

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BRADFIELD PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Manningtree

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114735

Headteacher: Miss D Griggs

Lead inspector: John Messer

Dates of inspection: 24-26 November 2003

Inspection number: 15477

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:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	102
School address:	Heath Road Bradfield Manningtree Essex
Postcode:	CO11 2UZ
Telephone number:	01255 870241
Fax number:	01255 870958
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Mark Murrison
Date of previous inspection:	November 1998

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

This community primary school has four classes and is smaller than most primary schools. Most children come from within the village but around a third come from further afield. Most are from typically average social backgrounds. Nearly all are from white English speaking families although a small number are from ethnic minority backgrounds. All pupils speak English as their first language. Children arrive at school with broadly average standards of development in each area of learning. A below average proportion of pupils, around 8 per cent, is entered on the school's record of special educational needs. The proportion of pupils who enter or leave the school part way through this stage of their education, around 9 per cent, is below average. It is often difficult to recruit teachers in this area. The school received a 'School Achievement Award' in recognition of its improved performance in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 in 2002 and the 'Investors in People' award in 2003.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
15477	John Messer	Lead inspector	Mathematics, science, information and communication technology, art and design, design and technology, physical education.
14756	John Lovell	Lay inspector	
20963	Judy Keiner	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, English, geography, history, religious education, music, special educational needs.

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

### **OVERALL EVALUATION**

**This school provides a sound education for its pupils** and provides satisfactory value for money. It has significant strengths, especially in leadership and management, so that its effectiveness, already sound, is improving. Teaching is good but pupils' achievement is only satisfactory because the high levels of consistently good teaching have not been established for very long and the school has suffered from staffing problems over several years that adversely affected the continuity of pupils' learning. The school is now in a very good position to make further advances.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The strong leadership of the headteacher has resulted in good improvements over the past two years and all staff share a determination to improve standards.
- Children settle quickly into the reception class, where teaching is always good so that the children learn effectively.
- Teachers generate an enthusiasm for reading and standards are above average.
- The work of the governing body is very good; governors monitor the work of the school closely and help to shape its direction.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and teaching assistants make a strong contribution to their effective learning.
- Not all teachers require pupils to produce enough written work in subjects other than English or to produce sufficient records of their work in mathematics and science.
- Computers are not used enough to support learning across the curriculum.
- The more able pupils are not always provided with challenging tasks that extend their thinking and require them to produce work of the highest standards of which they are capable.
- In the classes for pupils in Years 1 to 4 too little time is allowed for teaching science.

The school has improved significantly since its last inspection. The standards that pupils attain in reading, writing and mathematics are broadly similar but the leadership and governance have improved. The school seized the opportunity offered by the Public Finance Initiative (PFI) to substantially improve the accommodation and this is contributing to a rising trend in standards. Standards in information and communication technology have improved, as have standards in speaking and listening and science attained by pupils in Years 1 and 2. The curriculum is now better organised and finances are managed efficiently. Facilities for physical education are now good. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved substantially; it was unsatisfactory and is now good. The school has tackled all the issues raised in the last inspection report but there is still too little time devoted to science in some classes.

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED**

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	A	E	C	C
mathematics	D	E	C	C
science	E	E*	E	E

*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.*

*These results should be treated with great caution as the groups that take the tests are very small.*

**Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall.** Children's achievement in the Foundation Stage is good and most are on course to attain the goals that children are expected to reach by the end of reception. Most pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and they attain at least average standards in all subjects except reading, where they achieve well and attain standards that are above average. Most pupils continue to achieve satisfactorily in Years 3 to 6 although there are gaps in their prior learning, particularly in science, that slow the rate of progress and constrain the standards they attain. Nevertheless, most attain average standards in all subjects except reading, where again standards are above average. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and attain standards that are similar to those attained by the others. The more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they could and therefore do not always attain the standards of which they are capable.

**Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good.** They have good attitudes to their work; they are eager to please and keen to succeed. Pupils develop good levels of self-confidence and self-esteem. They have a keen sense of justice and fair play. Behaviour is good and pupils work and play happily together. Attendance and punctuality are good.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The school provides a sound quality of education. The quality of teaching is good.** An examination of pupils' work indicates that the good teaching has not been secure until very recently and consequently there are gaps in pupils' prior learning. Although much of the provision is now good, it has not been established for long enough to enable a secure judgement that is good overall. All the teaching staff are relatively new to the school and one, representing a quarter of the class teachers, only started teaching at the school a few weeks before the inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is now much more consistent than it was; until recently, staffing difficulties seriously affected achievement and this is still having an impact on the standards that pupils attain. Pupils now learn effectively in lessons but there is a considerable amount of catching up to do. Pupils' positive attitudes to school support learning well. The curriculum is well organised so that skills, knowledge and understanding are taught systematically. Accommodation and resources have recently been improved and are now good.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**The leadership and the management of the school are good.** The governing body works very effectively. The school is well regulated and runs efficiently thanks to the headteacher's strong and effective leadership. There is a strong sense of teamwork and a shared commitment to continuing improvement and raising standards further. Finances are managed well and are directed towards the most important areas of priority. The school has got its priorities right and is working hard towards improving provision systematically. Responsibility for managing the curriculum has been delegated appropriately to subject leaders but most have been in post for a very short time and have not yet had time to have a major impact on raising standards.

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

Most parents are pleased with the education provided for their children. They particularly appreciate the fact that their children like school and that the school encourages pupils to become mature and independent. They feel that staff treat their children fairly and that teachers expect pupils to work hard and to do their best. Although most rate the teaching as good, many have been disappointed with the many changes of teacher that have affected some year groups. Also a small minority are not comfortable at approaching the school with problems or concerns. Pupils themselves are pleased with the facilities offered by the school. They claim that they have to work hard and find out new things in lessons. They are proud to be members of their school.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Increase the amount of written work that teachers require pupils to produce.
- Extend the use of computers to support teaching and learning across the curriculum.
- Make better use of assessment, in particular to raise expectations of what the more able pupils can achieve.
- Increase the amount of time allocated to teaching science in Years 1 to 4.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS**

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and most attain average standards in most subjects by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6. In English standards are above average. Pupils achieve particularly well in reading and develop a great enthusiasm for books.

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

- Pupils achieve well in the reception class, where they gain a good start to school.
- Across the school pupils achieve well in reading and attain standards that are above average.
- There is an improving trend in the school's performance and standards are set to rise further.
- The more able pupils do not always achieve as well as they should or attain the standards of which they are capable.

#### **Commentary**

1. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and most attain average standards in most subjects by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6. However, in English standards are above average and pupils achieve particularly well in reading. There are no significant differences between the achievement of boys and girls and the achievement of the small number of pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds is the same as that of the other pupils. Reading is strong because it is taught systematically from reception through to Year 6. Children in the reception class are introduced to a good system that helps them to match letters with the sounds they make. This system is also taught rigorously in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are also taught how to recognise common words on sight. Alongside the technicalities of learning to read, pupils are encouraged to love books and to enjoy stories. The quality of reading material is good and helps to promote enjoyment in reading.
2. Inspection findings are, to a large extent, mirrored in the results of national tests in English and mathematics. In the tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2003, the school's performance was above national averages in reading and writing. In the tests for pupils in Year 6, the school's performance was average in English but reading was stronger than writing and there is an improving trend. In mathematics the school's overall performance in the tests for pupils in Year 2 and in Year 6 was average.
3. In science, inspection findings are different from the school's performance in last year's national test and assessments. The school's overall performance in science was well below average both for pupils in Year 2 and for those in Year 6. This was because, although all pupils who were assessed by the teacher as having attained the national target of Level 2, a result that ranked among the top ten per cent of schools nationally, no pupils were assessed as having attained the higher Level 3 standard. This lowered the school's overall grade to an 'E' in the summary table. In the national tests in science for pupils in Year 6, the proportion who attained the national target of Level 4 was above average but the proportion that attained the higher Level 5 standard was well below the national average. Again this lowered the school's overall grade to an 'E'. There are clear reasons why relatively few pupils attained the higher standard. The prime cause was a string of staffing problems that adversely affected pupils' learning in Years 3 and 4. These have recently been resolved but it did have a major impact on pupils' achievement, particularly in science because the first priority was to patch the gaps that were identified in pupils' learning in English and mathematics. It was also a priority to bring all pupils up to at least average levels before concentrating on the learning needs of the more able pupils. Also, although the National Curriculum in science is taught according to statutory requirements, the time allocated to teaching the subject in Years 1 to 4 is only sufficient to give superficial coverage. The school has successfully addressed its main priorities, raising

standards generally to at least an average level in reading, writing and mathematics. Science features as a priority for improvement in the current school development plan.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.4 (17.4)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.9 (14.4)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	17.0 (16.5)	16.3 (16.5)

*There were 11 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	26.6 (23.8)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	27.0 (23.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.4 (25.2)	28.6 (28.3)

