

## INSPECTION REPORT

### **BOCKING CHURCH STREET PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Braintree

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114809

Headteacher: Mrs. Rosalind Welch

Lead inspector: Dr. Alan Jarvis

Dates of inspection: 8<sup>th</sup> – 10<sup>th</sup> December 2003

Inspection number: 255549

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 -11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll;	187
School address:	Church Street Bocking Braintree
Postcode:	CM7 5LA
Telephone number:	01376 322650
Fax number:	01376 321337
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. David Mann
Date of previous inspection:	22 <sup>nd</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup> February 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school mostly serves the historic village of Bocking but more pupils than in the past are being admitted from the nearby urban area of Braintree, usually from rented accommodation. The school has been directed to take a very small number of pupils who have found it difficult to settle into other schools. The school is smaller than most primary schools. There are slightly more boys than girls. They are generally distributed evenly across most classes with the exception of Years 2 and 6 where there are more boys and Year 5 where there are more girls. Overall the pupils' socio-economic backgrounds are broadly average but they range from disadvantaged to fairly affluent. Nearly all pupils are from white British backgrounds. None speak English as an additional language. The attainment on entry can vary quite widely. It was average for pupils in the current Year 6 and below average for those in Year 2. For the first intake of the reception class this year it is average. Fewer pupils enter or leave the school in any one year than most other schools, but this can be marked in some classes. Twelve per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average and lower than at the last inspection. Four pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Needs (which is above average) and are in receipt of appropriate specialist support from outside the school. Other special needs include moderate learning, dyslexic, behavioural, speech and multi-sensory impairment difficulties. The Year 2 class has more pupils who need support for their behaviour than other classes. The school was awarded the "Healthy Schools" award in 2002 and a "Schools Achievement" award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
2711	Dr. Alan Jarvis	Lead inspector	Science Information and communication technology Music Special educational needs
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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**The effectiveness of Bocking Church Street School is satisfactory.** It gives sound value for money. Teaching and learning are mostly satisfactory. As a result most pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs, including behavioural needs, are well provided for. It is satisfactorily led and managed.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Standards of singing are very high and there is a first class choir.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the effective co-ordination of the support they receive and the investment in high numbers of good quality teaching assistants.
- Attendance is well above average.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral and social development are good but they have limited experiences of other cultures in Britain.
- The school provides good care and guidance and a high priority is assigned to health and safety.
- A good range of activities such as well attended clubs, visits, speakers and effective links with the local community help to enrich the curriculum.
- Good governance and high quality financial management have ensured that the school operates to budget and long term developments are affordable.
- The headteacher has ensured that some areas or subjects are effectively led and managed but the leadership skills of some co-ordinators are insufficiently developed.

The school is improving steadily and has been resilient to the changes in staff and the more complex intake of recent years. Satisfactory achievement for most groups of pupils has been maintained. Staff have responded positively to the key issues in the last inspection report. Consequently, schemes of work are now in place in all subjects, and there are more effective systems for assessment and monitoring the performance of teachers and the school. Although much effort has gone into raising standards in mathematics, standards have not risen as much as they ought to have done. Underachievement in information and communication technology (ICT) and science have both been satisfactorily addressed. The school has developed effective strategies to include the growing numbers of pupils from outside its normal catchment area with behavioural difficulties or below average standards of attainment on entry. Beneficial improvements have been made to some classrooms and the administrative area but some key work remains to be completed. Governors have found it hard to recruit suitably qualified staff and this has impaired better progress being made.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			Similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	B	A	B	B
Mathematics	C	A	C	D
Science	D	D	C	C

*Key: A - well above average; B – above average; C – average; D – below average; E – well below average  
Similar schools are those whose pupils attained similarly at the end of Year 2.*

**Achievement is satisfactory overall.** Standards have kept pace with national trends by the end of Year 6 but have improved faster in English and science than in mathematics. The table shows how standards in different years can vary quite widely because of the make up of different classes. In 2003, the pupils reached average standards overall compared with all schools nationally and those

of similar schools. After a period in which standards were below what they ought to have been in science they were average last year. In the current Year 6 standards are average in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education. Achievement is therefore satisfactory overall because standards were also average on entry for these pupils. Pupils with special educational needs do well. Other pupils achieve satisfactorily with the exception of the higher attaining pupils in mathematics, where some underachieve. Pupils make better progress in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6 than in Years 1 and 3. Very few pupils are underachieving. Although standards are below average overall by Year 2, standards were below average for this group of pupils on entry and most pupils achieve satisfactorily. Some boys do not do quite as well as the girls but they make up the lost ground in later years. In the reception class achievement in the different areas of learning is mostly satisfactory, and standards are average. But, children do well in their mathematical development and are likely to reach above average standards.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good overall.** Attendance is well above average. Punctuality is good. Pupils mix happily and harmoniously together. Most behave well but a few pupils show very challenging behaviour. Although this is managed effectively, it slows learning and thereby lowers achievement.

## QUALITY OF EDUCATION

**The school provides a satisfactory quality of education.**

**Teaching and learning are satisfactory** overall. However, there is more good or better teaching and much less that is unsatisfactory. Teaching and learning in English and mathematics are satisfactory because too little attention is given to challenging average and higher attaining pupils. There is some very good teaching of singing, physical education and in the special needs set in mathematics. Teaching is more productive and consistent in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6 than in other years. There is a sound curriculum which is enriched by a good range of extra-curricular activities. Pupils are cared for well. Good induction procedures help children to settle quickly in to school life. There are effective links with parents, the local community and other schools.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

**Leadership and management are satisfactory.** The headteacher and senior staff have established a climate in which all pupils can learn productively. Assessment, special educational needs, ICT, music and physical education are all led well. In contrast English and mathematics are not as well led as they should be and consequently standards and the quality of teaching are not rising as fast as they should be. The governing body plays a key role in guiding the work of the school, and ensures that statutory requirements are fully met.

## PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

**Parents** are well satisfied with the school and say any concerns they have are dealt with quickly. The inspectors agree that the informal arrangements for parents' meetings do not meet some parents' needs. Parents have few formal opportunities to put forward their views and suggestions. **Pupils** show good levels of satisfaction. Nearly all say they find out new things in lessons.

## IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

The most important things the school should do to improve are:

- Continue to raise the achievement of average and higher attaining pupils in English and mathematics by planning more specifically for their learning needs.
- Review and develop the leadership skills of the co-ordinators for English and mathematics.
- Ensure that teaching is consistently good in all years.
- Provide more opportunities for pupils to understand about Britain as a multi-cultural society.

## PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

#### Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

*Achievement is a measure of how well pupils are doing, taking their progress and their capability into account.*

Achievement is satisfactory overall. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2 and average by the end of Year 6, reflecting how the intake can vary in different years. Pupils with special educational needs achieve better than other groups of pupils.

#### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in singing are very high.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they receive but the achievement of average and higher attaining pupils is predominantly satisfactory.
- Some pupils do not comprehend their reading as well as they should do by the end of Year 2.
- A few of the higher attaining pupils are underachieving in mathematics by the end of Year 6 and do not reach the higher Level 5.

#### Commentary

1. The first intake of children in the current reception class has been in school for a term. Their standards on entry were average, although there is a range of needs. They are making a sound start to school and are achieving satisfactorily. They are likely to reach average standards and attain the goals expected of them by the start of Year 1 in most areas of the curriculum. However, the good teaching in mathematical development is enabling them to do well. Standards are likely to be above average in this area of learning.

*The tables shown in this section give average point scores for pupils. Each level in the national curriculum is given a number of points. Pupils are expected to move on one point every term. So, if a school's points are one point above the national, their pupils are, typically, a term ahead.*

#### Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	15.2 (14.8)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.5 (14.2)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	16.0 (16.3)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 30 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

2. The 2003 results for Year 2 were average overall. The point scores show that standards were above average in writing but below average in reading and mathematics. Teacher assessments in science were average. Recently, standards have risen slower than those nationally. This reflects the growing numbers who are admitted from outside the normal catchment area with lower standards on entry or needing support for their special educational or behavioural needs.
3. The current Year 2 class has a smaller number of higher attaining pupils than previous years. More pupils than normal have a special educational need and a small but significant number have severe behavioural difficulties. Current standards in Year 2 are above average in writing



but below average in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics and science. This reflects the complex learning needs of the class but also the care given to behaviour management.

**Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003**

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.8 (28.6)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	26.6 (28.6)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	29.1 (27.8)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 29 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year*

4. A comparison of the point scores in the 2003 results shows that standards were above average in English and average in mathematics and science. They were average overall. They were also average when compared with schools that obtained similar scores in 1999, when the pupils took the Year 2 tests. A more detailed study indicates that achievement was good in English, satisfactory in science but with some underachievement in mathematics, especially for the higher attaining pupils. Over recent years results have risen faster in English and science than they have in mathematics as the teaching has been strengthened, especially in Year 6.
5. The pupils in the current Year 6 class are more typical of those in the natural catchment area. Pupils' standards on entry were average. They are reaching average standards in English (in reading, writing, speaking and listening), mathematics, science, ICT and religious education. Standards in singing are very high and a strength of the school.
6. Achievement is satisfactory overall and similar to that reported at the last inspection. This is supported by the achievement seen in lessons, the overall performance of the school compared with similar schools and the school's own "value added" data on achievement between entry and the end of Year 6. Pupils, including boys and those with special educational needs, do very well in their singing because of the expert teaching they receive. Pupils in Years 1 to 6 are achieving satisfactorily overall in English, mathematics, science, ICT and religious education but make more secure progress in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6. Achievement is boosted because nearly all pupils with special educational needs do well in relation to their capabilities. The higher attaining pupils achieve satisfactorily in English and science. Achievement is not higher because lesson planning does not clearly identify good levels of challenge for average and higher attaining pupils. The teachers' lack of confidence in teaching the materials, forces and electricity aspects of science also limits good achievement. Some higher attaining pupils underachieve in mathematics, again because their needs are not clearly thought through in lesson planning. A few boys do not do quite as well as the girls in Years 1 and 2, which lowers the overall achievement. However, as they gain confidence they respond well in Years 3 to 6, making up lost ground.

**Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities**

Personal development is good overall. Pupils like school and show good attitudes to learning. Behaviour is satisfactory. Attendance is high. Their spiritual, moral and social development is good and their cultural development satisfactory.

**Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Attendance is very good. This has improved steadily year by year since the last inspection.
- Pupils' attitudes to their work are good.
- A few very challenging pupils occasionally interrupt lessons and reduce the learning opportunities of others.
- Moral development has improved since the last inspection and is good.

- Pupils have insufficient opportunities to learn about Britain as a multi-cultural society.

## Commentary

7. Attendance is well above average and this represents very good improvement since the last inspection. Punctuality is good. The school has very good monitoring and follow-up procedures to ensure that all absences are carefully checked. Parents now understand that prompt and regular attendance is important if their children are to achieve well.

### **Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)**

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.3	School data:	0.0
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.4

*The table gives the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.*

8. Pupils like school. They say that they work hard and enjoy finding out things in their lessons. The vast majority of pupils have good attitudes to work, settle quickly and enthusiastically to their work and enjoy their lessons. For example, in a Year 4 class pupils were very engrossed in designing and writing postcards from Bocking to a friend. They joined in with the class discussion and very carefully identified special things to write about their village and to illustrate their postcard. They enjoyed working quietly and productively on their own postcard.
9. Behaviour is satisfactory. The majority of pupils are very aware of the standards of behaviour expected in school and most meet these expectations well. However, there is a small minority of pupils who can show very challenging behaviour from time to time. The code of behaviour is well understood and consistently followed in the school. The policy is interpreted with a sensible degree of flexibility so the individual needs of pupils can be recognised. Although some parents, and some pupils, indicated that they were concerned about bullying and poor behaviour the inspection found that children mixed happily and well. When unacceptable behaviour occurs it usually centres on a very few pupils and is handled quickly and well by staff.
10. Pupils also show a mature and sensible approach to the tasks they carry out in class and around the school. Parents indicate their children become mature and independent in school. Playtime had been identified as a difficult time in the school day. The introduction of Year 6 play leaders has brought a calming effect on the playground. They ensure that all younger pupils enjoy playtime and are happily occupied in games. The sensible work of the play leaders is clearly having a positive effect and they are right to be proud of the work they do.
11. Pupils have a positive sense of the needs of others. This is reflected in the collections they make for charities and also in the time they give to helping others such as elderly residents in the village for whom they have given harvest gifts. Relationships in the school at every level are good. Through the application of the behaviour code, the recognition of the value of the individual and the needs of others the moral development of pupils has been strengthened. It is now good. Social development is also good. Pupils respect truth and have a well-developed sense of what is fair and why bullying and aggressive behaviour are unacceptable. In a range of subjects pupils gain a good understanding of other ways of life and different cultures. They study aspects of British history such as the work they have done on Victorian England and also the Tudors. In geography, they learn a little of the lives of people in other parts of the world. However, although pupils learn about different faiths and cultures, since the loss of the link with a London multi-cultural school they have very limited experience and understanding of being part of a multi-cultural society. Spiritual development is good. All pupils have a chance each day to gather together in assembly to share a quiet and thoughtful time together. There are also some very special moments of deep feeling experienced by pupils in their lessons. For example, in a religious education lesson pupils thought about the gifts that can be given which are free but of real personal value, such as kindness, friendship and being a good listener.

