

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BRIGHTSIDE PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Billericay

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 132164

Headteacher: Mrs Deborah Coles

Reporting inspector: Ruth Frith  
2490

Dates of inspection: 28 October - 1 November 2002

Inspection number: 248916

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Brightside Billericay Essex
Postcode:	CM12 0LE
Telephone number:	01277 655995
Fax number:	01277 655995
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Mollie Stammers
Date of previous inspection:	N/A

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2490	Ruth Frith	Registered inspector	Design and technology Geography Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11041	Marvyn Moore	Lay inspector		How high are standards? 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?
20534	Nichola Perry	Team inspector	English Art Music Special educational needs	
22669	Thomas Prosser	Team inspector	Science History Information and communication technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20063	Gerald Slamon	Team inspector	Mathematics Physical education Religious education Educational inclusion English as an additional language	

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Brightside Primary School is a community school for boys and girls aged 4 to 11 years. There are 328 pupils on roll, including 31 part-time children who attend the Early Years Unit. The school is situated in the north west of Billericay in an area of privately owned and rented housing. The percentage of pupils receiving free school meals is below the national average. On entry to school, pupils show levels of attainment similar to those seen nationally for children of the same age. Currently, the percentage of pupils with special educational needs is well below the national average and three pupils have a statement of special educational needs. Most of the pupils with special educational needs who require regular additional support have moderate learning difficulties or autistic, emotional and behavioural difficulties. A small number of pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds. Six pupils speak English as an additional language. Six out of the twelve classes contain pupils of two different year groups. At the time of the inspection, the school was undergoing major building works.

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

Brightside Primary is a good school with many strengths and is well placed to improve further. The managers of the school have successfully amalgamated the infant and junior schools and developed a team of professionals who share a commitment to improving further the quality of education. There is consistently good teaching in most areas of the school and by the time they leave, pupils reach high standards in English, mathematics and science. The school provides good value for money.

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

- Staff have successfully managed the transition from two schools to one and are now in a good position to reap the benefits from this hard work and further establish the school in the local community.
- Pupils attain high standards in the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year-olds.
- Teaching and learning are good in the reception classes and in Years 3 to 6.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education is good. This results in pupils' good relationships, behaviour, personal development and attitudes to learning.
- The school has very effective procedures for the monitoring and recording of attendance and this has brought about an improvement in pupils' attendance.
- Staff know the pupils well and consequently pupils are well supported in their academic and personal development.
- The school is well led and managed.

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

- Attainment in information and communication technology throughout the school.
- The quality of teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 to ensure consistent good teaching across the whole school.
- The range and quality of resources in areas indicated later in the report.
- Opportunities for pupils to take more responsibility for their own learning by developing their research skills.

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

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

Brightside Primary School was formed in September 2000 from the amalgamation of Brightside Infant and Junior Schools. This is the first inspection report of Brightside Primary School.

## 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	N/A	B	A	A
mathematics	N/A	B	A	A
science	N/A	C	A	A

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

Children make good progress in the reception classes and, by the time they are ready to start Year 1, most are likely to reach the national standards in all areas of learning, apart from in their personal, social and emotional development where standards are higher. Results of the 2002 standard assessment tests for seven-year-olds indicate a decline in standards from the previous year in reading, when they became average. Standards in mathematics were above average and in writing they were well above. Staff are reviewing their practice with regard to reading in order to raise standards back to their previous high level in 2001. Results of the 2002 standard assessment tests for eleven-year-olds indicate a significant improvement in English, mathematics and science, particularly in the percentage of pupils reaching a higher standard than that expected for their age. This indicates that pupils were appropriately challenged. In 2002, the school did not quite meet the very challenging targets set for English and mathematics. Evidence from this inspection indicates that pupils in Year 2 are working at levels appropriate for their age in all subjects inspected. Pupils in Year 6 are working at above average levels in English, mathematics and science and average levels in all other subjects. However, standards in information and communication technology are below average overall because pupils have not been taught the whole curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs and the higher-attainers are generally appropriately challenged and make progress similar to their peers. This also applies to pupils who speak English as an additional language who reach standards in line with their capabilities. No significant difference was noted in the progress and achievement of boys and girls during the inspection although, in the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2002, girls did better than boys in English and boys did better than girls in mathematics and science.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes are good. They enjoy their work and demonstrate interest and enthusiasm towards their learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other and towards adults.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good. They develop good relationships with adults and as they move through the school become increasingly sensitive to the needs of others.
Attendance	Significant improvements have been made in the rate of attendance in recent months. It was broadly average for the last academic year but for the current term it is good.



The pupils' good relationships, attitudes, behaviour and personal development provide a good basis for their learning and make a positive contribution to the levels of attainment that they achieve.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Over the last two years, teachers have worked hard to develop their teaching skills and raise standards. The clear identification of what they want pupils to learn, together with the setting of individual targets for pupils' improvement, are key features in their success. A team spirit has emerged where staff share their expertise and support each other. Teachers work hard to ensure that pupils in mixed-age classes receive appropriate teaching through good planning and the setting of pupils of similar ability in English and mathematics. This is proving to be successful. Throughout the school, teachers focus on developing the core skills of literacy and numeracy within a broad range of curriculum experiences. They have adopted the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies well and this has led to some good teaching in English and mathematics for pupils in Years 3 to 6. Some good teaching was also seen in Years 1 and 2 but not all lessons were structured well enough to sustain the pupils' interest. Consequently, the behaviour of some pupils deteriorated and they did not always make the progress of which they are capable. The school allocates valuable additional support for pupils with special educational needs and consequently they make similar progress to their peers. The needs of pupils who speak English as an additional language are generally well met through good class teaching. Higher attaining pupils are usually appropriately challenged.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for children in the reception classes is good. The school offers a broadly satisfactory range of learning opportunities for other pupils apart from in information and communication technology. Here, the school is not fulfilling its statutory obligations, due mainly to the continuing building works which have affected the pupils' access to a full range of resources.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Pupils with special educational needs receive a curriculum that is generally appropriate and overall provision is good. They usually make good progress in relation to the targets set in their individual education plans.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Appropriate support is given to pupils whose mother tongue is not English so that they receive a broad and relevant curriculum. Their social needs are also well met.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development through the promotion of spiritual and cultural awareness, and knowledge of social and moral responsibilities is good. They become aware of a variety of beliefs and customs and learn to respect views different from their own.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff have good knowledge and understanding of their pupils and take appropriate account of their individual needs. They make good provision for their welfare, health and safety.

The school has effective links with parents who, in turn, contribute well to their children's learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has provided very good leadership following amalgamation. She has a clear vision for the school and central to this are her aims to raise standards and provide good quality education. She has brought together a team with a shared sense of values and priorities who are keen to continue to improve the school. The deputy headteacher ably supports her and other managers new to their posts are quickly developing their practices.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They are fully involved in the school development planning process and have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and priorities for improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is continuing to develop its procedures for monitoring pupils' progress and evaluating the quality of teaching. Staff and governors have established a system of monitoring and target setting that keeps the school moving forward towards achieving its aims.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is thorough and takes full account of the cost of implementing the school's plan for development. Correct financial procedures are followed and staff and governors seek to obtain the best value for their spending.

There are sufficient suitably qualified teachers to ensure that class sizes are not too large and a group of experienced support staff who enhance the pupils' learning. The accommodation provides a good opportunity for a range of learning activities to take place but currently staff have to work very hard to ensure that the pupils' learning is not disrupted by the considerable building work. The amount and quality of resources in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education are less than those found in similar schools nationally. Resources are good in English and elsewhere are satisfactory.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The school has a strong sense of values and a very happy atmosphere.</li> <li>Children like school and they make good progress.</li> <li>Pupils behave well and become confident.</li> <li>The teaching is good and children are expected to work hard.</li> <li>Parents feel comfortable about approaching members of staff if they have a query or problem.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provision of homework.</li> <li>A closer working relationship with the school and more information about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>Activities outside lessons.</li> <li>Mixed-age classes.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the positive views expressed by the majority of parents. Evidence gained from the inspection indicates that the school has an appropriate homework policy and the provision of homework is satisfactory. The inspectors consider that the school provides ample opportunities for parents to find out about their child's progress. This is confirmed by the parents who stress how willing staff are to listen and help. The school is judged to provide a satisfactory range of activities outside formal lessons. Inspectors acknowledge the concerns expressed by some parents about pupils working in mixed-age classes but, from this inspection, there is no evidence to suggest that this is having a detrimental effect on the pupils' learning. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are making good progress.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. On entry to school, children have a broad range of abilities and experiences but overall their knowledge, skills and understanding are similar to children of the same age nationally. They make good progress in the reception classes and, by the time they are ready to start Year 1, most are likely to reach the national standards in all areas of learning, apart from in their personal, social and emotional development where standards are higher. This is different from previous years when the personal, social and emotional development of some children has not risen above satisfactory.
2. Results of the 2002 standard assessment tests for seven-year-olds indicated that, in comparison with all schools, pupils' attainment was average in reading, well above average in writing and above average in mathematics. When compared with pupils from similar schools they attained average standards in reading and well above average standards in writing and mathematics. Results of the 2002 teacher assessments in science indicated that the number of pupils reaching the expected level for their age (Level 2) was average. Results of the 2002 tests show a decline in the percentage of pupils achieving the higher Level 3 in reading and this has brought down the overall attainment grade.
3. At the age of eleven, pupils' attainment in the 2002 tests was well above average in English, mathematics and science when compared with all school and also schools with pupils of a similar socio-economic background. This shows a significant improvement since the previous year in all three subjects, especially in the percentage of pupils who attained a level above that expected for their age. This was particularly so in science where two-thirds of pupils achieved a higher level. Despite these very high standards, the school did not quite meet its very ambitious targets in English and mathematics.
4. Evidence from this inspection indicates that the pupils currently in Year 2 are working at levels appropriate for their age in English, although standards in reading are good. Whilst most pupils of this age speak well and confidently, a significant number do not listen as well as they should. Standards in writing are satisfactory. Pupils in Year 6 are working at levels above those expected for their age and have made good progress. Standards of speaking and listening are very good as pupils become more confident and respond positively to the high expectations of staff. Standards in writing are at least good and often very good. Pupils respond well and work enthusiastically when teachers stimulate their imagination. Standards in reading are good.
5. Standards in mathematics are currently average for pupils in Year 2 and above average for those in Year 6. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject and plan lessons well. This ensures that activities build systematically on prior learning. There is a strong emphasis on mental computation and all pupils are benefiting from regular practice at the start of lessons. This is helping to raise standards. Setting arrangements have also recently been introduced and this is allowing pupils to be taught at appropriate levels and thus enhances their learning.
6. Pupils in Year 2 are currently working at the level expected for their age in science and in Year 6 they are achieving standards that are average and above. Pupils generally make good progress, although this is better in Years 3 to 6 than in Years 1 and 2. The pace of learning is currently quicker with the junior pupils due to good quality teaching. The structured way of working and recording their findings results in the oldest pupils clearly writing about their investigations and demonstrating their understanding of a fair test.
7. Pupils in Year 2 and Year 6 are currently reaching average levels of attainment in all other subjects although a clear judgement can not be made in music in Year 2 as insufficient evidence was available. However, as attainment is average in Years 3 to 6, it is likely that pupils reach average standards in the infants. Standards in information and communication technology are below average overall because pupils have not been taught the whole curriculum and they have had insufficient opportunities to use the computers.

8. The progress in language development made by pupils with English as an additional language is good. This allows them to make the same progress as other pupils of similar abilities in lessons. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, most of these pupils attain standards that are expected for their age in English, mathematics and science. This reflects how successfully the school provides for these pupils. No significant difference was noted in the progress of boys and girls during the inspection although there have been some differences in the national test results. For example, in the national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2002, girls did better than boys in English and boys did better than girls in mathematics and science. More able pupils are generally appropriately challenged and reach standards in line with their abilities. Pupils with special educational needs achieve in line with their abilities. They are making satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 and good progress in Years 3 to 6. There are not enough pupils from specific ethnic groups to analyse trends in their progress and attainment.

