

INSPECTION REPORT

GREAT BENTLEY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Great Bentley

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114736

Headteacher: Mrs Diana Cleaver

Lead inspector: Ian Naylor

Dates of inspection: 8th - 10th March 2004

Inspection number: 256254

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	185
School address:	Plough Road Great Bentley Colchester Essex
Postcode:	CO7 8LD
Telephone number:	01206 250331
Fax number:	01206 251744
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Chris Wright
Date of previous inspection:	13 th February 2002

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Great Bentley is a smaller than average sized single-form entry school. The majority of pupils are from white British backgrounds. There are seven pupils in public care. There are no refugees or asylum seekers or pupils whose first language is not English. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need, but 23 pupils have special educational needs requiring school action. Pupils are from family backgrounds representative of a cross-section of the community. Twenty-two pupils joined and 18 pupils left the school before the end of the last school year. Many of the current pupils are not from the immediate area of the school and the school draws from a wide area. The school received the DfES School Achievement Award in 2003. The level of achievement on entry is variable and sometimes low.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
20906	Ian Naylor	<i>Lead inspector</i>	English, art and design, music, personal, social and health education.
17315	David Holroyd	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
1224	Graham Todd	<i>Team inspector</i>	Science, information and communication technology, design and technology, physical education, special educational needs.
32383	Rosemarie Sadler	<i>Team inspector</i>	Mathematics, Foundation Stage, religious education, history, geography.

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REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	1
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	3
Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	5
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	9
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	11
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	21

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is a satisfactory school and the potential for raising pupils' standards is good. There has been steady improvement overall in the quality of education provided. The good leadership of the headteacher and good standard of teaching are having a positive impact upon pupils' achievements and there has been a distinct improvement recently in standards. The school has coped particularly well with a long period in which there has been great change. It has emerged as a very orderly and caring community in which there is a very positive attitude to learning from pupils. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The attitudes, behaviour and relationships of pupils are very good and make a significant contribution to raising pupils' self-esteem and desire to learn.
- The headteacher has shown great drive and initiative and has very high aspirations and expectations of staff and pupils.
- Standards in 2003 for English, mathematics and science fell well below their previously higher levels.
- Teaching is predominantly good and has raised pupils' levels of achievement and progress, which are now good.
- Teaching and midday assistants give very effective support to pupils' learning and wellbeing.
- The curriculum is enhanced by very good after-school activities that include sport and music.
- There is insufficient emphasis given in planning the curriculum for subjects such as design and technology, history and geography.
- Very good links with parents have been established.

The school has continued to develop satisfactorily overall and there have been particular areas that have improved significantly since the last inspection. For instance, there has been a dramatic improvement in the ethos of the school. The quality of leadership, teaching, areas of the curriculum and involvement of parents and the community are now contributing very successfully to the achievement of pupils. Teaching and learning have improved considerably, so that there is now no teaching that is unsatisfactory. Building work has now been completed and the quality of accommodation has been radically improved, thus removing a significant barrier to pupils' learning.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Year 6 results

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

Achievement is good by the end of Years 2 and 6. In 2003, standards in Year 6 in English, mathematics and science fell well below those for the previous years when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. This was due principally to a very low achieving Year 6 cohort and the turmoil created by building work at the school. Inspection evidence in pupils' work and in lessons confirms an improved situation and the school is on track to see standards rise

towards their previous levels in English, mathematics and science in the national tests at the end of the year. Achievement in the Reception class is good. Progress for pupils with special educational needs, including those who are gifted and talented, is good. The performance of girls is better than boys, mainly because there are more boys with special educational needs. Standards in music and physical education are good. Achievement and progress are satisfactory in art, design and technology, history, geography and religious education. **Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good. Their moral, social, spiritual and cultural development is very good.**

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is good. Teaching and learning are good overall and never less than satisfactory. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology (ICT). Teaching is good in the Reception class. Effective support is given by teaching assistants to pupils with special educational needs or those who have low self-esteem. Teachers plan effectively and provide a good range of interesting and relevant activities. They have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and participation. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. There is high participation by pupils in sport, the arts and music. For instance, there are several successful school musical drama performances during the year. There are many out-of-school clubs that extend pupils' learning and make it fun. The care and welfare of pupils, including health and safety procedures, are very good. The partnership with parents has improved dramatically over the past three years and is now very good. There are good links with the community, including other schools. These give considerable support to pupils' self-esteem, achievement and progress by increasing the opportunities for learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is good. Management is satisfactory. The personal leadership of the headteacher is good and provides direction, drive and tireless enthusiasm, which have helped to inspire staff to improve the quality of teaching and to promote the overall ethos of the school. The governors give good support to the headteacher and staff. They have helped to steer the school successfully out of special measures and through the complete rebuilding of the school. They have been proactive in ensuring that the achievements of pupils are promoted. All legal requirements are met and there are satisfactory policies and planning procedures in place. The financial administration and controls are satisfactory. The school office is efficient and provides a welcoming atmosphere to parents and visitors.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Pupils and their parents hold the school in high regard. Parents' responses are overwhelmingly favourable. They stress the great improvement that has been made in the school since the appointment of the new headteacher. Pupils are very proud of their school, eager to attend and feel that they make good progress in their learning.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Continue to raise standards in English, mathematics and science.
- Improve the quality of planning in history, geography and design and technology.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Standards were low in the 2003 national tests in Years 2 and 6. However, standards are currently average and pupils' achievement is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' overall achievement is showing signs of good improvement in English, mathematics and science.
- Achievement in pupils' reading and writing is improving rapidly, especially in Years 5 and 6.
- Many pupils show good ability in sport and music.
- Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
- A low achieving cohort was largely responsible for lower standards in 2003.

