

INSPECTION REPORT

**ORSETT CHURCH OF ENGLAND PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Essex

LEA area: Thurrock

Unique reference number: 115171

Headteacher: Mrs J Hooper

Reporting inspector: Mr D Shepherd
2905

Dates of inspection: 9 - 12 December 2002

Inspection number: 247541

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
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Orsett Essex
Postcode:	RM16 3JR
Telephone number:	01375 891383
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Holmes
Date of previous inspection:	27 November 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2905	David Shepherd	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Foundation stage	What sort of a school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
9079	Ann Moss	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) 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?
31029	Peter Thrussell	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Music Physical education Special educational needs English as an additional language	How well is the school led and managed?
22990	Christopher Furniss	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Orsett is a voluntary aided Church of England primary school. It is about the same size as other primary schools, with 189 full-time pupils on roll. Most pupils are white, ten are of African and one of Chinese background. No pupil speaks English as an additional language. Thirty-six pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs [SEN]. None of these has a statement. This is fewer than the national average. The range of special educational needs includes multi-sensory impairment, speech and communication and emotional and behavioural difficulties. Attainment on entry is average. There are slightly more girls at the school than boys. Over 60 per cent of pupils came from out of the immediate area of the school. The school is over-subscribed. Seven teachers have left and twelve have joined the school during the past two years. This is high.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a sound education for its pupils and has the capacity to improve. The teaching and learning in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 6 are consistently good. Good teaching is sometimes evident in Year 5. This promotes high standards. The attitudes and behaviour of most pupils are good. Most pupils attain standards that are average in most subjects and make steady progress, overall, through the school. The leadership provided by the headteacher is good. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Provides children with a good start to their schooling in Reception
- Provides role models of good teaching
- Ensures that pupils have positive attitudes to school and that they behave well
- Promotes pupils' personal development well and helps them to become mature and responsible
- Provides good levels of care for pupils
- Secures good leadership from the headteacher

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology [ICT] throughout the school and standards in English, mathematics, science, geography and history in Year 2
- Standards attained by high attaining pupils
- Teaching where it has weaknesses, especially in teaching basic skills, raising expectations of what pupils can achieve, adopting appropriate teaching methods, using the outcomes of assessment to plan future lessons and in matching the work to the needs of higher attaining pupils
- The monitoring and evaluation roles of subject leaders
- The management of and provision for pupils with SEN to ensure that they make as much progress as possible
- Communication with parents to ensure that they are supportive of the school

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 November 2000. During the past year, it has made significant improvements in the serious weaknesses that were identified at that time. The serious weaknesses are no longer evident in the school. The leadership and management of the new headteacher are good. Subject co-ordinators are more involved in monitoring and evaluating standards and teaching in their subjects than they were, but are not involved enough in direct observations of teaching. Teaching has improved overall, but weaknesses remain in Years 2 and 4. Overall, most pupils make satisfactory progress in most subjects. However, the school has not reviewed the amount of time allocated to each subject.

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	C	D	A	B
Mathematics	B	C	B	C
Science	B	D	B	C

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

In 2002, the percentage of pupils in Year 6 reaching the higher levels was well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science when compared with all schools. Over the past four years, the trend of improvement in English, mathematics and science is above the national trend. In each of these subjects, girls have achieved higher levels than the boys, especially in English. Inspection evidence suggests that standards in English, mathematics and science in the current Year 6 are average. Standards in test at the end of Year 2 in 2002 were above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics when compared to all schools and average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics when compared to schools in similar contexts. The proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was well above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics when compared with all schools. Results in reading and mathematics were lower than in the previous year but higher in writing when compared with all schools. Over the past three years, girls have achieved higher levels than boys in reading, writing and mathematics. Results in the 2002 teacher assessments in science were in the top five per cent when compared with all schools. At the higher level, they were average. Inspection evidence suggest that standards in Year 2 in English are average but below average in mathematics and science.

The school easily exceeded the extremely low targets set for English and mathematics in 2002. The targets set for 2003 have been revised by the new headteacher and now represent a realistic challenge for the school. By the time children have left the Reception class, most have made good progress. Nearly all have achieved the national targets for pupils of this age, and many have exceeded them in all areas of learning. Inspection evidence suggests that in standards art and design are above average in Year 6, and those in design and technology [D&T], geography and history are average. Standards in art and design and D&T are average in Year 2, but below average in geography and history. It was not possible to judge standards in ICT, music and physical education [PE]. The achievement of pupils is poor in Year 2, but good overall in Years 1, 5 and 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy coming to school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well. Behaviour is occasionally spoilt by a few pupils who act in immature and attention-seeking ways.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils work and play together harmoniously. They form good relationships with adults and treat them courteously and politely.
Attendance	Satisfactory. Attendance is similar to the national average.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Unsatisfactory; good in Year 1	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.

Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. They are consistently good in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 6. Good teaching and learning are also evident in Year 5. However, evidence from pupils' work indicates that a significant amount of teaching and learning in Year 2 during the past term was unsatisfactory. The teaching and learning are most often unsatisfactory in English, mathematics, science, geography and history. Overall, the teaching and learning of pupils with SEN is satisfactory. The skills of literacy and English and of numeracy and mathematics are mainly taught satisfactorily. High attaining pupils do not make the progress they should in many classes because the work set for them is not matched to their needs and abilities.

There are a number of features about the teaching and learning that are good. In lessons where they are good, teachers hold high expectations of pupils' behaviour and their achievement. Relationships with pupils are good. In their turn, pupils adopt positive attitudes to their work and put in a considerable amount of effort. They behave well. However, a few teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour or their achievement. The same tasks are often set for all the class, irrespective of pupils' prior attainment or abilities. Higher attaining pupils in particular find the work too easy. These same teachers do not use the outcomes from assessments when planning future work for pupils and basic skills in literacy and numeracy are not taught well enough.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school teaches all elements of the National Curriculum, personal and social education, sex education and drugs education. The school provides a satisfactory range of out of school activities including day and residential visits.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The management and provision for pupils with SEN do not always help them to make the progress of which they are capable.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and moral development is good. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory. Procedures for pupil care are good. However, assessment of their work is not used well enough when planning future work.

The school does not work in partnership with parents very well. The responses from a large percentage of parents were critical of the school in a number of respects, as indicated at the end of this summary.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher provides good leadership and management for the school. She is supported well by the deputy headteacher. Subject co-ordinators do not monitor teaching in their subjects rigorously enough.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive of the school and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher monitor and evaluate standards achieved and the quality of teaching well. However, co-ordinators are not involved enough in monitoring and evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of their subjects or areas of responsibility.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Funding is used for the purposes for which it is allocated. Governors have not evaluated the impact of a few of their spending decisions. The school provides satisfactory value for money. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily.

There are enough staff to teach the curriculum. However, the co-ordinator for SEN is not used effectively enough. The accommodation is satisfactory. Learning resources are adequate in most subjects. However, there are not enough computers to implement fully the National Curriculum in enough depth, more artefacts and information books are needed in history and more class reading books in literacy.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school • The school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best • The school is well led and managed • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More information about how their children are getting on • A closer working relationship with parents • More activities outside lessons • More homework • Better teaching