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

9. Pupils display good attitudes to the school and their learning, which results in an orderly community. Pupils have good relationships with staff and, in the main, enjoy coming to school. In lessons where pupils display enthusiasm they show interest and maturity, and enjoy their learning. The overwhelming majority of pupils work very hard, relate well to each other and enjoy the company of visitors. In a minority of lessons where aspects of teaching are unsatisfactory, slow or uninteresting, pupils' behaviour deteriorates and, on occasions, this interferes with learning. This occurs mainly in Years 1 and 2.
10. Behaviour demonstrated by pupils both in and out of the classroom is generally good. In the main, during lunchtimes and playtimes, pupils often display a good level of acceptable behaviour. During the inspection week, pupils were observed being helpful and friendly. Many instances of pupils assisting one another were observed and pupils demonstrated their respect for school property. Computers, books and school artefacts were treated with respect and the school has no litter or graffiti. The school's strategies to manage behaviour are in the main consistently applied by staff and understood by pupils. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others.
11. The personal development and relationships of pupils are good. For example, in an excellent Year 3/4 literacy lesson, pupils were able to choose a poem they liked best, discuss with each other their opinion of the poem and speak with fluency and confidence. In a very good religious education lesson, pupils demonstrated their knowledge and understanding that the Bible is divided into the Old and New Testaments and demonstrated very good communication skills when discussing the various artefacts in a Church and their perception of what a Christening meant.
12. Pupils with special educational needs generally have positive attitudes to their learning. They are supportive of one another and care for each other. Some, particularly the younger pupils, do not have well-developed listening skills and do not always pay attention to their teachers or listen to each other. A small number of pupils at school, with English as an additional language, respond extremely well to the support they receive and learn quickly. They are developing the ability to sustain concentration and are well supported by class teachers.
13. Pupils are given good opportunity to display personal responsibility and initiative. The Class and School Councils are lively bodies where pupils discuss matters of school interest and communicate their ideas. The agendas for School Council meetings are formulated from ideas that are discussed in Class Council meetings. During the inspection week, an excellent School Council meeting was observed where pupils acted as Chairman, Vice Chairman and Secretary. Although well supervised by a member of staff, pupils from all year groups articulated extremely well giving their own opinions and acting in a sensible, mature and confident manner. Pupils in all classes and year groups are appointed as monitors and are given additional responsibilities; for example, returning registers to the office, helping during assemblies and at other times.
14. The attendance rate has greatly improved and, at 95.6 per cent during the period prior to the inspection, is good. Lessons mostly start on time; pupils seldom arrive late in the morning and are keen to attend school. Exclusion rates at the school are extremely low. No pupils were

excluded during the year prior to the inspection. One pupil had been excluded for a fixed term period during the current term.

15. The inspection team agree with the overwhelming view expressed by parents that behaviour in the school is good; although behaviour in Years 1 and 2 could be further improved. Pupils' attitude to school, their learning and behaviour, the attendance rate and quality of relationships between them, are all of a good standard and pupils make good progress as a result.

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

16. The quality of teaching was judged to be good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. Whilst there was some good teaching in Years 1 and 2, overall it was judged to be satisfactory. In the lessons seen, 64 per cent were good or better and 22 per cent very good or better. One lesson was unsatisfactory. In this lesson, tasks were not sufficiently well targeted within a structure which supported the pupils' learning. Consequently, the pace of learning slowed and pupils did not make the kind of progress of which they were capable. This was related to a lack of experience rather than to any specific problems with the developing skills of the teacher.
17. The good quality of teaching in the reception classes was characterised by good lesson planning and reflects the national guidance for teaching children of this age. Appropriate attention has been placed on settling children into school and a good range of activities is provided which maintains the children's interest and supports their learning. This results in children developing good personal, emotional and social skills, attitudes to learning and behaviour. The children's knowledge, skills and understanding are successfully extended as they move from part-time to full-time provision and they continue to develop confidence. The support staff give valuable help to the children and this is a key feature in making children feel secure in their learning.
18. Although teaching and learning were judged to be good or better in nearly a third of lessons for pupils in Years 1 to 2, other lessons and a scrutiny of pupils' work indicated that teaching and learning overall for this age group are satisfactory. Expectations of work and behaviour vary and consequently pupils' learning does not always move forward in a progressive and systematic way. Some pupils in these year groups display an immature attitude and find it difficult to concentrate. Teachers were not always taking this into account and sometimes the timing of activities was not appropriate. Some pupils began to get restless when asked to sit on the carpet and listen. Consequently, the rate of learning slowed. In other lessons, such as a Year 2 mathematics lesson, pupils make good progress in recognising number sequences, including odd and even numbers, because they could relate to the activities and their interest was maintained. Similarly, in another Year 2 physical education lesson, pupils responded well to the activities and the teacher managed the behaviour of pupils well so that learning was not interrupted.
19. The teachers' knowledge and understanding in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory and they plan work that is generally appropriate. Most support staff work well and are instrumental in supporting pupils' progress and raising their levels of attainment. In some cases, however, they are not fully aware of how to improve the pupils' learning.
20. The quality of teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, where staff work well together to plan lessons with activities that build on pupils' prior knowledge, skills and understanding. Staff in Years 3 to 6 have very high expectations of work and behaviour and are consistent in their approach with the pupils. Consequently, the pupils know what is expected of them, respond well and develop good attitudes to learning. Teachers use the expertise of support staff well and pupils receive good support.
21. In the best lessons, teachers have a clear idea of what they want pupils to learn and share that with them. They provide appropriate support and challenge, which ensure that pupils of all abilities maintain a good pace in their learning. They use assessments of pupils' work well so that the activities provided build systematically on prior learning.

22. Some lessons are particularly effective in developing pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. In an excellent Year 5/6 music lesson, pupils demonstrated very good responses to music and developed an excellent understanding of rhythm. In another Year 5/6 lesson, pupils thoughtfully reflected on differences in religious experiences and beliefs due to the teacher's ability to create a learning environment where pupils felt secure and able to participate fully.
23. The quality of relationships between staff and pupils is good and sometimes very good. This has a significant influence on how most staff successfully manage the pupils in their care. Teachers are encouraging and supportive, which results in pupils becoming confident. For example, in one excellent Year 5/6 English lesson when pupils adapted a short section of a story into a playscript, the work of pupils was praised well by the teacher who, in turn, told the pupils how much she had enjoyed the lesson. Similarly, in a very good Year 5/6 drama lesson, the very good relationships between the teacher and pupils, together with the enthusiasm of the teacher acted as a motivating force for learning and pupils developed the confidence to perform in front of others.
24. Teachers use their knowledge of pupils appropriately in lessons and encourage them to improve and work harder. Some are more successful than others in how they indicate, through their marking, how pupils can improve their work. Provision of homework is satisfactory overall and supports the work done in school, particularly in English and mathematics.
25. The school recognised the need to improve teachers' skills in information and communication technology. The training provided has improved teachers' confidence and ability and, consequently, teaching has been enhanced. This, in turn, has brought about improvements in the pupils' learning.
26. The school supports job-sharing arrangements by ensuring that the teachers involved have time provided to plan the work so that a consistent approach to teaching and learning is maintained. The school also raises the pupils' standards in skills such as basketball by using the expertise of outside specialists. Teaching was judged to be very good in one such lesson observed where the coach planned the session well to match the needs and experiences of Year 2 pupils.
27. The school has improved its work with higher attaining pupils. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are taught in sets with others of similar ability in English and mathematics so teachers can more easily target the lesson to a narrower band of ability in each set. These arrangements are proving to be effective and the pupils of all abilities make good progress.
28. Pupils who speak English as an additional language progress in line with their peers and currently have their needs met within mainstream classes. Teachers and support staff are effective in ensuring their participation in lessons. Pupils from minority ethnic groups are well supported, so that they are included in all class activities and progress at a similar rate to their peers, in line with their abilities.
29. Teachers are fully aware of all pupils' individual needs, including those with special educational needs. They plan appropriately differentiated activities, which generally meet the needs of individual pupils well. They liaise regularly and effectively with support staff and, as a result, pupils are usually well supported in their learning. All pupils have educational targets in line with school policy and these are reviewed termly or earlier, as appropriate.

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

30. The opportunities for pupils in the Foundation Stage of their learning, including the provision for religious education, are good. The curriculum provided for the statutory years of schooling is suitably broad. All required National Curriculum subjects and religious education are appropriately taught. In addition the school makes satisfactory arrangements for pupils to receive sex education and drugs education. Pupils have opportunities to hear talks from

visitors on a range of issues, such as health, sex education and drug awareness, and to effectively prepare for life outside school. There are sound procedures being developed for pupils' personal, social and health education.

31. The curriculum is not completely balanced because in information and communication technology, pupils are not being provided with full access to all aspects of the curriculum and provision is therefore unsatisfactory. During the inspection, although lessons in information and communication technology were satisfactory, there was very little evidence of computers being used to support learning. The failure to provide a fully balanced curriculum is a weakness. The overall time allocated to teaching and learning throughout the school is satisfactory.
32. There are effective strategies in place to teach literacy and numeracy skills. Although literacy and numeracy are firmly embedded into the specific subject areas of English and mathematics, links with other subjects are only loosely structured. There is no overall plan for consolidating literacy and numeracy skills in subjects such as science, geography, history, religious education and physical education.
33. In most subject areas the school has adopted the nationally recommended subject guidance, sensibly adopting the schemes of work to incorporate any successful aspects and practices already used within the school's curricular planning. There are satisfactory policies in place for all subjects and for other, non-subject, areas of learning. The exception to the above is the 'Learning Policy' which is only in draft form and under consideration by the governing body. The lack of cross-curricular links is identified as an area in need of attention and this policy, when implemented, will in part provide guidance for teachers to address this issue. Staff and governors properly review and agree these policies.
34. There is a strong commitment to educational inclusion. All pupils are afforded full and equal access to the curriculum. Pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum and are fully included in all aspects. There are opportunities for pupils to work in both ability and mixed ability groups. Support is mainly within the classroom with access to appropriately differentiated activities which meet individual needs well. However, one pupil in the lower part of the school is currently not receiving a sufficiently high level of support in some lessons and this is impacting on the learning of other pupils. Senior managers are actively working to see how this can be improved. All pupils have full access to all activities within the school, including educational visits and residential trips. No pupil is barred to any form of learning or involvement in activities as a result of their difficulties or disability.
35. The school has recently drawn up a register of gifted and talented pupils and has plans to use the strong links already established with the secondary school to provide for their specific needs. Boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds are fully included in all aspects of school life. The quality of support and teaching for pupils speaking English as an additional language ensures the inclusion of all pupils and their full and equal access to the curriculum and all aspects of school life. Planning of the curriculum meets the needs of pupils with English as an additional language.
36. The school has a clear policy on equal opportunities which is fully implemented to ensure that all pupils have access to the curricular opportunities without discrimination. This is evident in the way that teachers direct questions to pupils and ensure their full participation and in the way that pupils have access to additional curricular activities irrespective of gender, age and cost. The school's policy includes its commitment to race equality and how it should be implemented. It clearly states to whom the policy applies and the responsibilities of the governing body, the headteacher and staff. The policy clearly indicates how practice should be monitored.
37. The curriculum is enhanced through a wide range of educational visits such as to Colchester Castle and Braintree Museum to support work in history. Pupils' visits to farms and the Sea life Centre enhance their work in geography and science and a prolonged residential visit to the Isle of Wight is of value to a number of curriculum areas. The school has a sound programme of activities that take place beyond the school day. These include sports clubs for football,

netball and basketball, music and science clubs. The school rightly places a high value on the after-school clubs for they are popular with pupils and support the development of positive relationships.