Commentary

1. Standards in 2003 for Year 6 in English, mathematics and science fell well below those for the previous years when compared with all schools nationally and with similar schools. This was due to a combination of factors, including a very low achieving cohort, with many pupils having special educational or social and emotional needs and to the turmoil created by building work at the school, which acted as an inhibitor to learning. At the end of Year 6, standards in the 2003 tests were well below the national average in English compared with all schools nationally and when compared with other, similar schools. At the end of Year 2, standards were well below the national average in reading and just in line with the national average in writing when compared with similar schools. There was also a corresponding dip in standards in Year 2. Reading and mathematics were well below the national average, whilst writing was broadly in line. However, test results over the last four years were above the national trend by Year 2 and broadly in line by Year 6. In the Reception class, most children meet the Early Learning Goals by the time they transfer to Year 1. Whole-school targets set in conjunction with the local authority last year proved to be unreliable indicators of pupils' attainments and were too optimistic. Those set for the current year are realistic and more likely to be achieved.

2. Achievement of pupils is good by the end of Year 2 and 6. For many, the rate of progress is particularly good. Achievement of children in the Reception class is good. Current standards evident in pupils' work and in lessons are satisfactory and this points to an improving situation. The school is likely to raise standards, so that they are broadly in line with similar schools by Year 6 in the national tests in English, mathematics and science at the end of the current year. This is because of the improved quality of teaching and the greater emphasis on pupils meeting the individual targets set in each subject. Pupils with special educational needs, including those who are gifted and talented, make good progress in the targets set for them. This is mainly because the work in groups is set at an appropriate level and pupils are well supported by well-trained and effective learning support assistants. The performance of girls is slightly better overall than that of boys, mainly because there are more boys with special educational needs.

3. Achievement and progress in English is good because of the increased emphasis in teaching of the literacy strategies for reading and writing, although standards in spelling are not always satisfactory. Achievements in mathematics, science, ICT, music and physical education, particularly in sport, are good. Achievement and progress are satisfactory in art and design, design and technology, history, geography and religious education.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	14.9 (15.9)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	14.7 (15.2)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.6 (17.2)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 29 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	24.9 (27.2)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	24.8 (28.8)	26.8 (26.7)
science	27.4 (30.2)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 32 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

The **very good** behaviour of pupils, their desire to learn and attitudes to school are strong features of the school.

Strengths and weaknesses

- Attitudes and behaviour are very good and often exemplary.
- Relationships are very good and pupils show great respect for the feelings and values of others.
- Attendance and punctuality are good.
- Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.

Commentary

4. Pupils consistently behave in a pleasant and polite manner to adults and to each other. They show a great interest in school life and in the range of activities provided. During lessons, pupils behave well, help each other and are polite and well behaved. There are very few instances of silly behaviour or lack of cooperation with staff. Pupils work hard and enjoy their lessons. They develop very good relationships with other pupils and with adults. A good example of this was seen during a school football lesson supported by soccer coaches from a local professional football club. Pupils worked together and, with the adults, showed great confidence and self-esteem

5. The school works well with parents and carers to ensure the attendance of children and, as a result, attendance has improved and is now good. This gives good support to pupils' learning and their attitudes to school. There have been no permanent exclusions and only one fixed-period exclusion in the last year.

6. The school behaviour code and expectations are clearly displayed around the school. Evidence from lessons, observing pupils informally and in discussion with them showed these to be well understood. All staff use the achievement boards to highlight examples of considerate and excellent behaviour by pupils. The school motto, '*only my best will do*', is used effectively to stimulate pupils' desire to learn and to ensure that pupils understand the high expectations of their conduct by all staff. All pupils clearly understand and apply the principles that help distinguish right from wrong. Pupils are consulted about school rules, and these are reinforced by staff in assemblies and by school prefects. These rules continually draw pupils' attention to the very high expectations set by the school.

7. Pupils feel that the staff deal effectively with the very few incidents of bullying and that there is no racism or other forms of harassment. Through their representatives on the school council, pupils state they are able to bring any concerns to the attention of relevant adults, and they know it is important to do this. Staff are vigilant and supervise behaviour well, for example, on the playground, to ensure that bullying does not occur. Midday assistants play a key role and organise interesting activities that help pupils to build good relationships and friendships.

8. Pupils are encouraged in their relationships. Older pupils monitor and support younger pupils who may have suffered or been concerned about bullying. Through a well-developed and understood programme, the school enables children to develop self-understanding. There are many good examples of consideration for others shown by pupils during breaks and in lessons. Respect for other people’s feelings, values and beliefs, was evident during conversations with children and in assemblies.

9. There is a good programme to help children understand and fulfil the responsibilities of living in a community. This includes visits to many places of interest by pupils as part of the PSHE programme. A range of visitors are invited to lead assemblies to help talk to pupils about the arts, other cultures and aspects of other religions. Visiting professionals testify to the friendly atmosphere of the school.