A very high proportion of parents expressed dissatisfaction with aspects of school. Of the 68 responses to the pre-inspection questionnaire, over half indicated that they would like more information about the progress their children were making and nearly half wanted a closer working relationship with the school. Inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by parents. Inspectors also agree that teaching needs to improve in certain classes and that the school should develop a closer working relationship and a better understanding with parents. However, inspectors do not agree with parents in their other criticisms of the school. There is evidence that homework is being set in all classes. A satisfactory range of activities outside lessons, including day and residential visits to places of interest, is provided by the school. The school provides a satisfactory amount of information about the progress children are making, both in written and oral forms.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In 2002, standards in English in the National Curriculum tests were well above average and in mathematics and science they were above average. However, standards in the current Year 6 class are average in mathematics and science are average and below average in English. Standards in English are improving this term, and, if this rate of progress continues, will be average by the end of the year. Since the last inspection, standards in English, mathematics and science in Year 6 have been rising faster than the national trend. However, this upward trend is unlikely to continue this year. Standards in art and design are above average and those in D&T, geography and history average. Overall, standards in these subjects are similar to those reported at the last inspection. The targets set for 2002 in English and mathematics were too low. They were easily exceeded. Targets set for 2003 in these subjects at the end of Year 6 have been reviewed by the new headteacher, and are suitably challenging.
2. In 2002, standards at the end of Year 2 were above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. Standards in the current Year 2 are average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics and science. Standards have improved since the last inspection in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards are average in art and design and D&T and below average in geography and history. This is a similar picture to that at the last inspection in these subjects. The current Year 2 pupils entered with standards that were above average. Their progress this term has been very slow and their standards have slipped to average. This is a significant issue for the school to tackle.
3. Standards in ICT are below average throughout the school. Although some good work in ICT was observed in a few lessons, the school is not yet providing pupils with enough opportunities to cover the National Curriculum in enough depth. Standards are below average because of the inadequacy of provision. Standards in ICT are lower than they were at the last inspection. Lack of evidence makes it impossible to judge standards in music and PE.
4. Most pupils enter the Reception class with average standards in all areas of learning. With their lively enquiring minds, positive attitudes to learning and good teaching, they enter Year 1 having made good progress. The majority have achieved, and many exceeded, the national standards set for pupils of this age. Their attainment overall on entry to Year 1 is above average.
5. The progress pupils achieve is directly related to the quality of teaching they receive. Last year, pupils made satisfactory progress in Year 2 because the teaching was of a sound standard. Progress being made by pupils in Year 2 this year is poor. This is because the teaching in this class is unsatisfactory, and sometimes poor. During the inspection, most of the teaching in Year 2 was satisfactory, but evidence from pupils' work and school data indicates that most pupils are not making the progress they should. Progress being made by pupils in Year 3 this year is satisfactory because of the sound teaching. The progress being made by pupils in Year 4 this year is too slow. This is because of a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching, especially the low expectations the teacher has of pupils' achievements. Last year, pupils made slow progress in Year 5. This year, pupils are making sound progress in Year 5 because the teaching is much better than it was. This portrays an uneven pattern of pupils' achievement through the school. At present, pupils are achieving appropriately in Years 3 and 5. They are achieving well in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 6.
6. The most significant factor in pupils making less progress than they should is low teacher expectations. For example, when pupils are set work that is too easy for them, they do not put in much effort and fail to reach their potential. This applies to pupils at all levels of ability, but to high attaining pupils in particular.

7. A further factor that has hindered the progress made by pupils is the high turnover of teachers during the past two years. Many pupils find it hard to adjust to a new teaching style and this often slows down the progress they are making. For example, Year 5 in 200-01 pupils were taught by three different teachers. This meant that this class had to get used to new teachers each with different teaching styles. This slowed down their progress. However, the school recognised this and put in a lot of effort to raise the attainment in English and mathematics of targeted groups of pupils so that they might achieve a higher grade in the national tests. This plan worked and many pupils made up lost ground as a result and achieved levels of which they were capable.
8. However, there are now identifiable factors that are raising standards. Teaching and learning are now being systematically monitored by the headteacher and deputy headteacher. Strengths and weaknesses in lessons observed and in analyses of pupils' work are being identified. Teachers are given a written account of these and plans are carried out that lead to improvements in the weaknesses identified. However, the focus of this monitoring has not been rigorous enough on improving standards. Hence, standards in some classes are not high enough.
9. Overall, teachers now have higher expectation of pupils' achievements than they used to have. Targets are now set for pupils on a termly and annual basis. Some of the targets set are ambitious and some teachers are pleasantly surprised when they have been achieved. This is helping teachers to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve and pupils in some classes are making more progress as a result.
10. Staff training is also contributing to improving standards, particularly in some classes. Teachers have received significant training in teaching literacy and numeracy and in other subjects. Subject co-ordinators have been released to work alongside other teachers to help them teach those subjects. All this training makes staff more confident in their teaching and better able to teach more effectively. Standards in some classes are rising as a result.
11. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and the national guidance for all other subjects are used effectively in teachers' plans and helping to raise standards in all subjects. The introduction of additional lessons in literacy for those at the early stages of reading and writing, and those who are underachieving higher up the school is also helping these pupils to make progress.
12. Overall, pupils with SEN make only satisfactory progress. This is disappointing because the school employs a specialist teacher for these pupils. Unfortunately, while this teacher mainly helps the eleven pupils who have the greatest needs she does not link this work to the rest of the work these pupils are doing in the classroom. Teachers do not receive enough guidance from the specialist teacher about provision for the other pupils with SEN in their classes. Pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress, mainly owing to the good work of the learning support assistants [LSAs] who help these pupils effectively during lessons. They make satisfactory progress towards the targets set on their individual education plans. These targets are appropriate and manageable.
13. Through the school, boys do not achieve as well as girls in English, mathematics and science. This is because they do not receive enough structured support in their written work and they are not encouraged to read enough non-fiction books in their work. Activities are not practical enough for them to sustain their interest in the learning.
14. The progress made by high attaining pupils, including the gifted and talented, is unsatisfactory. This is because much of the work set for these pupils is not at their level of prior attainment or ability.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. As at the last inspection, pupils continue to have good attitudes to school and learning. Most parents report that pupils enjoy coming to school and this ensures that most arrive on time each

morning. When they arrive, most pupils are happy and looking forward to their day. Pupils are polite, cheerful and eager to learn. They have a positive approach to school and try hard to meet their teachers' expectations. This was evident, for example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson when pupils worked hard writing captions for a story about the first Christmas. All pupils listened well and took part eagerly in the lesson. Pupils' positive attitudes to learning were seen in many lessons, including in the classes for the youngest children. The safe, welcoming and calm atmosphere provides an environment that encourages pupils to do their best and pupils respond well. They develop good habits of working, and settle quickly to tasks. Sustained levels of concentration were seen in many lessons, as seen for example, in a Year 6 numeracy lesson when pupils persevered in completing their activities.

16. Behaviour in and around school is good overall except for a few incidents of boisterousness at playtimes. Occasionally, a few pupils act in immature and attention-seeking ways in the playground. More generally, when pupils are moving around the school and in lessons they do so with a minimum of fuss without wasting time. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour, bullying or racism. The school's caring and supportive climate for learning encourages pupils to get on well together and there is good racial harmony.
17. There are good relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and adults. Good levels of co-operation and collaboration were noted in many lessons, as, for example, in a Year 5 history lesson where pupils worked well in pairs. Higher and lower attaining pupils work well together, readily sharing their knowledge and skills, and this helps them learn better. On occasions, pupils showed their appreciation of each other by giving spontaneous applause when one of them achieved well. They understand and follow school rules well and treat each other and adults with courtesy and respect. Teachers use personal, social and health education lessons well to help pupils recognise their worth as individuals and to see themselves as others see them. Through these lessons, pupils develop an understanding of the impact of their actions on others, and learn to respect each other's feelings, values and beliefs.
18. Pupils' personal development is good. They readily accept responsibility for performing tasks around the school, for example in setting up the hall for assemblies and looking after younger children during wet playtimes. The school council meets regularly and some older pupils are given responsibilities as house captains and prefects.
19. Attendance levels are now satisfactory. They have improved since the previous inspection and are now similar to the national average. There have been no exclusions during the past year.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

20. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. However, these vary significantly between classes and this creates inconsistencies in the progress pupils make throughout the school. This is similar to what was recorded at the last inspection. Teaching and learning are consistently good in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 6. Good teaching is also evident in Year 5. Teaching in Year 3 is satisfactory. The majority of good teaching was observed in English, mathematics, science and D&T. With the exceptions of ICT, music and PE, teaching and learning in all other subjects are satisfactory. Lack of evidence meant that no judgements were made about teaching and learning in ICT, music and PE. The teaching and learning in Year 4 are sometimes unsatisfactory, and in Year 2 consistently unsatisfactory. Pupils do not make the progress they should in these classes.
21. Teaching and learning have a number of good features, particularly where they are consistently good. Relationships with pupils are very good and pupils are managed very well. Pupils respond positively to this and try hard with their lessons. They make good progress and are guided in their work by their teachers and LSAs. Teaching methods are varied and often include practical and investigative activities. For example, Reception children were taken on a tour of the school grounds as they were learning more about their surroundings. Year 6 pupils used a microscope on the computer to help them with observing details more closely during a science lesson.

Resources are used effectively and help pupils in their learning. For example, a digital camera was used by the LSA in Year 6 and a group of pupils in this same class used computers, including laptop computers, as word processors in their writing. This is in spite of there not being enough resources for ICT overall in the school. The on-going assessments made of pupils in the Reception class are very detailed and are used very effectively to plan future work for these pupils.