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

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

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	164	4	0
White – Irish	2	0	0
White – any other White background	2	9	0
Mixed – White and Black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	4	0	0

*The table gives the number of exclusions, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.*

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a satisfactory quality of education. Teaching, learning and assessment are all satisfactory. A sound curriculum is enriched well through clubs, visits and visitors. High numbers of well trained teaching assistants provide effective support for pupils with special educational needs. Good care and links with parents, the community and other schools are also strengths.

### **Teaching and learning**

Teaching, learning and assessment are satisfactory overall.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching of singing throughout the school and physical education in Year 6 is very good.
- The difficult behaviour of some pupils is consistently managed well.
- Teaching assistants effectively support pupils with special educational needs and help ensure they achieve well. Some teaching of these pupils in smaller groups is also very good.
- Lessons are clearly planned but the level of detail does not always ensure that average and higher attaining pupils are consistently challenged and consequently achieve well.

### **Commentary**

12. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. There has been some improvement since the last inspection. Now just over half of teaching is good or better and nearly all is at least satisfactory. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching, which was previously seen in around one in ten lessons, has been reduced. Two good lessons were seen taught by a supply teacher. Although one unsatisfactory lesson was seen during the inspection in Year 1, this was not typical of the satisfactory teaching seen in other lessons in this class. Nearly all pupils agree that they find out new things in lessons, they work hard and get the help they need when they are stuck.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 30 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (10%)	13 (43%)	13 (43%)	1 (4%)	0	0

*The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons; figures in brackets show percentages where 30 or more lessons are seen.*

13. There are a number of strengths in teaching. Staff who co-ordinate music and physical education have expert knowledge of their subjects which shines through in their teaching. In the singing and physical education lessons seen teaching was stimulating and challenging for all pupils. The activities which were chosen engaged pupils and helped them sustain their achievement to the best level they could. The teaching of mathematical development in the reception class is good. Good relationships are fostered. Teachers give much encouragement to all pupils, rarely losing patience. They take pains to include all pupils in lessons through the questions and activities which are set. This results in pupils applying themselves well. Consequently much learning is productive, and especially so in Years 2, 4, 5 and 6.
14. Lessons are clearly planned according to the school's useful policy on teaching and learning which sets out the expectations of good practice. Lessons usually start and end well with pupils being clear as to what they are going to learn, and what they have learnt is summed up at the end. This is helped by teachers identifying clear objectives of what the class is expected to learn in the lesson. In practice, some modification is made through the support that is given or the tasks set, which enables pupils to work productively at their own level. However, the weakness is that the learning goals and tasks do not provide that extra level of challenge that will stretch the pupils of average and higher ability and enable them to consistently achieve well.
15. Teachers, with the support of the headteacher and teaching assistants, generally manage challenging behaviour well. Nevertheless, in some classes the poor behaviour of a few pupils can distract other pupils. Consequently, the learning of the whole class is affected. This is most evident in Year 2 where there are more pupils with behavioural needs than other classes. The extremely calm, consistent and methodical approaches to behaviour management used by the teacher are proving beneficial. Most pupils are engaged and on task for the majority of the time. However, the interruptions to learning result in achievement being satisfactory rather than good.
16. The school's decision to maintain high numbers of teaching assistants is paying off as their support in lessons makes an effective contribution to their good achievement. They, and more specialist staff who support pupils with special educational needs, work closely with the teachers to provide targeted support. They work either with designated pupils or, on occasions, withdraw groups of pupils to boost their learning and standards. Careful notes are made of each pupil's progress which are used later to plan work which challenges them. Teaching assistants work very closely in harmony with the school's behaviour policy, and so ensure all pupils are included.
17. Assessment is satisfactory. It has improved because of the good leadership and management of the co-ordinator and the manageable systems that have been put in place. Pupils' work is regularly marked for correction. In the best examples seen, written comments are made which give pupils clear pointers on what to do to improve. Teachers' evaluation of pupils' work and written dialogue is stronger in English and mathematics than it is in other subjects. All pupils have targets in English and mathematics which indicate the next level they are working towards in the national curriculum. Some, but not all classes, build on the level target by having more precise learning goals for the different ability groups. Assessment in science is satisfactory. However, the results of occasional tests are not frequently evaluated to pinpoint what individual pupils need to focus on to improve their standards. A very useful task of the week in ICT helps provide pupils with a regular target for learning and a manageable system helps staff identify standards and track progress. In the reception class, staff know where children are progressing on the stepping stones to the goals expected by the start of Year 1.

## **The curriculum**

There is a satisfactory curriculum. In addition, there are good opportunities for enrichment in sports, the arts and in music, and through visits and expert visitors coming to school. Staffing, accommodation and resources adequately meet the needs of the curriculum.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- High numbers of teaching assistants are used well, particularly in literacy and numeracy.
- Pupils have good opportunities to learn beyond lessons through a rich and varied programme of clubs, enrichment activities and visitors who come to school.
- The small school hall restricts physical education and communal activities and the two mobile classrooms make working conditions difficult, especially in winter.

## **Commentary**

18. A broad and balanced curriculum is in place. It is generally soundly planned and enables most groups of pupils to achieve at least satisfactorily in all subjects and areas of learning. Planning has been strengthened and schemes of work are now in place in all subjects. In the reception class planning is clear and the right emphasis is given to the different areas of learning. There is a full complement of teaching staff, but over recent years suitably qualified staff have been difficult to recruit. This has impeded developments.
19. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is effectively planned. These pupils are mostly taught in class and effectively supported by the teaching assistants. However, there is also a very well thought-through pattern of withdrawing individual pupils for more specialist teaching, the involvement of specific support from outside agencies and in small groups to boost their literacy or numeracy. Individual education plans (IEPs) are well prepared with clear and measurable targets, activities and resources that enable these pupils to achieve their best. A good focus on all individuals' needs ensures they achieve well and are included in school life.
20. Many pupils, including the younger ones, benefit from clubs such as the very well attended choir, and those for homework, gym and for learning the recorder. These change to suit the school year. Pupils have good opportunities to participate in local cross country, football, netball and athletics as well as visiting theatres, enriching their cultural experiences. Visits by a wide range of expert visitors from the local community such as the Christian outreach group and a puppy walker, who taught younger children how to keep pets, are also beneficial.
21. Recent enhancements to the classrooms and the office accommodation have had a positive impact on the learning environment and smooth running of the school. Access for pupils and adults with physical disabilities has improved. There is sufficient space inside and outside for the children in the reception class to move freely and take part in practical activities. However there are some weaknesses. The hall remains too small to allow physical education activities to take place effectively and limits pupils' achievement. Two classes are also taught in mobile classrooms, located in the playground, and these do not provide an effective learning environment, even though the teachers do their best to make them attractive.