*There were 16 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

4. Statistical comparisons should be treated with great caution because the number of pupils in the groups taking the national tests is much smaller than in most primary schools. Only 12 pupils in Year 6 took the tests in 2002, for example, and only 11 pupils in Year 2 in 2003. Therefore the over- or under-performance of one pupil can markedly affect the school's overall performance. However, because the groups are so small it is somewhat easier to identify and cater for individual needs. The school has managed this well and has sound assessment procedures which clearly indicate an improving trend in the school's performance in national tests. However, the profile of the pupils currently in Year 6 suggests that, although more will attain the higher Level 5 standard, fewer are likely to attain Level 4. This is associated with the nature of the group due to take the tests. It is also because the staffing problems in Years 3 and 4 that adversely affected achievement are still resonating in the standards attained at the end of Year 6. It is also because insufficient attention has been paid in the past to the needs of the more able pupils. Also their needs are not always met in all classes because expectations of their performance are not high enough. This leads to inconsistencies in achievement for these pupils. As a result they do not always perform as well as they might.
5. Across the school, pupils with special educational needs achieve well. This is because the teachers and support staff know all the pupils very well and promptly identify any specific learning needs. The analyses of their learning requirements, and the related recommendations in their individual education plans for teaching them, are good. They are kept up to date and give clear guidance to teachers and teaching assistants on how best to support them. Teachers use the guidance very well in their planning and classroom support. However, there is scope for improving the use of information and communication technology (ICT) to help these pupils, including the use of 'talking' word banks, digital cameras, and programs designed to help those with literacy and numeracy difficulties.
6. Pupils' achievement in ICT is satisfactory and the standards they attain are broadly average across the school. However, the new computer suite is used well and, with the expertise and guidance of the new co-ordinator for the subject, standards are poised to rise rapidly.
7. Pupils' achievement in religious education is satisfactory and most are on course to meet the expectations defined in the locally agreed syllabus. Although there was insufficient evidence available to judge overall provision in the other subjects, samples of pupils' work indicate that standards are broadly average. All subjects are well established in the school's curriculum

although the limited amount of time devoted to science in Years 1 to 4 restricts achievement and constrains the standards that pupils attain.

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

Pupils' positive attitudes, good behaviour, good relationships and high values are a strength of the school and make a good contribution to pupils' learning. This reflects an improvement on the positive picture found at the time of the last inspection. The pupils' personal development is also good in all areas of spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school maintains a supportive and caring ethos, which is reflected well in pupils' attitudes to school.
- Very good relationships have been established between pupils, and between pupils and staff, which help to promote pupils' good attitudes and personal development.
- Staff provide good role models and this helps to promote good behaviour and a good understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
- Pupils' social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are good.
- Pupils undertake responsibility with commitment and pride.
- Pupils support each other very well in their work.

### **Commentary**

8. Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good and sometimes very good. Parents are very positive about the support that staff provide to encourage pupils to become mature and independent. The vast majority of pupils are well behaved, polite and courteous, and respond well to the supportive and inclusive ethos of the school, although there are a few pupils who behave in a silly or immature manner. Staff work effectively to consistently reinforce high expectations of courtesy and to promote good behaviour. Most parents support the school strongly and are very pleased with the values the school promotes. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and around the school is good overall. Staff deal quickly and effectively with the few incidents of inappropriate behaviour that occur. No incidents of bullying were seen during the inspection and any concerns, which are often about minor squabbles concerning relationships, are followed up quickly and effectively. As the table below shows, only one pupil has been excluded from school during the previous year. There have been no racist incidents recorded.

#### ***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	98	1	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	1	0	0
Parent/pupil preferred not to say	3	0	0

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

9. Pupils work well when given opportunities to work independently or in groups. They co-operate well and, as they move through the school, they become increasingly able to collaborate, sharing and valuing each other's ideas, and concentrating well on activities, particularly when the objectives are clear and the task is challenging. Occasionally, some pupils become restless and inattentive when expected to sit for too long listening to the teacher rather than being actively engaged in their learning.

10. Pupils' relationships with adults and each other are very good. These have a positive impact on their learning. They are supportive of each other and their teachers. Pupils are happy and secure, and enjoy school life in an atmosphere where all are valued. They respond well to the help provided, and enjoy the praise that is often given. Pupils of all ages mix well at playtime and lunchtime.
11. Pupils have a good understanding of right and wrong which is promoted consistently throughout the school, and pupils benefit from the very good role models set by the adults in school. All pupils are very aware of the high expectations of staff and the school rules, which promote an orderly and caring community. There are opportunities, throughout the school, for pupils to enhance their social development, through undertaking responsibility within the classroom, around the school, in the playground or serving on the school council. In addition, a range of extra-curricular activities, visits and residential experiences benefit pupils' social development. There is a very good level of participation in these activities and tasks are undertaken with commitment and pride. Pupils develop a very good understanding of the needs of others through visiting speakers and activities to support a range of charities. Pupils are encouraged, through all school activities, to be honest, trustworthy, and courteous, respecting other people's feelings, values and beliefs, and this is exemplified through 'circle time', a special time when the class sits together in a circle to discuss personal and social issues, and the support which pupils give to each other in lessons.
12. Pupils are provided with a curriculum that promotes a good understanding of western culture in subjects such as history, art and design, music, and English. Recent poetry, art-work and history has very effectively linked work on World War II with the poetry of Rupert Brooke and the Earl Haigh Poppy Appeal ('... In Flanders Fields'). Pupils' good understanding of different cultures is promoted through history and in religious education when they learn about the major world faiths. The school also organised a multi-cultural week which promoted a good understanding of spirituality through enhancing pupils' wonder and awe at the diversity of natural environments to be found throughout the world and how those environments and climatic differences affect our daily lives and needs.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.8	School data	0.2
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.*

13. Attendance is above the national average and levels of unauthorised absence are broadly in line with the national average. Most parents ensure that their children attend school regularly and arrive punctually. Attendance levels have risen by a small amount in each of the last three years, although overall attendance has reduced slightly in comparison with that found at the time of the last inspection. Registration practice is efficient and unexplained absences are quickly followed up. Most absences arise through sickness or medical visits, although a small number of parents formally seek the headteacher's approval to withdraw their children from school to participate in annual family holidays during term time.

**QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a sound quality of education so that pupils achieve satisfactorily and attain mostly average standards. The quality of education has improved significantly, but much of this improvement is very recent and has not been in place for long enough to enable a secure judgement that it is now firmly established as consistently good. The quality of teaching is good and there is a broad curriculum. This is enhanced by the good links with parents and the community.

## Teaching and learning

Teaching is good and in the lessons where pupils receive good teaching they learn effectively. However, their achievement in the longer term is just satisfactory and does not always reflect the good teaching they receive. This is because there has been a history of staffing difficulties that have interrupted pupils' learning. Although these difficulties have now been resolved, the good teaching has not yet been established for long enough or consistently enough to impact fully on the quality of education provided. Assessment systems are satisfactory but are not used consistently to identify particular learning needs, especially the needs of the more able pupils.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most of the teaching is good and this helps pupils to learn effectively.
- Teaching for the children in the reception class is always good and here they receive a good start to their schooling.
- There is a small element of unsatisfactory teaching for pupils in Years 1 and 2 where too much is attempted all at once.
- Assessments of pupils' work are satisfactory but are not used consistently to inform planning for the next steps in learning; consequently pupils, especially the more able groups, are not always given work that extends them so that their progress accelerates.

### Commentary

14. Teaching is good. Teaching in the reception class is always good; it is mainly good for pupils in Years 1 and 2; it is mostly good, and occasionally very good, for pupils in Years 3 to 6. The small amount of unsatisfactory teaching in Years 1 and 2 was caused by endeavouring to do too much and so losing sight of precisely what pupils were expected to learn. Teachers plan lessons thoroughly and reflect on how to make learning interesting. They provide a good variety of activities that often include imaginative elements, such as inviting a mother and baby into the classroom as part of a scientific study of human growth.
15. There are examples of very good teaching in Years 3 to 6. In the very good lessons explanations and demonstrations were exceptionally clear. The projector linked to laptop computers was used skilfully to illustrate explanations. In the best lessons teaching assistants made a strong contribution to pupils' learning by, for example, guiding them through computer programs. The pace of learning was brisk and pupils enjoyed the activities because they were modified well to match the learning needs of all groups. Consequently all pupils experienced success.
16. In the very good lessons pupils were encouraged to think for themselves. They themselves, for example, had to think through the definition of a fraction. Teachers often use an excellent strategy that involves them in appearing to be stupid. 'I think that a third of 6 is 3. Does anybody have a problem with that?' After howls of anguish from the pupils the teacher probes further, 'O.K. You are all saying that I am silly – but nobody is explaining why'. Here the teacher is digging for a clear explanation of the essential attributes of fractions so that the pupils can themselves organise their thoughts. In this lesson gentle humour helped to build very good relationships. The teaching assistant was used well throughout the session and took one group out to work with computers to consolidate learning. The teacher spent much time with more able pupils who, if they had understood fully, left the group so that they could work independently on complex problems. Those who had not grasped the concepts fully stayed for further clarification. In this way all were learning effectively throughout the lesson.