22. However, teaching and learning are not always as positive as this. A general weakness that was evident in most classes, with the exceptions of the Reception class and Year 6, is that teachers do not set high enough expectations for pupils' achievements. In a Year 4 literacy lesson, the same activity was set for the whole class with the expectation that higher attaining pupils would think of more examples than lower attaining pupils. Many pupils only produced a single word response in this lesson. The activity did not take into account the pupils' prior attainment or abilities. It was too easy and did not challenge the thinking or improve the literacy skills of the pupils. In many classes, the presentation of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. Too often, letters are carelessly formed and books look untidy. In some lessons, a few teachers do not have high enough expectations of pupils' behaviour and they do not manage behaviour well. For example, in a Year 2 mathematics' lesson, the teacher did not involve all the pupils in the learning at first and these pupils became bored and began distracting others. This disruptive behaviour was not managed well and the learning of most pupils was adversely affected as a consequence. A number of teachers do not mark pupils' work well enough and use these assessments when planning future lessons. Lessons are planned according to the programmes of work being followed without enough attention being given to what pupils have learned in the previous lesson. For example, some work in Years 2 and 3 is unmarked and yet lessons have still been planned without any evidence that these teachers know what pupils have understood.
23. As a result of these weaknesses in teaching, pupils do not make the progress they should throughout the school. In Years 2 and 4 in particular, pupils are not required to put in much effort and they learn at a slow pace. They present their work in a sloppy fashion; their handwriting, punctuation and spelling are much below their best efforts. However, the positive features of teaching, especially in the Reception class and in Years 1, 5 and 6, outweigh the weaknesses and enable pupils to make satisfactory progress overall.
24. The teaching and learning of numeracy and literacy are satisfactory overall. Their understanding of number, shape, measurement and data handling are better than their abilities to solve problems. More emphasis is given to teaching about number than to the other elements of mathematics. Good opportunities were provided in Year 6 for pupils to practise their measuring skills in D&T. However, teaching does not always take sufficient account of pupils' prior learning or abilities. Work set for higher attaining pupils is too easy for them, and that for lower attaining pupils, too hard. The teaching of reading and writing receives more emphasis than teaching other aspects of English, such as speaking and listening skills. Not enough opportunities are given for pupils to consolidate and extend their literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. The teaching of ICT skills is satisfactory but too few opportunities are provided owing to insufficient computers being available. In spite of this, some good examples of teachers using computers to improve pupils' learning in history, science and writing were observed during the inspection.
25. The teaching and learning of pupils with SEN are satisfactory overall. This is because of the good contributions made by LSAs to these pupils' learning. It is often LSAs who help to explain tasks set to the class to these pupils at the levels of their understanding and prior attainment. LSAs are trained effectively and keep records of the progress made by pupils. In group work, they give appropriate support to individual pupils, but do not always work effectively with the groups as a whole, checking understanding through further questioning and discussion. Overall, lessons are not adapted sufficiently to the needs of SEN pupils; teachers rely too much on LSAs to help them carry out their activities.
26. The part-time specialist teacher for SEN concentrates on the few pupils with the greatest needs, but this help is not always linked to the work being achieved in class by these pupils. The tasks set for these pupils when being taught by the specialist teacher enables them to meet their individual targets, particularly those related to literacy and numeracy, but does not help them make the progress they should within different subjects.
27. The teaching of high attaining pupils, including the gifted and talented, is unsatisfactory overall. This is because too often the same tasks are set for pupils of all abilities and expectations of their work are not high enough. They are not encouraged sufficiently to think for themselves, use their initiative, carry out research and solve problems.

28. The teaching of boys does not take enough account of ways in which they learn best. They do not have enough opportunities to read non-fiction books and their writing is not planned out in a structured enough way.

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

29. The school provides a satisfactory curriculum for its pupils that includes all subjects of the National Curriculum as required by statute. The ICT curriculum is not taught in enough depth because the school does not have enough computers to do so. Provision for personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The school makes effective use of agencies to support its programme for sex education, health education and drugs misuse. To support pupils' personal development a discussion time is timetabled across the school. The contribution made by extra-curricular activities to pupils' learning is satisfactory. Extra-curricular activities include soccer, netball, geology, choir, recorders, orchestra, Bible club and homework club. This provision is supplemented by a range of visits to places of interest. Pupils have been to places such as Barleylands Farm, Bethnal Green Museum of Childhood, Orsett Church, Laindon Hills 'Hands on History' and residential visits take place for pupils in Years 3-6 to the Isle of Wight or East Mersea.
30. The school applies the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy satisfactorily and wisely uses national guidance as a basis for programmes of work in other subjects. Good links between subjects are made. For example, computers are used in history, science and literacy lessons. Curricular planning has improved overall since the last inspection but the time allocated to subjects and lessons remains an issue for the school to tackle. Unnecessarily long time slots are sometimes allocated to literacy, numeracy and other subjects during the afternoons. Much time is wasted in some of these lessons because the pace of learning is too slow.
31. Overall, many pupils are not provided with equal opportunity and access to the curriculum. For example, higher attaining pupils, including the gifted and talented, do not always receive sufficiently challenging work. This means they are not learning as effectively as they might. Boys do not achieve as highly as girls in English because the curriculum is not adapted enough to capture their interest.
32. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is sound. There are close links with the church, the Children's Society, the Faulkner Trust and through this trust to a children's home in Zambia and the local education authority's music service. Links with Ford Motor Company have led to improvements in the garden environment. Links with other schools are satisfactory. The school has developed close links with one of the secondary schools in particular to which pupils transfer. Pupils use facilities at this school to help with training pupils for athletics and netball. Links with playgroups from which the children transfer are also satisfactory.
33. The provision made for pupils with SEN is mainly satisfactory. Individual education plans are devised for these pupils and include appropriate targets for their learning. These pupils are helped effectively by LSAs to achieve these targets within lessons. The management of SEN provision is unsatisfactory because the specialist teacher does not have enough impact on the learning of all pupils with SEN within the context of lessons.
34. The provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
35. Provision for spiritual development has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. The development of pupils' self-esteem is central to the school's ethos and is evident in the teaching. All pupils are included and each individual is valued. Pupils' self-esteem is raised through performing in music and drama productions and by seeing their own work on display. In a

Year 6 D&T lesson, pupils worked with maturity and independence. In an assembly for Years 3-6, the visiting speaker drew together thoughts in a moment of silent reflection in which pupils considered the story to which they had been listening. Pupils are also being taught to love and look after pets, such as rabbits and guinea pigs.

36. Provision for pupils' moral and social education is good. The school teaches pupils right from wrong and helps them behave well individually and in groups. A sound personal, social and health education programme is taught and this helps pupils consider some current social and moral issues. Pupils are considerate and tolerant of each other. Older pupils are encouraged to help the younger children. Pupils regularly collect money for charities. For example, Year 4 pupils have recently raised a substantial sum of money towards the work of Christian Aid. Extra-curricular activities, including visits to places of interest, also make a good contribution to pupils' social development.
37. The provision for the development of pupils' own culture is good. The school provides a broad and interesting curriculum which helps pupils develop their understanding of art, music and literature. This provision is reinforced through regular assemblies, displays around the school and by visits to museums and places of interest. Provision for learning about other cultures is satisfactory. Opportunities are provided in geography for learning about ways of life in other countries, but overall, the school has identified this as an area to develop further and to better prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. Pupils continue to be well cared for by the staff, as they were at the last inspection. Parents and pupils appreciate this good provision. All pupils are valued and the school's good ethos promotes good racial harmony. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour. The senior management team now ensures that there is a shared understanding by all members of staff of the necessity to promote consistently the guidance given in the school's clear behaviour policy. Teachers and LSAs make a significant contribution to providing a caring atmosphere and a safe and calm environment for all pupils, both in and out of lessons. Good behaviour is encouraged in ways that make sense to the children. Playtimes and lunchtimes are well supervised. The occasional outbreaks of boisterous behaviour by a few pupils who act in immature and attention-seeking ways are handled well.
39. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development are also good. Although no formal profiles for the personal development of each pupil are kept, pupils' personal development is monitored effectively. Staff know pupils well and respond sympathetically to them individually, taking good account of any personal circumstances that may affect their learning and general well-being. Circle time is being used to help pupils express their thoughts and feelings and to learn to understand about themselves and others. The school provides good opportunities for pupils to take responsibility by, for example, tidying up the hall after lunch and helping younger pupils during wet playtimes.
40. Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. Attendance rates have improved recently and are now similar to the national average. The school follows stringent and appropriate procedures for registering pupils each day. There are clear procedures for following up any absences and staff make sure that parents fill in the appropriate application forms for holidays in term time. Such holidays are now actively discouraged as they often adversely affect pupils' learning.
41. There are good procedures in place for child protection: a teacher is named as the designated person in charge. There are no children currently at the school who are being cared for by the local authority, but systems are ready to be put into place to monitor such pupils' personal and academic progress if necessary. Staff are receiving appropriate training to enable them to keep up to date with aspects of first aid. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy and regular risk assessments are carried out. All recommendations are now acted upon as soon as is practicable.

42. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are mainly satisfactory. There are good procedures in English and mathematics where end-of-year tests are given to pupils in Years 3-5, along with national testing at the end of Years 2 and 6. In some other subjects useful assessments are starting to be made at the end of units of study, recording how well pupils have achieved key learning objectives.
43. The use of assessment data to inform future planning is unsatisfactory. Little analysis is carried out of test results to identify strengths and weaknesses in learning. Pupils are set individual termly and end-of-year targets to achieve. However, the work set in classes relates more to the objectives set in the National Literacy Strategy and Numeracy Strategy, rather than to the particular National Curriculum levels which are indicated in the pupils' targets. In other subjects, some account is taken of the outcomes of assessment in the grouping of pupils. However, the content of lessons and the planned activities do not take enough account of pupils' prior attainment and abilities and the levels at which they should be working.
44. Assessment data are used well in English and mathematics to monitor pupils' progress, and to identify where further support is needed. For example, extra support is given to groups of pupils as a result of assessment in literacy and numeracy in the form of booster classes, Early Literacy Support and Additional Literacy Support. However, in other lessons, activities are not always sufficiently adapted, particularly to the needs of lower and higher attaining pupils.
45. Pupils with SEN are identified early from initial assessments and the concerns of class teachers. The SEN co-ordinator also carries out further assessments, particularly for those pupils who may need further support than that given in ordinary class lessons. The advice and support of outside agencies is sought as required. Individual education plans are drawn up by class teachers and the SEN co-ordinator and these provide clear, manageable targets, against which to measure pupils' progress. Pupils with SEN are involved appropriately in setting their targets.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

46. Overall, the parents have a poor view of the school and the school has an unsatisfactory working relationship with parents. The school has identified this as a weakness and admits that this is an issue that urgently needs to be addressed. Parents do express confidence in the work of the headteacher and think that the school is well led and managed. They know they are welcome to speak to her at any time by appointment. She is committed to improving this relationship and is introducing new initiatives to provide much more information.
47. The school is not communicating effectively with the parents in spite of the overall quality of information provided for parents being satisfactory. The school provides information about pupils' progress through reading diaries and individual parent interviews each term. There are additional meetings for parents in Years 2 and 6 about the national tests and meetings for parents of children about to enter the Reception class. Regular newsletters and the school prospectus provide further information about the school. However, parents do not receive enough information about the curriculum and the topics that their children will be studying. There is a lack of information on the progress that the children have made in some of the annual reports. Targets for future progress are not given consistently in these reports.
48. Parents value the school's caring attitudes and say that their children like school and are eager and keen to attend. They say that the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best and is helping them to become mature and responsible. A few parents help in classrooms with, for example, reading and cooking. Year 1 pupils invited parents in to look at a toy exhibition and served them with mince pies they had made. This event was well supported and much appreciated by parents. Family assemblies are open to all parents and take place each week. Many parents are keen to volunteer to help on school visits. A number of parents gave invaluable help at the school's Christmas lunch. The Parents' Association has raised substantial amounts of money. Funds are being raised at present to re-equip the library and to provide new playground equipment.

49. Many parents did not think that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team found that the range was satisfactory, especially when taking into account the visits to places of interest and the residential visits for pupils in Years 3-6.

50. Parents are kept sufficiently informed of children with SEN. They are invited to attend reviews and receive copies of their children's individual education plans. Further opportunities are provided for these parents to talk over concerns about their children at parent-teacher consultation meetings

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

51. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good. The headteacher has a clear vision for the school, and central to this is the provision of high quality teaching to ensure good standards. Since her appointment two terms ago, she has had a significant impact on improving teaching and raising standards. This shows a good improvement since the last inspection when there were serious weaknesses in the leadership and management provided by the school.
52. The headteacher's vision and determination are proving to be significant factors in improving the school. In this, she is ably supported by the deputy headteacher. They have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Subject co-ordinators are being trained appropriately to identify strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. They have monitored pupils' work but have not monitored teachers' plans or teaching in their subjects. Subject co-ordinators are looking forward to taking on greater responsibilities and to sharing the commitment to improve. The co-ordination of SEN is unsatisfactory; not enough guidance is provided for teachers and LSAs about ways of teaching pupils with SEN. This means that these pupils are not making the progress they should. The co-ordinator does not have a sufficiently clear picture of her teaching role or of the particular time in lessons when support is required. Too much of her time is spent on administration, despite there being a lower than average proportion of pupils with SEN in the school.
53. The school's aims and values are satisfactorily reflected in its daily work. These are encapsulated in its mission statement, "We encourage all members of the school to develop high esteem and recognise that they have a responsibility to develop and use to the full the talents which God has given them". This is evident in some of the initiatives in the school improvement plan, especially those that focus on raising standards of attainment and behaviour.
54. Teachers and other adults set good examples to pupils of how they should treat one another. Everyone in school treats one another with courtesy and respect. Good opportunities are provided for pupils to learn effectively without interference and disruption. Pupils receive respect and individual help from their teachers. Good attention is given to their well-being and their parents are happy with this aspect. The values of the school are reflected in its curriculum, resources and conduct.
55. There are good strategies for promoting good relationships and behaviour. There is an absence of racism, sexism and other forms of discrimination. Currently there are no physically disabled pupils at the school: access for such pupils would be difficult because the school is on different levels with several steps and narrow corridors.
56. The school improvement plan is a weighty document that identifies many important areas for improvement. However, there is too much in the plan for it to provide a clear steer for the work of the school. Priorities are not clear and staff time is not included to see if the plan is manageable. The school is working hard to carry out the initiatives in the plan, but has recognised that priorities need to be identified among these issues, with a longer time scale in which to address them all effectively.
57. The development of teaching has been central to the school's strategy for improvement, so that good monitoring and evaluation are now becoming established in the school. This has led to an improvement in teaching overall, except in two classes. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have carried out most of the monitoring and evaluation that have taken place so far. Teachers have been provided with feedback on their teaching with the use of a very helpful grid that clearly identifies strengths and areas for development. The monitoring procedures are wisely linked closely to the school's strategies for appraisal and performance management, where

targets are set, based on careful observation of teaching and the following discussion with teachers. The school has plans to involve subject co-ordinators more in the monitoring and evaluation of their subjects. This is central to further improvements in standards being achieved.

58. Through their increased involvement in the life of the school, the governing body now has a sound understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are now playing a greater part in shaping the direction of the school and supporting its work as a critical friend.
59. Financial planning is sound, and special grants, such as allocations for SEN, are used appropriately. The governing body agrees the budget allocations annually and governors monitor expenditure monthly in order to check that actual expenditure is in line with the agreed budget. Good quality financial information is now made available to all governors. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Governors now receive good quality information upon which to base their decisions. Spending decisions are now more closely linked to educational priorities than they were. However, governors have not reviewed and evaluated the impact some of their recent decisions have had on standards. For example, the effectiveness and efficiency of the use of the SEN co-ordinator has not been evaluated. Governors have an understanding of best value principles and apply them appropriately. There is at present a significant budget deficit to carry forward but a sound four-year recovery plan has been devised with local education authority approval. This will have an impact upon the amount of money the school can put into resources and will need careful management. The school budget is well managed on a day-to-day basis by the office staff. Financial controls are good and the general administration of the school, including the use of technology for administrative purposes, is very effective and efficient.
60. An appropriate number of teachers and other staff are employed at the school. Teachers are suitable qualified to teach the National Curriculum effectively. The majority of teachers are well matched to the subjects they teach. Staff are now working closely together as a team to agree and implement recently revised policies and procedures. Teachers attend in-service training courses out of school and are given opportunities to pass on appropriate information to other teachers upon their return to school.
61. All job descriptions are clearly set out and each area of the curriculum has a co-ordinator. The work of all teachers is appraised and targets for further improvements are established. This is in accord with the guidance given nationally under performance management.
62. The accommodation, set within a large area with playgrounds and a field, provides a satisfactory environment for learning. It is well maintained by the caretaker and cleaning staff. It is being improved by the installation of a computer suite in the annex. The Reception area now has a secure, designated outside playground with a covered play area for wet weather. With the help of parents new garden areas are being laid out. All health and safety issues mentioned in the previous report have been corrected. There is a library area in the centre of the school which is in the process of being re-stocked by money raised by the Parents' Association.
63. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. They remain good for music. There is a lack of computers, and this a priority for the school to rectify. There is also a lack of class readers for literacy and research books and artefacts for history.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and governors, as appropriate, should
 - (1a) raise standards in ICT throughout the school by:
 - establishing a fully operational computer suite;
 - ensuring that all classes teach the National Curriculum in ICT in sufficient depth for an appropriate amount of time;
 - using ICT in the teaching of all subjects across the school.