## **Care, guidance and support**

The school provides good care and guidance for pupils. A high priority is assigned to matters of health and safety. Monitoring is good and used well to support and encourage pupils' achievement. Less well developed, but satisfactory, is the way pupils' views are sought and valued.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school provides a safe and caring environment and good induction for new pupils.
- Staff know pupils well and have good working relationships with pupils.
- The monitoring of pupils' progress and personal development is good.
- There are few opportunities for pupils formally to contribute their views.

## **Commentary**

22. The school provides a safe and caring place for all pupils. They are well supervised and good arrangements are made for pupils who are unwell. All staff have basic first aid qualifications and a senior first aid supervisor has full qualifications. Accidents are not frequent and good records are kept of any incidents. Regular inspections are made of the premises and equipment used in the school, risk assessments are carried out efficiently and there are regular fire drills. Child protection procedures are fully understood by staff and in order to support the headteacher the deputy head is to undertake new training in this important area of care within the school. The good care and guidance provided by the school for pupils and sometimes for their families is extended to make good use of the professional services of a range of agencies such as the education welfare service. Good priority is assigned to health and safety.
23. Teaching staff know the pupils in their care very well and all pupils feel they have someone in school to whom they can turn for advice and support should they need it. Although the personal development of pupils is not formally monitored, the good knowledge that staff have of their pupils is used effectively to promote their learning and help them to improve and mature as they move through the school. Tracking and monitoring of pupils' academic development are satisfactory and are used appropriately to help identify not only how well pupils are doing with their work but also how they can improve and do better. The progress of the pupils with special educational needs, against the targets on their IEPs and Statements of Special Educational Needs, is effectively followed.
24. New pupils are gently introduced to school life by a gradual integration into the reception class. The good links with nurseries and play-groups in the area helps this process to be smooth and well co-ordinated so that new pupils and their families feel happy and confident about their new school. The process of getting to know children begins well at the time of admission when a good background profile is built up for each child. Pupils from Year 6 are also well prepared for their transfer to secondary school. They meet staff and also have a chance to spend time in their new school in the summer term so that they can confidently move to secondary education.
25. Pupils are enthusiastic about helping in class and around the school. They undertake a range of duties with calm efficiency. The recent introduction of Year 5 and 6 play leaders who help younger pupils in the playground, organise games and sort out disagreements has been very successful. Less well managed are opportunities for pupils to contribute their ideas about their school community and so make a contribution to future developments. There are plans to implement a school council which, it is proposed, will evolve from year councils. Pupils are able to enter into some discussion on important issues through circle time and within classrooms. However, such opportunities are sporadic and pupils' views are not as regularly considered and good ideas taken forward in the school as they might be. Valuable opportunities for pupils' personal development are missed; they do not acquire some of the basic skills of citizenship by being fully involved in their school community.

### **Partnership with parents, other schools and the community**

Good and effective partnerships with parents, the community and other schools have been sustained. These make a valuable contribution to the learning opportunities and achievement of pupils.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Parents are positive about the school and the quality of education provided.
- Parents remain concerned about the information they receive about their children's progress.
- Some parents do not feel that their views and suggestions are considered by the school.
- Good community links are well used to extend learning.
- Effective links with local schools help support pupils and the professional development of staff.

### **Commentary**

26. Links with parents and the partnership between home and school are good. Parents have a mostly positive view of the school and especially value the quality of education provided and the way in which their children's education is enriched by the good links within the local community and with other schools. Good information is included in the governors' annual report to parents and prospectus, which both meet statutory requirements.
27. Better arrangements are in place for parents to meet with staff to discuss their children's progress. A formal parents' consultative meeting is organised once a year to which all parents are invited. The long-standing open invitation for parents to meet staff at other times, if they wish to do so, also continues. Although commendable and flexible, some parents still do not feel this informal arrangement meets their needs. Some remain unhappy about both the exchange of information on their child's progress and the chance to contribute their views and suggestions about the school. Improved information is contained in the annual report to parents of their child's progress. However, both the quality and quantity of information presented to parents varies too much from class to class.
28. Parents are provided with good information about what is happening through regular newsletters. A few parents help in school on a regular basis with more help available when trips out of school are planned, so that pupils are well supervised by adults. The school is aware that some parents do not find it easy to support their child at home. Some initiatives have helped inform and support parents so they could help their children at home in literacy and numeracy. The school is aware that more similar initiatives, possibly to support reading, would be helpful. The "Friends" of the school help by raising funds and supporting staff.
29. Links with the community are good and well used by the school to extend pupils' learning beyond the classroom. A broad range of enjoyable and informative visits out of school takes place around the village and local area, to Colchester and further afield to such places as Duxford and Saffron Walden Museum. Pupils also join in community initiatives and share with the local residents, for example at Christmas they visit The Old Deanery and Millard House to sing carols. Pupils experience new and stimulating ideas from these visits which they use well in their lessons. A good example is the visit made to Kentwell Hall to learn about the Tudors.
30. Links with other schools are good and used effectively to ensure that pupils are well prepared for the next stage of their education. By the time pupils transfer to their secondary school, especially Tabor High School, they are familiar with their new school and the staff there, so the move is less daunting. Links with the local federation of schools are developing well. The strength of professional links with colleagues in local schools and colleges is helpful and productive. Tabor High School has provided good support with the development of ICT in the school and in turn regular work-experience opportunities are given for secondary pupils.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership and management, including that of the headteacher and senior staff, are satisfactory overall. Some subjects are led much better than others. Management is satisfactory. The work of the governing body is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Governors provide effective challenge and support to the headteacher and staff.
- Financial management is very good.
- Special educational needs, assessment, ICT, physical education and music are well led and managed.
- The co-ordinators in English and mathematics do not have the confidence, skills and strategies to drive up standards and the quality of teaching.