38. The school has established a good range of links with the local community. The curriculum is enriched by a wide range of visitors to the school, such as members of the police. Local builders provided materials at a reduced rate to help with the refurbishment of the swimming pool and a Telecom company, as well as a bank, have provided financial support to the school. There are close links with local churches and religious groups. Close working links exist with the local secondary school. In-service meetings for cluster schools are held and Year 6 pupils are invited to attend activities at the school. Training sessions, involving the neighbouring primary schools, also exist with, as recently as the day before the inspection, a day being devoted to multicultural education.
39. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. This is promoted regularly through assemblies and religious education lessons but also at other times. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon the beliefs held by other people so they can compare these with their own. The religious education syllabus provides for the teaching of comparative religions and during the week of the inspection an excellent display of Hindu artefacts was seen in the hall together with good information about the celebration of the Diwali festival. The school benefits from the strong link with the School's Christian Ministry which has been set up by local churches and various speakers come into school to take assemblies and contribute to lessons. Assemblies are used to develop a sense of individual achievement by recognising special qualities found in other people. Pupils' spiritual awareness is also developed through music lessons and literacy when they are encouraged to react to the work of others before developing their own.
40. Provision for pupils' moral development is also good. School rules are displayed clearly in every classroom and are used to influence behaviour towards others. Teachers reinforce these rules, and, consequently, pupils begin to regulate their own behaviour. There are good systems in school for recognising achievement, whether in lessons or generally about the school and during the inspection week an excellent Celebration Assembly was held where pupils were awarded certificates for outstanding behaviour, attendance and work. They were extremely enthusiastic and pleased to receive them. The overwhelming majority of pupils respond positively to this provision and the behaviour of pupils at break times indicates that strategies are beginning to become effective. The personal, social and health education programme of study is fully timetabled and contributes to pupils' moral and social development.
41. The social development of most pupils is good. In most lessons pupils are taught well and show tolerance and respect for others. Pupils have a growing awareness and respect for differing beliefs and faiths of others. Pupils work well in pairs and in groups and they show respect and understanding of pupils who are different to them. At lunch times and break during the inspection week, pupils were observed socialising well together and offering support to each other. Pupils also have opportunities to mix together in a non-class based setting when going on school visits and when taking part in extra-curricular activities.
42. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good. In classrooms the works of Van Gough, Matisse and Picassos are displayed. In Year 5, as part of their Victorian work, pupils visited the Braintree Museum, dressed up as Victorian children and spent a very successful day in a Victorian classroom. The school has involved pupils in a range of productions such as the traditional Nativity Play, a musical version of Lewis Carroll's "Alice in Wonderland" and a production of "Joseph and the Amazing Technicolour Dream Coat". Year 6 pupils in the school band participated in the Billericay Music Festival at the Brentwood Centre and the school band participated in a large number of music festivals receiving very high accolades for their playing. A number of pupils have their poems published in a children's poetry anthology called "Poetic Voyages". The school has been selected to take part in a video, which will have nationwide circulation. The school prepares pupils well for life in our diverse society.



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

43. The school has good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare. All pupils at the school are well known to teachers and non-teaching staff and receive a high level of support and care. All staff display a deep care for pupils and their positive attitude is reflected in the good progress that pupils make during their time at school. They thrive in the strong learning climate.
44. The school has good procedures for the promoting of child protection. The headteacher, who is the named Child Protection Officer, is well aware of her responsibilities and has received recent training. Other members of staff receive training provided by her. Child protection records are good with the school keeping concise information about referrals to the Local Authority on child protection issues and good information on pupils on the At Risk Register and Looked After children. Accidents are well recorded and the school has an adequate number of First-Aiders, all of whom have received training. The school does not have a dedicated First Aid Room.
45. The headteacher, caretaker and governing body carry out regular Health and Safety Audits; in addition a private contractor carries out an external audit. The school caretaker, who also carries out informal checks on the building at regular intervals, has addressed any items of concern. He keeps excellent records and fire alarm tests are regularly carried out together with fire drills.
46. The school has very effective procedures for the monitoring and recording of attendance. Registers are marked regularly, are accurate and neat and fully comply with legislation. The secretary follows up absences and liaises extremely well with the Education Welfare Officer. Regular, good attendance is rewarded by certificates and pupils are extremely anxious to attend regularly to receive them. The pro-active approach taken by the school has resulted in a good improvement in attendance and this has a positive effect on pupils' progress.
47. The school gives extremely good educational and personal support to pupils. All pupils are known well to staff. Pupils are able to relate to them and know who to go to for support and guidance. Pupils' needs are identified early and external agencies are notified and involved as required. Class teachers monitor the progress of pupils with special educational needs termly and identify those requiring additional support. Some pupils take part in specific initiatives, as appropriate. The pupils' Individual Education Plans are well maintained and include appropriate targets, usually no more than three, and are linked closely to class targets for literacy and numeracy. Sometimes there is also a target to help pupils manage their behaviour. Arrangements for monitoring attendance for pupils with special educational needs are the same as for all other pupils.
48. The school has good procedures for the monitoring and promoting of good behaviour and the monitoring and elimination of oppressive behaviour. The school rules are prominently displayed in all classrooms and are based on rewards and sanctions. They are readily understood by pupils and in the main are consistently applied by staff. Incidents of bullying or challenging behaviour are rare and are quickly dealt with by staff in an appropriate manner. Pupils spoken with during the inspection week confirmed that they felt safe and secure, bullying was well addressed by staff and that all members of staff were approachable and helpful. Supervision in the playground both at break and lunchtime is of a good standard, although an item of concern regarding pupils' safety was observed and reported to the headteacher who is addressing the matter.
49. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress, including those who have special educational needs and those who are learning English as an additional language, are good in English and mathematics, and satisfactory in all other subjects excluding information and communication technology and music where they could be improved. In the main, consistent use is made of assessment data for setting individual targets. Teachers using interim and annual tests make regular assessments, and the strengths and weaknesses of pupils are carefully recorded. Teachers use the information gained to improve their planning to meet the needs of individual

pupils. Baseline assessment is carried out for children in the reception classes shortly after arrival at the school and ongoing tracking is made of their progress. All these features help to ensure that pupils work at an appropriate level and consequently make good progress.

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

50. A large number of parents (42.6 per cent) responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire. A significant minority of parents who responded felt that they were not kept well informed about how their children were getting on and the school did not work closely with parents. A large majority of parents felt that their children were making good progress in the school, teaching was good and the school was well led and managed. The inspection findings confirm the positive views of the parents and generally disagree with the negative views expressed. The school works extremely hard to foster a strong relationship with parents and involves them in all aspects of their children's education.
51. The positive, helpful links that the school has with parents are good. All parents are warmly welcomed into school and encouraged to help in a variety of ways. They aid work in the classroom, helping pupils in art and design, science and design and technology. They hear readers and accompany pupils on visits. Most feel free to come into school at any time if they wish to discuss their children's progress.
52. The school encourages participation of all parents, including those of pupils with English as an additional language, in curriculum events and parents' evenings. Parents of pupils with special education needs are kept well informed of the reviews of their children's Individual Education Plans so they are fully aware of the provision being made for them. Parents of pupils with statements of special educational needs are invited to the Annual Review meeting and are fully involved in target setting. The effective partnership the school has with parents and the very good quality of information provided by the school have a very strong impact on the progress that pupils with special educational needs make.
53. The quality of information provided by the school about pupils' progress is very good. Reports are clear and well written, giving precise and concise information about pupils' progress, target setting and a good explanation of pupils' grades. Reports also contain spaces for pupil and parental comments. The school has produced a very good brochure, which is parent friendly, extremely well presented and gives valuable information to parents about the curriculum, various school policies and the ethos of the school. In addition, the headteacher produces a weekly letter giving full information about events and activities being promoted by the school.
54. The Parent Teachers Association, to which every parent belongs, has a nucleus of 15 parents who work extremely hard to raise money for the school. During last year, the committee, led by a team of new officers, worked hard to organise a number of fundraising events including a car boot sale, Christmas bazaar, family disco, music quiz and summer bazaar. The extra funds generated by these events have been used to provide play clothes for children in the reception classes.
55. The school holds two formal parent evenings each year – in October and March – for each year group where class teachers are available to see parents. In addition, the school has arranged a "Meet the Teacher" evening in September for parents of each year group to meet the new teacher and discuss any concerns that parents may have. An Open Afternoon is held in July, where children show work to parents. The school has also arranged a Pre-school Information Evening where the headteacher, senior management team, members of the governing body and other members of staff are available to meet parents and give them full information about the facilities the school provides. The school arranges meetings for Year 2 and Year 6 parents to give them information about the National Curriculum Standard Assessment Tests which their children will be taking. This year a meeting was also held to explain the target setting process to parents.

56. The Governing Body surveyed parents last year regarding communication with the school. As a result of the survey a diary of future events was produced. The Reading Diary and the Home/School Diary provides a valuable form of communication between parents and the school.
57. A significant number of parents were spoken with during the inspection week. They overwhelmingly expressed the view that the school is well led and managed, was helping their children to become mature and responsible and they were kept well informed about how their children were getting on.

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

58. The leadership and management of the headteacher are very good. She has a clear vision for the school, and central to this is the provision of high quality teaching to ensure good standards. She has worked hard to involve staff and governors in developing Brightside Primary and has created a team of professionals who are loyal to the school and strongly committed to the care and education of its pupils.
59. The headteacher's vision and determination have proved to be significant factors in developing the new school and she is ably supported by the recently appointed deputy headteacher. They have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and areas for development and use their previous experiences and complementary skills well, for example to ensure good practice in both the infant and junior sections of the school. The headteacher is keen to involve all in decision-making and has an appropriate management structure, which ensures that senior members of staff have a significant role in school improvement. Senior managers have a clear view of the school's strengths and priorities for development and are developing their new roles well. The role of subject co-ordinator is also being developed and although some of the current co-ordinators are recent appointments, they share an understanding of what should be achieved. Established co-ordinators are well informed and effective in promoting their subjects.
60. The headteacher has a good vision of how she would like the school to develop and central to this is the development of the whole child. In addition to achieving well academically, the headteacher is keen to ensure that the pupils become independent in their learning, and well prepared for their next school. There is a good balance achieved in the school between focussing on formal aspects of learning and encouraging pupils to socialise well, be happy in their learning and respect others. These features are demonstrated in the school where an ethos of care and concern, together with good expectations of academic work, are usually evident. By the time pupils leave school they show a mature attitude and are sensitive to the needs of others. There is a good degree of mutual tolerance, respect, and racial harmony. This reflects the headteacher's commitment to equality of opportunity for all.
61. The school's aims of raising standards and improving the quality of education are reflected in its work. Systems are in place to monitor pupils' progress so that staff can more clearly see the difference they have made to the pupils' learning regardless of the pupils' attainment on entry to school. The school is planning to use a computerised tracking system, which indicates the gains that pupils have made in their learning and allows the staff to identify where additional support is necessary to help pupils. There is also a programme of monitoring teaching and learning although senior managers have highlighted the need to develop this more formally and a new action plan has just been developed.
62. Governors give full support to the new school. They and the headteacher have worked hard to develop the quality of school provision and support staff through the transition period of amalgamation. Governors have a clear understanding of the strengths of the school and future areas for development. They fulfil their duties well. They have a good range of skills and expertise between them and use these well to focus on all areas of school government. They are well informed and this helps them to be fully involved in discussions and developments. They undertake their duties diligently and fulfil their roles conscientiously.