[see paragraphs 121-123]

- (1b) raise standards in English, mathematics, science, geography and history in Year 2 by:
- improving significantly the teaching of these subjects in Year 2;
 - ensuring that all groups of pupils, including higher and lower attaining pupils, achieve their potential by providing teaching targeted specifically at their needs.
[see paragraphs 80-89; 90-98; 99-104; 113-116; 117-120]
- (3) raise standards of high attaining pupils in all subjects by setting tasks for them that are sufficiently challenging.
[see paragraphs 27; 87; 95; 99]
- (4) improve teaching where it has weaknesses by:
- teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy more effectively, particularly in Years 2 and 4;
 - raising teachers' expectations of what pupils, especially high attaining pupils, can achieve;
 - using the information from assessing pupils' work to plan future lessons.
[see paragraphs 20-28]
- (5) extend the role of subject co-ordinators by:
- including monitoring and evaluating teaching in classrooms;
 - providing written feedback to teachers from this monitoring;
 - using the weaknesses identified as a focus for raising standards further in their subjects.
[see paragraph 58]
- (6) review the management and provision for pupils with SEN by:
- ensuring that class teachers and the SEN co-ordinator plan jointly the work for these pupils;
 - ensuring that feedback on the progress these pupils are making is given to teachers from LSAs and the specialist teacher at the end of each lesson as appropriate;
 - providing specialist help for SEN pupils within the context of lessons.
[see paragraphs 25; 26; 33]
- (7) improve the effectiveness of communications with parents by:
- creating a better understanding of the progress pupils are making throughout the year;
 - establishing further ways of working more closely with parents;
 - informing parents of the full range of activities, including visits, outside lessons;
 - securing better teaching where there are weaknesses;
 - ensuring that homework is consistently provided and followed up according to the school's policy in all classes.
[see paragraphs 46; 47]

In addition, the school should include the following minor issue in its action plan.

- (8) Review the amount of time allocated to teaching each subject with due regard being given to national guidance.
[see paragraphs 30; 31]

The school's improvement plan includes elements of improvement in science, geography and history, but does not focus enough on raising standards in these subjects.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	40
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	36

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	3	12	22	3	0	0
Percentage	0	8	30	55	8	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	189
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	9

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	36

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	13	16	29

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	12	12	12
	Girls	16	16	16
	Total	28	28	28
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	97 (96)	97 (92)	97 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	13
	Girls	15	14	16
	Total	26	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	90 (83)	86 (100)	100 (100)
	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	12	18	30

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	12
	Girls	16	16	17
	Total	25	25	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	83 (77)	83 (61)	97 (84)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	4	6	6
	Girls	15	13	15
	Total	19	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (61)	63 (65)	70 (61)
	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	126	0	0
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	0	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	0	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	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	0	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	0	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	59	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)	8.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	197.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-02
	£
Total income	473,499
Total expenditure	491,511
Expenditure per pupil	2,482
Balance brought forward from previous year	21,287
Balance carried forward to next year	3,275

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	12

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	189
Number of questionnaires returned	69

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	46	48	6	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	20	52	16	3	9
Behaviour in the school is good.	16	57	16	4	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	20	52	19	7	1
The teaching is good.	14	52	13	9	12
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	6	32	41	17	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	26	52	14	4	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	30	61	9	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	9	27	39	38	10
4The school is well led and managed.	17	57	10	3	13
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	16	65	13	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	7	46	20	16	10

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

65. Provision for pupils in the Reception class is a strength of the school. The high standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained. The curriculum is planned very well and takes due account of the national guidance for children of this age. A wide variety of interesting and varied activities are planned for the children.
66. Most children enter the Reception class with standards in all areas of learning that are average. This is confirmed by the initial assessments carried out with these young children. Through good teaching in most areas of learning, they enter Year 1 having achieved most of the early learning goals set for children of this age, and many exceed them, especially in reading, ICT skills and in their knowledge about the world around them.
67. The Reception class is now well established and provides a stimulating environment in which children learn. Although relatively small in size, the classroom includes areas for a post office, computer activities, practical work, quiet reading and there is suitable provision for outdoor learning. Because of the cold weather, the children were not observed using the outdoor area during the inspection.

Personal, social and emotional development

68. Most children enter the Reception class with above average skills in personal and social development. By the time they enter Year 1, most have achieved and some exceed the early learning goals in this area. However, a few children enter school with below average skills in this area and are immature and attention seeking. These pupils enter Year 1 without achieving these early learning goals. This in general shows satisfactory achievement that reflects sound teaching in this area of learning.
69. Most children work well independently and are constantly encouraged to work together in small groups. They find this more difficult and only a few achieve this. For example, when playing different roles in the post office, some children found it difficult to co-operate in the role play when preparing a letter for posting. These pupils preferred to carry out their own procedures rather than co-operate with others in franking their letters and posting them.
70. Most children are enthusiastic about their work. For example, they took part eagerly in responding to their teacher's questions about the first Christmas. Most children put up their hands when they wished to answer, but a few called out in their eagerness and this interrupted the flow of the lesson as they were corrected, quite rightly, by their teacher.
71. The adults provide good role models for the children in this area. The nursery nurse works quietly with the children and they respond very well to her. However, on occasions, the teacher encourages the children to respond in exuberant ways and a few children become over-excited as a consequence. For example, when counting as a class, the children were asked to say one number quietly and the next loudly. A few children became over-excited by this and shouted out their numbers rather than respond sensibly as did most of the class.

Communication, language and literacy

72. Most children enjoy listening to stories and they do so with interest. They like looking through books and reading to adults. Many can read simple texts accurately with good understanding of the story. Many can form letters that are recognisable and a few can write their names well. The teaching of these aspects is good and this explains why standards in these aspects are above average. Standards in reading are well above average.

73. However, children's speaking skills are not as well developed. They do not have enough opportunities to talk about what they are doing at length and say what they are thinking. As a result, they do not make as much progress as they could in this aspect. An exception to this was when the nursery nurse was discussing Christmas with a group of children using pictures and Christmas cards. The children were encouraged to talk about what they saw in the pictures and cards, and they did so in a sensible manner. On most occasions, though, as when sitting on the carpet listening to their teacher, there were few opportunities for children to talk at length about their work and what they knew.

Mathematical development

74. Most children make good progress in this area and leave the Reception class with above average standards. Most count to twenty. Some work out one more than and one less than numbers up to twenty. They know the days of the week and a few work out the day before and the day after Monday for instance. Most understand mathematical language, such as sixth, seventh. However, a few pupils do not yet recognise numbers on the Advent Calendar and have below average skills in this area.
75. The teaching of mathematics is good. Children are treated as mathematicians and helped to see mathematics around them. They are encouraged to work out problems around them. For example, they used the days of the week to work out the next day and the preceding day. They used the Advent Calendar to recognise the next number. Songs including numbers are sung, such as "One potato, two potato" and "The Twelve Days of Christmas". However, sometimes, children are not given enough time to consolidate their learning. They are rushed too much as the teacher tries to quicken the pace of learning by clapping her hands and saying "Quick, quick".

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. This area is taught well and children make good progress in their knowledge of the world around them. Most children leave the Reception class with above average skills in this area. They are developing a good understanding of geography as they study a plan of the school and its grounds to find out the best way Father Christmas might enter. A few children locate the position of their classroom on this plan. This followed a walk around the school grounds with their teacher identifying the main features on a large plan. Most children understand some key events that happened on the first Christmas. Most children work on computers well for their age. A few followed through an art program unaided and controlled a mouse skilfully.

Physical development

77. Most children enter school with above average skills in their physical development. Through good teaching, they make satisfactory progress and leave the Reception class with above average standards in this area.
78. Most children walk, run and move around showing an awareness of others and of the space around them. For example, they play well in the playground and do not bump into others. They work well in PE lessons and carry out movements skilfully and use the space around them appropriately. Most put on their coats and gloves and get changed for PE independently. They move around some of the narrow spaces in their classroom without bumping into chairs and tables. Most use scissors with above average accuracy for their age. For example, they cut out squares as part of the mathematics lesson on numbers 1-12. Most pupils control their pencils well. Some form letters appropriately and the writing of their names is legible.

Creative development

79. Creative development is taught well and most pupils exceed the early learning goals in this area. In one lesson, children used paint on silk with pleasing results. They controlled their brushes well and used the paint carefully. The teacher drew the children's attention to some good work during the lesson and this encouraged others to have a go at improving their work. Many children paint

pictures well. For example, some proudly showed off their paintings of Christmas trees which were on display in the corridor. Some pupils used the Colour Magic program on the computer to produce pleasing pictures of Christmas trees complete with decorations.