### **Commentary**



31. The chair of governors provides a very good steer to the work of the governors. Committees run effectively and effective team work is evident. Governors have a clear idea of the school's strengths and where further development is needed. They have a very good grasp of budgetary and staffing priorities. A swift response is made to any new local or national initiatives. They have ensured that the school is focused on improving the quality of provision, rooting out areas of weakness and responding effectively to the changing nature of the yearly intake. Very regular visits are made to talk to staff and see lessons in action and the outcomes are reported back at governors' meetings. The useful records of the visits that are kept do not, however, sufficiently pin-point how well developments are going. Governors are well trained. Performance management procedures are effectively implemented and closely monitored.
32. Satisfactory leadership and management by the headteacher and senior staff have ensured that the standards achieved compare satisfactorily with similar schools. A good, inclusive climate for learning has been established. The headteacher has ensured that the school has been resilient to the changes brought about by the changing nature of the intake, staff illness and the difficulty in appointing new, good quality staff. Her very clear analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the school closely accord with the inspection findings. There is a close and productive working relationship between the head and deputy headteacher, who bear the brunt of monitoring teaching, analysing the school's performance and monitoring progress of the development plan. A weakness is that the senior management team spend too little time evaluating and improving the effectiveness of subject co-ordinators.
33. Provision for special educational needs is effectively led and managed. The co-ordinator is very well organised and up to date in her thinking and training. She plays an influential role in the school, identifying the growing numbers of pupils with special needs, in conjunction with other staff at an early stage, and ensuring effective support is given. Links with parents of pupils with special educational needs have improved. They are kept well informed of their children's progress in school and if they need more specialist support from outside the school this is carefully discussed. She organises and deploys the enthusiastic and capable team of teaching assistants to good effect. The good provision she has ensured results in pupils with special educational need achieving well.
34. ICT, music, physical education and assessment are also effectively led. As a result standards are improving. However, the core subjects of English and mathematics are led by staff who have had little previous experience of leading a core subject or are based in classes lower down the school. Their management is satisfactory but their leadership skills are insufficiently developed. Consequently standards are not being driven up because they do not target the weaknesses in pupils' standards and help drive up the quality of teaching and pace of learning. Co-ordinators have limited time at present to monitor teaching or pupils' work and to disseminate good practice, although their roles and responsibilities are clear.
35. The budget is managed very well and has been prudently maintained since the last inspection. The school systematically budgets for all expenditure and is very clear about the costs of its developments. For example, development planning is carefully costed and capital grants for building work, for improving standards and providing support for pupils with special educational needs are spent very well. Financial records are meticulously maintained. The budget is carefully monitored on a monthly basis. Principles of best value are applied well and have helped improve the cost-effectiveness of provision. The relatively large expenditure and carry-forward in the table reflects money earmarked and now spent on improvements to the accommodation. The school's average costs and satisfactory effectiveness ensures sound value for money.

**Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003**

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	568978
Total expenditure	474468
Expenditure per pupil	2978

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	102113
Balance carried forward to the next	94509

## **PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS**

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

There are three intakes to the reception class during the school year. Children join in the term prior to their fifth birthday. The attainment of the children who have been in school for one term (around one third of the total intake) is average but the range of ability is wide. Many but not all children from last year's intake reached the early learning goals and progress based on teacher assessment indicates that achievement is satisfactory.

The provision for children in the reception class is mostly satisfactory. Children are achieving well in their mathematical development because of good teaching. By the end of the year children are likely to reach above average standards for their age. The children do not achieve quite as well in other areas, where teaching is satisfactory. As a result children are likely to reach average standards in these areas. The curriculum is soundly balanced and the teacher integrates the areas of learning appropriately to stimulate and sustain children's interest. Satisfactory use is made of assessment to track children's progress, which is detailed in literacy.

The main strengths of the teaching seen during the inspection were the effective classroom management and the balance between teacher-directed and child-initiated activities. All adults manage the children well. The teacher has a group of volunteer helpers to supplement the adult/child ratio and thus give individual attention. Tasks are soundly planned and delegated to the teaching assistants, who implement them effectively and provide detailed written feedback to the class teacher. However, lesson objectives are insufficiently honed to suit the stage of development of individual children. The accommodation has been improved to extend the wet play facilities but there is no provision for children to use wheeled toys. Arrangements for induction are good. Provision since the time of the last inspection has been satisfactorily maintained.

### **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in personal, social and emotional development is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children participate well in class routines and help each other.
- Guidance to children on acceptable behaviour is not always clear and consistent.

#### **Commentary**

36. The teacher has effective classroom routines that add structure to the school day. She seeks ways to encourage children to help and has a rota for sharing out the jobs. Children are praised when they help and they quickly learn that good manners are valued. Children are trusted to tidy up and they line up without fuss ready to move around the school. There is a well-ordered atmosphere in the classroom and children have generally good behaviour and attitudes.
37. A minority of children call out during teacher-directed sessions. In the main the teacher gives clear guidance and praises examples of good behaviour but with persistent interruption there is a tendency to let such individuals dominate and so that their inappropriate behaviour is rewarded.

### **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

Provision in communication, language and literacy is **satisfactory**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Structured teaching programmes for literacy result in children learning to recognise letter sounds and simple words.
- The features of good handwriting are not consistently taught to the children.

## **Commentary**

38. Children learn at a sound pace from a structured teaching programme for developing early literacy skills. The teaching programme is continued through Years 1 and 2 and ensures progression. The children enjoyed the phonic work and participating in regular short responses and rhymes. They could identify simple and distinct consonants at the beginnings of words. Some could recognise rhyme and suggest others to fit.
39. The classroom resources and alphabet frieze are not in the same style of writing as modelled by the teacher. Children's reproduction of letter formations is similarly inconsistent. Some children write letters with joining flicks, others do not.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision for mathematical development is **good**.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Effective and regular use is made of number rhymes and games to reinforce basic counting and mathematical vocabulary.
- Mathematical ideas and vocabulary are set in a practical context to make the learning meaningful to young children.

## **Commentary**

40. Teaching is good and learning is lively and fun. Actions are exaggerated, and mathematical vocabulary is learnt by the lively use of rhymes and chants. This encourages children to have a go with number and sequencing. Children could chant to 30 and count backwards from 10.
41. Teaching takes good account of the prior knowledge of children and carefully repeats key vocabulary and ideas so that mathematical development is absorbed. Children enjoyed exploring symmetry, within their preparation for Christmas, by placing lights on a tree in symmetrical formation. By the end of the session some children used the vocabulary correctly, but they could all recognise the distinctive feature of a symmetrical pattern. This activity was well pitched to the children's ability and enabled them to make progress.

## **KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD**

It was not possible to make a judgement on provision in this very wide area of learning. During the inspection children were seen making simple circuits with a battery and light bulb and children could use a mouse to drag and drop an image across a computer screen. Indications are that standards are average.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

It is not possible to make a judgement on provision in this area of learning. During the inspection children were observed manipulating plastic dough to make figures for a Nativity scene. They could roll, twist and add details with tools. Children's fine motor control is soundly developed.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Role play is well resourced and helps children consolidate learning from other parts of the curriculum.
- Children carefully craft creative work using a variety of media.