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 31 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	3 (10%)	21 (68%)	6 (19%)	1 (3%)	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.

17. Teachers' assessments and evaluations of pupils' attainment and the progress they are making are satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well and relationships are very good. Teachers talk to pupils about their work and make suggestions about how they can improve. Teachers mark pupils' books regularly but the quality of marking is inconsistent. The best marking shows pupils how they can improve the standard of their written work but there are occasions when it is superficial. Assessments are not always used effectively to match work to pupils' particular learning needs. This is particularly the case for the more able pupils. Support for the more able pupils is inconsistent. There are occasions when they are challenged appropriately and are provided with tasks that extend them. This is not always the case and they are often given tasks that are well within their ability to finish quickly. This is because not all teachers expect enough of these pupils or use the assessment data, which reveals their ability to learn rapidly, to provide tasks that extend them. Expectations of their ability to master concepts quickly and to work independently are sometimes too low.
18. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to teaching and learning. They contribute a good range of appropriate skills. One, for example, is particularly good at devising ways to construct imaginative displays of pupils' work. All have participated in training courses, often in their own time, to develop and hone their skills. They are highly regarded as important members of the team.

### The curriculum

The curriculum provides a good range of learning experiences, with good opportunities for enrichment. The accommodation and resources meet well the needs of the curriculum.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is a good outline curricular plan that details what will be taught to each year group and this helps to promote full coverage of the National Curriculum.
- The curriculum is enriched by a good programme of visits, special events and extra-curricular activities, and caters well for pupils of all abilities.
- Not enough time is devoted to teaching science in Years 1 to 4.
- The attractive and well stocked library promotes pupils' enthusiasm for reading, but it is not used enough to teach research skills.

### Commentary

19. The school offers a stimulating and well balanced curriculum, based on thorough, systematic curricular planning. The curriculum has been improved since the last inspection by the adoption of detailed plans which promote full coverage of the National Curriculum in all subjects, including personal, social and health education. The plans for teaching the curriculum methodically provide very well for the challenge of teaching mixed year groups. This is achieved well by following plans that include a carefully considered two-year cycle of lesson plans. These help to promote teaching programmes that provide each year group with a sequence of topics that are taught in an appropriate order and in sufficient depth. This broad, long-term planning is supported by good medium term planning which provides good guidance about what parts of the curriculum will be taught each term. Teachers use this framework well as a basis for

creating their detailed lesson plans. This thorough planning helps to promote accurate curricular targets for the whole range of pupils in each year group in the mixed age classes. The time allocated for most subjects is appropriate but the amount of time devoted to teaching science in Years 1 to 4 is below the recommended minimum and this constrains pupils' achievement.

20. Special weeks during which the school concentrates on specific areas of the curriculum, such as literacy, arts, sciences and multicultural week, enrich pupils' learning by providing good opportunities for them to focus in depth on particular curricular areas in successive years. During the inspection the success of this year's multicultural week was evident from the many attractive displays which showed how it had enabled the pupils to enjoy demonstrations of the music, arts and wider cultures of many different countries, such as Sri Lanka and India. Visits, including a residential visit to Yorkshire for the oldest pupils, enable them to have vivid encounters with other times and places. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 spent a day as Tudor characters on their visit to Kentwell Hall whilst Reception and Years 1 and 2 children enjoyed visits to Colchester Zoo and a local reservoir, as well as walks into the local area. The range of special events which enrich pupils' curriculum experiences also includes theatre visits, sporting events such as the local cross country, five-a-side football, hockey, cricket and rounders events, and charity fundraising events such as the 'Mathathon' in aid of Great Ormond Street Hospital.
21. There is good extra-curricular provision through such clubs as the homework and art clubs, a choir and a range of sports clubs, including netball, football, rounders and athletics. These provide good challenges for the keenest and highest attaining pupils to extend their experience.
22. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because their individual education plans give teachers and teaching assistants good guidance in how to support them, and the wide range of interesting books and other resources for all subjects includes many that are right for their needs. Teaching assistants are also well briefed in how to ensure that the pupils they support get the most out of the curriculum.
23. The school's accommodation and resources are good and meet the needs of the curriculum well. Since the last inspection, the school has benefited from a new building which has provided a much improved indoor and outdoor learning environment for children in the Foundation Stage, and enhanced ICT facilities for the whole school. The staff have acquired good resources, such as pictures, mathematical apparatus and historical and religious artefacts, and use them very well. Interesting displays of artefacts and pupils' work are creatively arranged in common areas and classrooms to highlight the exciting learning that is taking place. These stimulate pupils' curiosity and interest, particularly in their own and other cultural heritages. The library, with its beautiful displays and attractive furnishings, is a particular strength. Pupils in all years say they love using it and their interest is reflected in the wider than usual knowledge they have of children's authors. The well chosen stocks of attractive books for classroom use succeed in getting even the most reluctant readers interested in learning more about the topics they study. However, too little is being done to teach the pupils how to use the library subject classification system as an efficient way to locate books on topics they are studying or interested in. Teachers and support staff are well qualified and trained, and have very good systems to guide their work. The system of pairing more experienced subject leaders with those who are beginning to take on subject responsibilities, works well in ensuring the consistency and continuity of curricular planning and development.

### **Care, guidance and support**

The care, guidance and support for pupils are good. Pupils enjoy very good relationships with adults. Staff listen carefully to pupils' views in discussion sessions and through the school council.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- There are good arrangements to help new children settle happily in school.
- The very good relationships that exist between pupils and staff help to promote a comfortable, productive learning environment.
- Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures.
- The portfolio of risk assessment does not cover all eventualities.

## **Commentary**

24. Arrangements to help pupils settle into school are good. When children start school, staff work hard to help parents to continue to be involved in their child's learning. These arrangements help the process of developing good and trusting relationships between pupils and staff. This trust gives pupils the confidence to seek support and guidance when they have concerns about their work, or when they encounter a personal problem, or when they want to share news about something special. This is reflected in the very positive views, expressed by pupils, of adults working in the school, their willingness to listen and their fairness. Teachers and learning support staff monitor pupils' personal and academic development well. As a result management was well aware of the impact of staff changes on pupils' achievement and has acted to bring about improvements. Teaching and support staff, including midday assistants, provide well-informed support to pupils through their good knowledge of them as individuals.
25. Adults place importance on hearing pupils' views and listening to them with respect and courtesy. This is seen regularly in and out of classrooms informally and through formal structures such as the school council. The council successfully seeks pupils' views on issues affecting the school community and promotes improvements for the benefit of all. Teachers make sure that pupils with special educational needs are consulted when their individual education plans are drawn up or reviewed.
26. The school's procedures for ensuring the safety and wellbeing of pupils are satisfactory and show a good improvement on those found at the time of the last inspection. First aid provision is good and an adequate number of staff is qualified to provide assistance in the event of an emergency. Safe practice is promoted in lessons, supported by the local education authority's generic risk assessments. Equipment is regularly checked and tested. The school completes appropriate risk assessments for visits but is beginning to develop a portfolio of risk assessments associated with the new school buildings.
27. Child protection procedures are based on those of the Local Area Protection Committee and meet requirements, the designated person and teaching staff have been trained appropriately and the school exercises its responsibilities with vigilance and care.

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

The partnerships between school and home, local schools and the community are good overall and play a positive role in supporting pupils' learning at school and at home.

## **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The school's partnership with parents makes a positive contribution to pupils' learning.
- The committee of the Parent Teacher Association (PTA) works hard to support the work of the school.
- Links with local primary schools and the community enrich the curriculum and provide good opportunities for pupils' social development.
- The home/school contact book is used very effectively to reinforce the partnership between school and home.
- Newsletters to parents give parents good general information and celebrate pupils' achievements.
- Reports to parents about their children's progress vary in quality and style from class to class.