ENGLISH

80. Evidence collected during the inspection presents a mixed picture throughout the school. Most pupils enter Year 1 with a good vocabulary and they speak clearly and confidently. Their reading and handwriting are above average. Boys do not achieve as high standards as girls because they do not receive appropriate help. They do not plan their writing well enough to encourage them to write at greater length. By Year 6, most pupils are below the expected level for their age in speaking, listening, reading and writing. This is because some of the teaching they have received in certain classes has been unsatisfactory. Pupils are now making good progress in Year 6 and catching up rapidly.
81. All pupils are developing speaking and listening skills well in Year 1. They talk about their work with confidence and understanding. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils wrote about the first Christmas and two boys explained that the shepherds were 'petrified' with fear when they saw the angels. One girl explained that she would not have been scared, but 'puzzled.' Most Year 2 pupils have an extensive vocabulary. Pupils with SEN in this class explain themselves clearly but these skills are not being developed as much as they could be. In whole-class sessions, it tends to be a minority of pupils, six or seven, who are contributing most while another five or six take little or no part and after a while lose concentration and seem to stop listening. Progress in speaking and listening remains slow in Years 3 and 4 but improves in Years 5 and 6.
82. Teachers work hard to develop pupils' reading skills. Pupils are encouraged to read with expression and there is a developing emphasis upon learning properly the sounds letters make. Pupils have a sound knowledge of how to use books and this helps them to use books properly for finding out information. For example, pupils in Year 2 understand about contents pages and indexes and higher attaining pupils understand how to use glossaries. They read fiction and non-fiction books and know the difference between them. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy reading and read regularly at school and home. Effective reading record books are up to date and contain useful comments about how well children are reading from their parents as well as teachers. Almost all Year 6 pupils are reading independently and fluently and are at the level expected for their age. They have positive attitudes and talk with understanding about using books and the Internet for research as well as reading fiction for pleasure. They read with expression and understanding and talk knowledgeably about the plot, the setting and characters in stories.
83. Pupils' writing skills are not as good as those in reading. They are above average in Year 1 where all pupils, including those with SEN, are writing at least one sentence independently, with reasonably formed handwriting and recognisable spelling. At least seven of the pupils in this class are writing a series of at least three connected sentences, using capital letters and full stops correctly. Two pupils are writing a whole page and one girl is using apostrophes correctly. The teacher holds high expectations in this class and teaches speech marks well. One pupil with SEN explained that the closing speech marks '...go after the full stop at the end.' However, standards of writing in Year 2 are barely at the level expected for their age and they are not being sufficiently well developed. Much of the work seen in pupils' books in this class is unfinished, some is unmarked and expectations of pupils' attainment are very low.
84. Most pupils make slow progress in writing in Years 3 and 4. There is a good deal of unmarked and unfinished work in Year 3. For example, one pupil's work had not been marked for three months. This is unacceptable as no efforts have been made by the teacher to help this pupil improve. In Year 5, pupils make good progress and the standard of written work seen is mainly above average. Six higher attaining pupils in this class were asked to use imaginative ways of describing people and events and they did this well. For example, one girl wrote, "I am the eyes. I look deep into your soul. Each step you take I shall be there. Each day, night and day, my eyes shall haunt you." The teachers in this class hold high expectations of pupils' writing and pupils, in their turn, respond well to these. Year 6 pupils also make good progress but there is

evidence that they made little progress in their previous year. Indeed, assessments indicate that some of them have gone backwards! However, they are now making up ground and are about at or nearly average levels. During the inspection, they were writing in different styles - in particular, a journalistic style. Good organisation largely overcame the present lack of computers in one lesson seen in Year 6 and good use was being made of computers to improve and edit pupils' written work.

85. Pupils have positive attitudes to learning English. These are the result of good relationships in class and teachers' high expectations of behaviour. Generally, pupils work well independently or in groups well. When some lose concentration, it is mainly because their attention wanders because they have lost interest in the lesson. In spite of different standards of teaching, the progress pupils make throughout the school is satisfactory overall.
86. Almost all English teaching in lessons seen during the inspection was satisfactory and some was very good. Effective teaching includes good planning with clear learning objectives, which give pupils a target for learning during lessons. The better teachers engage pupils well in discussions, making sure that all are involved by targeting appropriate questions at individual pupils. There is a brisk pace to teaching. A variety of activities is planned that includes high, but realistic, expectations of work, based on teachers' assessment of the pupils' abilities. These assessments allow teachers to plan work at the needs of pupils so that they, including those with SEN and higher attaining pupils, are suitably challenged by their work. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is supported well in the best English lessons. Teachers encourage pupils to explore their feelings, emotions and relationships. A range of books that reflect other cultures is also used by some teachers. The skills of reading and writing are practised satisfactorily in other subjects, such as in geography and history. Sound opportunities are provided for pupils to read for information and write accounts of that are based on their learning in geography and history. Computers are increasingly being used by the better teachers to help pupils in their work. Computers, though, are not being used enough by most teachers.
87. However, teaching is sometimes unsatisfactory. An examination of pupils' work over a period of time shows that there is a significant amount of unsatisfactory teaching taking place in Years 2, 3 and 4. A significant amount of work in these classes is badly marked or sometimes not marked at all. Hence, pupils are not getting sufficient feedback and guidance to help them improve and the teacher cannot properly assess the pupils' needs and plan accordingly. Where expectations and challenge are too low, pupils have no proper standards at which to aim and they 'learn' that standards do not matter.
88. The leadership and management of English are good. Two teachers work together to co-ordinate the subject and they have a clear awareness of its strengths and areas for further development. Although planning and teaching of the subject are effectively monitored in the school by the headteacher and deputy headteacher the co-ordinators are not significantly involved in this process. Assessment procedures are sound and effective use is made of recording pupils' progress so as to provide extra help and support to pupils who may be underachieving. Individual targets are set by teachers for pupils and these are reviewed each term. These are helping teachers to focus appropriately on the learning needs of individual pupils. Resources have been greatly improved recently and are adequate to deliver the curriculum but many classes are still having to share sets of books. The National Literacy Strategy has been satisfactorily developed in the school and is helping to raise standards. There has been satisfactory improvement in English since the last inspection.

MATHEMATICS

89. The standards of work seen in Year 6 are average overall. Assessments for these pupils, at the end of Year 5, show their achievement for that year to be unsatisfactory. They are now making good progress in Year 6 owing to the good quality of teaching and learning. In Years 3-5 pupils are currently making satisfactory progress. The results of National Curriculum tests in 2002 showed standards at the end of Year 6 to be above average. Pupils achieved these results

because of the extra lessons they received during the year. The inspection did not find any significant difference between the attainment of boys and girls.

90. The standards of work seen in Year 2 are below average, owing to the current unsatisfactory teaching and learning; pupils in this class are making unsatisfactory progress. However, the standards achieved in the national tests last year in Year 2 were average. Pupils in Year 1 are achieving well and overall standards in this class are above average.
91. In Year 6 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of place value and rounding numbers to the nearest 10, 100 and 1000. They use these skills well as one way of calculating differences between numbers. Pupils work in decimals to two places and know the equivalent values of simple fractions. They find the perimeter of shapes and identify different four-sided shapes. They draw line graphs to convert miles to kilometres and use block graphs to interpret data. Most pupils have opportunities to discuss their work and to explain their thinking. Work in their books is not always sufficiently organised and well presented.
92. Pupils in Year 2 add and subtract mentally numbers to 10. They arrange numbers to 100, using a hundred square to count in tens and fives. They use their number skills to solve simple money problems. Lower attaining pupils are unsure about numbers to 20 and about identifying numbers one more or less than a given number. Some reverse tens and units numbers in their books. Most Year 2 pupils identify simple two-dimensional shapes, but only by the number of sides. They measure with rulers, although some are not always accurate in their measuring. Pupils compare simple data, for example, using a Venn diagram, but do not make any useful analysis of their findings. In their recorded work, there is very little evidence of any pupils working at higher than expected levels. Their work is largely based on published workbooks that provide little opportunity for them to set out their own work and demonstrate how their mathematical skills are developing.
93. From lessons observed and an analysis of pupils' work, the quality of teaching and learning is overall satisfactory. However, in Year 2 it is unsatisfactory. In the best lessons, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve. Pupils respond positively to this; they try hard and make good progress in their learning. Learning objectives are shared with pupils so that they know the purpose of the lesson. For example, in Year 1, very good questioning ensured that pupils understood the terms 'estimation' and 'difference' within the learning objective. Lower attaining pupils in this class, including those with SEN, were helped effectively by the learning support assistants who worked effectively with their groups, enabling them to make good progress in their learning. Teachers mainly manage classes well, and as a result pupils behave well and have positive attitudes to learning. The skills of mathematics are taught satisfactorily in other subjects. For example, pupils practise measuring when cutting materials to size in D&T and plotting of co-ordinates when locating places on maps in geography. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, there is insufficient challenge for pupils, particularly for higher attaining pupils. For example, in Year 2, the brief mental start to the lesson did not motivate pupils or attempt to get them thinking quickly. As a result, many pupils were not sufficiently attentive throughout the lesson and some became distracted and bored. They needed frequent reminders to carry on with their work, but these interruptions slowed down the pace of learning in the lesson. Computers are not used enough in lessons.
94. Lesson planning is thorough and follows the National Numeracy Strategy for the year being taught. Although activities are generally adapted for the identified ability groups, they do not always take sufficient account of the range of assessed levels at which pupils, particularly higher and lower attaining pupils, should be working. In a Year 4 lesson on data handling, higher attaining pupils very quickly completed a pictogram, repeating work done in a previous year. They found this too easy.
95. There are good opportunities in lessons for pupils to discuss what they are learning and consolidate their understanding. However, class discussions do not always involve all pupils; replies to questions are often given by a few pupils in the class. This does not enable teachers to assess the understanding of all pupils or develop speaking and listening skills as fully as

possible. Also, in some lessons, teachers provide pupils with answers instead of allowing them to find out for themselves through questioning and reasoning. Learning support assistants work with lower attaining groups and support individual pupils well. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to check the learning and understanding of the whole group through further discussion.