63. Governors, headteacher and staff show a clear commitment to maintaining the pace of improvement. There is a system of monitoring, evaluating and target setting that keeps the school moving forward towards achieving its aims. The school improvement plan sets a clear agenda for development and is the result of an effective consultation process. Governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities apart from ensuring that the school provides a full information and communication technology curriculum.
64. Leadership and management of special educational needs have been well developed over time. The recently appointed co-ordinator has a good understanding and experience of working with pupils who have special educational needs. Management of all procedures, including arrangement for reviews, and the paperwork is up-to-date and well organised. The school has adopted the revised Code of Practice, and all staff are aware of the new terminology relating to pupils' level of need. The special educational needs policy reflects these changes and a register of special educational needs is still maintained so that school staff are kept informed of any changes as they occur. Funding is well used by the school to employ an appropriate number of support staff who access pupils to the curriculum. Staff have also been trained to deliver government initiatives to support learning. The quality of delivery of these initiatives is not yet being properly monitored regarding their impact on learning. The governing body is kept fully informed on matters relating to special educational needs and the school fully meets statutory requirements in respect to special educational needs.
65. Although there is no specific support provided for the pupils with English as an additional language, the headteacher and staff are fully aware of their needs and support them well. The inclusive nature of the school ensures that boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds are treated with due concern and care.
66. There are sufficient teachers and support staff to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum and religious education are being taught effectively and that classes are not too large. There is a good range of qualifications and experience amongst staff and this contributes positively to the quality of teaching provision. Performance management practices are appropriately in place and teachers have opportunities to develop their knowledge and skills through attending courses. In some cases, however, teachers indicated that the system for applying for such courses did not always run smoothly. Support staff have received a range of appropriate training and the majority work well and make an important contribution to the effective teaching, pupils' progress and good behaviour observed in lessons. Good induction procedures for newly qualified as well as staff new to the school are in place. The written information provided by the school to new staff is valuable but they report that there is a lack of specific information on smaller issues, such as which books are used for recording in science and mathematics. Supervisory staff at lunchtimes and the kitchen staff also make a positive contribution to good standards of behaviour and mutual respect observed around the school.
67. The school has had to manage a major change in the use of the accommodation as the two schools have been amalgamated. There is still extensive building work in progress and this is restricting the access to the buildings and their use. However, the accommodation available at the school is good. Classrooms are sufficient in size to allow the curriculum to be taught and the ability to use two halls is of great value when planning activities. There are a number of rooms suitable for withdrawal groups to use and the information and communication technology suite and the library provide good accommodation and opportunities for learning. The school caretaker and the cleaning staff have worked very hard to keep the school clean and to provide a pleasant working environment during the building period. Effective use is also made of the school grounds and there is sufficient hard play area to accommodate the needs of the pupils.
68. Resources to support the work in the Foundation Stage, the core subjects of mathematics and science as well as physical education are satisfactory. Resources are good for English. However, resources in the other subjects are unsatisfactory. During the year prior to amalgamation the junior school had a deficit budget which curtailed the amount of money available to be allocated to each subject area. This has had some impact on the regular updating of resources and is currently affecting the teaching and the experiences which pupils receive.

69. Financial planning is thorough and takes full account of the cost of implementing the school's plan for development, ensuring that identified priorities are addressed. Governors have a good understanding of the school's finances and specific grants are well used for their designated purposes. Financial administration is good and there are effective procedures for monitoring and controlling expenditure with regular reports to the governors, senior managers and other budget holders. Correct tendering procedures are followed and staff and governors seek to obtain best value for their spending.
70. The day-to-day organisation of the school is efficient and the administrative personnel are providing good support to staff, pupils and parents during this difficult period when the on-going building work often creates daily changes to the possible use of certain areas and significant noise pollution. The school's ability to fully use new technology with regard to administration and the day-to-day running of the school is also affected. Considering the good quality of educational provision and the high results achieved at the end of Year 6, the school provides good value for money.

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

71. Raise standards of attainment in information and communication technology throughout the school by:
- ensuring that the full curriculum is taught;
  - providing adequate resources;
  - ensuring that work is planned so that information and communication technology is used to support the pupils' learning in all subjects.

(Paragraphs 7, 16, 31, 93, 99, 106, 117, 126, 137, 139, 140, 141, 145, 146)

Raise the quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 to ensure consistent good teaching across the school by:

- raising teachers' expectations of pupils' work and behaviour;
- structuring lessons so that they sustain pupils' interest and concentration, thereby increasing the pace of learning;
- identifying and sharing good practice.

(Paragraphs 9, 15, 18, 19, 87, 92, 93, 96, 97, 107, 109, 153, 156)

Improve the adequacy, quality and range of resources in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education.

(Paragraphs 68, 118, 128, 132, 137, 150, 156)

Staff and governors are also encouraged to:

Provide more opportunities for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning and develop their research skills.

(Paragraphs 115, 138, 140, 145, 156)

Through the school's improvement planning process, staff have already identified the need to raise standards in information and communication technology.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	71
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	13	30	24	1	0	0
Percentage	4	18	42	34	2	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)		328
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		20

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs		3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register		23

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	6

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	34
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	26

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
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	24	20	44

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	24
	Girls	20	20	20
	Total	41	43	44
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (95)	98 (97)	100 (100)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	22	23	23
	Girls	19	17	19
	Total	41	40	42
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	93 (100)	91 (100)	95 (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	25	31	56

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	22	23	25
	Girls	28	25	30
	Total	50	48	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (84)	86 (76)	98 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	24	25
	Girls	27	25	29
	Total	50	49	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	89 (84)	88 (80)	96 (88)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

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

### Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
322	1	0
0	0	0
7	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
4	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)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.1
Average class size	27.3

#### Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	14
Total aggregate hours worked per week	213.50

#### Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

### Financial information

Financial year	2001-2002
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	£
Total income	815,817
Total expenditure	827,740
Expenditure per pupil	2,435
Balance brought forward from previous year	61,950
Balance carried forward to next year	50,027



### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	8.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	7.2
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	338
Number of questionnaires returned	139

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	34	4	4	1
My child is making good progress in school.	40	50	5	2	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	59	3	2	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	54	12	2	6
The teaching is good.	37	57	1	2	4
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	24	52	14	6	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	52	39	6	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	44	47	6	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	33	45	17	4	1
The school is well led and managed.	35	50	6	6	3
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	36	53	5	2	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	42	14	5	12

### Other issues raised by parents

Parents at the meeting were generally very positive about the school. They did, however, comment on the building works, raising issues of safety and supervision at lunchtime. Most concern was expressed over the existence of mixed-age classes. Whilst a few were very against them and thought that their children suffered, others felt that this arrangement did not affect the quality of teaching and provision. A few parents thought that the pupils' annual reports could be improved.

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

72. Provision for children in the reception classes is good. Staff have worked hard to develop a good curriculum with a wide range of activities despite the problems caused by the building works. They ensure that the work set matches the children's abilities and builds systematically on their prior learning. The curriculum takes into consideration the national guidance for the Foundation Stage and staff adapt it to meet the needs of the children. Staff plan work appropriately and use assessments of the children's attainment to inform their planning. Appropriate records are kept to monitor the progress that children make in all areas of learning. Teaching is consistently good for communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, creative and physical development and mostly very good for personal, social and emotional development. Teachers and support staff have good understanding of how young children learn and successfully use this to develop the children's good attitudes to learning and good behaviour. There is a consistent approach to teaching and learning and this helps children to settle into school life either on a part-time or full-time basis. A very calm atmosphere is evident which belies the high expectations and good pace of learning. Support staff play an important role in developing the children's learning and in supporting their achievements. Leadership and co-ordination of this phase of learning is good.
73. Children, including one who is learning to speak English as an additional language, are well supported and make good progress. By the time they start in Year 1, children currently in the reception classes are likely to reach average standards in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, mathematical, creative and physical development with some children working above these levels. Standards are likely to be above those seen for children of the same age nationally in personal, social and emotional development. At the time of the inspection, one class provided for children who were attending part-time ready for their full-time learning at the start of the spring term.

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

74. Staff have developed good relationships with parents, who are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning. This, together with a good induction programme, helps children to settle quickly into school routines. A caring learning environment is created where children in the Early years Unit where children begin to understand the structure of the day and by the time they enter Year 1, most have good attitudes to learning. Children are encouraged to play and work with each other and consequently are helped to develop good relationships. They were observed working well together on the computer and sharing resources, for example when playing with the sand and water. Teachers and support staff make appropriate comments to encourage co-operation and most children learn how to share and take turns. Children are encouraged to recognise the importance of keeping healthy and are aware of personal hygiene issues. This was demonstrated during snack time.
75. Through their own behaviour and working relationships, staff display good examples of how children should behave and the children's skills are continually developed through the positive interactions between staff and children. Girls and boys are encouraged to play together and take part in all activities so that they develop a good range of skills across all areas of learning. The tasks provided ensure a good balance between teacher-directed activities and times when children are able to work without direct adult supervision. This develops the children's confidence and a growing independence and initiative when they are presented with choices. Staff monitor the activities which children choose in order to ensure that they receive a good range of experiences.

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

76. Staff provide an environment which encourages children's speaking and listening skills and supports their developing use of vocabulary. They provide regular opportunities for children to

ask and answer questions and to discuss things as a class. Some good examples were observed when a teacher was encouraging children to identify shapes by using the appropriate vocabulary. In another, children developed questions to ask a visitor about her baby. In both these examples, the children were encouraged to respond to the adult, develop their use of vocabulary and sustain good levels of concentration. Children's speaking skills are also systematically developed through the provision of specific activities, such as in the imaginative play areas, which at the time of the inspection were clinics. Most pupils make good progress and have the confidence to speak with adults and each other.

77. Most children are interested in books, handle them carefully and show enjoyment in a range of stories. Children have regular opportunities to listen to stories and they respond well. Children were seen enjoying the story of *The Owl Babies*, and were helped to respond by the teacher's careful questioning. Whilst the focus of this activity was to develop their reading and responses to the story, no opportunities were missed to extend other areas of learning, For example, the children were encouraged to identify the shortest and tallest owls in the pictures and asked to explain how and where owls lived. Children very quickly became engrossed in the story and showed very good levels of concentration and involvement. Regular sessions support children in their recognition of letters and the sounds that they make and standards in reading are broadly average. Most children can name their favourite stories and identify books that they have at home. The higher-attainers read their books well with good understanding whilst lower-attainers retell stories in their own words and recognise names and key words. All children are encouraged to read regularly with their parents at home, which has a significant effect on the progress that they make and the standards that they achieve.
78. Children initially develop their writing skills by learning how to hold the pencil correctly and recognising and writing their own names. They become aware of writing for different purposes, for example, when in the clinic and 'writing for medicines'. Skills are developed further when children are encouraged to help the teacher as she models writing following the story of *The Lost Teddy*. Children are encouraged to suggest what should be written on labels for teddy bears and complete their own by writing their names. The youngest children make marks on paper whilst others copy the teachers' writing or write familiar words of their own.

### **Mathematical development**

79. The children's mathematical skills and understanding are taught during specific sessions, and consolidated through daily play activities. The youngest develop their skills of number and counting through singing number songs and the older pupils count people in pictures of families and match the numbers to the picture. Their work indicates that they understand the concepts of big and small families. Formal numeracy sessions are taught in preparation for National Curriculum work, like one good lesson observed, which focussed on developing the children's understanding of shape. The teacher had planned the lesson well to maintain the children's interest and used a good range of teaching methods and activities to consolidate and extend their learning. The children were encouraged to guess the shape whilst having some parts of it hidden and thereby began to identify the characteristics of, for example, a triangle, rectangle, square and circle. By the end of the session, most clearly knew the number of corners and sides to each shape. One child described a circle as 'a roundy' shape with one side. The teacher quickly followed this up by introducing the term 'curved'. She extended the children's use of language well. Her careful questioning encouraged children to distinguish between a square and a rectangle and higher attaining pupils were able to describe a square as 'having all sides the same' whilst the rectangle has 'two long sides and two short sides'. The children's understanding was further enhanced by playing a game outside with a learning support assistant who challenged them to run to a shape marked on the ground, after she has described its characteristics. They enjoyed this and responded very well.

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

80. Children in the reception classes develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through taking part in a range of play activities and during specific sessions led by the teachers. Some excellent teaching and learning took place as children were encouraged to see the development from babies, toddlers to children of their own age. The teacher planned and

prepared the lesson very well by asking the children to think of questions to ask a visiting mother about her baby. The children were very well prepared so that when the visitor arrived they gained the most they could from this activity. Their listening skills were very good as they found out about feeding and looking after the baby and became enthralled as they saw the baby being fed. The visitor had also prepared well and brought some of the baby's things so that the children could fully understand what she was talking about. Overall, this excellent session resulted in the children understanding that 'a baby cries when it is hungry or lonely' and 'drinks milk and boiled water' amongst other things. Children also acted out the roles of doctor and patient well in the 'clinic' and demonstrated the need for treatment for a range of imagined illnesses. Children worked well together playing with sand and water, developing their understanding of texture and volume. Staff ensure that the children receive aspects of religious education, for example, by focusing on their personal and social development and celebrating key religious festivals. Children have a sound understanding of the uses of everyday technology. Opportunities are provided for children to assemble and take apart simple models, using a variety of construction kits. Their skills in using the computer are also developed through the use of a range of programs, which also help to develop their literacy and numeracy skills.