## Commentary

28. The good partnership that the school has developed with parents reflects an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. The improved accommodation, such as the new hall, has enabled greater degree of parental participation in assemblies and other aspects of the life of the school.
29. Parents express general satisfaction with the school and the education it provides and most have very positive views of the school's provision. A small minority of parents express some concerns about the information that parents receive about pupils' progress and express reservations about approaching the school with a problem or complaint. Inspectors support the positive views of parents and judged that the weekly newsletters, which celebrate pupils' successes, and the general information provided to parents, are good and that annual reports are satisfactory. Reports demonstrate that teachers know each individual pupil well. The reports give parents clear information about the work that pupils have completed and their attitudes to learning, but are not always consistent in their style and content. Some teachers include clear, detailed targets for future learning but others are less clear. Consequently, reports do not always provide parents with clear targets or guidance as to what their children need to do to progress to the next stage of their learning. However, teachers are accessible and are always prepared to talk with parents. Very good use is made of the home/school contact books. These include broad targets for learning, give details of homework and make a very positive contribution to the information provided to parents about pupils' achievements.
30. The majority of parents support their children well at home by sharing books with them and helping them with their homework. A small number provide effective help in school on a regular basis. The school normally manages to resolve any concerns of parents informally and this was the case throughout last year.
31. The headteacher, in the role of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO), ensures the school builds a good partnership with parents of pupils with special educational needs. Parents are notified promptly if there are concerns about their child, and they are invited to contribute their knowledge and suggestions. Their comments are sought and recorded when individual education plans are drawn up.
32. The PTA is run by a small but hardworking committee and successfully raises large sums of money to support the work of the school and provide additional resources and learning opportunities for pupils, in addition to organising social events such as a recent ice-skating evening held in the school hall that brought the school and community together and provided very good opportunities for pupils' personal and social development. The work of the PTA is appreciated by staff and benefits pupils well.
33. Links with the community and a wide range of visits and visitors provide good enhancement and enrichment of the curriculum, and support pupils' personal and social development as well as widening their experiences and giving them opportunities to learn about the needs of others.
34. Links with other schools are satisfactory overall and the school plays a very active part in the local cluster of primary schools. Links with secondary schools appropriately support the transfer of pupils at the age of eleven by providing opportunities to visit and gain an understanding of what secondary schooling will be like. Links with primary schools and playgroups provide good curriculum links and opportunities to improve resources by entering into consortium arrangements such as those for the purchase of specialist ICT equipment and support for multicultural aspects of the curriculum.

## LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The work of the governing body is very good. The leadership and management of the headteacher are good and the school has a clear sense of

direction which is bringing about improvement. The leadership of key curriculum co-ordinators is satisfactory.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The headteacher provides good leadership and clear educational direction.
- The governing body works very well and governors play an active role in shaping the direction of the school.
- Effective policies and systematic procedures securely underpin the work of the school.
- The headteacher and governors monitor and evaluate provision rigorously.
- Staff receive good support and good opportunities for continuing professional development.
- The role of subject leaders in monitoring and evaluating provision in their areas of responsibility is under-developed.
- There is not enough consultation by the governors with pupils, parents and the community to guide their targeting of priorities for school improvement.

### **Commentary**

35. Since the last inspection, the school has made significant progress in addressing the weaknesses that were identified in the management of the school, the work of the governing body, the school development plan and financial planning. These weaknesses have all been addressed successfully. However, the role of the curriculum co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating provision remains an area for development.
36. School leadership is good with very good features. The headteacher has a clear vision for improvement and has a good team of teachers and support staff who share a strong commitment to raise standards. The school development plan identifies priorities clearly and reflects the headteacher's clarity of vision. The management of the school is good. The curriculum is managed well. The school is engaged in a concerted drive to improve standards. Since her appointment just over two years ago, the headteacher has successfully managed significant change. New building work, developed through a Public Finance Initiative (PFI), has been managed well. The new hall, classroom and internal modifications were completed in September 2002, just over a year ago. The new building work has made a huge difference to the range of activities that can be provided. The headteacher has also successfully managed the appointment of a new deputy headteacher and teaching staff. She has established a committed team of teachers and support staff. She has also systematically introduced a secure framework of clear policies and good strategies to underpin the work of the school. Staff are fully committed to promoting the highest standards of provision to promote the all round development of all pupils. There is strong determination to raise standards that is shared by both staff and governors. The headteacher, ably supported by her deputy, co-ordinates this methodical drive to improve provision.
37. Governors support the headteacher very well, act as critical friends and provide appropriate challenge. Governors have a very good grasp of the strengths and weaknesses of the school and they are actively involved in planning for improvement. Governors visit the school during the school day and procedures for them to monitor, evaluate and record what is happening in school are very good. The governing body works hard to monitor the work of the school and is successful in helping to improve standards. It holds the school to account and works energetically to facilitate developments that have a major impact on improving provision. It has, for example, worked in tandem with senior management to create substantial improvements to the building. All governors complete thorough monitoring reports after each of their visits, which are both supportive and challenging.
38. The school is committed to doing its best for all pupils. Pupils and staff are valued for what they bring to the school community as individuals. Care is taken to meet pupils' personal needs and to meet their individual learning needs. The leadership and management of provision for pupils with special educational needs are good and these pupils are supported well. The headteacher,

acting as SENCO, has devised good systems for identifying, documenting and managing support for these pupils. She knows the pupils and their parents very well and is effective in briefing and training teachers and support staff in how best to identify and support them. All the related documentation is clear, up to date and complies with the most recent national requirements and recommendations. She liaises effectively with the local authority educational psychologist and support specialists, who provide good advice and support. She also works with the governor with responsibility for special educational needs, ensuring that there is the required report made to governors and the wider community through the governors' annual report to parents on each year's work to support pupils with special educational needs. The funding received for special educational needs is correctly used and provides good value for money.

39. Since she has been at the school, the headteacher has focused effectively on self-evaluation and the monitoring of performance in the classroom. This has influenced the arrangements for the professional development of all staff and subject leaders now have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. The headteacher works sensitively with all staff to help them to develop and to support them in their work. The school has Investor in People Status and staff development is used effectively to help meet the needs of the school development plan and the individual. New staff and newly qualified staff are supported very well and helped to rapidly become part of the caring and supportive community of the school.
40. Several teachers with subject responsibilities are developing their roles and currently are not as effective as they might be, especially in relation to monitoring and evaluating provision and standards in their particular areas. This is because, within the small teaching staff, most subject co-ordinators are new to their roles and have not developed a clear programme for monitoring and evaluating work in different subject areas. Staff are very hard working and indications are that monitoring and evaluation are set to improve rapidly as staff develop their new responsibilities.
41. The headteacher has established good procedures and policies to provide a secure framework for further development. She is developing the use of systems for tracking the achievement of individual pupils in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science, to be able to allocate extra support where necessary. The school is also in a stronger position to know what standards to expect when setting targets for the future as, for example, in predicting outcomes of National Curriculum tests for pupils in Year 6.
42. Since the headteacher was appointed the school development plan has been extended to cover a three-year period and governors are now seeking to further refine the planning by improving the financial modelling to link it with projected pupil numbers, sharper success criteria and utilisation of the surplus balances which accrued during the period of uncertainty leading up to the re-building using PFI monies. This comprehensive planning helps the school to know what its total premises costs will be on an annual basis.
43. The current school development plan provides a sound basis for financial planning within the school. The governing body monitors expenditure carefully and financial controls and procedures are secure. The school uses its resources satisfactorily to support pupils' learning and additional funding, obtained through grants, has been applied properly. Funds allocated to support pupils with special educational needs are used effectively, as are other specific grants. There is a relatively large underspend which is largely due to reserves accumulated as a result of the re-alignment of finances caused by the PFI funding.

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

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	314 332
Total expenditure	340 951
Expenditure per pupil	3 409

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	49 605
Balance carried forward to the next	22 986

44. The school has good procedures to ensure that it applies the principles of best value appropriately and in some cases very well. For example, fair competitive tendering and the securing of goods and services are managed very well to ensure that competitive quotations enable the school to obtain best value in its use of resources. Although the school has good relationships with pupils, parents and the community and listens to their views, the governing body has not developed systematic procedures for consulting stakeholders about their perceptions of the school and whether they have any views about how the school might improve provision. Governors use national and local data to compare standards but, because of the limited number of similar sized primary schools that have PFI funding, they have not fully developed the use of national and local financial data to compare with other schools. Taking into account the good teaching, pupils' good behaviour, sound achievement and the generally average standards that most attain, the school provides sound value for money.

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

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

The school provides well for children in the Foundation Stage. Teaching and learning are consistently good. Most children are likely to attain the nationally expected learning goals in each of the six areas of learning by the end of the reception year, with some likely to exceed these. The children begin the reception class in the Autumn or Spring Term before they are five years old. Almost all have attended a local playgroup before they begin. They share their classroom, and are mainly taught together, with a group of younger Year 1 children, although each group has times for separate learning activities. Since the last inspection, the previously unsatisfactory curriculum and scope for role play and matching indoor and outdoor activities have been much improved. The very good targeted planning and teamwork by the Foundation Stage co-ordinator and her teaching assistant now offer the children a consistently rich and stimulating learning environment, so that they achieve well. Improvement since the last inspection has been good. There are now new indoor and outdoor Foundation Stage areas, attractively equipped and resourced, which the co-ordinator uses imaginatively and effectively to ensure that the children develop their understanding equally strongly in all the areas of learning and through indoor and outdoor activities. In the week of the inspection, the children were following up a visit to the village post office with role play in a well set up pretend post office, comparing and weighing convincing looking make believe parcels, and drawing a coloured chalk map of their village walk route across their outdoor courtyard.