96. Pupils' books show that work is not always adequately marked. Some work is left unmarked and pupils are not always informed of how well they are doing or of what they need to do to improve. Where comments show that corrections are expected or work needs to be finished, this is often left undone. Insufficient attention is given to the presentation of work; some work is

untidy and scruffy. In the conclusion to some lessons, not enough time is allowed for pupils to evaluate their own learning in relation to learning objectives, with teachers sometimes merely telling pupils what they should have learnt.

97. Teaching and learning have been monitored by the headteacher and deputy headteacher and teachers have been given useful feedback about the strengths and weaknesses in their teaching. The co-ordinator is new to the post and has not been involved in this process. However, monitoring and evaluation have not yet improved the overall quality of teaching and learning or maintained the standards reported at the last inspection. Current standards in Year 2 have fallen and the progress made by pupils throughout the school is inconsistent between classes. Good assessment procedures have been developed that allow pupils' progress to be monitored throughout the school. End-of-year and termly targets are set to ensure that pupils make appropriate progress for their abilities. These procedures are new this term and have not been adopted long enough to see if they are effective in raising standards. However, overall, insufficient account is taken of pupils' targets to plan work that is both fully appropriate and challenging for pupils. A few teachers have not received training in the National Numeracy Strategy. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory. Standards and teaching are remain at similar levels to those reported at that time.

SCIENCE

98. In the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6 in 2002, standards were above average when compared to all schools and average when compared to similar schools. At the time of the inspection, standards in Year 6 standards were average. Pupils make satisfactory progress throughout Years 3-6. In the teacher assessments in the 2002 tests at the end of Year 2, standards were very high when compared to all schools. However, from the work seen in Year 2 during the inspection, standards overall are below average. Pupils, including those with SEN, are currently making unsatisfactory progress in Year 2 because of the unsatisfactory quality of teaching, with low expectations, particularly of higher attaining pupils. Good teaching in Year 1 enables pupils to make good progress. Overall, improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory.
99. Pupils in Year 2 have a basic knowledge of electrical circuits, and can identify objects that use electricity. However, the overuse of poor quality commercial worksheets, some unfinished and unmarked, shows that high attaining pupils are not being challenged enough in their work. For example, pupils are not required to investigate how bulbs work in different circuits. Pupils in Year 6 know the factors that affect plant growth and how plants adapt to their environment. They make careful observations of plants growing under different conditions of light and water. They understand how animals are suited to different habitats and describe the feeding relationships between plants and animals, using food chains. They know how to separate simple mixtures, with higher attaining pupils applying this knowledge to complex mixtures. Most understand how to carry out a fair test and start to make predictions about their investigations and to draw conclusions from them.
100. From an analysis of pupils' past work and the lessons seen, teaching and learning overall are satisfactory. In the best lessons, work is well planned and prepared, and captures pupils' interest

throughout. For example, in a very good Year 1 lesson, the activities provided to investigate the colours that show up at night were appropriate and enabled pupils at all levels of ability to draw appropriate conclusions. Tasks provided give pupils good opportunities to find out and solve problems for themselves. For example, in a Year 5 lesson, pupils investigated the sound-proofing qualities of different materials. In this lesson, pupils worked out a suitable method that enabled them to measure and compare their results. Teachers generally manage classes well, and as a result pupils behave well in lessons and show positive attitudes to learning. They pay careful attention even when introductions are too long and the pace of lessons becomes rather slow.

101. In some lessons teachers tell pupils too much, rather than encouraging them, through careful questioning and discussion, to think for themselves and thus gain greater understanding. In a Year 6 lesson, for example, good use was made of a computer microscope to compare different soils. However, the teacher told pupils that the larger particles identified in sand let water drain through, rather than getting pupils to draw this conclusion for themselves. Pupils' work shows that teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils can achieve. These are higher when pupils are encouraged to be more systematic in their work and recording.
102. Pupils have sufficient opportunities to record information and to write up investigations. This helps develop pupils' writing skills. However, not enough structure is provided to help pupils, especially boys, record their work logically. Where teachers plan investigative work, satisfactory use is made of numeracy skills to measure, record and compare information. Insufficient use is made of computers to help pupils learn in science.
103. Some work has been monitored and evaluated but this has not identified the weaknesses rigorously enough. There has been no formal monitoring of lessons by the co-ordinator with a view to improving the quality and consistency of teaching and learning and raising standards. Pupils are assessed against key learning objectives, but this is not yet being used to inform future planning for the range of ability within classes. Teacher assessments in the previous Year 6 were inaccurate, and very much underestimated those who reached expected standards in national testing. This indicates that the teacher did not have enough expertise to carry out this task appropriately.

ART AND DESIGN

104. By the end of Year 6, standards in art and design are above average. By the end of Year 2, they are average. All pupils, including those with SEN, make satisfactory progress in art and design. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when standards across the school were average. Art is used effectively in other subjects. Examples of art are seen in English, mathematics, science, D&T, ICT, geography, history, music and PE.
105. In Year 2, pupils have created an effective display using silhouettes of the Great Fire of London. They have learned good techniques of rubbing, painting, printing and collage work based on autumn. Computers have been used well in this display. Year 5 pupils have worked with good success on detailed pencil drawings of still life. Good teaching and learning of basic artistic techniques are clear and pupils have effectively arranged and evaluated their work. Techniques such as overlapping and using space are seen in their work and pupils have written about using these techniques to get the effect they wanted. Year 6 art displays centre round their work in PE and show some interesting and vibrant movement in action. A range of materials and media has been well used in this class, including pencil, paints, collage and computer work.
106. Teaching in the two lessons seen was satisfactory and the work on display suggests that it is satisfactory overall, with some good teaching taking place in Years 5 and 6. Teachers plan well for lessons and provide a range of stimulating activities, which allow pupils to develop skills using a range of media. In the lessons seen, pupils clearly enjoyed their art. They worked well, concentrated hard and shared resources with their classmates. Although the school policy for art indicates that all pupils should have a sketchbook, not all do. Year 2 pupils, for example, do not have sketchbooks. One of the great benefits of sketchbooks is that it allows pupils and teachers

to monitor the development of certain basic skills over a period of time. Ensuring that all pupils have and regularly use sketchbooks will help provide continuity through the school and provide valuable evidence of pupils' progress in art and design.

107. The art co-ordinator monitors art through the school by looking at the planning and by discussing with colleagues. She has a good view of what is being done in the school. End-of-unit assessments have been introduced to help teachers monitor pupils' progress. Art makes a good contribution to the spiritual and cultural development of pupils as they learn to appreciate art forms and artists from different cultures. There are satisfactory resources to ensure that all elements of the curriculum are taught. Overall, computers are not used enough by all teachers in art and design.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY [D&T]

108. It was possible to observe only three D&T lessons during the inspection. However, a review of displays, photographs and teachers' planning shows that the standards being achieved are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. All pupils, including those with SEN, make satisfactory progress. The school follows national guidance for its programme of work and sensibly adapted it to the needs of the school. All areas of the National Curriculum are taught.
109. Year 1 pupils were seen designing and making Christmas cards with 'pop-up' features. They concentrated well and were clearly engaged in the activity, sharing glue sticks and other materials well. However, they were not encouraged sufficiently to work independently and use their initiative during this activity. Higher attaining pupils in particular were not being challenged enough. Year 2 pupils showed sound understanding of the process of designing and making and were able to explain what they had done in the recent past. A few of these pupils were able to make constructive suggestions as to how they might improve their design. One girl explained, "I would turn [the body of the vehicle] sideways so the wheels wouldn't wobble so much." Year 6 pupils were seen planning and making a model shelter. They evaluated their work well as they worked out flaws in their prototypes before starting a more 'permanent' structure. In this lesson, pupils were encouraged to think through problems for themselves and use their initiative to solve them. This helps all pupils to improve, but higher attaining pupils in particular were suitably challenged by this approach. Throughout the school, skills of measuring and cutting are being developed well and D&T activities are often linked appropriately to other subjects, such as history and mathematics.
110. Teaching of D&T is satisfactory, and, sometimes, good. Lessons are well planned and prepared and teachers have sound subject knowledge. Explanations given to pupils are clear and activities well structured. Teachers put an appropriate emphasis overall on design and techniques that develop basic skills, such as measuring, cutting and joining materials together. The best teaching challenges all pupils but some teaching is too teacher directed and does not encourage pupils to use their initiative. Overall, computers are not used enough in D&T.
111. The co-ordinator has not had opportunity to monitor and evaluate planning, teaching or standards. However, guidance on planning and assessment has been given to teachers and an audit of resources has made sure that teachers have sufficient to teach the programme of work. Standards have improved since the last inspection and teachers generally seem more confident about what is expected of them. Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