### **Physical development**

81. Children get regular opportunities for physical education through playing outside where they learn to balance, climb and run. Despite restrictions caused by building works, staff have done their best to ensure that these activities continue to take place. Children also develop their skills through playing with small equipment and using wheeled toys. Children have regular formal physical education lessons. In one good lesson observed, the children responded well to the teacher and followed instructions. The teacher made sure that all children knew what they were going to do and learn, by sharing the lesson objectives with them in an appropriate way. Consequently, the children felt confident and built up their level of exercise gradually. The focus of the activity – to move around the hall in a variety of ways - was related to animals. This, in particular, secured the interest of the children and thereby their involvement. Behaviour and attitudes were good, as the children became involved in developing their movements. The work of individual children was used well by the teacher to demonstrate good teaching and learning points and to raise the children's self-esteem. One child was very keen to show others how to move like a worm and the teacher used this opportunity to celebrate his progress. All participated well and made good progress due to the good teaching, appropriate activities and support by an additional member of staff.

### **Creative development**

82. The children's creative development is successfully fostered through a range of activities. Following the story of *The Owl Babies*, children were encouraged to make collages of owls by using a good range of appropriate materials. The additional support given was very effective in enabling children to choose their resources and attempt their own work. The children quickly became engrossed and produced some good examples of work. Most children were able to show texture by the use of feathers and indicated good observation when making the owls' eyes. In another class, children consolidated their mathematics work by printing shapes and by making a collage using circles of a variety of materials. Here again, children concentrated well and could give good reasons for their choice of materials. A scrutiny of work showed a good range of art work which related well to other areas of learning. Also, children had obviously been encouraged to hold brushes correctly and develop their brush strokes when colour mixing and applying paint.
83. The children's responses are also developed through specific music sessions and through singing rhymes and songs. In one good lesson, the work on music was linked to literacy and focused on three bears each playing an instrument with a different sound. The lesson started with the teacher encouraging children to identify a good range of instruments and the sounds that they made. The children's literacy skills were also developed as they were encouraged to describe the sounds made. Children responded by saying, for example, that a triangle made a 'ping, ping' sound and bells made a 'jingle' sound. This work was further extended so that by the end of the lesson, the children could identify that the daddy bear was playing a drum, the

mummy bear a tambourine and the baby bear a bell. Because the lesson was presented in a fun way with an element of competition, all children enjoyed the activity and consequently made good progress. Behaviour and attitudes were good as all were fully occupied. The role-play areas in both the reception classes provide opportunities for children to play co-operatively and develop their imagination. They extend their language skills by re-enacting familiar situations or making up their own.

## **ENGLISH**

84. National tests for seven-year-olds in 2001 show that the proportion of pupils achieving at Levels 2 and 3 in reading and writing were well above the national expectations and those found in similar schools. Results for 2002, whilst remaining average, show a significant drop in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 3 from the previous year. National tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001 show that the proportion of pupils gaining Levels 4 and 5 were above national expectations and those found in similar schools. Results for 2002 show a slight increase in the proportion of pupils gaining the expected Level 4 and a very significant increase in the proportion of pupils gaining the higher Level 5 from the previous year. However, the very challenging targets set by the school were not quite met.
85. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 make good progress in their learning whilst those in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress. Pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds, those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs in all age groups make similar progress to that of their peers on account of the good provision made for them. There were no obvious differences between the work of girls and boys.
86. Across the school, standards in speaking and listening are at least satisfactory and often good. In Years 3 to 6 standards in speaking and listening are very good. Teachers question pupils effectively and ensure that there are very good opportunities for pupils to explain their thoughts and share ideas about their work. As a result, pupils are eager to share their understanding. They speak confidently and many are extremely articulate in their responses. Their answers are relevant, indicating that they have listened carefully and understood and they contribute very well to whole class discussions. Pupils listen attentively and are able to share and build on each other's ideas well. They follow the instructions they are given accurately and, when this involves a change of activity, it results in them settling quickly to new tasks because they are clear about what they have been asked to do. Adults are sensitive in their support of pupils and this helps them to develop confidence. Teachers are quick to praise the contributions made by pupils and this encourages them to participate.
87. In Years 1 and 2, standards in speaking and listening are less well developed. Although many pupils are able to speak well and confidently, there is a significant number of pupils who have still not learned to listen to their teachers or each other consistently so that they can share and build on each others' ideas. There is often inappropriate calling out and ongoing low level chatter during lessons. This is because teachers' expectations are not sufficiently high and all teachers are not applying the whole school behaviour policy and insisting on having pupils' attention at all times.
88. Standards in reading across the school are at least good, although they are better in Years 3 to 6. Pupils in all classes were heard reading in lessons during the inspection, in addition to the reading sample, and most generally demonstrated good attitudes to reading. The school's approach to teaching reading is well structured and positive attitudes are fostered by regular opportunities to read in lessons as well as quiet reading sessions. This all contributes significantly to the standards pupils achieve and promotes their interest in books. The school uses a wide range of reading books, including schemes as well as other books, banded to different ability levels. This provides pupils with very good experiences of reading an interesting range of different styles of books and provides good opportunities for them to practise their skills.

89. Pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy and, by the age of eleven, they have encountered a good range of fiction and non-fiction texts, including myths and legends, autobiography, humorous stories and poetry. They remember what they have read and are able to discuss themes and characters. Pupils become progressively aware of the differences in layout and style between fiction, non fiction and poetry and this contributes effectively to their developing vocabulary. The examples used by their teachers provide them with an understanding of how to write for different audiences. Teachers place good emphasis on pupils using their skills to research topics, such as the Greek Gods in Years 5 and 6 and The Romans in Years 3 and 4. As a result, pupils confidently use their knowledge about non-fiction texts and their research skills to find the information they need. Reading assessments are in place and provide a factual record of pupils' reading ages which teachers are able to use in order to develop pupils' reading skills.
90. Higher attaining pupils, in all age groups, generally demonstrate very positive attitudes to reading, many express a love of it and read regularly at home, either to other family members or to themselves. Less able readers still struggling with reading, show a significant lack of any enjoyment or enthusiasm for it and do not read regularly at home. Many are still at the single word level and do not routinely apply their knowledge of phonics or blends taught in literacy lessons. This is because all teachers do not have sufficiently rigorous expectations regarding pupils' learning, use and application of phonics in their reading.
91. Inspection evidence shows that standards in writing in Years 3 to 6 are at least good and often very good. Pupils use their reading skills increasingly effectively to help them in their writing. They are developing their understanding of grammar and punctuation effectively because there is good teaching of word and sentence level work. Where teachers stimulate pupils' imagination they are able to write well, use interesting words and they tackle their work enthusiastically. Higher attaining pupils are appropriately challenged and, as a result, write in a logical way, developing and sustaining their ideas effectively. Their work shows imagination and the composition of well sequenced sentences. Pupils' developing knowledge of phonics helps them to spell words correctly and spelling skills are further enhanced by learning to identify the letter combinations that make different sounds. They make use of the good guidance and opportunities they are given to use dictionaries to check spellings and meanings.
92. In Years 1 and 2 standards in writing are satisfactory, with some good. This is because all teachers do not have sufficiently high expectations that basic skills are learned and properly used at all times. Many pupils are not yet using phonics sufficiently to assist them in their writing. Some pupils have access to additional support through specific initiatives to help them improve their literacy skills. However, there are no outcomes from monitoring yet which suggest these are impacting on the attainment of these pupils.
93. Whilst teachers ensure that pupils have good opportunities to use different forms of writing, such as lists, flow diagrams and play scripts, opportunities for extended writing were not seen during the inspection and examples in the work scrutiny were limited. Opportunities for writing in Years 1 and 2 are limited and there is an over emphasis on the use of published work sheets. Handwriting across the school is satisfactory. However, a significant number of younger pupils demonstrate poor letter formation and have awkward pencil grips, which have not been addressed. Most pupils in Years 3 to 6 and some in Year 2 are developing a good cursive script and take care with the presentation of their work, although this is not consistent in all classes. Information and communication technology is not used well and is not yet contributing effectively to pupils' learning in English in all classes.
94. During the inspection, teaching and learning in Years 3 to 6 was consistently good with four lessons very good or excellent. This ensures that pupils make good progress in their learning and achieve high standards. In Years 1 and 2 all lessons observed were satisfactory. Teachers, particularly in Years 3 to 6, are good at helping pupils to make connections across the subjects of the curriculum and this enables them to use their literacy skills effectively to support their work. In all lessons, teachers place good emphasis on sharing with pupils what they want them to do and achieve and how this links with what they have learned before. Older

pupils, including those with special educational needs, are more actively involved in the learning opportunities they are given and make good progress. All pupils in Years 1 and 2 make satisfactory progress in their learning.

95. Across the school, teachers know their pupils well and match work effectively to the capability of pupils. They group pupils of the same prior attainment together, either in sets for older pupils, or in groups within classes, and prepare appropriate work for them. Individual needs are met effectively through targets, which are shared with pupils and for which pupils have some, but not yet sufficient, responsibility. Where this is happening, this is beginning to contribute to the development of pupils' independent learning skills and their awareness of their own learning. Teachers demonstrate in the way they plan and teach lessons that they have a secure knowledge of the literacy strategy and this reflects the good training they have had. There are good procedures for assessment although these are not yet being used consistently across the school to track individual pupils' progress.
96. The subject is well led and managed. The co-ordinator has worked hard with the staff to promote literacy and improve standards. She has ensured that resources are good, motivating and well matched to meet the needs of the curriculum. Development of the library has been good and most books are now sorted or catalogued on disc. However, use of the library to further develop pupils' research skills has been restricted during the extensive building works. There has been some monitoring of pupils' work, the outcomes of national tests, school assessments and lesson observations. However, this is not yet part of a more rigorous, systematic approach to monitoring the quality of teaching and learning so that areas for development can be identified and addressed quickly, particularly in Years 1 and 2.

## **MATHEMATICS**

97. Inspection evidence shows that standards of attainment are in line with those expected for pupils currently in Year 2 and above those expected for pupils in Year 6. Results of 2002 tests for pupils aged seven show a similar picture to those of 2001 when standards were well above average. Pupils enter Year 1 with sound levels of attainment in mathematical development. Of the four lessons seen in Years 1 and 2, teaching was good in two and satisfactory in two. These lessons, and an analysis of pupils' work, indicate that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in this age group. Results of 2002 tests for pupils aged 11 were better than they were in 2001 when they were above average. Teachers explain that standards are not so high in the current Year 6 because of a difference in the cohorts. The quality of teaching is good overall in Years 3 to 6 and pupils make good progress in their learning. Teaching was very good in two of the lessons seen, good in two and satisfactory in two. The reason for the difference in the quality of teaching between year groups is that lessons are not always well enough structured in Years 1 and 2 to sustain pupils' interest. Class teachers tend to keep the whole class on the carpet for too long, rather than challenging and teaching at different levels as pupils work on group tasks. As a result, the pace of learning slows and some pupils resort to silly, disruptive behaviour.
98. Teachers throughout the school have good knowledge of the subject and plan their lessons well, sharing learning objectives with pupils. The plenary sessions at the end of lessons are generally well used to give pupils an understanding of their own learning. A common feature of the good and very good lessons is the way in which teachers motivate all pupils to learn through well structured activities which ensure a good balance between direct teaching and independent learning. Inspired teaching in a Year 3/4 lesson, for example, resulted in a very high level of enthusiasm as the class teacher challenged pupils to apply their existing knowledge of multiplication to devise strategies for multiplying two digit numbers. The high quality learning environment established, and the strong relationships, resulted in excitement and joy in learning. In these lessons, rigorous questioning is well used to challenge pupils' thinking and to deepen their understanding. In a very good Year 5/6 lesson, for example, high quality questioning was used to challenge pupils to apply their prior learning to discover that  $0.865\text{km} = 865\text{m}$  and that a further 135m was needed to make 1km.