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

Provision for personal, social and emotional development is **good**.

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

- Teaching is good and staff provide good role models which encourage children to be caring and to accept responsibility willingly.
- The good planning, teaching and daily routines promote very good attitudes and behaviour.

#### **Commentary**

45. The children show levels of personal, social and emotional development overall that match those that are expected for their age group. They learn effectively and achieve well. Most are likely to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year and many are likely to exceed them. The teaching team are very good role models, and plan and reinforce good routines of caring and responsibility well throughout the day, so that the children's attitudes and behaviour are very good, particularly given the short time they have been in school. The teacher's warm welcome and enthusiasm encourage the children to settle quickly and share news excitedly when they start the school day. Children discuss daily targets for personal responsibility such as 'putting our hands up and not calling out.' The children sit quietly and show interest when their teacher tells a story or gives instructions for tasks they are going to do. Some ask questions to check which equipment they can use. They are confident when they choose an activity and invite others to join them. The staff team encourage them to share biscuits and drinks amicably at break time and their approval makes the children keen to volunteer to clear away the tray and beakers afterwards. The good clearing up routines organised by the team result in the children taking pride in helping to put things away and keep their classroom and outdoor area looking attractive. In the current intake, there is a very wide range of social and emotional development, with the most mature and articulate being girls and the least developed socially and emotionally being boys. This sometimes means that these girls choose and develop increasingly complex role play games, whilst the boys tend to choose activities with large toys and construction kits, water and sand. Although the team plan very well for the involvement of all the children in the activities, there is scope for more focused planning,

including the use of role play and challenges, to give the boys and girls more reasons for wanting to play co-operatively together.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Very good planning and good teaching ensure that the children achieve well.
- The staff promote speaking and listening very well, particularly through the use of role play.
- There is scope to use ICT more widely to promote reading and writing.

### **Commentary**

46. The children start school with average levels of achievement for their age group, and almost all are likely to reach the expected national goals by the end of the school year, with a good proportion exceeding them. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator's very good planning for language and literacy skills includes very well targeted experiences and activities for the widely different levels in the class, resulting in good teaching which helps the children make good progress. The team's good role modelling and teaching motivate children to speak and listen confidently to each other, to their teachers and to visitors. They also use every opportunity to encourage the children to go beyond one-word comments through skilful follow-up questions. The team use planned role play particularly effectively to extend the children's speaking and listening. This is a great improvement since the last inspection, where provision for promoting speaking and listening was judged unsatisfactory, and there was too little use of role play. During the inspection, the convincingly set up pretend post office, with its stamps, labels, parcels and postbox, promoted lively exchanges between the children. For example, four girls hurried to organise the post with comments like, 'We've got to get these parcels stamped—it's time to collect the letters from the postbox'.
47. Children learn effectively. They enjoy studying the wide range of attractive books that are provided. These are well chosen to promote interest and to support the topics the children are studying. Many of the books also provide vivid and attractive stories from different cultures from around the world, such as 'Handa's Surprise', a story set in Africa. They also have regular opportunities to listen to story tapes and hear 'talking book' CD-ROMs on the classroom computer. The teacher systematically builds up their knowledge of letters and sounds and how they are written, every day through work on a shared 'Big Book'. The children enjoy holding up letter cards which they know appear in their name. They regularly have well organised one-to-one reading time with the teaching assistant, who encourages them to recognise letters and words they are learning and practise writing them. All the children enjoy pretend writing, such as writing a letter in the pretend post office to invite a friend to a party. Many know the correct way to write some or all of the letters in their name. There is scope to make more effective use of the classroom and ICT suite to promote writing and reading, through using the 'talking' word bank programs to encourage the children to build up and listen to sentences about topics they are familiar with.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good planning provides well for the range of children in the class.
- Good use of drama and action songs helps children's mathematical learning.
- There is scope to use ICT more to help children record their mathematical learning.

## Commentary

48. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Almost all are likely to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year and a small number likely to exceed them. There is good planning for and teaching of mathematical development, providing very well for the children's different starting points. For example, the more advanced children were set a challenging task of seeing how many buckets of sand it took to fill a large container. The teaching assistant helped them record the number by getting them to make tally marks on a chart and together they counted to twenty-six buckets. Children with less developed mathematical skills learned through filling different sized containers with sand and water. The teacher uses action rhymes to help the children remember and learn counting sequences easily, for example by singing them to the tune of 'Old Macdonald Had a Farm.' There is also very good use of the role play settings to promote mathematical learning. During the week of the inspection, the teacher was using role play about using the post office to help the children develop their understanding of 'light' and 'heavy' as they compared lifting different sized parcels, including some small parcels which weighed more than larger ones. Using the scales enabled the children to notice that the heavier the parcel, the further the pointer moves round the dial. There is scope for using the school's ICT tools, such as digital cameras, to help the children record their mathematical investigations, such as sorting objects and putting them in order.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Provision in knowledge and understanding of the world is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good links are made between the local environment and outdoor and indoor investigations.
- There is good provision to help children to develop an understanding of their own and others' cultures.
- Computers, and investigative tools associated with information and communication technology, are not used enough to enhance learning.

## Commentary

49. Teaching is good and children achieve well. Almost all the children are on track to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year. Since the last inspection, both the outdoor and the indoor learning environments have been much improved, and the new outdoor enclosed area now has a good range of fixed and moveable climbing and exploration structures and wheeled toys which the staff use whenever possible to provide learning opportunities. Attractive fixtures such as mirrors with different surfaces, shapes with patterned surfaces and coloured ribbons which wave in the wind attract the children and rouse their curiosity about their surroundings. During the week of the inspection, the staff drew on the previous week's walk to the local post office to work with the children on drawing a chalk picture map in the outdoor courtyard of their walk route and the buildings they saw on it. The teacher exploited the sensation caused by the disappearance of the map after a cloudburst, asking the children who exclaimed, 'Our drawing's gone!' what they thought had happened, so that the children realised as they talked that the rain had washed it away. The classroom has a wide range of tools and materials including generous indoor sand and water play centres as well as a computer and cassette playback machines which the children can use. Children also have regular opportunities to use the school's computer suite. However, there is not enough use made of the school's digital cameras and microscope as investigative and recording tools. The classroom is also well equipped with books and other resources about other cultures and world religions. During the inspection the children enjoyed learning about the festival of Wesak and what it means to Buddhists, through the lively way in which their teacher showed them a book and some striking pictures of Buddha statues. Their talk showed they know that Wesak is a day

when Buddhists bring flowers and light lanterns and the more advanced children know it commemorates the day when the Buddha became wise.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in physical development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Good use is made of the outdoor space.
- There were good opportunities to try out yoga in the school's multicultural week.

### **Commentary**

50. Most children enter the school with the range of physical development characteristic of this age group. Teaching and learning are good. Pupils achieve well and almost all are likely to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year. The improvements in the outdoor facilities since the last inspection have enabled the staff to plan a sound, well balanced programme of outdoor physical activities, as well as providing a wide range of indoor opportunities to develop skills in handling a range of tools and materials. Teaching is good and pupils achieve well. At outdoor play times, the children enjoy climbing up the different levels of tyre embedded in their larger outdoor area. They carefully walk up the largest tractor tyre and step a carefully prepared route over the other tyres. They use tricycles competently and confidently. Guided and supervised by their teacher and teaching assistant, they learn to negotiate a relatively small inner courtyard without getting in each other's way and they stack and stow equipment away at clearing up time. During the school's multicultural week, earlier in the term of the inspection, photographs showed that the children had enjoyed learning to do simple yoga postures from a visiting Indian yoga specialist.

## **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Provision in creative development is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Role play is used imaginatively to extend learning.
- There are good links made between music and dance.
- There is scope for more adventurous and experimental artwork.

### **Commentary**

51. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with many good and very good features. Children achieve well and most are likely to reach the expected learning goals by the end of the reception year, with a small number likely to exceed them. The opportunities for role play are a strength of the provision for creative development, because of the rich and varied resources the Foundation Stage co-ordinator and her teaching assistant provide. These include good quality dressing up clothes and meticulously prepared props, such as the 'real life' post office mini-posters, labels, parcels and stamping kits in the pretend post office. Because the dressing up environment has been very well linked to a prior visit to its real life equivalent, the children build on their observations of adults at work and using the post office. Their role playing is realistic but they add their own fantasy drama.

52. There are well planned opportunities for the children to link their learning of music and dance. During the inspection, the teacher helped the children to develop their understanding of musical timing by holding up cards with symbols to identify fast and slow music when they heard clips of classical and folk tunes played. They then hugely enjoyed moving in fast and slow time to

some of the clips, and developed well sequences of movement from the teacher's demonstrated movements and suggestions. The teacher also helped the children widen their knowledge and experience of making sounds by providing a good range of instruments from traditional musical and wider ethnic traditions, including African drums and tablas, so that they could 'design' slow and fast sounds by the way they struck the instruments.