10. Cultural awareness is encouraged well, for example, through the introduction of food from other cultures as part of the daily snack menu and by a multi-cultural display board in the hall. There are very good displays of art representing the colours, patterns and designs from a range of cultures. The school makes a good effort to enable pupils to appreciate their own and other cultural traditions.

11. Children in the Reception class are well on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Foundation Stage.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.2	School data	0.0
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are good in Years 1 to 6. Teaching in the Reception class is good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good in most lessons; there is no teaching that is unsatisfactory.
- Teachers’ planning is effective and is based on a good knowledge of pupils’ abilities through data analysis and the tracking of pupil progress.
- Teaching makes clear to pupils what and how they will learn.
- There is good use of electronic aids.
- Teaching assistants give good, specific support to pupils’ learning.
- Self-assessment by pupils is not yet used uniformly across the subjects to support pupils’ learning.

Commentary

12. Teaching has improved significantly since the last inspection. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science, ICT and in the Foundation Stage (children five and under). Good attention has been given to raising the quality of teaching by introducing additional learning strategies, for instance those in literacy, which involve giving extra support to pupils individually or in small groups. All teachers plan effectively and provide a good range of interesting and relevant activities. They set out clearly in writing and reinforce orally what the pupils will learn in the lessons and what they need to do to make progress. They have high expectations of behaviour and participation by pupils.

13. Teaching has also been made more effective by the introduction of ICT, such as electronic whiteboards. These enable teachers to present visual information more easily and help them to promote learning. Effective support is given by teaching assistants to pupils with special educational needs or those who have low attainment or low self-esteem. They have clearly identified roles and areas of responsibility. Many have received specific training, for example, in the accelerated learning strategy for literacy, and they have developed good teaching skills for these small groups and for individuals. The quality of teaching for pupils with lower attainment or with special educational needs is good. There is regular specific teaching given in separate sessions with the headteacher to pupils identified as gifted and talented. As a result, it is expected that more pupils will achieve at Level 5 in the forthcoming tests. Although results in national tests were low last year, there is strong evidence to suggest that teaching managed to successfully promote many areas of non-academic achievement for pupils in a cohort of generally low attaining pupils.

14. Assessment and recording of pupils' progress is satisfactory overall, but it is best in English and mathematics because it is applied here more consistently. The teachers know the abilities of pupils well and set individual targets in most subjects for pupils. These are presented as a reminder at the front of pupils' workbooks and targets are checked regularly. Assessment is closely linked to the planning for lessons and to the resources that pupils need. The identification and assessment procedures for pupils with special educational needs are good. Teachers are starting to develop pupils' self-assessment skills. These are being used regularly in English and mathematics, but need to be applied more in the other subjects. The school has amassed a vast amount of data about pupils' attainment. Teachers track pupils' progress as they move through the school. They are beginning to use this information more effectively to identify areas of weakness in pupils' learning.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3 (9%)	25 (78%)	4 (13%)	0	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.

The curriculum

The school ensures that all pupils have access to a **satisfactory** range of learning opportunities. Statutory requirements with regard to religious education, sex and relationships education, alcohol and drug misuse are fully met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Effective implementation of the national strategies in literacy and numeracy.
- A very good range of extra-curricular clubs, visits and sporting activities help to enrich the curriculum.
- The accommodation and resources support the curriculum well.
- Planning in several subjects requires further emphasis.

Commentary

15. The school has focused well on the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, and these are now well established. A great deal of emphasis has also been directed at improving the curriculum in English, mathematics, science and ICT. However, the use of ICT in different subjects of the curriculum remains a weakness. The school is aware that concentration on the above subjects has meant that some others have been neglected. The work scrutiny and interviews with key staff show that curriculum planning and content in history, geography and design and technology need reviewing.

16. Since the previous inspection, there has been very good progress in enriching the curriculum. There have been visits from an author, a poet and an actor. There is a wide range of clubs, extra-curricular activities and educational visits. Participation in sport is very strong. Parents have been consulted about the introduction of French to the curriculum; this is to commence shortly. Gifted and talented pupils receive extra tuition from the headteacher and attend master classes at Elmstead Primary School. Colne Community School is also involved with an accelerated learning programme.

17. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and, as a result, their needs are well met. In most lessons, the curriculum is adapted well to meet their specific learning targets. Individual withdrawal and support is well planned and regularly reviewed. The curriculum for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is good. This includes the study of the human body, diet and healthy eating in science. The residential visit in Year 6 provides good opportunities for pupils to develop social skills and to interact positively with their friends.

18. There is a good match of teachers to the curriculum. Teaching assistants have clearly defined roles and provide very good support for the pupils. The new school building and refurbishment contribute well to teamwork and the very good community ethos. The library, computer suite, gymnasium and learning support room are good facilities, and they are making a good contribution towards school improvement and the raising of standards. Resources are of good quality and are well organised. Teachers make good use of them to support pupils' learning.

Care, guidance and support

The school provides **very good** care for all its pupils. The school is a safe, very caring and supportive place, where all pupils receive good support and guidance, and this helps them with their learning. The school takes very good account of the views of its pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Staff know pupils' needs and abilities very well and care about their welfare. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good.
- Very good attention is given to health and safety policies and procedures.
- The school council is used well to consult pupils on their views.
- Induction and transfer arrangements are good.
- The school is working successfully towards the Healthy Schools award.
- Pupils with special educational needs have good individual education plans (IEPs).