99. Setting arrangements have recently been introduced into Years 3 to 6 and this is allowing pupils to be taught at appropriate levels. The structure and content of the National Numeracy Strategy are well used to support learning and many features, such as the mental sessions and the discussions of strategies, are securely embedded. An analysis of pupils' books shows that the programme of work in applying mathematics, numeracy and algebra, and shape, space and measure, are covered systematically and thoroughly. The main weakness in provision in all year groups is that there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop their data handling skills in meaningful ways within mathematics itself and in other subjects, including information and communication technology.
100. There is a strong emphasis throughout the school on mental computation. All pupils benefit from regular practice at the start of lessons, and their understanding of mental strategies is developing well. In the most successful lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved in the mental sessions. The very good relationships that exist between all members of the school community gives pupils of differing attainment the confidence to offer answers, knowing that they will be appreciated. Teachers use a good range of resources such as number lines, 100 squares and digit cards, to allow all pupils to answer, checking each answer quickly. In the best lessons, questions are carefully targeted to challenge all pupils. A good example of this was seen in a Year 3/4 lesson where the class teacher deliberately discouraged pupils from raising hands to answer questions. As a result, all had to think hard because anyone could be selected to answer the question. However, this is not always the case. In some lessons teachers fail to question those who do not volunteer to answer. Consequently, some pupils play a passive role and contribute little. The overall provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The support that these pupils receive is generally of good quality and this allows them to be fully included in lessons so that they make progress similar to that of all other pupils. Pupils with English as an additional language are also fully included in lessons and they too make the same progress as other pupils of similar ability. There was no evidence during the inspection of a difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Teachers generally ensure that boys and girls work together at all levels of attainment.
101. Pupils develop a good understanding of the number system and of place value. Many pupils currently at the start of Year 2 are beginning to understand the place value of digits and to sequence numbers to 100 and beyond, with a good understanding of odd and even numbers. At the end of a lesson in which learning had been good, pupils could identify 145 as an odd number 'by looking at the last digit.' Work shows that by the end of Year 6, most pupils make good use of their understanding of place value to multiply and divide whole numbers and decimals by 10, 100 and 1000. Last year's Year 6 work shows that, by the end of the year, pupils calculate fractional and percentages of quantities and they understand that  $0.41 = 41/100 = 41\%$ . They also gain a good understanding of negative numbers through interesting tasks such as measuring temperature. Throughout the school there is a consistent approach to teaching pupils the correct mathematical vocabulary, so that by the end of Year 6, pupils show they understand situations by describing them mathematically with use of symbols, words and diagrams. Pupils are taught to use formulae to find areas of squares, triangles and rectangles and higher attaining pupils are further challenged to solve algebraic problems such as  $n = 2(28 + 15) - 4$ . This shows a good emphasis on developing the important skills of using and applying mathematics in a range of contexts. They are taught, for example, to use their knowledge that the sum of the angles of a triangle is 180 degrees to calculate a missing angle, and to construct angles to the nearest degree. A special feature of most lessons is the way in which teachers make links between using and applying mathematics, numeracy and algebra, and shape, space and measure, to ensure that all are taught to sufficient depth.
102. Teachers regularly mark pupils' work and most teachers are successful in showing pupils how they can improve, either through positive feedback in lessons, or by written comments in their exercise books. Apart from what has already been said about the development of data handling, subjects such as science, geography and design and technology make a sound contribution to pupils' numeracy skills. Homework, such as learning tables, is regularly set to support pupils' learning.

103. The subject is conscientiously led by a well-informed co-ordinator. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans to ensure coverage. National and optional tests are closely analysed to identify any weaknesses in provision or to identify any groups of pupils who might be underachieving. There are good procedures in place for monitoring pupils' progress and for setting realistic but challenging targets for individual pupils. There is a satisfactory range of resources to support teaching and learning and these are well managed. The co-ordinator has identified the need to provide more challenging learning materials to support the learning of older, higher attaining pupils. Learning support assistants are, on the whole, well trained, efficiently prepared, and provide good support to pupils' learning.

## **SCIENCE**

104. At the end of Year 2, in 2001, reported standards in the teacher assessments were very high in comparison with the national average and for those obtained in similar schools. Results for 2002 show that a smaller percentage achieving the higher Level 3. Standards in the current Years 1 and 2 are assessed to be in line with national expectations. The 2002 National Curriculum test results indicated that by Year 6, 98 per cent of the pupils had achieved the expected Level 4 with 66 per cent achieving Level 5. These results are also similar to those achieved in 2001 with the exception that a higher proportion of pupils managed to achieve the higher Level 5. Standards in the current Year 6 indicate that pupils are working at the national level and above.
105. All pupils make good progress as they move through the school both in lessons and over time. Teachers plan their lessons together and this ensures that pupils receive common experiences and work builds consistently on previously gained knowledge. Throughout the school, pupils of all levels of attainment take care with their work and complete all assignments. Younger pupils are able to record observations using annotated diagrams and this skill is progressively developed throughout the school. In Year 1, pupils start to record their observations and in one topic on 'How do we change when we grow up?' pupils record observations under agreed headings such 'As baby, As toddler', 'Now I can'. This structured way of working and recording is developed throughout the school and by Year 6 they produce clear recordings based on predictions involving previous knowledge and understanding. Pupils develop an understanding of a wide range of specialist vocabulary and they make good progress with the factual elements of science.
106. The investigative aspects of science are satisfactorily taught and pupils are developing a good understanding of scientific facts. By Year 5, pupils know how to record and write up science investigations and are aware of the need to consider fair testing. This was seen in Year 5 and 6 in their work on how materials alter when heated or cooled. They had identified what was used, what they did, the results, key facts and whether the test had been a fair test. Pupils represent data using tables and graphs but this aspect of the work is underdeveloped. Very few examples are found of information and communication technology being used to enhance and develop science throughout the school.
107. Pupils' attitudes towards the work presented in Years 1 and 2 varied from unsatisfactory to satisfactory. In both year groups, pupils, and especially some of the boys, were excitable and restless and had to be regularly reminded about their silly behaviour. In some of the classes, the strategies for managing bad behaviour are not secure or consistently applied. Learning objectives are not always shared with pupils resulting in pupils being unclear about the tasks to be undertaken.
108. Pupils' attitudes in Years 3 to 6 are good and often very good. They listen carefully to explanations and instructions and, as in the experiments in dissolving materials, they are very clear about what they are expected to do. They settle quickly to their tasks, they share equipment sensibly and are very mature in the way they share ideas and discuss their experiments. Most pupils take care in presenting the results of their work and behaviour is consistently good.

109. The overall quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. Here, the teaching of basic skills is clear and contributes effectively to the development of pupils' knowledge and understanding. However, some unsatisfactory teaching was observed and the major contributory factors were when teachers allowed a small group to dominate discussions, did not manage group work well, and pupils were unclear in relation to the tasks that they were expected to carry out. All teachers follow the scheme of work and teachers in each year group plan together. This helps to ensure that work consistently builds on previous knowledge gained. The contribution made by some of the learning support assistants in the Year 2 classes could be more effective for in some lessons they were passive listeners for too long. Good subject knowledge is shown through the correct and appropriate use of scientific language.
110. In Years 3 to 6 teaching is good. Activities are planned in detail and a good range of resources is available. Teachers use careful questioning to check pupils' knowledge and recall of previous completed work. Teachers set high expectations of the quality of learning through differentiated activities and appropriate use of scientific terminology. They closely monitor the progress of pupils and use this information very effectively to sustain good progress. The management of pupils is invariably good. Teachers again demonstrate good subject knowledge and plenary sessions at the end of lessons are used very effectively to share ideas and findings and consolidate new learning.
111. Pupils follow a broad and balanced curriculum. The Qualification and Curriculum Authority's scheme of work helps to ensure a good balance between the development of pupils' knowledge and skills, and increased opportunity for pupils to complete independent or group investigations. Assessment procedures are satisfactory and data from the National Curriculum tests are analysed to identify any patterns in pupils' strengths and weaknesses. The co-ordinator monitors and evaluates pupils' work and produces a detailed report on her observations which are shared with the school staff. She does not however monitor teaching. Resources to support the curriculum are satisfactory and are well managed by the co-ordinator.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

112. Standards in art and design for pupils aged seven and eleven are broadly in line with those expected nationally and pupils make satisfactory, and sometimes good, progress in certain elements of the art and design curriculum. Teaching throughout the school is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs, and those for whom English is an additional language, make appropriate progress in line with all other pupils and are generally well supported in their learning.
113. Displays in classrooms and around the school are a delight and demonstrate the growing status of art and the school's commitment to developing pupils' creative skills. Pupils enjoy their art lessons, most have very positive attitudes and participate enthusiastically, even when they do not feel confident about their own abilities. The school is still in the early stages of developing the art and design curriculum and supporting teachers' own knowledge, skills and confidence in the subject.
114. Pupils' skills in art are not yet being developed consistently across the school. Work in Years 1 and 2 is beginning to develop pupils' knowledge and understanding of processes and skills through experiencing a range of materials and techniques. These include patchwork landscapes, based on the work of Van Gogh, using chalks, showing pattern and colour and those using pencils, showing pattern and tone. However, in lessons observed, it was clear that many pupils lacked confidence in skills such as colour mixing, applying paint, observational drawing and use of pattern. This is because these skills have not been systematically taught as part of a scheme of work which develops skills progressively over time. For example, there is clear evidence that observational drawing skills have not been sufficiently well taught with appropriate attention to line, shape or size. There is good evidence that pupils' drawing skills are being further developed in Years 3 to 6, and that they are acquiring increasing pencil control and some awareness of how shading can be used effectively. For example, in Years 3 and 4 pupils were experimenting with a range of sketching pencils and graphite sticks to

observe how line and tone can be used to enhance drawings. Pupils' colour mixing skills are also being developed to explore the effect of colour through use of tones and shades. However, overall their drawings and paintings remain very immature in relation to their ages.

115. The use of sketchbooks to develop pupils' planning of their ideas is developing well and is beginning to provide evidence of progress over time. However, their use is not yet consistent across the school. Some teachers are making good use of them to encourage increased exploration and development of ideas, prior to proceeding with the final piece of work. In some sketchbooks, pupils are labelling and annotating their sketches very well. Some teachers are helping pupils to improve by making evaluative and supportive comments as part of their marking, and there is good evidence that some pupils are dating their work and ensuring that titles or learning objectives are part of the process. The school has not yet developed an agreed whole school approach to the use of sketchbooks so that they become an effective planning tool for pupils.
116. Pupils' work on abstract art in Years 3 to 6 is outstanding and has greatly helped to develop their self confidence. They speak enthusiastically about the process and are rightly very proud of their efforts. This area of art work is contributing very effectively to developing pupils' cultural awareness and is enabling them to speak knowledgeably and confidently about a wide range of famous artists and their work.
117. Art and design is well used to support learning in other subjects; for example, diagrams in design and technology, illustration of work on the Ancient Greeks and The Romans, drawing of signs, symbols and artefacts in religious education and also to illustrate writing in English. Three dimensional work, including clay, and the use of information and communication technology are not well represented and the school is aware of the need to develop these areas as part of the ongoing expansion of the art curriculum.
118. The recently appointed co-ordinator is an art specialist and is providing sound leadership and management. She has introduced a new scheme of work which will be evaluated at the end of the summer term. Teachers' subject knowledge and confidence are developing and staff in Years 3 to 6 already consider that this scheme is an improvement on the previous one. However, staff in Years 1 and 2 are finding that some aspects of the scheme, particularly those relating to the teaching of specific skills, are less helpful for working with younger pupils. Although the co-ordinator has improved the range of resources for art, including examples of paintings by well known artists, resources overall are currently unsatisfactory and this is impacting on teaching and learning.
119. There has been limited monitoring of teaching and learning due to other school priorities and the use of assessment is not yet well established for the new scheme of work. However, each module will be assessed as it is completed so as to provide the school with an ongoing record of pupils' development of skills and techniques over time.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

120. Due to timetabling constraints, only two lessons were observed in classes with Year 5 and Year 6 pupils. Other evidence was gained by looking at planning, pupils' work and through speaking with teachers and pupils. From this evidence, it is clear that pupils aged seven and eleven reach standards that are broadly in line with those expected for pupils of the same ages nationally. Pupils are currently making satisfactory progress due to sound coverage of the design and technology curriculum and effective teaching.
121. Discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6 indicate that they have a clear understanding of the designing and making process and are learning to evaluate their work and the work of others. However, standards in evaluation are lower than in designing and making with the older pupils. Pupils are aware of health and safety issues, for example, the younger pupils talked about holding scissors correctly whilst those in Year 6 spoke about the safe use of tools and the need for good hygiene in food technology.