53. The artwork children do is often linked to topics being studied, such as making paper lanterns and flowers when they learn about the Buddhist Wesak ceremony. The children work in a good variety of media and use colours freely when they paint. However, there is scope for developing more adventurous and experimental artwork, for example based on looking at the work of modern artists such as Matisse, Kandinsky and Georgia O'Keefe, who use bold colours and patterns.

## **SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 and 2**

### **ENGLISH**

Provision for English is **good**.

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

- Pupils enjoy reading, know a wide range of authors and attain standards that are above average.
- Standards of speaking and listening are good.
- Teachers are not teaching joined handwriting early enough.
- Pupils are not being taught to use the library non-fiction classification system.
- Pupils are introduced to the habit of proof-reading their writing but this is not yet embedded in practice.

#### **Commentary**

54. Pupils achieve well and standards in English are above average at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents good improvement since the last inspection when standards by the end of Year 2 were average, although as now they were above average by the end of Year 6. In the most recent national tests at the end of Year 2, the school's performance in reading was well above average. In writing all the pupils reached the national target of Level 2, but the proportion of pupils who attained the higher Level 3 was below the national average. The proportion of pupils reaching the expected level at the end of Year 6 was above the national average, although the proportion reaching the higher level 5 was below the average. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their education plans, because teachers plan very well for them and they are supported well by teaching assistants in lessons.
55. Pupils' standards of speaking and listening are good, because teachers regularly ask pupils to discuss their ideas or explain how they have worked, or to play roles as part of their learning. This represents very good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were judged to be poor. Pupils' skills in reading and understanding fiction and non-fiction texts are above average. Almost all pupils achieve well because they are very keen fiction readers and they know a wider range of authors than is usual for their age groups. This is because they love books and regularly use the school library, and it helps to promote their enthusiasm for visiting other libraries and reading good quality books regularly. Their research and library skills are under-developed because they are not being taught how to use the library non-fiction classification system. The new library has only just been established and the school has good plans to use skilled librarians to help develop research skills.
56. Pupils' basic writing skills, including handwriting and spelling, are sound overall at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Scrutiny of pupils' workbooks showed Year 2 pupils are achieving well in

developing a range of styles in writing stories and letters. However, they are being held back from reaching their full potential because they are not yet doing joined writing, and their presentation lags behind the quality of what they write. The rate of achievement of many of the Year 6 pupils' writing is not as high as it could be, because there are gaps in their prior learning. Also pupils' workbooks showed that, in the weeks before the inspection, they had done less writing than would normally be the case because of the greater emphasis the school has been placing on developing their speaking and listening skills. Some Year 6 pupils are not reaching the standards they are capable of in writing because, although they are taught the habit of proof-reading their work when they complete it, the habit has not become embedded. Consequently, too many fluent writers make simple errors of punctuation and spelling.

57. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teachers consistently plan very well, providing well for the needs of the wide range of pupils in their mixed age classes by setting the right learning tasks in each lesson. For example, in a lesson for Year 1 and 2 pupils, based on a retelling of the Grimm's fairy tale 'The Fisherman and his Wife', the highest attaining pupils were set to devise and act out a reporter's interview with the fisherman and his wife in the style of a regional TV news report. Other groups of pupils were set such tasks as presenting a puppet show version of the story, or acting out the parts in the story. Teachers explain the purpose of the lesson clearly and use lesson time well. Both they and the teaching assistants enthuse pupils about the tasks they set. In a lesson for Year 5 and 6 pupils on planning a biography of a famous historical character, even the most reluctant writers were excited by the wide range of beautiful books they were offered or helped to find in the library. Teaching assistants also play a very successful part in helping pupils with special needs succeed in lessons, so that they complete the tasks they are set well, and often make very good contributions to the end of lesson discussions of what the class has learnt. However, teachers do not draw as effectively on the assistants' support during the introduction to lessons, so that their time is not used well in about a third of each lesson. They also too rarely use the classroom computers to set writing tasks, for example using 'talking' word banks to help pupils with special educational needs to draft stories independently. Assessment of pupils' work is broadly satisfactory, but there is scope for providing clearer guidance. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly, but the quality of their comments varies. Although most comments give pupils good guidance on how to improve their work, too many are simply ticks or comments such as 'You have worked hard.'
58. The leadership and management of English are good. Since the last inspection, the curriculum plans, the library and the book stocks have been greatly improved. The recently adopted Early Reading Research initiative has improved the younger pupils' knowledge of letters and sounds. This has contributed to the good improvement since the last inspection.

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

59. The use of language and literacy skills is satisfactory overall. Teachers help pupils' literacy in other subjects by ensuring that there is always a good range of attractive books displayed in the classroom for different levels of reading achievement for each topic they study. They also use their display boards for each subject well to present key subject vocabulary and phrases. However, more could be done to help pupils develop a wider range and more extended writing in different subjects, and to learn to use the library reference system to find the sections related to the topics they study.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The teaching is good and helps pupils to learn effectively so that standards are rising.
- Pupils enjoy the subject and have positive attitudes to learning.
- There are gaps in pupils' prior learning that constrain progress.

- Not all teachers expect enough of pupils and so they do not produce as much work as they should.

## Commentary

60. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory and most are likely to attain average standards by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6. These findings are confirmed by the results of national tests in 2003. However, there are clear indications that standards are set to rise further. This is because teaching is good and an enthusiasm for the subject has been established. Standards are very similar to those found at the time of the last inspection.
61. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are particularly good at reasoning. They make deductions about three-dimensional shapes, as for example in a game that helped them to identify the properties of shapes. 'I know that it has five faces, a square base, four corners and one point so I have worked out that the other four faces must be equal triangles.' They know what their targets for improvement are and read them from their target books, 'I can say all the partners that make ten and what is left when any number is taken away from ten.' This helps them, and their parents, to understand the direction of their learning. They are good at oral work but they do not produce enough written work.
62. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 are keen to learn and in discussions most say that they enjoy the subject. They have a good grasp of which units to use when measuring distances, liquids, and solids. However, they are unable to explain the inter-connecting relationship between the units used in the metric system. They have too few opportunities to apply their skills in purposeful activities, such as cooking. In Years 3 and 4 computers were used well to support the learning of the slower learners. In a lesson on fractions, for example, the teaching assistant worked well with a group in the computer suite when using programs to illustrate dividing numbers into equal parts. There were examples of a projector linked to a laptop computer being used well to illustrate ideas about fractions and about shapes. This helped to promote clear explanations and helped pupils to learn effectively.
63. Teaching and learning are good but within this overall picture there are significant strengths as well as areas for development. The good teaching has not been sustained over a long enough period to have had a major impact on improving standards. Teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are satisfactory. The school has recognised that younger pupils in particular benefit from learning in an active physical way. As a result pupils in Years 1 and 2 benefit from a regular weekly mathematics lesson in the school hall. Here they play games such as adding the correct number of pupils to a group of four to make a total of ten or activities that involve, for example, forming groups in particular ways to make two-dimensional shapes with their bodies. These activities are extremely popular with the pupils and help to develop positive attitudes to learning. Teachers also encourage pupils to explain their thinking and the methods they have used in their calculations. There is a great deal of oral work. Whilst this is valuable in extending pupils' understanding there are too few activities that require pupils to record the results of their work in order to consolidate learning. The more able pupils in particular are not required to extend themselves fully and so they do not attain the high standards of which they are capable.
64. The teaching for pupils in Years 3 to 6 is good and often very good. Although most of the teaching and learning are now good, it is clear that there have, until recently, been significant shortcomings. An examination of pupils' work and discussions with pupils revealed gaps in their learning. It is clear that there have been inconsistencies in the quality of teaching and learning caused by staffing problems. This is confirmed by parents, who regret the discontinuity in their children's learning caused by staff absence and changes of teacher. It is clear that pupils in Years 3 and 4 did not achieve as well as they should have done last year. Staffing problems have affected this year group over the past few years. Consequently there is a great deal of catching up to do in the Year 5 and Year 6 class. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is often very good and this is confirmed by the good quantity and quality of work that pupils in this class produced last year. Nevertheless this good teaching did not enable all pupils to attain the highest

standards of which they were capable. The more able pupils in particular did not perform as well as they might have done because much time had to be spent mastering basic number work that should have been thoroughly learned in the previous class. Staffing problems have now been resolved and standards are rising rapidly.