Commentary

19. Pupils have a good and trusting relationship with one or more adults in the school. Teachers, learning support staff and midday assistants play a key role in establishing good relationships and place great value on the views of pupils. Pupils on the school council in Years 5 and 6, who were interviewed, stressed they see their relationship with all adults, including teachers, as very important to their learning. They confirmed that they had access to well-informed support, advice and guidance as they progressed through the school. Pupils stated good examples of advice given to them by staff on dealing with playground problems and helping newer, younger children to settle in.

20. There are very good practices and procedures in place for child protection. Governors have very good practices and procedures to make certain pupils work in a healthy and safe environment. Governors and staff have been very vigilant about health and safety during the last two years during the major building and redevelopment of the school site. The school's programme of PSHE provides a good framework for raising the pupils' awareness of healthy and safe living.

21. The school has very good induction arrangements. There are sound relationships and links by the headteacher and Reception class staff with the local playgroup. There are also very good links with secondary education. This includes many sporting links, from Year 3 onwards, with pupils in secondary schools. Secondary school teachers from catchment schools spend two days on site with pupils who will be making the transition. This gives very good support to pupils' learning and self-esteem.

22. The ways in which the staff seek to involve and consult pupils are very good and a strength of the school. The main vehicle for this is the elected school council, which meets regularly. There is evidence of a very good record of involvement by pupils in determining things that happen in school. For example, pupils have been closely consulted in the introduction of new after-school or lunchtime clubs. The school has recently consulted all pupils about changes planned for school meals. This work is part of the school's bid for the Healthy Schools Award.

23. Individual education plans for pupils are of a good quality. These are reviewed on a regular basis and parents and pupils are fully involved in this process. The plans have clear targets and these provide key information and data against which progress can be measured. The pupils are carefully monitored and the tracking by the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO) indicates that the majority are making good progress.

24. Individual withdrawal and support is well planned and regularly reviewed. The academic support, care and advice available for pupils with special educational needs are good. The pupils are involved in discussing their own individual learning targets. The school works closely with a wide range of outside agencies.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has a **very good** partnership with parents and has been successful in involving some of them in the education of their children. There are good links with other education institutions and good links with some sections of the wider community that benefit the pupils. Links with the business and commercial community are limited, but of good quality.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents think very well of the school and are provided with very good quality information.
- Good account is taken of parents' views.
- Parent helpers provide good support to learning.
- Links with business and commercial community are good.
- There are examples of good practice, but some teachers could use homework books more effectively.

Commentary

25. A very good contribution is made to children's learning by parents and the strong links and relationships they have with the school. Parents are provided with good and relevant information about the school and the standards and progress of their child. For example, the school prospectus is very informative and well presented.

26. The school has very good means to seek parents' views. The school values and acts upon parents' views and these arrangements are very successful. Through its good communication systems and the parents' forum, the school makes sure it does all it can to ensure parental satisfaction and deal effectively with their concerns and complaints. Parents are positive in their views about the school and feel that they can approach staff very easily.

27. Homework is a well-established feature of the school. Homework books help to maintain the partnership with parents and they make a vital contribution to pupils' learning. However, parents feel that there is a lack of uniformity of approach across the school, with some teachers providing more specific information than others to parents on how they can encourage and give active support to their child's learning.

28. Annual and termly reports ensure parents remain well informed of their children's progress. The school makes every effort to ensure that parents are kept in touch about the progress their child is making. They are fully involved in the review of IEPs

29. Parent helpers are encouraged by staff and are a regular feature of the school and support the work of class teachers and teaching assistants in all areas, including the library, additional reading support and with school visits and outings. They make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning.

30. The school has many good links with the local community. For example, good support has been received for the refurbishment and restocking of the library from local businesses. The Parents Association provides very strong practical, social and financial support. Links with other schools are good. Examples include the many sporting links and those connected with the programme for accelerated learning.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership is **good**. Management is **satisfactory**. The good leadership of the headteacher provides direction and focus for improvements. Governance is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The good leadership, vision, drive and very high aspirations of the headteacher.
- School self-evaluation has improved significantly and is now good.
- The governing body has played a key role in securing improvements to teaching, accommodation, staffing and resources.
- There are good opportunities for staff training.
- Analysis by staff of data and trends regarding pupils' attainment and taking positive action to raise standards is good.
- The school has a larger than recommended budget surplus.

Commentary

31. The headteacher has a very clear view of the future development for the school that is shared by staff, governors, parents and pupils. She consults with staff and governors, who all work well as a team and endeavour to involve parents as much as possible. Her tireless enthusiasm has helped to inspire staff, to raise standards in teaching and to successfully promote the overall ethos of the school. She has developed the school most effectively from a very low point at the time when she was appointed two and a half years ago and has successfully steered it through the massive rebuilding programme.

32. The school plan is good and spells out the future development for the school. It has been adjusted and adapted over the last two years so that staff can keep pace with the demands upon them, but at the same time embrace the challenges presented. The headteacher is constantly reviewing school practice and uses internal school evaluation, data analysis and objective external monitoring as methods to drive up standards in teaching, curriculum and attainment. Management of the special educational needs provision is good.