122. In Year 1, pupils build on their experiences of using construction kits and design and make, for example, houses from recycled material. In Year 2, pupils use their skills further when designing and making a moving vehicle. Discussion with these pupils highlighted how they had looked at and talked about vehicles, before making their plans. They were also encouraged to draw their cars and lorries and record the equipment and resources they would be using. Higher attaining pupils were aware of the need to look at the resources available before developing their design. Others indicated that their finished vehicles were different from their plans because they didn't have sufficient materials or what they had intended to do 'did not work'. Pupils spoke enthusiastically about their work and most said that they enjoyed making things. All these responses indicate that teachers had stimulated the pupils' interest and provided appropriate opportunities for them to develop skills and understanding in a systematic way.
123. Similarly, discussions with older pupils and photographs of their work indicate that they enjoy their lessons. This was confirmed through the observations of those in Years 5 and 6 when they were seen starting a project on designing and making slippers. The quality of teaching in both of these lessons was very good. Teachers had planned well and there was a consistency in approach and coverage of key teaching points. This meant that regardless of which class they were in, pupils received a very good experience. They were told what they were expected to do and learn, and consequently all were confident and responded positively. The attention of pupils in one class was quickly gained when the teacher started the lesson by asking what type of slippers the pupils thought David Beckham wore. Conversation quickly developed as the pupils related to this approach and wanted to put forward their views. Without really realising it, the pupils had taken on the role of designer by responding to the very good questioning of the teacher. They identified characteristics such as comfort, protection, style, safety, cost and warmth when designing slippers. A particularly good feature of the lesson was the development of literacy through the use of project specific glossaries. These were differentiated to take account of the variety of abilities in the class and resulted in pupils using terms such as durability, flexible and manufacture by the end of the lesson.
124. Similarly, in the other lesson observed, the teacher's questioning was a key factor in how pupils developed their learning. All participated well and discussed some interesting issues surrounding the influence of gender on design. The teacher had created a good environment where pupils felt comfortable about putting forward their views and ideas. This included pupils with special educational needs and also a pupil with English as an additional language who were all fully aware of what was expected of them. All contributions were valued and the teacher managed the discussion very well.
125. In both lessons, pupils were encouraged to work together in pairs or small groups to evaluate a good range of slippers which they had brought from home. They did this well, sharing ideas and recording their findings after reaching agreement. As the pupils were interested in what they were doing, they behaved well and worked hard.
126. Overall, there was a limited amount of work available from pupils but that seen indicated that they understood the designing and making process. The topics covered reflected those in the National Curriculum guidance and were enhanced by additional work. Literacy and numeracy skills are developed within the subject but the development of information and communication technology skills has been restricted by lack of access due to the building works. There is, however, evidence of teachers using the computer to present work of a good quality and pupils using programs, for example, to design patterns.
127. Teachers and support staff have good relationships with the pupils and manage them well. They encourage pupils to work together and this results in pupils sharing resources. This reflects the school's good provision for moral and social development. Also, older pupils designed and made story books for those children in the reception year and shared these with them. Support for pupils with special educational needs was good in the lessons observed. All pupils were encouraged to participate and no differences were noted in the attainment and progress of girls and boys.

128. The co-ordinator has worked well to ensure that an appropriate curriculum is in place and that pupils are being taught the subject regularly. She monitors this by looking at teachers' plans and pupils' work. She has maintained teaching and learning in the subject well during a period when priorities have been in other subject areas, and has developed the use of assessment that relates to the learning expectations in each topic. Although she has prioritised the spending of the budget appropriately, the level of resourcing is below that usually found in similar schools.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

129. Due to the nature of the timetable which focuses on some subjects for just part of the year, no geography lessons took place during the week of the inspection. Inspection findings are based on the work seen in pupils' books and displays, as well as discussions with teachers and pupils. This evidence indicates that in Year 2 and Year 6, pupils have knowledge, skills and understanding which are similar to pupils of these ages nationally. This is due to sound curriculum coverage and effective teaching. Evidence also indicates that all pupils have access to an appropriate curriculum so that those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make similar progress to their peers. No differences were noted between the progress and attainment of girls and boys.
130. Discussions with pupils in Year 2, together with the scrutiny of work, show that they have learnt about appropriate topics whilst in school. In Year 1, pupils become familiar with the local environment by looking at the area around the school and their journeys from home to school. From this, they learn their own address and identify some of the landmarks such as post boxes, bus shelters and a petrol station. As they get older, pupils look further afield to the local park when following a field trip and become aware of the park's uses and how it could be improved. Pupils develop their skills by drawing maps, and plans of their bedrooms from 'a bird's eye view'. Pupils could also identify the five countries of the British Isles and are aware of differences in countries beyond their own. Good class displays indicate issues of location and travel and pupils clearly learn where some key foods are grown. All these aspects indicate that teachers relate pupils' learning well to their experiences and cover an appropriate amount of work.
131. Pupils in Year 6 were confident about their learning when talking with an inspector and also showed interest in learning about countries different from their own. In Years 3 and 4 they studied in more detail the local area of Billericay, how the town developed, and its key geographical features. They had a greater understanding of the British Isles through identifying major cities and rivers and also undertook a study of Kenya. Teachers have a clear understanding of what pupils have learnt and understood through regular assessments after each topic and those in Years 3 and 4 show that pupils make appropriate progress and attain similar standards to pupils of those ages nationally. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have a clear understanding of mountain formation and teachers encourage them to plan a mountain holiday thereby extending their interest. This exercise consolidates their learning as pupils identify mountainous areas, location, and climates and appropriate facts and figures. Work completed last year shows an appropriate use of the Internet to gain evidence for this piece of work. Links with mathematics are also made through pupils working on differing climates, and links with literacy as Year 6 pupils complete a diary during their school visit to the Isle of Wight. This visit is a key factor in consolidating and also extending pupils' geographical learning, and some interesting work results from it.
132. The pupils seem to enjoy their geography and the subject makes a significant contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and their knowledge of the world and its peoples. In Year 2, for example, lists of members of the pupils' extended families, together with their connections with a range of countries, provide good evidence about differences in cultures and settlement. The pattern of topics to be studied ensures continuity and progression of the skills and work to be taught and reflects those suggested in the National Curriculum guidance. The co-ordinator has only recently been appointed but has a clear understanding of the subject and how it could be developed. Although some resources have

been removed, as they do not reflect current geographical areas and facts, there are still books and resources which are 20 years old and not very stimulating. Currently, the level of resourcing is below that usually found in similar schools.

## **HISTORY**

133. Provision for history is sound and standards at Year 2 and Year 6 are in line with national expectations. The curriculum is well planned and teaching across the school is satisfactory with some good teaching observed in some classes in Years 3 to 6. The quality of learning reflects the teaching observed with satisfactory learning in most lessons and good progress in one Year 3/4 class and one Year 5/6 class.
134. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 start to develop a clear sense of the passage of time by creating time lines. They are provided with the opportunity to examine artefacts from the past, such as toys and models, and look at books and pictures of houses and homes. Good use is made of the imminent 'Guy Fawkes Night' to interest pupils in the life and times of a person from the past and pupils are keen to locate the information gained on the class time line.
135. In Years 3 to 6, pupils have good opportunities to build on their knowledge through more detailed studies and visits. By Year 6, in their work on the Ancient Greeks, pupils have appreciated the range of different sources available for information seekers and that different sources provide different information. They make good use of outside sources such as local museums and pupils spoke enthusiastically about the re-enactment day relating to the Greeks that had been arranged by a visiting provider. The enthusiasm and interest displayed by the pupils could be evaluated from photographs and examples of their work around the school.
136. Teaching was satisfactory overall with good teaching being observed in two lessons in Years 3 to 6. Six lessons were observed. Teachers plan their lessons carefully and have clear objectives. All teachers made good use of questioning to ensure that pupils had understood the work presented or to help them recall work from previous lessons. The pace of teaching and learning in two lessons became slow and pupils were not fully challenged throughout the lesson. Assessment procedures are sound and are used to not only evaluate progress over time but also to influence day-to-day planning
137. Teachers differentiated the tasks provided for the pupils and this enabled pupils at all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, to make sound progress. The school has a wide range of resources to support history and this includes both printed material and artefacts. This is further supplemented by loans from local sources. There is however a need to evaluate the use of information and communication technology and the resources within this field that are available to support learning within history. The co-ordinator has only been responsible for this curriculum area for a brief period of time and is enthusiastic about developing the subject. History work is given prominence and the displays on the walls in both school halls enables pupils throughout the school to share the on going work from other classes.
138. Teachers are starting to extend pupils' literacy skills in history. However little evidence is found of cross-curricular links with other subjects being planned or used. This is an area within the teaching of history that is unsatisfactory. To raise standards further there is a need to provide pupils with the resources and opportunities to research information for themselves from as wide a range of sources as possible. Pupils need to be encouraged to do more on their own.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

139. During the week of the inspection it was only possible to observe one lesson being taught in Years 1 and 2 and there was very little other evidence of information technology within the classrooms available for examination. In the lesson observed, pupils used a mouse to move the cursor and to select items. They have also begun to examine the value of word-processed

text when compared with hand written assignments. Attainment within this lesson was judged to be below national expectations. However, the pupils have a sound understanding of the basic keyboard function and the majority have the skills to improve on this level.

140. In Years 3 to 6 it was possible to see four lessons, examine a small selection of pupils' work and discuss and examine, with Year 6 pupils, the range of work that they had covered. Attainment in the lessons and work seen is overall assessed as being sound and in line with national expectations. By Year 6, pupils have developed their skill, particularly in word processing. Pupils learn how to edit their text using the spellchecker facility. They successfully insert a text box, pictures and sound when creating a new slide. The majority of pupils in Year 6 are able create a hyperlink between two slides. However, very little evidence was found of monitoring and control, of information and communication technology used for data handling, modelling and simulations, use of Internet or for research work in other subjects. Pupils are not being presented at this time with a balanced curriculum and therefore provision for information technology is unsatisfactory and standards overall are below average.
141. The teaching and use of information and communication technology has been adversely influenced by the building work that has been going on at the school for a significant period of time. Internet access has been removed, access to the information suite has been curtailed and resources for the delivery of the curriculum have not been readily available for the staff or pupils to use.
142. The overall quality of teaching is sound with some good teaching in nearly half of the lessons seen, albeit across a narrow range of activities. Teachers show satisfactory subject knowledge and have planned their lessons well. Staff have undertaken the national training and report that they have gained not only knowledge but also confidence from the training they have undertaken. This was observed in nearly all the lessons where pupils were provided with suitable challenges and good support from the teachers. In one lesson, the teacher lacked the confidence to allow the pupils to progress at their own rate of learning and insisted on pupils working at a prescribed rate.
143. Pupils' attitudes to working on the computer are positive and they are confident workers. They work sensibly and with good concentration, and they collaborate when finding solutions. Information and communication technology contributes to social development through pupils working together. Pupils gain awareness of the impact of new technology on human lives. They have become aware that a code of behaviour and rules are necessary to operate successfully the various systems.
144. The co-ordinator for the subject is new to the school. She is enthusiastic and keen to develop the information and communication technology curriculum. She is aware that the full curriculum is not being delivered and that there is a need to improve the resources, mainly software, to enable information and communication technology to play its full part in the education of pupils. She is aware that the action plan now in place is in need of modification and she is in the process of reviewing it.
145. The non-availability of the Internet and the lack of suitable CD-ROMs is restricting the access of pupils to research many cultures in the ancient and modern world. There is no clear cross-curricular planning structure to help to guide staff in the use of information and communication technology across the curriculum. The result of this is that information and communication technology is not being used systematically to help pupils with their learning or to encourage them to become independent learners by researching and using information from a wide range of sources. The school has adopted the national scheme for information and communication technology and this, in part, will provide a structure to ensure that all aspects of information and communication technology are fully implemented. The teaching staff have the confidence and the skill to deliver the required curriculum.