65. Teachers mark pupils' work and the best marking gives clear guidance about how to improve. Teachers' assessments of pupils' work are satisfactory. However, there are occasions when teachers pass over opportunities to insist on accurate spelling, capitals for titles, days of the week and names. This lack of attention to detail results in carelessness regarding accuracy and standards of presentation that are not as high as they should be. Digital cameras are used increasingly to record the experiences pupils have enjoyed. These are not yet exploited fully by, for example, creating class booklets on the themes being explored. Although there were examples of computers being used well to support learning there are very few examples in pupils' work of computers being used to sort data and present findings or of the Internet being used for research. This is an area for further development.
66. The subject is led and managed well. The experienced and well qualified co-ordinator monitors and evaluates teaching and learning regularly through lesson observations. The results of this monitoring are used well to advise colleagues about improving their performance. Pupils' work and test results are analysed to identify areas for development. For example, a recent analysis of the results of national tests for pupils in Year 2 revealed that pupils were not confident about solving problems that involved two stages and an analysis of the work produced by pupils in Year 4 showed that many were not secure in their understanding of subtraction. Carelessness and a lack of attention to accuracy have also been identified as areas for improvement. This information is used effectively to adjust teaching programmes in order to strengthen areas of weakness. Improvement since the last inspection has been satisfactory but it is clear that the school is now very well placed to make further advances.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

67. Pupils apply their numeracy skills well in other subjects, such as science and design technology. In science, for example, they use Newton meters to measure force and construct good line graphs to illustrate, for example, the way that sound diminishes as the source recedes into the distance. In design and technology pupils in Years 5 and 6 measure lengths carefully when making model shelters. They have produced carefully drawn graphs to show clearly how their pulse rates increase during various vigorous exercises and return to normal between each activity. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 enjoyed selling holidays in the class 'Travel Agents'. Here pupils applied their numeracy skills well when giving customers the cost of the holiday, changing currency, the likely travelling time and the probable distance that they will have to travel.

### **SCIENCE**

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

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

- Pupils have an enthusiasm for learning.
- The work produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6 is carefully presented with good attention to detail.
- There are examples of imaginative teaching that stimulates pupils' interest.
- The more able pupils do not attain standards that match their abilities.
- There are significant gaps in pupils' prior learning because parts of the planned course have not been taught effectively and because insufficient time is allocated to the subject in Years 1 to 4.

### **Commentary**

68. Pupils' achievement is broadly satisfactory and they attain average results by the end of Year 2 and again by the end of Year 6. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when standards by the end of Year 2 were below average. Pupils enjoy learning about all aspects of this subject. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 were enthralled by the baby who visited their classroom as part of their study of life and living processes. They listened in awe as the mother explained how to look after a baby and what babies need to thrive. They had composed searching questions about the food babies eat and make the connection between having no teeth and therefore not being able to chew solids. When asked why babies cry one pupil answered astutely, 'Well, it's their language, really'. Pupils reflect sensibly on the way they have developed since their birth. There is a strong emphasis on learning through oral means and, as a result, too little written work is produced. Too few activities allow pupils to develop recording skills or to practise their writing.
69. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and with in this overall picture there are clear strengths. There are examples of particularly imaginative teaching, such as the introduction of the baby into the lesson of growth. It was only possible to see a limited amount of teaching in Years 3 to 6 and it was satisfactory. Discussions with pupils and teachers and an examination of pupils' work indicate strengths and areas of weakness. The work produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6 is beautifully presented with close attention to detail. This complements the need for accuracy in conducting experiments and recording results carefully. Most pupils have a good understanding of how to control variables in order to conduct a fair test. In Year 5 and 6, however, it is clear that few have a good understanding of basic principles and claim, for example, that when salt is mixed with water the salt 'disappears' rather than dissolves. Most have a sound understanding of forces but many still claim the reason for objects sinking in water is that they are heavy. In Years 3 and 4 pupils were divided in their opinions about whether the moon was a source of light. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 demonstrate a secure understanding of principles concerning light and sound as well as the conditions that plants need to grow successfully. They are less secure in their understanding of electrical circuits.
70. The more able pupils are not as advanced as would normally be expected. This is because too little has been expected of them in the past and because there are wide gaps in their prior knowledge and understanding. This stems from staffing problems that have affected the learning of pupils in Years 3 and 4 over a number of years and the limited time devoted to the subject in Years 1 to 4. Staffing difficulties have recently been resolved successfully. Although the proportion of pupils in Year 2 that attain the national target of Level 2 is very high, and those in Year 6 that attain Level 4 is above average, the proportion that attain the higher standards are well below average and this reduces the school's overall performance to an 'E' grade, signifying well below average overall. However, pupils' work confirms that the substantial majority attain average standards.
71. The subject is led and managed well by the deputy headteacher. Sound assessment procedures are in place that help to reveal areas of strength and important areas of weakness in pupils' learning. The co-ordinator has a good overview of provision across the school and is very aware of the areas that need developing. She provides good advice for colleagues and strives to improve standards. Her efforts have been thwarted by staffing problems and, although the subject is taught for an above average amount of time in Years 5 and 6, the amount of time allocated to the subject in other year groups is below the national average. This was also identified as an area for improvement at the time of the last inspection. The subject now features as a priority for improvement in the school development plan but has not recently been an area of focus because there has been a pressing need to improve standards in literacy and numeracy. There are examples of pupils' learning being extended by the use of information and communication technology but computers are not used systematically to, for example, collate data from experiments and illustrate results.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The new co-ordinator is skilled, knowledgeable and enthusiastic.
- Resources are good.
- Pupils are now being taught skills systematically but until recently this has not been the case across the school.

### **Commentary**

72. Pupils enjoy this subject and have very positive attitudes to learning. Their achievement is satisfactory and they attain average standards. However, there are strong indications that the school is poised to make substantial advances. The teaching is good, staff have a good range of skills and subject knowledge, the new co-ordinator is already beginning to have a positive impact on provision. There have been extensive improvements to the building and a considerable expenditure on new computers. Time is used particularly well. Pupils begin working on the computers soon after they arrive at school in the mornings. They can be trusted to get on with their work in the computer suite without direct supervision. This means that computers are used well throughout the day, as well as after school and during the lunch period. The standards that pupils attain are better than at the time of the last inspection, when they were below average by the end of Year 6. Also the resources are now much better. This represents good improvement since 1998.
73. A good programme of study has been devised. This guides teachers about what should be taught in each year group. Consequently skills are now being taught systematically and sequentially in a step-by-step process. Good links are made with other subjects. In art and design for example, pupils have used a digital camera to take photographs of everyday objects from unusual viewpoints, such as a close up of a zip or part of a leaf. These images have been enhanced and altered by scanning them into the computers and adjusting them. Exceptionally good work has been produced by pupils in Years 3 and 4 using these techniques. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have also used word processing techniques to produce newspapers such as the 'The Breakfast Daily' with a bold headline 'Missing Porridge' to illustrate different versions of traditional stories.
74. Most of the teaching seen was good but this good teaching has not been sustained over a long enough period to have had its full impact on improving standards. Pupils' learning is satisfactory but their achievement is constrained by gaps in prior learning. Teachers plan and prepare lessons methodically and teaching assistants make a strong contribution to pupils' learning by providing close support. There are occasions when pupils are allowed to experiment freely. The outcomes are sometimes surprising, as for example, when lower attaining pupils in Years 1 and 2 used their own initiative to use a good range of two-dimensional shapes to make pictures such as faces. However, there are also times when too little is produced because there is insufficient direction. Most lessons proceed at a brisk pace. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are good at changing the colour and size of fonts and in Years 5 and 6 they use clip art graphics to create contrasting symbols representing war and peace. The work produced by pupils in Years 5 and 6 is not always very much in advance of that produced by those in Years 3 and 4. This is partly because the enhanced facilities have only recently been introduced. It is also partly because the higher attaining pupils are capable of producing work of better quality but they are not always sufficiently challenged to complete complex tasks.
75. The co-ordinator has only just taken up his appointment so it is too early to say that curriculum management is more than satisfactory. However, he has completed a great deal of work to develop the subject in the few weeks that he has been associated with the school. He has a great deal of relevant expertise and is in a good position to effect substantial improvements. The provision has been greatly enhanced since the last inspection with the recent addition of a

new computer suite. There is now a good number of machines both in the suite and in each classroom.

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

76. This area is developing well but there is still a long way to go to ensure that computers and other technological devices are used fully to support teaching and learning. The Internet is not used systematically for research purposes. Procedures for integrating computers into subject planning are at an early stage of development. Pupils are not yet using computers to draw graphs in mathematics, for example, or to collate data from experiments in science.