33. There is a sound overall system of subject co-ordination, with most subject action plans in place and budgets allocated and managed satisfactorily. Subject leadership is best in English, mathematics and the Foundation Stage, where good opportunities have been created for subject co-ordinators to monitor the quality of teaching across the school. This supports consistency of approach in planning and promotes good teaching. Further development is required, however, in the planning for other subjects. This is recognised in the school plan.

34. The low national results for 2003 are of concern to the leadership of the school, who are aware of the causes and are taking appropriate measures to promote standards, with the result that they are now rising again towards their previous levels. The analysis of trends in performance and attainment by pupils in the national tests and the setting of school targets in conjunction with the local authority are good. Action by teachers, arising out of this analysis, to set priorities for teaching and learning, is sound, but needs further consolidation and refining. Nevertheless, the school is well placed because of the quality of leadership and good teaching to raise standards in all subjects significantly.

35. There are good procedures for appraisal of staff and these are successfully linked to good arrangements for the professional development of staff. This has had a positive effect upon the quality of teaching and learning. The headteacher and governors have made a good start in adjusting to the new national workload agreements on staff deployment, and this is having a direct effect upon the teachers' capacity to monitoring the quality of teaching in their subject.

36. The governors receive good information from the headteacher and staff and provide them with good levels of support and challenge. They have helped to steer the school successfully out of special measures and through the complete rebuilding of the school. They have made successful staff appointments that have helped to improve the quality of teaching and learning. Governors have high procedural standards in their committees. They have been concerned to ensure that the achievements of pupils are promoted. Governors ensure that pupils with special educational needs are well catered for. Good use is made of link governors, who have a more direct hands-on approach to the monitoring of the curriculum, teaching, learning and attainment, so that all staff feel a higher level of involvement and support by governors in raising standards. Governors meet all legal requirements and there are good policies and planning procedures in place.

37. There is a sound system of financial administration. Good liaison is maintained with the local authority finance department so that there is regular monitoring of spending and financial controls. The money received by the school for special educational needs is well spent, the majority being used to fund staff. There is a larger surplus in the school budget at the end of the year than is recommended, but this is within acceptable limits given the uncertainty over pupil numbers and projections for future staffing costs. The school office is efficient and provides a welcoming reception for parents and visitors.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	500,219
Total expenditure	507,688
Expenditure per pupil	2,744

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	56,272
Balance carried forward to the next	95,068

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

38. Provision for children in the Reception class is **good** and this has maintained the standard since the previous inspection. Teaching is good overall and, consequently, children are well prepared for transfer into Year 1. Useful links have been developed with the pre-school playgroup and this helps the class teacher to get to know the children before they enter school. Most children settle quickly into school. The children begin school in the September or January before they are five. All children have attended some form of pre-school provision.

39. Most children currently enter the school with standards that are average in literacy skills and in numeracy. All children achieve well in the Reception class because of the good teaching in all areas of learning. By the end of the Reception Year, nearly all children reach the expected standards in all areas of learning, with some children exceeding them.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children are on course to reach the Early Learning Goal by the end of the school year.
- Children maintain attention and concentrate well.
- Trusting relationships are established so that children feel happy and confident.

Commentary

40. Very good care is shown by the teacher and teaching assistant towards the children, which develops their confidence. Children are well settled into the school and class routines. They co-operate well with staff, share equipment and take turns with one another. Since the adults have high expectations of them in the classroom, children know what is expected of them. They are friendly and helpful towards each other and are keen and proud to show their work to adults. Children concentrate and persevere with their learning even when they are not directly supervised. They sit and listen to the teacher and each other for a reasonable length of time. Many children have the confidence to speak aloud to the whole class and have developed these skills since September. Children socialise well during 'snack time' and wait patiently for their drink and food. The staff work as a cohesive team to give the children all the confidence they need. They support children with special educational needs very well.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Children are developing good skills in reading.
- The teacher knows the abilities of the children and plans the work to meet their needs.
- Children have made good progress in their speaking skills since starting school.

Commentary

41. Children are given many opportunities to speak and listen and, as a result, are making good progress. As children came into school with underdeveloped speaking skills the teacher has made this a focus for improvement. The majority now speak in complete sentences and are developing their vocabulary. They enjoy listening to stories and join in with the teacher when reading a big book. Many children are developing good reading skills and are able to read a number of common words. They predict what might happen next in a story and discuss their opinions about a book. They are beginning to notice words that rhyme. The daily Early Reading Research (ERR) sessions teach children the letter sounds and this gives them a good start to reading. Parents support this work at home or at the beginning of the day in school. The teacher and teaching assistant listen to children read and discuss books with them individually. This is well supported at home by parents, who comment in the reading diaries. Children make good progress with their writing and many are writing common words independently and beginning to form their letters correctly. Some children know that a sentence ends with a full stop.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **very good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- Good planning and differentiation ensures children make good progress.
- Basic mathematical skills are well taught.