## MUSIC

146. Two music lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6 and none in Years 1 and 2; therefore it is not possible to give an overall judgement about teaching in the lower part of the school. Scrutiny of school documentation and discussion with the headteacher and previous manager of the subject show that appropriate provision is made throughout the school. Pupils' attainment in music is broadly in line with that expected nationally for pupils aged eleven and pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make satisfactory progress in their learning. Insufficient evidence was available to make a clear judgement on attainment in Year 2.
147. The school has adopted national guidelines for music and, using these, teachers are generally well supported in delivering their own class music lessons. Pupils have opportunities to use a range of tuned and untuned instruments, sing songs and write their own basic compositions, although the use of information and communication technology in music is less well developed. Music is well used across the curriculum, for example, in religious education and English lessons. Pupils listen to carefully selected music in different contexts and effective use is made of music to create a quiet and reflective atmosphere during assemblies and hymn practices. Pupils are encouraged to listen attentively to composers' individual styles of music, including those from different cultures. Pupils' singing of well-known hymns and songs is tuneful and enthusiastic. In one hymn practice, the standard of the singing was particularly high and provided a few moments of moving quality. On this occasion the teaching was excellent and as a result pupils understood they needed to think about pitch, rhythm and timing as well as taking care with their breathing and diction. All pupils are fully included in these musical experiences.
148. Teaching in one Year 3/4 was good and as a result pupils made progress in their learning. Pupils were encouraged to use their listening skills to focus on how instruments are used to portray characters and they were then able to use this knowledge, using a very limited range of instruments, to compose short musical scores for a well known children's story. Pupils worked collaboratively, clearly enjoyed their experience and performed confidently. Teaching in the other Year 5/6 lesson was exemplary, totally motivated pupils and, as a result, attainment in this lesson was above national expectations. Their ability to work collaboratively reached a level rarely seen in lessons and the quality of discussion was very high. A reasonable range of tuned and untuned instruments were available for pupils to select and use specifically to represent emotions as they perceived them, based on a text from their literacy lessons. Pupils were thrilled to listen to their recorded compositions and were rightly proud of their achievements. These lessons were successfully delivered in spite of the fact that the range, number and quality of resources were very limited and impacted on teaching and learning.
149. The music curriculum is enhanced through a range of extra-curricular activities, such as the school band and recorder club and pupils also have opportunities to learn to play a range of musical instruments taught by visiting experts to the school. Pupils' performing skills are well extended by taking part in assemblies, large local musical festivals and events and, in addition, participation in school productions staged before an audience.
150. There has been no school based co-ordinator for music recently and co-ordination is therefore currently unsatisfactory. Appropriate steps were taken by the headteacher to employ a qualified and very talented musician during the last academic year to manage and deliver music across the school. This was highly effective and the expert knowledge of the subject has been used to lead and encourage others so as to support teachers in extending their subject knowledge and developing confidence in the teaching of music. The school is clear that there is still much work to be done but is confident that music has a high status throughout the school and is well placed to build on this in the future. Basic assessment procedures are in place but these have yet to be further developed to effectively support curriculum planning. Resources for music to meet requirements of the planned curriculum are unsatisfactory. The range of instruments needs to be greatly increased and many of those available are either in need of repair or replacement.

## PHYSICAL EDUCATION

151. Standards of attainment match those expected for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. Most pupils enter the school having achieved the early learning goals in physical development and they are offered a broad and balanced curriculum which meets statutory requirements. Lessons in games, dance and gymnastics were observed during the inspection. The school has its own swimming pool which all pupils from Year 2 to 6 use at appropriate times during the year. Most pupils achieve the expected level in swimming by the time they are eleven and a significant number achieve levels above this. Year 6 pupils are offered opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities during the annual residential trip.
152. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall with little significant difference between different age groups. Of the five class lessons seen, teaching was very good in one, good in one and satisfactory in three. The teaching of basketball skills to pupils in Year 2 by a qualified coach was of very high quality and pupils made swift progress. Coaching after school by trained coaches, teachers and parents in football, netball and cricket, is well used to enrich the curriculum and pupils' sense of achievement. Throughout the school, teachers plan their lessons well and are secure in their knowledge of the subject. Lessons begin with good warm up sessions and are generally structured well enough to keep pupils warm and to allow enough time for exploring, practising and improving skills. Effective use is made of pupils to demonstrate their techniques so that others can evaluate these so as to improve their own work. Although there is a correct emphasis on teaching the appropriate skills, there is little evidence of teachers carrying out a careful assessment of pupils' work so as to ensure that all are being challenged at appropriate levels. This is the main reason why the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory rather than good. Teachers manage their pupils well so that all can work safely together. The school's high expectations result in all pupils having their kits for lessons, and teachers set good example by being appropriately changed. Teachers use praise effectively to increase the confidence of less able pupils who are fully included in lessons.
153. By the end of Year 2, guided by supportive teaching, pupils have increased their confidence in physical control and mobility. Although a significant minority of boys in Years 1 and 2 lack self control, teachers work hard to ensure that all can learn safely without disruption. A good example of this was seen in a Year 2 gymnastics lesson, where the pace of learning was brisk as pupils built up simple sequences, because the teacher insisted on good behaviour from all. In games' lessons, pupils are taught to develop elements of games play that include running, throwing, catching and control using hands and feet. This was the case in the Year 1 lesson seen in which pupils were using hands and feet to control a ball when bouncing and dribbling. The skills to be developed were appropriately identified and taught so that pupils made satisfactory progress in their learning. Despite the class teacher's efforts, the immature behaviour of some boys in this lesson meant that they had to be regularly checked so the pace of teaching and learning slowed. Although no dance lessons were observed, planning shows that pupils explore moods and feelings as they are taught to develop their responses to music and other stimuli.
154. Pupils enter Year 3 with a sound basis for further learning. Teachers have developed very positive relationships with their pupils. As a result, pupils enjoy their lessons, behave well and work together safely and co-operatively. A very good example of this was seen in a Y5/6 dance lesson where, as a result of the outstanding relationships and high level of mutual respect, pupils worked hard, listened closely to their teacher and made very good strides in their learning. Boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds worked closely together exploring each other's moods, and helping each other to improve the quality of their work. In games lessons, pupils are taught the skills required to send, receive, strike and travel with a ball, and to apply these skills and techniques in games. Although teachers ensure that pupils enjoy the lessons, behave well and work hard, they need to adapt their lesson plans to provide appropriate tasks for pupils of different abilities. Skills can then be progressively developed at appropriate levels. The local authority has developed procedures for assessing attainment in physical education which the school will introduce after a member of staff has attended the appropriate training course. Pupils are given many opportunities to take part in inter-school competitions such as swimming galas, athletics, football and netball. As a result, the subject makes a strong contribution to pupils' social development and their sense of fair play.

155. The headteacher and deputy headteacher effectively manage the subject and have a clear understanding of what needs to be done to improve provision. They have correctly identified assessment as an area for development. The recent schemes for games and dance give good guidance to teachers who are confident in the delivery of the curriculum. The school has coped well during the amalgamation and the ensuing building works. Teachers have worked hard to minimise any disruption to pupils' learning.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

156. Standards in religious education match those expected by the locally Agreed Syllabus for pupils aged seven and eleven. Two lessons in Years 1 and 2 were observed during the inspection. The quality of teaching and learning in both of these lessons was satisfactory. An analysis of past work shows that an over dependence on worksheets deprives pupils in this age group of thoughtful writing opportunities, and that time is often wasted colouring in pictures. Many of these tasks are undemanding and do not help pupils to learn more about religious education. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons seen in Years 3 to 6 was good. In one of the lessons, teaching was very good and it was good in the other three. However, all evidence, including an analysis of pupils' work, shows that learning over time has been only satisfactory, because the skills required for pupils to research topics independently, using a range of resources, including information and communication technology, have not been systematically developed. Although teachers in these classes feel well supported by the Agreed Syllabus and research the subject well, there is a need for a wider range of artefacts and research materials available to older pupils to support their learning about Christianity and other faiths. This would help pupils to more easily retain knowledge of aspects they themselves have researched, rather than depending on teachers to provide them with facts about faiths, traditions and religious practices. In this way, the subject would also make a greater contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Teachers are aware of the needs of pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language. They ensure that boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds are fully included in lessons and that they all make the same progress in their learning.
157. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 plan their lessons well to include an interesting range of methods to inspire pupils to learn. As a result, pupils are well motivated, behave very well and readily participate in activities. The interest and attention of a significant minority of boys in Years 1 and 2 wanes when they are expected to spend too much time sitting on the carpet, and this results in some inappropriate behaviour.
158. By the end of Year 2, pupils show a sound understanding of the richness and diversity of different religions by looking at Christianity and aspects of other faiths such as Hinduism and Sikhism. Teachers make effective use of stories from the Bible and literature from other faiths to develop pupils' moral understanding, and to teach them the difference between right and wrong. For example, pupils in Year 1 heard the stories of Ruth and Naomi, linked to the story of Guru Nanak and Mardana, when considering the meaning of true friendship. Pupils in a Year 2 lesson reflected on good and evil when listening to the story of Rama and Sita. In this way teachers ensure that pupils not only learn *about* religion but also *from* religion. Through visits to their local church pupils are able to recognise and understand the purpose of different parts of the building. They are beginning to understand the significance of baptism as a sign of belonging, and they know that a major element in different faiths is that of caring for one another and the environment. The subject co-ordinators have identified the need to adapt the programme of study for this age group to make it more relevant to the pupils, and to increase the range and quality of resources to support this.
159. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the origins of Christianity and of the life and times of Jesus. Teachers build well on what pupils have been taught in Years 1 and 2, and give them deeper understanding of Judaism and Hinduism. Analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils show that they have a sound understanding of the importance of festivals such as Christmas, Easter, Harvest, Diwali, Advent, and Hanukkah. They learn that each of the faiths studied has a Supreme Being, a place of worship and key leaders such as Jesus and Moses. They are also taught that each faith has a Holy Text, for example the Bible,

and Torah, and teachers ensure that pupils' understand the rules for living contained in these. Teachers in these classes continue to help pupils understand the beliefs, attitudes and activities of other people, in developing their own beliefs and values. Examples of this were seen in Year 6 lessons in which pupils were considering the difference between 'being clever' and 'being wise' when studying the life of Solomon. Although pupils develop a sound understanding that religions share some common features, they often forget facts about faiths and traditions previously taught. By the end of Year 6, they have a good understanding of how people should treat each other through studying the lives of inspirational people and the parables of Jesus. Assemblies, led by members of staff or visiting speakers, are well used to support pupils' learning and their moral and social development. All pupils show respect for people's different beliefs and religious practices as was evident during the assembly about the festival of Diwali.

160. The school ensures that the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils join with the local community in church services such as Harvest, Christmas and the Easter. These opportunities further strengthen pupils' understanding of Christianity as well as supporting their sense of community. The co-ordinators are awaiting the local authority's assessment procedures which are linked to its Agreed Syllabus. This should help to ensure the systematic development of skills and understanding year-on-year.