annual report on pupils and are invited to two parents' evenings. They also have the opportunity to make an appointment to see teachers on a Monday after school to discuss concerns and their child's progress. The headteacher and class teachers are readily available to discuss concerns at the end of the school day as they are often to be found in the playground as pupils depart. Some parents voiced concerns about pupils having too much homework in the questionnaires and at the parents' meeting. The team again did not agree with parents. Homework is planned for half an hour a night for Year 5 and 6 with Year 3 and 4 having one and a half hours a week. Homework activities set by the school were very valuable activities. They were often linked to developing independent research skills in older pupils. For example in Year 6 pupils undertook a project linked to their study of the Ancient Egyptians. A very good guidance sheet was produced by teachers which gave the parents and pupils the option to choose to produce a detailed project or a factual poster or a leaflet. Pupils could also choose to create a model of an Ancient Egyptian pyramid. This kind of homework deepens pupils' understanding of their learning and assists pupils in achieving high standards in many subjects.

**Activities after school and during lunchtime are very good because teachers are willing to give up their own time and offer their expertise.**

26. There is a particularly wide range of activities for pupils to explore during lunch breaks and after school. There are many sporting activities. For instance pupils have opportunities to join clubs for football, cricket, netball, swimming and athletics. They can participate in competitive matches with other local schools. The school has won many inter school competitions. For example they won the North Essex National Adidas Predator Football Cup and Witham and District Netball Rally. A very wide range of musical clubs are offered. Pupils talk about clubs for recorder, band, guitar and choir. The school choir and band perform annually in the Witham and District Schools Music Festival. Other clubs include chess, art, scenery making, country dancing, gardening, ICT, Year 6 literacy and numeracy and gym trail. Many of these activities are open to pupils of all abilities and enrich the school's curriculum considerably. Gifted and talented pupils are often invited to participate in extra activities for sport and music.

## **WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED**

**The consistency of provision for pupils with special educational needs.**

27. Although some teachers do plan strategies that will enable these pupils to work more independently a significant number do not. Many teachers do not set out detailed guidance in their planning on how these pupils will be effectively supported and as a result support is ad hoc. Teaching assistants regularly withdraw pupils with special educational needs to work on their individual educational plan targets. However, in a considerable number of lessons teachers admitted they were not really addressing targets in pupils' individual educational plans. Assessment is not always used fully to include these pupils in lessons.
28. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs do not consistently have specific and measurable targets. The strategies recorded on these plans are rather brief and do not offer sufficient guidance for staff working with these pupils. Whilst individual educational plans are shared with parents at parents' evenings and meetings, parents very rarely sign these plans. This makes it hard for the school to track whether parents have seen these plans or not. There is little evidence, as suggested under the new Code of Practice, of pupils having their individual



targets shared with them. The individual educational plans in Year 3 have particularly broad targets. There is little evidence that the individual educational plans, which were sent up by the infant school, have been used by the junior school to inform planning. This results in time being wasted in the first half of the autumn term.

29. The special educational needs co-ordinator has only been in post for a few weeks. The previous co-ordinator did monitor pupils' progress against their individual targets and recorded a considerable level of success. However, the new co-ordinator has yet to monitor the progress of these pupils in relation to National Curriculum levels of attainment. In over three quarters of lessons observed inspectors commented that pupils with special educational needs only made satisfactory progress when other pupils were mostly making good progress. Very few pupils with special educational needs achieve average standards in English or mathematics. However, most of these pupils do achieve average levels and grades in science. The co-ordinator and governor responsible for pupils with special educational needs are not fully involved in monitoring the provision and progress for these pupils or those with statements of special educational needs.

### **The part of the school's curriculum that prepares pupils for life in a multicultural society.**

30. The school recognises that the provision for multicultural education is satisfactory at present and has included this area in its school development plan. Pupils have some opportunities to learn about other cultures which are found in our society today. They do not learn about other faiths in depth. For instance Year 6 pupils could only recall studying symbols from the Sikh and Buddhist religions. They talked about the Hindus' beliefs about death. There are few activities in physical education for pupils to learn dances from other cultures. Resources are rather limited for professional recordings of music and musical instruments from other cultures. The school has few visitors or audiovisual materials which would enable pupils to understand the beliefs and religious activities of people from non-western cultures. There are few books used in lessons or in the library which would enable pupils to develop their knowledge in this area. Famous artists from non-European countries are not studied in many art projects.

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

The headteacher, staff and governors should:

- (1) Develop consistent provision for pupils with special educational needs by:
  - improving teachers' planning and establishing structured support for these pupils;
  - ensuring that detailed strategies are recorded on individual educational plans;
  - improving opportunities for teachers to address individual educational plans in all lessons;
  - ensuring that information is transferred from the infants to Year 3 class teachers so that planning is effective in the early part of the autumn term;
  - increasing the co-ordinator's monitoring and evaluation of these pupils' progress. (paragraphs 25-27)
  
- (2) Improve the provision for multicultural education by:
  - developing resources for English, art, music and physical education;
  - increasing the use of visitors and visual stimulus;
  - developing the depth of pupils' understanding of beliefs from other cultures;
  - ensuring the provision is monitored. (paragraph 28)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	23
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	12

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	6	10	6	0	0	0
Percentage	4	26	44	26	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/a	265
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/a	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/a	46

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.6

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	33	35	68

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	28	30	33
	Girls	33	32	35
	Total	61	62	68
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (93)	91 (95)	100 (100)
	National	75 (75)]	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	27	28	33
	Girls	33	30	34
	Total	60	58	67
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (80)	85 (93)	99 (95)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British – Indian
Asian or Asian British – Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group

No of pupils on roll
230
2
4
1
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0
0

Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
2	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0
0	0

No ethnic group recorded
--------------------------

28
----

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: Y4 – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.5
Average class size	29.4

#### Education support staff: Y4 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	228

#### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
----------------	-----------

	£
Total income	617600
Total expenditure	574203
Expenditure per pupil	2058
Balance brought forward from previous year	60374
Balance carried forward to next year	103771

### 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	3

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.



## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	265
Number of questionnaires returned	96

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	66	34	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	44	46	5	0	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	41	54	1	1	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	50	18	3	0
The teaching is good.	52	43	4	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	41	9	5	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	66	31	2	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	31	3	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	48	41	8	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	58	38	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	38	4	1	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	46	5	1	1