Commentary

42. The teacher plans mathematical activities carefully and all children work to their ability level. This ensures that there is a good balance of teacher led and child initiated activities. Children have many opportunities to count, sort, measure and compare. They are all confident with numbers up to 10 and some with numbers up to 20. They explore patterns and develop an understanding of repeating patterns. The teacher uses every opportunity to develop their mathematical language. Some children had remembered the word 'fewer' from a lesson some time ago. In one lesson observed, children were exploring shape and some were able to name three-dimensional shapes such as a cube, a cylinder and a sphere. High attaining children went on to explore the properties of shape and could recognise the faces of a cube. The majority are on course to meet the Early Learning Goal by the end of the year.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are many well-planned activities to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world.
- There are good opportunities for children to learn about their own religions and the religions of others.
- Limited use is made of ICT to support learning.

Commentary

44. The children have many opportunities to learn about the world. They grow and look after bulbs in the outside area and become aware of the things a plant needs to make it grow. In a lesson about the Jewish Sabbath, the teacher skilfully created an atmosphere of mystery using a table with a white tablecloth, food and cutlery as it would be in a Jewish home on the Sabbath. The boys in the class were happy to wear Kippurs on their heads and, as the teacher lit the candles, the children were enthralled. Children asked enquiring questions, which the teacher encouraged. They were very interested to learn about the special day.

45. Children gain an understanding of where they live by walking around the village. They learn about other cultures through snack time, when they taste foods from other countries. Children have weekly lessons in the computer suite, where achievement in ICT is satisfactory. They are developing mouse skills and can recognise the letters and numerals on the computer keyboard. Access to computers in the classroom is limited and children do not have sufficient opportunities to develop their skills using programmable toys.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

No physical education lesson was observed, so it is not possible to make an overall judgement about children's physical skills.

Commentary

46. The outside area is accessed directly from the Reception class and is reasonably well equipped. Because of this easy access, the area can be used by groups of children throughout the day. Pupils use the large construction apparatus and wheeled and pedalled toys in the outside area and their general mobility skills are satisfactory. Children develop their manipulative skills by handling scissors, glue, brushes and beads, and they use small construction equipment with dexterity.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Provision for creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Activities are planned well to develop skills using a wide range of materials.
- Children develop very good skills in music.

Commentary

47. There are good opportunities for children to develop their creative skills by using a wide range of materials. Children use a variety of pencils, crayons, paints and modelling materials. They create interesting collages using well-chosen resources, including fabric, wool, tissue paper and card. When finding out about seeds and plants, one group made delightful seed packets and children persevered very well with cutting and sticking. They make party hats, imaginatively selecting their own materials and designs. Children listen quietly to classical music and are taught very well how to clap a rhythm and sing in tune. They very confidently sing phrases on their own in front of the rest of the class. They enjoy selecting their own percussion instruments and play these in a very controlled manner. They play loudly and quietly, fast and slowly. They are very enthusiastic and the teacher is brave enough to let them explore and experiment.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning is good in Years 1 – 6 and in the Reception class.
- Pupils' speaking and listening skills are improving and are a strong feature of lessons and other activities.
- Monitoring of teaching and tracking of pupil progress is being developed effectively.
- Writing skills are improving, with very good examples of pupils' extended writing in Years 3 – 6.
- Pupils' attitudes to the subject are very good.
- Spelling skills are weak, especially in Years 5 and 6, and detract from the overall quality and presentation of work.

Commentary

48. Evidence in lessons and from analysis of pupils' work shows that standards are currently satisfactory. There has been satisfactory improvement in standards of reading and writing and both are likely to show an improvement in the results from the end of the year assessments and tests. This is mainly due to the fact that teaching is good, but also because there is a more settled school environment and the disruption to learning created by building alterations in school has ended.

49. Achievement is good in Years 1 and 2. Pupils make sound progress in their speaking and listening skills and respond sensibly in sentences to the teacher's skilful questioning, for example, during whole-class big book activities or when discussing their ideas for story writing with a partner. In this way, pupils show their understanding and sound levels of concentration. Reading and writing skills are improving rapidly, largely because of the various good approaches made by teachers, who use guided reading and other literacy strategies with small groups or individuals on a regular basis. The progress of low attaining pupils or those with special educational needs is given good support by the expertise of the learning support assistants. Pupils' learning is good and well supported by regularly set homework. They write in sentences and have a good understanding of punctuation and the use of verbs and adjectives. There are many examples of how they use these successfully to enhance their story writing. Good teaching promotes relevant and fun activities that engage pupils' interest, as when pupils take part in a whole-school multi-media week. Pupils gain great ideas that help to promote their writing skills. For instance, they write stories in the form of a storyboard for a film and draw their own illustrations. As a result, pupils show interest in what they are doing and work hard to make good progress in their skills. Pupils use dictionaries, for example, to find words ending in 'ed' and, although some show sound skills in spelling, many pupils struggle with spellings and their workbooks often show this.