GEOGRAPHY

112. From the two lessons observed and pupils' work, standards of attainment by the end of Year 6 are average. In Year 6, pupils make satisfactory progress, and, a few pupils, progress that is good. Standards are below average in Year 2. Standards of work in Year 2 are unsatisfactory and the progress pupils are making in this class is unsatisfactory. This is because teaching does not expect enough of the pupils. Pupils with SEN make satisfactory progress overall.
113. Year 1 pupils were observed learning about Christmas around the world. However, they found the content of this lesson too hard but the task too easy. They were asked merely to colour in a picture. This did not develop their understanding of geography. However, evidence from pupils' books indicate that standards in this class are average. Year 6 pupils were seen asking and answering geographical questions relating to where people live. This work is preparing pupils for exchanging emails with other schools and promotes the development of their computer skills. Pupils made valid comparisons between two fictitious emails, both of which gave information about the 'sender's' school and town. Through class discussion and working in pairs, pupils were able to pick out the email that had 'relevant' and 'useful' geographical information rather than being general and chatty. This is extending their own skills and they were becoming much more aware of the kind of specific questions they need to ask and answer in emails.

114. Teaching is satisfactory overall. It is best in Years 5 and 6, where pupils produce some good work. Teaching is mainly sound in Years 3 and 4 and pupils produce some satisfactory work. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is not as good as this; it is often unsatisfactory. The scrutiny of the sample of Year 2 books given to the inspectors suggests poor teaching with very little work being done. The sum total of work done in the term, as far as could be seen, is two worksheets and these mainly consisted in colouring the land green and the sea blue. Almost all work is unfinished and appears to have been rushed and none seems to have been marked. There is little or no evidence of progress being made. Overall, computers are not used enough in geography.
115. The subject co-ordinator has worked hard to develop geography and to improve standards. The school sensibly uses national guidance as its programme of work. This makes sure that the whole range of the subject is being taught. Useful guidance has been to staff to help with planning and assessments and they are helping to raise teachers' awareness of what needs to be done and how to assess pupils' progress. The co-ordinator does not monitor teaching to ensure standards are improving across the school. Overall, there have been good improvements in geography since the last inspection.

HISTORY

116. Standards in Year 6 are average. They are below average in Year 2. This is about the same as it was at the last inspection. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in history by Year 6. However, they make unsatisfactory progress in Years 2 and 4, where the teaching is often unsatisfactory.
117. By the end of Year 2, most pupils are beginning to understand the concept of time and events that happened a short while or a long time ago. They know aspects of famous people of the past. For example, Year 2 pupils showed a good overall knowledge of the historical events around the time of Florence Nightingale. One lower attaining pupil remembered and explained clearly that "...she helped soldiers who were hurt in the war". By the end of Year 6, pupils have learned about the second world war. Year 3 pupils learned about some of the experiences during this war in a class discussion and question and answer session with some of their grandparents. This was a good stimulus and pupils responded well to listening to people who had lived through the history they were studying. Year 5 were observed finding out what changes there have been in the celebration of Christmas since 1945. Through whole-class and group discussion and their own research using books and the Internet, pupils developed their research skills well. They showed awareness of how to research and what kind of questions to ask to get the information they needed. They also showed a sound knowledge of life in post-war Britain and are able to talk with understanding about what they have found out.
118. Teaching and learning in the lessons seen were at least satisfactory, and, in one lesson, they were good. Planning is sound and lessons are well prepared. Lessons are taught at a brisk pace and pupils' interest and concentration stimulated by effective questioning, which challenges individual pupils. However, overall, there is not enough emphasis upon finishing work and the presentation of work. This lowers standards and pupils' attitudes to their work. This is particularly true of Year 2, where a scrutiny of work done over the term shows unsatisfactory standards and teaching. Most of the work is undated, untitled, unfinished and unmarked and there is very little challenge or development of historical understanding or skills evident. It also suggests that the teacher can have no real knowledge of what the pupils know and can do so that work can be planned to raise standards. A few teachers do not hold high enough expectations of pupils and set work that challenges them appropriately.
119. The school follows national guidance for its programme of work. This ensures a sound coverage of the curriculum. The subject co-ordinator has a general awareness of what is being taught in the school but has not monitored teaching or standards rigorously enough. Resources have improved and are satisfactory overall. However, more artefacts and books for research are needed. Good use is made of visits, such as to Colchester Castle, Bethnal Museum and a Roman fort to stimulate and extend pupils' knowledge and understanding of history. Literacy

skills are developed well in Years 1, 5 and 6. Computers are not used enough in history. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection but the inconsistencies in teaching need urgent attention.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY [ICT]

120. At the time of the inspection, the school was establishing a computer suite in the former music room. Until this suite is operational, whole-class teaching of computer skills is not possible since each classroom contains just two computers. A few classes, for example Year 6, use five laptop computers in addition to two desktop computers to help teach larger groups of pupils. The impact of having so few computers available is that it takes teachers longer to cover aspects of the National Curriculum by teaching small groups than by teaching the whole classes at the same time. In spite of this, the National Curriculum is covered but not in the depth that would help consolidate pupils' skills and understanding of computers. Consequently, by the end of Years 2 and 6, standards are below average. This is lower than they were at the last inspection although expectations of attainment are higher now than they were at that time.
121. Not enough teaching was observed during the inspection to judge the quality of teaching. From a sample of pupils' work at the time of the inspection, it is clear that pupils are making steady progress with computers. By the end of Year 2, pupils have been taught to use a picture program about themselves. They understand that computers are used to communicate in words and pictures, and can operate simple drawing and painting programs, such as RM Colour Magic. Year 2 pupils produced pleasing pictures representing scenes from each of the four seasons. By the end of Year 6, pupils have been taught how to use Excel to produce line graphs of changing temperatures. They are familiar with spreadsheets and use them to compare prices of goods in different shops. They produce bar graphs and pie charts to represent test scores and word process text using the editing facility. During recent weeks, computers have been used to help the teaching and learning in a range of subjects, such as art and design, design and technology, geography, history, literacy and mathematics.
122. The leadership and management of ICT are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and keen to establish the use of the forthcoming computer suite on the timetable of each class. An action plan for the development of ICT was produced last year, but much of this is now out-of-date. Priorities for the next twelve months and beyond now need to be established. A useful assessment and recording form has been produced to help record pupils' learning in each aspect of the subject. In spite of the best efforts of the teachers, not enough ICT is taught either as a subject by itself or to aid learning in other subjects.

MUSIC

123. Lack of evidence means that no overall judgements can be made about standards, teaching or improvements since the last inspection. Evidence from assemblies and the school's Christmas production, 'The Bossy Fairy', suggests that singing is good. Pupils sing in tune and sing quietly or loudly as appropriate to suit the mood of different songs.
124. The school's part-time specialist music teacher has recently left the school. Teachers now take their own lessons, following a programme of work based on national guidelines. The lesson seen in Year 4 linked music and art and design satisfactorily. Pupils used the moods suggested in different pieces of music as a stimulus for painting and drawing. In Year 1, pupils made satisfactory progress in setting out a simple rhythm with loud and soft beats.
125. The co-ordinator has set out suggested activities which helps teachers when planning lessons. There has been no monitoring of lessons with a view to improving the quality of teaching and learning and raising standards. Assessment is not used to inform future planning. Resources for

the subject are good and support pupils well in their learning. They include some instruments from around the world, which, along with the variety of music played for assemblies, make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' cultural development. There are computer programs

that support the development of composition, but these are not yet being fully used. Good opportunities are provided for instrumental tuition. The school also runs a choir, recorder group and orchestra that perform both within and out of school.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION [PE]

126. Lack of evidence prevents overall judgements being made about standards, teaching or improvement since the last inspection. Pupils have opportunities for swimming throughout the school. By Year 6, the majority of pupils achieve the expected national standard of being able to swim twenty-five metres; some pupils progress further than this and learn personal survival skills.
127. In the two lessons seen, teaching and learning were satisfactory. The outdoor games lesson in Year 6 was well organised, with a good variety of activities to keep pupils on the move and enable them to practise ball skills in football. In the dance lesson in Year 1, pupils showed good basic physical control and co-ordination in response to music. In neither lesson were there opportunities for pupils to evaluate the performances of others with a view to improving their own.
128. No monitoring of lessons has taken place with a view to improving teaching and raising standards. No assessment procedures have been developed for PE. The school provides an adequate range and quantity of extra-curricular activities. Football and netball clubs take place and provide pupils with opportunities to take part in competitive sport playing against schools.