### Commentary

42. The role-play area is a focus for learning. During the inspection it was a shop selling Christmas cards. Children were able to purchase cards priced from 1 penny to 12 pence and send them to members of staff and children. To enhance the quality of play the teacher had provided money, purses and a range of writing materials. The teacher maintained involvement by responding to cards. More girls make good use of the shop than boys.
43. Art and creative work is well resourced and children enjoy painting, printing and collage. Work is carefully planned to enhance other curriculum areas. Children's work is careful and they are encouraged to make choices in their selection of media and use of colour. Standards of children's work are average.

## SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2

### ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and achieve well.
- Higher attaining pupils make insufficient progress with reading by the end of Year 2 but reach the expected Level 5 by the end of Year 6.
- Levels of challenge and support in lessons need to be improved to better reflect the different levels of ability within classes.
- Management is sound but the leadership of the subject is having little impact on improving the quality of teaching and achievement.

### Commentary

44. Standards are below average by the end of Year 2. Achievement is satisfactory as these pupils entered with below average standards. Standards are average by the end of Year 6. Achievement from the end of Year 2 and from when the pupils started school is satisfactory as their standards were average at these two earlier points. Girls do slightly better than the boys in Years 1 and 2 but the boys do better in Years 3 to 6, making up the ground they lost earlier on. Standards are not quite as high as in last year's national tests because the 2002 year group contained more higher attaining pupils.
45. By the end of Year 2 standards are above average in writing but below average in speaking, listening and reading. Higher attaining pupils, in particular, make insufficient progress with reading. Pupils have a range of strategies that enable them to read words in isolation. However, few have comprehension skills when reading a text. Achievement in Year 2 is hampered by regular interruptions to lessons by a small number of pupils with behavioural difficulties. Consequently, opportunities to extend the learning of the higher attaining pupils are thwarted as

the teacher maintains a productive learning environment for the rest. For this reason achievement is satisfactory rather than good.

46. By the end of Year 6 standards in speaking, listening and reading and writing are average. Pupils' achievement, based on prior attainment at the end of Year 2, is satisfactory. This is because most teaching is sound. Teachers have secure knowledge of the curriculum and the national literacy strategy and consequently lessons are well structured. Teachers make good use of the plenary section at the end of the lesson to give pupils an opportunity to explain their learning and thus consolidate what they have learnt. In addition to the literacy lesson, each class has further time allocated to specific reading programmes. Pupils have daily practice of phonics and word recognition. As a result pupils are using these skills to good effect in their independent writing. Teachers keep effective assessment notes on pupils' progress. Regular marking gives clear feedback to pupils on how well they have done; it also gives praise.
47. There are two key reasons that explain why teaching is not yet good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers do not yet link their planning to the information gained through assessment about what each pupil can and cannot do. As a result the tasks set in lessons to different groups of pupils and individuals, although enabling them to work productively, do not provide the challenge that would enable them to consistently achieve well in lessons. For example, pupils were set a written task to compare the narrative in St Luke's and St Matthew's gospels. Although the support enabled the more able pupils to complete the task well, less support was given to most other pupils and so their rate of learning was sound rather than good. Secondly, there are inconsistencies in teachers' expectations. Handwriting, for instance, varies between classes.
48. Pupils throughout the school with special educational needs are well supported by an effective team of teaching assistants. Learning is supported in small groups, either as targeted literacy support or by talking pupils through tasks with additional resources. As a result these pupils achieve well.
49. Management is satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has made accurate evaluative comment on standards and has up to date knowledge of curriculum development, which she effectively disseminates to colleagues. There are adequate numbers of reading books and dictionaries. The subject co-ordinator manages the budget effectively and is enthusiastic about developing literacy, but her leadership skills are under-developed. Insufficient time is made available for her to lead the subject and share good practice by monitoring the work of teachers and pupils. However, overall improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory as achievement remains satisfactory and standards have risen in line with national standards.

### **Language and literacy across the curriculum**

50. Teachers make satisfactory links to other curriculum areas. For instance in Year 6 pupils have produced historical biographies of prominent Victorians using information derived from the Internet and CD-ROMs. The final copy is in a word processed format with a professional finish. Such writing for a purpose is typical of many examples throughout the school.

### **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

#### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Standards at the end of Year 2 have risen since the previous inspection.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, enabling them to achieve well.
- While day to day management is sound, overall leadership is unsatisfactory.
- Higher attaining pupils in each set in Years 3 to 6 are insufficiently challenged.

## Commentary

51. Standards at the end of Year 2 are below the national average. Significant improvement in standards was evident in the national test results in 2000. However, this has not been maintained in the last two years because pupils' standards on entry are also lower. Most pupils now achieve satisfactorily and pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of effective support by teaching assistants. A minority of pupils in the present Year 2 have significant behavioural problems and although the school has been effective in helping these pupils to improve, the pace and flow of lessons is still affected. This is why achievement overall is not yet good. Standards and achievement have improved satisfactorily since the previous inspection.
52. Standards in Years 3 to 6 are average as they were at the time of the previous inspection. National test results in the Year 2002 significantly exceeded this, as the school formed a small extra set for higher attaining pupils in Year 6 and pupils responded well to the challenges involved. This year the school has responded to the perceived needs of the pupils and the extra set is composed of pupils from Years 3 to 5 who have special educational needs. This provision is effective and is having a positive effect on learning. However, in the other sets, where pupils across the age range are set by their identified national curriculum levels, higher attaining pupils are often insufficiently challenged. The test results in 2003 reflect this in the lower than average percentage of Level 5's reached by pupils. Pupils' development in using and applying mathematics is less secure than in the other attainment targets.
53. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. The outcomes of learning show that teaching and learning are satisfactory by the end of Year 2. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils were involved and interested in trying to find out the teacher's 'secret number' by asking appropriate questions related to its properties. Teaching and learning are satisfactory by the end of Year 6, but with a significant proportion of good teaching, particularly in the older years. Planning is clear but its effectiveness is limited by the consistent lack of identification and provision for the higher attaining pupils in each class. In an effective lesson based on finding perimeters, the teacher planned appropriate tasks suitable for the needs of the range of pupils. The learning of higher attaining pupils was extended well through questions based on compound shapes.
54. Teachers manage pupils well and overall are successful in engaging their interest. Consequently the majority of pupils respond by working hard. In a Year 6 lesson based on sequences, the pupils were interested in the patterns formed by plotting the unit digit of sequences on a circular number face and were keen to find out if the subsequent ones were different. In this lesson motivation was high and learning was good.
55. Literacy skills are reinforced appropriately in teachers' marking and displays of key words but opportunities to enhance speaking and listening skills and reinforce learning of mathematical skills are often missed in review sessions. The support of learning by ICT is satisfactory and developing. However, the overall good quality of teaching noted during the last inspection has not been maintained.
56. Leadership is unsatisfactory overall. The co-ordinator manages Years 1 and 2 appropriately and the deputy headteacher provides support by managing Years 3 to 6. However, there are insufficient structures in place to ensure that the identification of all areas for development is made or that good practice in teaching is shared in order to raise achievement. Overall improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