50. Achievement is good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils make good progress in their speaking and listening skills so that, by Year 6, many are confident speakers and able to lead an assembly or describe the best features of their school to visitors. They take part in a class debate about presenting a balanced argument on 'whether the Internet is good for children'. All pupils participate and are very enthusiastic and able to work within groups or with a partner to develop their ideas. They show very good learning and are very well behaved, work very hard and show respect for one another's points of view. This is a result of very good teaching that is well planned, directed and which is focused on challenging pupils to raise their standards. In particular, good use is made by staff of a range of literacy strategies to promote pupils' learning. Learning support staff show skilful teaching of groups and individuals and this supports learning very effectively. Pupils with special education needs are taught well. Those pupils with high ability have additional teaching sessions, and this is having a good impact upon their standards. Marking is effective and helps to promote

better presentation by pupils. Evidence from lessons and from pupils' work in their books and on display indicates that there is a growing confidence by pupils in their writing skills. They produced good extended writing about the 'Iron Man', by Ted Hughes, using storyboards to help them and critical summaries of their views on plays by Shakespeare. Achievement and progress in reading are good and pupils are well supported by the regular guided reading sessions. There is, however, a continuing weakness in pupils' spelling skills that prevents some pupils attaining higher levels in their national tests.

51. The subject is well led and has good features, such as good ideas for subject enrichment. Resources are satisfactory. The co-ordinator has made good use of non-contact time to monitor and help improve the quality of teaching across the subject. Good use has also been made of data analysis to assist with the setting of targets for pupils. There has been good progress since the last inspection.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

52. There is evidence from lessons, analysis of work in the subjects and of teachers' planning that language and literacy feature satisfactorily across the curriculum. For example, in science, pupils use good writing skills to label their work and describe their experiments. In ICT, pupils record formats for their programs and enhance their writing with word-processing. In religious education, pupils read stories about the Holocaust and show good writing when sequencing special events such as birthdays. Pupils have good speaking and listening skills and this helps to promote learning in all subjects.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The teaching of mathematics is good and this has raised pupils' achievements.
- The behaviour and attitudes of pupils is good.
- The subject is well led.
- Although standards are rising, there is a need to continue to raise standards and provide further challenge for the more able pupils.
- Marking and the use of ICT are not used sufficiently to support learning.

Commentary

53. Standards in mathematics are currently satisfactory and this maintains the standard since the last inspection. However, evidence shows that standards are now rising due to the good teaching that is now taking place. Pupils achieve well in response to the good teaching that they receive and their positive attitudes to learning. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.

54. Achievement is good. In Year 2, most pupils are able to work out doubles and halves and begin to learn about division using a number line. They have a good understanding of three-digit numbers. Some pupils recognise that division is the inverse of multiplication. By Year 6 pupils are able to carry out fast mental calculations of two-digit numbers. They are able to explain a range of strategies for working out problems. They are developing their knowledge of the properties of shape and are able to work out the angles of a triangle.

55. Teaching is good because lessons are planned thoroughly and the National Numeracy Strategy is implemented well. Frequently, a good pace and lively delivery engage pupils' interest and they work hard. Pupils are well behaved, eager to learn and keen to succeed. Teaching assistants are clear about their role and work effectively to support small groups of pupils. This assists the

pupils' understanding. Teachers' good use of praise encourages the pupils to contribute their ideas, which they do with confidence. However, teachers did not always challenge the higher attaining pupils sufficiently and, in some lessons seen, the work was too easy for them, or time was not used effectively to push their learning forward. In some lessons, their organisation prevented the most able pupils moving on at a faster rate. The quality of opportunities made by teachers at the end of lessons to check on pupils' learning varied considerably. In the best examples, the time was used effectively to check pupils' understanding. In other lessons this time merely involved a few pupils describing what they had done during the lesson.

56. The use of pupils' own self-assessment is developing well and the older pupils are able to express what they have learnt, what they enjoyed and what they need help with. Targets are set for all pupils, and this helps them to become aware of what they need to do to achieve the next level of attainment in mathematics. The teachers' marking is variable and does not always give pupils enough information about what they need to do to improve.

57. The use of ICT in mathematics lessons could be further improved. There were good examples seen in a Year 5 lesson when pupils used a Venn diagram to sort various shapes. The computer program differentiated the work for different abilities and let the highest attaining pupils work at their own level.

58. The leadership of the subject is good. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in mathematics and has carried out effective monitoring, including lesson observation and looking at pupils' work. There is clear, direct feedback to staff which will have an impact on standards. The co-ordinator has large amounts of data, but this needs to be used effectively to help raise standards further.

Mathematics across the curriculum

59. Pupils use mathematics satisfactorily as part of their work in some other subjects. They make satisfactory use of graphs and tables to record data in science, such as the light and shadow line graphs in Year 6. Displays of mathematical vocabulary are common in most classrooms. Mathematics skills could, however, be used more frequently in other subjects.

SCIENCE

The provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The majority of pupils are achieving well.
- Practical science is well taught.
- The recording of investigations requires improvement.
- Information and communication technology is not used effectively enough.
- Teaching assistants support pupils very well.

Commentary

60. Inspection evidence found current standards to be average and rising. Overall, pupils achieve well in science, with girls attaining higher standards than boys. The majority of pupils find science fun; they enjoy the work and are enthusiastic about the practical investigations. However, there are a small, but significant, number of higher attaining pupils who are coasting and are not achieving the standards they could. This is because the work set for them is not challenging enough.