### **HUMANITIES**

*Religious education was inspected individually and is reported in full below. Inspectors also saw a history lesson and sampled pupils' work. Because history and geography are taught alternately in blocks of time, **geography** was not being taught during the week of the inspection so work in geography was not inspected.*

77. The **history** lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 was taught well. Standards were average and pupils achieved well because the work was practical and interesting. The pupils were riveted by their teacher's lively and effective introduction to the domestic technology of the fifties as they started their study of that period. She showed them the record player, transistor radio and tape recorder she and her family had used in the sixties, and told them the story of how the new transistor radio technology enabled her as a teenager to listen to Radio Luxembourg under the bedclothes. This prompted pupils' stories about their own families' fifties treasures and experiences, which provided a good way for her to link their emerging interest to her prepared task sheet setting out the class research task based on individual study projects on a fifties topic of their choice. The teacher's description of requirements was clear and well backed up by good book and visual resources, but there was scope for better guidance on how best to use the internet as a research tool for this task, including guidance on the best sites to visit. Scrutiny of pupils' written work over the last year shows that while pupils use book, visual and map sources capably, they are not yet learning to identify and use the best historical web sites for the periods they study, such as those of the Public Records Office and the Imperial War Museum.
78. Work on display around the school indicates that this subject is enriched by visits and good resources, which is an improvement since the last inspection, as is the adoption of the nationally recommended curricular planning framework. The presentation of pupils' work has also improved since the last inspection. There were most attractive displays in the Year 5 and 6 classroom which showed how home life in the Second World War had been brought alive for the pupils by such objects as toys, letters, magazines and photographs of the period. The displays also showed how much pupils had learnt from interviewing a grandparent who had experienced life in World War II as a young boy.

### **Religious Education**

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Teachers promote children's interest in the practice of religion.
- There are good opportunities to visit different places of worship.
- Lessons sometimes focus too much on other subjects.
- Some written work is not completed.

## Commentary

79. As at the time of the last inspection, standards are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education, which the school follows closely. Because the lessons often centre on discussions, there is only a small amount of written work to be seen. Together with displays in the school, the work shows that pupils have an appropriate range of opportunities to build up their awareness of the teachings and practices of Christianity and of Judaism, Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism. They are able to relate ideas and principles from their own religion and others they study to choices and experiences of their own, including their own feelings about happy and sad or troubling events in their own lives. Pupils achieve satisfactorily by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. They respond attentively to their teachers' enthusiastic presentation of religious texts, customs and experiences through an interesting range of resources, including guest speakers and visits, for example to the local Anglican church and the Colchester Synagogue. The recent multicultural week enabled pupils to learn directly from visiting speakers. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The pupils learn to present their own increasingly perceptive insights into such issues as conflict and envy.
80. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. During the inspection, evidence of effective learning was seen when some of the younger Year 1 pupils exclaimed, 'It's the Buddha!' and 'He's meditating!' on seeing a characteristic image of the Buddha which their teacher showed after lessons in which they had been learning about Buddhist beliefs and customs. In a sound lesson observed for Years 5 and 6, pupils were able to discuss in a thoughtful way their awareness of bullying and racist incidents they had witnessed and to reflect on the impact of the incidents on both the perpetrators and the victims, as well as on themselves. Their teacher's careful planning of links between the lesson and previous 'circle time' discussions meant that pupils were well prepared to broach these sensitive issues and discuss them thoughtfully and unselfconsciously. The follow up writing task provided an opportunity to draft prayers or raps embodying their thoughts, but many of those pupils who chose the latter task became more concerned with getting the rap rhythm right than with the content of what they were writing. The setting of tasks which unintentionally resulted in pupils being diverted from a primarily religious focus was also evident in another less successful lesson for younger pupils. In this lesson a lively introduction to the Sikh temple meal ceremony was followed by a discussion with a group of pupils who had done follow-up writing in the computer suite. Too many activities were attempted and the evaluation was more concerned with how pupils had used the program controls rather than what they had learned about the ceremony.
81. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator has started to check teachers' planning, displays and pupils' work in the subject, but is not yet checking the quality of teaching and learning through lesson observation. She is aware that more could be done to use ICT to support the subject, for example by visiting religious groups' websites or by making email partnerships with a church or a religious community in another part of the UK or overseas.

## CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

*There was not enough evidence to report in full on provision in any of these subjects individually, because not enough teaching was seen and there was not enough evidence to judge overall achievement in the subjects. However, work was sampled in each subject.*

82. One lesson of **art and design** was seen for pupils in Years 3 and 4. Here the teaching was good and pupils achieved well. The teacher demonstrated particularly good expertise. The pupils studied photographs they had taken of everyday objects from different viewpoints, such as close up or from ground level. They then had to define the essential features of the photograph and use these as a source for developing an abstract design. The pupils developed a good understanding of abstract art forms. They were required to create a printing block from their designs. Many did not understand the difference between painting and printing. It was clear

that they had little previous experience of printing techniques. They produced work of an average standard.

83. Art work of good quality is displayed around the school. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 have studied Van Gogh's self-portraits and have used these well as inspiration for painting their own boldly painted portraits. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have used pastels to create still life compositions on the theme of 'Light and Shadow'. Pupils in Year 5 and 6 have designed bags for holding everyday objects and have created useful bags based closely on their designs. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have studied Aboriginal art forms and used these as a basis for their own paintings. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 have studied Indian and Nepalese art forms. They have experimented with mehendi hand painting designs. This gives pupils a good understanding of art forms from different cultures. Learning opportunities are extended through an after-school art club that two parents help to run. The co-ordinator is very new to the school but is skilled and enthusiastic. Average standards have been maintained since the last inspection. The school is in a good position to make further progress in improving provision.
84. One lesson **of design and technology** was seen for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The teaching was good and pupils achieved well because time was used effectively and all pupils were provided with appropriate challenges. Good links are made with other subjects, as for example the links made with pupils' work on the Second World War and with numeracy. Pupils studied the construction of the old air raid shelters on the school site. They measured them and used their observations to draw designs for making models of shelters. When making the models they demonstrated a good understanding of how to join materials and how to make solid, stable structures. They produced work of average quality. The pupils used a digital camera well to make a record of their work. One strong feature of the lesson was the way in which pupils collaborated with each other. Those who finished first politely offered to help those who were still completing their work. They supported each other exceptionally well. There has been good improvement in standards since the last inspection, when they were below average.
85. One lesson of **music** for pupils in Years 3 and 4 was observed and pupils' singing was heard in assembly. There was too little evidence of pupils' recorded work to be able to make a judgement about standards. Since the last inspection, the school has improved planning by adopting a commercially published curriculum plan which covers the national requirements for the subject. Teaching in the lesson seen was sound and pupils' achievement was satisfactory. Pupils enjoyed revisiting a gospel song they had listened to and learnt in the previous week. They made satisfactory progress in comparing it with a new song their teacher introduced, based on more traditional hymn music patterns. However, the teacher did not break the learning of the new song into small enough steps so that many of the pupils were unable to keep in time and tune. Observations of assemblies showed that in most pupils know a range of hymns in different traditions and sing them competently. There is a good range of instruments and a peripatetic music teacher offers opportunities for paid tuition in piano, strings, woodwind and keyboard.
86. In **physical education** one games lesson was seen for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and one dance lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6. The lesson for the younger pupils was taken by professional coaches. The school has developed a good initiative whereby specialist sports coaches teach some physical education lessons during school time and run after-school games sessions. In both the lessons seen the teaching was good and pupils achieved well. Pupils used their own music compositions, derived from the school's multi-cultural week, as a basis for their dance sequences. This added a depth of interest to the performances. Pupils used a digital video camera well to record their dance sequences so that they could subsequently evaluate their work and identify areas for improvement. This is good practice. Teaching assistants make a strong contribution to provision. One coaches hockey after school and helped the school to win a local hockey tournament during the week of the inspection. The recent addition of a new school hall has helped to raise standards, especially in gymnastics, an area that was under-developed at the time of the last inspection.

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

87. One very good lesson on the theme of 'Loneliness' was seen for pupils in Year 3 and Year 4. Here the teaching and pupils' achievement were very good because the teacher's quiet, serious manner created the right mood. This helped pupils to express personal feelings sensibly and listen attentively to those of others. The Beatles' song 'Eleanor Rigby' was used effectively to stimulate pupils' thinking. The very good relationships helped to develop empathy for the feelings of others.
  
88. Although too few lessons were seen to make overall judgements about provision across the school, this area is embedded well in the school's curriculum. The school has a well established school council. Members are elected democratically and the council meets regularly to discuss school issues. This offers pupils opportunities to have a say in the school's development as a learning community. Councillors have visited the local council offices to develop a deeper understanding of how local government functions. Pupils also study conservation and have strong views on looking after our planet. They have a well developed understanding of citizenship. Pupils study such topics as 'rights and responsibilities' and 'choices' that link well to the work of the school council. Education about drugs and sex and relationships is included in the programme of study, but there is scope for strengthening the links between work in these areas and aspects of science education. In science pupils are taught about safety with medicines lower in the school and pupils learn about the misuse of alcohol and drugs in Years 5 and 6 but these are not explicitly linked to the programme of health education. Pupils have a good understanding of healthy life styles, taking regular exercise and eating sensibly.

## PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
<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	3
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	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	3
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	3
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	4
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
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>3</b>
The governance of the school	2
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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