## Mathematics across the curriculum

57. The use and support of pupils' skills in other subject areas is satisfactory. Examples of good practice are found in science through the collection and representation of data, for example, the investigation in Year 2 to find out which colours shine best in the dark. In history, work on time lines was particularly effective in a Year 3 lesson.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have a good scientific vocabulary and most can competently write descriptions, explanations and predictions.
- Pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of life processes.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of the good support they receive.
- Teachers lack confidence in teaching some areas of materials, forces and electricity.
- Lesson objectives and activities are inconsistently planned with the needs of different groups of pupils in mind.

### Commentary

58. Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. Standards are below average at the end of Year 2 but achievement is satisfactory because they were below average on entry to the school. Standards are average at the end Year 6 and again achievement is satisfactory compared with pupils' starting points on entry and the end of Year 2. Pupils with special educational needs are doing well and average and higher attaining pupils are achieving satisfactorily. This is a broadly similar picture to the last inspection.
59. Staff changes, some weaknesses in the curriculum and the way pupils' standards have been assessed have meant that some pupils have underachieved in recent years. Staff have worked hard to address these deficiencies and achievement was satisfactory in the Year 6 tests last year. A new scheme of work has been implemented, and science is now taught in dedicated lessons rather than topics. Pupils' work is better assessed, although much more accurately in Years 3 to 6 than Years 1 and 2. Training has also improved teachers' confidence. Consequently, satisfactory achievement is secured but it is not yet good in every class.
60. Pupils have a good knowledge of facts, understanding of ideas and recall of living things. These are sound in materials, forces, electricity and light. This is one reason why achievement is satisfactory rather than good. This can be traced back to the teachers' good knowledge of life processes but uncertainty in delivering other areas which they see as being more difficult.
61. Throughout the school pupils enjoy the practical work they do, which develops a spirit of enquiry. Good emphasis is placed on pupils learning the correct vocabulary and writing in a scientific style. Consequently most pupils can write descriptions, explanations, predictions and scientific relationships at a level appropriate to their age and ability. So, as pupils approach Year 6 they become confident in planning, carrying out and making sense of their investigations. Higher attaining pupils use scientific conventions accurately and can draw graphs of their data using a line of best fit. However, some of the average attaining pupils are not as skilled as they might be in understanding the validity and reliability of data and this is limiting their achievement.
62. The outcomes in the tests at the ends of both Years 2 and 6 shows that teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Although some good teaching and learning was seen in individual lessons the work study shows it is not consistently good in all years. Teachers plan using clear objectives and ensure pupils study the right things at the right time. Pupils of different abilities are given tasks with sufficient challenge to help them work productively. The needs of pupils with special educational needs are well known, and the good support they receive helps them do well. Teachers also target their questions well to individual pupils, which helps them develop their understanding in a step by step manner. However, the tasks and goals given in lessons are often quite similar, although this is done better in some classes than others. In the weaker examples, insufficient attention is given to planning how the activities and objectives in lessons



might be adapted to better suit pupils of differing abilities. Stronger teaching in Year 6 is helping to provide a boost to standards as pupils approach the national curriculum tests.

63. The joint arrangements for leadership and management are satisfactory. They ensure satisfactory achievement but are insufficiently robust to improve this.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

Provision in information and communication technology (ICT) is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- A good task for the week helps pupils to focus their learning and work productively.
- The skills pupils have learnt are enabling them to access a wide range of ICT applications.
- More use of computers and other ICT equipment could be made in a few classes.
- The subject is well led and managed and consequently standards are improving.

### **Commentary**

64. Provision at the last inspection was unsatisfactory and standards were below average by the end of both Year 2 and Year 6. Since then good improvement has been made. Pupils are now reaching average standards at the end of Years 2 and 6 and are achieving satisfactorily. Some classes have not done as well in the past because of weaknesses in the curriculum and teaching, but as these have been resolved their achievement and standards have risen.
65. The pupils in Year 2 have soundly developed their ICT skills. They enjoy using computers and confidently make their word-processed work more attractive by quickly changing the font or its size; they automatically include capital letters, full stops and spaces. They can already control by themselves programmable toys, such as a *roamer*, and can talk about their experiences of ICT both inside and beyond school. The Year 6 pupils are consolidating their sound technical skills and developing new ways of using ICT in their work. For example, in a lesson seen in Year 6 pupils concentrated hard and understood the difference between files, fields and records when talking about databases. They understood how useful databases could be in extracting information as well as appreciating why some questions might be difficult to answer if different databases did not contain the same information. Many can use electronic mail and some can talk about its uses and disadvantages. Most are very confident in independently using the Internet and use this to carry out research and extract information into work they are preparing to enliven it. Many pupils are making up lost ground as a result of the more secure curriculum.
66. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. ICT is regularly taught each week either through an ICT lesson or in a subject context. Each class has an ICT task for the week which helps to focus their minds on a clear goal for learning. This is generally working well. Training has helped teachers become more confident in planning and using ICT more regularly. Pupils say they make good use of ICT in the weekly homework clubs and at home. Most teachers are incorporating ICT satisfactorily into pupils' learning but in a minority of classes insufficient use is made on a regular basis. A useful and manageable system of assessing pupils' work is established and is helping staff paint a clear picture of standards and what they need to do to improve them. Some teaching assistants lack confidence in supporting pupils in their ICT work.
67. The subject is making good strides forward because it is well led and managed. A good plan for the future has been thought through. In addition, a good investment has been made in purchasing new computers and software. Each classroom has at least one good computer and printer. A new ICT suite has been established and is proving beneficial. However, currently it cannot accommodate a full class of pupils working in pairs.

### **Information and communication technology across the curriculum**

68. Satisfactory use is made of ICT across the curriculum. However, there is scope for further consolidation and consistent use in all classes. Word-processing is prominent in English and some other subjects to compose, customise and present text in a lively way. Data-handling and the development of number skills are supported in mathematics. Pupils use special sensors to collect and organise data in scientific investigations. CD-ROMs and the Internet are used for research in subjects such as history and geography. Digital cameras, cassette recorders and a microscope help pupils use other ICT equipment in their learning.

## HUMANITIES

*Religious education was fully inspected and is reported on below. Inspectors also saw a lesson in history, discussed work with the co-ordinator and sampled work, but there was insufficient evidence to report in full. **Geography** was not inspected.*

69. In **history** the work study and discussions with teachers and pupils indicate that standards are average by the time pupils reach the end of Year 6. Pupils have appropriate knowledge of the areas of study and there is evidence of appropriate use of a range of source material in the development of the skills of historical inquiry. However, the higher order skill attached to the evaluation of source material is underdeveloped in the work of higher attaining pupils.
70. Teaching was of good quality and pupils responded with interest and worked hard. Over a longer period of time work samples on events leading to the fire of London, local history, the Tudor and the Victorians, for example, indicate that teaching overall is at least satisfactory. However teachers' marking of work contains little dialogue to help the learner to improve. There was evidence that teachers use ICT to support learning and that literacy skills are developed through the subject, as in Year 2 through a newspaper article on 'The Mystery of Guy Fawkes' and Year 6 by the examination of excerpts from Queen Victoria's Scottish Diaries. Photographic evidence shows that visits are used appropriately to extend learning.

## Religious Education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have good knowledge of Bible stories.
- The use of the community and religious groups supports learning well.
- Achievement is not yet supported by suitable assessment procedures.

### Commentary

71. Pupils enter the school with below average standards and make satisfactory achievement during Years 1 and 2. Standards in the present Year 2 are below those of the locally agreed syllabus because of the demands of a significant minority of pupils with behaviour problems and the timing and positioning of lessons. While the class teacher is effective in helping these pupils to cope with the demands of lessons, procedures do interrupt the flow of learning. Time is not always used well to develop learning in Year 1. The average standards noted during the previous inspection have not been maintained; however, pupils' standards at entry are now lower. Effective support by teaching assistants contributes to the sound achievement of lower attaining pupils. Pupils in the present Year 6, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory achievement and standards are in line with those of the locally agreed syllabus, as they were at the previous inspection.
72. Overall, by the time pupils leave school they have good knowledge of stories from the Old and New Testaments, sound understanding of Christian beliefs and appreciate the basics of Judaism and Hinduism. In Year 1, for example, pupils learn about Zacchaeus and consider why

they themselves are special. Pupils in Year 5 link the story of the Good Samaritan with the present day Samaritans and write about whom they would approach for help.

73. Links with some subjects support learning well. In history, pupils examine the lives of famous people like Dr Barnardo and see how his concern for others and his commitment had an impact on society. In literacy, Year 6 pupils examine sections of the gospels according to Saint Luke and St Matthew in order to take account of differing viewpoints. Pupils develop empathy and their literacy development is supported satisfactorily by writing in role and recounting Bible stories as newspaper articles. The use of ICT to support learning is insufficient. Overall religious education contributes well to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, although opportunities are missed in the promotion of multicultural aspects.
74. It was not possible to judge the quality of teaching during the previous inspection because insufficient lessons were observed. However, during the present inspection teaching was satisfactory. Teachers manage pupils well. Good relationships in the classroom and positive encouragement enable pupils to share their thoughts and feelings and know that they will be valued. In a successful Year 4 lesson based on the Christmas Crib and the giving of gifts at Christmas, pupils were able confidently to develop the theme and consider what gifts that are not purchased could be given to others. Teachers mark pupils' work but rarely include comments that will help the learner to improve.
75. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The need to improve assessment of learning has been identified as an area for development within the new locally agreed syllabus that is about to be implemented. Good links have been established with local churches and representatives of these regularly visit the school and sometimes lead assemblies, for example. However, the role of the co-ordinator has not been developed to include the regular monitoring of teaching and learning in the classroom. Overall, satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

*There was not enough evidence to report on any of these subjects in full, either because not enough teaching was seen or there was not enough evidence to judge standards and achievement in all parts of each subject. However, one lesson was seen in physical education and in music singing was heard in hymn practice and by the school choir. The views of the co-ordinators were also sought. Work in **art and design** and **design and technology** was not inspected.*

76. In **music**, it is quite clear that the expert knowledge of the deputy headteacher, who also co-ordinates the subject well, shines through like a beacon. She teaches singing with precision, giving all pupils extreme clarity on how exactly to perform. For example, she smiles and uses other face and hand gestures as she conducts them to give signals which help with timing and pitch. The choir sing tunefully, with an awareness of breathing, diction and dynamics that belies their age. A particular success of the choir is the high number of boys who participate and pupils with special educational need who also achieve at a very high standard. Standards in singing are a step above those in other subjects in the school and very high. Children sing with unusually good expression. The co-ordinator also leads the weekly singing in assembly, prepares the choir and has organised a range of successful public productions. A better scheme of work, improved confidence of most other teachers and better resources are also evident. Good leadership and management has resulted in good improvements being made since the last inspection.
77. In **physical education** teaching was observed in Year 6. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable subject co-ordinator was highly effective in coaching pupils to improve their skills with running passes in Rugby. The pupils practised with each other, remained focused and developed team skills. As a result of the brisk pace and well-targeted interventions by the teacher the pupils made very good progress. They left the field motivated, knowing how they had improved. Pupils say they are well satisfied with the range of sport and physical activities on offer and especially

enjoy team competitions. All pupils are offered blocks of swimming lessons during the year and supplementary sessions are held for non-swimmers in Year 6. The school has a level playing field and a hard play area but the school hall is too small to allow some activities to be undertaken safely. The subject is managed and led well and the scheme of work has been strengthened. Some good progress has been made since the last inspection.

## **PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP**

### **Personal, social and health education**

*There was not enough information to report on this area individually. No lessons were seen.*

78. The school has recently introduced a new commercial scheme, "Telling Tales", which is appropriately structured for pupils and focuses on important areas for their personal development such as staying healthy. This links well with the school initiative on Healthy Eating which has led to a Healthy Schools Intermediate Award. Assemblies seen during the inspection made a satisfactory contribution to this curriculum area.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

### *Inspection judgement*

### *Grade*

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>4</b>
Pupils' achievement	4

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities</b>	<b>3</b>
Attendance	2
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	4
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	4
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>4</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	4
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

*Inspectors make judgements on a scale: excellent (grade 1); very good (2); good (3); satisfactory (4); unsatisfactory (5); poor (6); very poor (7).*