61. Teaching is good overall, and this is having a positive impact on pupils' achievement. This year, investigational science is a focus for the school and teachers' planning reflects the strong

efforts that have been made to improve this. An example of the good teaching was the questioning to find out what pupils had understood and to reinforce scientific understanding and vocabulary. Key elements of the curriculum are well taught, such as prediction and fair testing. Lesson observations and the work in pupils' books show that, in some classes, the curriculum is not adapted and modified sufficiently for the different groups of pupils. Some pupils are spending far too much time writing up the results of investigations. A simpler way of recording would leave more time for practical work. In this respect, insufficient thought has been given to using ICT for recording, for instance the use of tables and graphs. Opportunities for research using ICT are also being missed. Marking of pupils' work is satisfactory; the best examples explain to pupils how they can improve their work. The teaching assistants support the pupils very well. They have clearly identified roles, work very effectively with the teachers and provide a high level of care for the pupils. The school environment is used effectively to support teaching and the curriculum is enriched by visits to places such as the science museum.

62. Subject leadership is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has monitored planning and pupils' work and has some opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching. Assessment procedures are satisfactory. There has been satisfactory improvement since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

The provision for ICT is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils' achievement is good.
- Teaching observed during the inspection was good.
- Good use is being made of new technology.

Commentary

63. Standards in ICT are average. In the lessons taught in the computer suite, the pupils have good opportunities to develop their skills. The analysis of pupils' work and subject planning show that National Curriculum requirements are fully met.

64. In the small number of discrete lessons observed, teaching was consistently good. The good teaching is having a positive impact on pupils' learning and helping to raise standards. The pupils enjoy their lessons, behave very well, respect the equipment and are keen to learn new skills and techniques. Effective use is being made of the projectors and electronic whiteboards. Pupils are achieving well and, by Years 5 and 6, they are gaining familiarity with spreadsheets and multimedia programs. Good work was seen in their slide shows about Great Bentley School. Staff training has been effective and can be seen in the way the school is using the new technology, for example, the Internet and digital photography. Digital images are particularly well used to record achievements. A good example of this is the recording of the visit in Year 3, when the pupils dressed up as Victorians. Pupils are enthusiastic about the lunchtime computer club. During the inspection they were observed enjoying their learning when using microscopes to examine minibeasts, such as worms and woodlice.

65. Subject leadership is satisfactory. Assessment is satisfactory; pupils have a booklet in which they can record the development of their skills. A computerised system of recording has been purchased recently, but this has not yet been introduced. Overall, there has been satisfactory progress since the last inspection.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

66. The use of ICT in different subjects of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Some good work was seen in English and mathematics. For instance, pupils in Year 6 word-process their stories and use spreadsheets to check for errors in graphical representation. Teachers and pupils use electronic

whiteboards effectively in many lessons. Year 3 pupils working in the computer suite were exploring simulations and learning to follow instructions. Keyboards and recording equipment are used in music. However, ICT could be used to greater effect in science, religious education, history, geography, physical education and design and technology.

HUMANITIES

67. Work was sampled in history and geography and one geography lesson was observed during the inspection. It is not possible, therefore, to form a judgement about the provision in either subject. However, pupils' work indicates that standards are broadly in line with national expectations. In religious education, four lessons were observed during the inspection week and pupils' written work was looked at.

68. In **geography**, study of the local area is a focus throughout the school. In Years 1 and 2, pupils compare Great Bentley with Brighstone on the Isle of Wight. They look at a range of maps and learn how to use keys, carry out vehicle surveys and interview people. In the lesson seen, the Year 1 and 2 pupils were studying the land use of Brighstone, and they used a variety of sources. However, the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils were doing the same work at the same level. This work was too difficult for the Year 1 pupils to understand and needed to be matched to their ability. In Year 3, pupils continue to build on the map work skills learnt in Year 2, and they study The Gambia. As part of this work, pupils had made some very good, large, clay pots. Pupils in Year 5 study settlements and, in Year 6, pupils comment on ways to improve the school environment. The limited amount of work in pupils' books shows that better planning for geography work by teachers would allow pupils to study topics in more depth and record their findings in a variety of ways.

69. Similarly, the limited amount of work in pupils' **history** books shows that the profile of the subject needs to be raised across the school. Although there is a sound scheme of work for history and geography, some teachers need to allocate more teaching time to the subjects. The quality of work in history shown by Year 3 pupils, after their visit to the Colne Valley Victorian Day, is very good. An attractively presented classroom display showed how interested the pupils were in the Victorians. In Year 5, pupils had written in detail about the Anglo Saxons and, in Year 6, when studying Ancient Egypt, pupils made some delightful 'minibooks' entitled 'An idiot's guide to mummification'. Although teachers carry out end-of-year assessments of pupils' achievements, there is no formal assessment in these subjects throughout the course of the academic year. This means that the work is not always matched to the ability of the pupils. The lack of assessment makes it difficult for teachers to plan the next stages of the pupils' learning and to ensure that all pupils are reaching their full potential.

70. The co-ordinator for geography and history has monitored the subjects by looking at teachers' planning and pupils' work, but has not yet observed lessons. Resources have been improved in geography and books introduced that can be used to link literacy skills with geography and history. There is little use of ICT in these subjects. The curriculum for history and geography is enriched by visits to places of interest, such as Colchester Castle and Cressing Temple and by inviting visitors into the school, for example, an archaeologist and someone in the role of Florence Nightingale.

Religious education

Provision in religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement during lessons is good.
- Pupils develop a positive attitude to the subject and a respect for their own faith and those of others.
- The work is not always matched to the pupils' ability.

- The co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject.

Commentary

71. Pupils achieve well and meet the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils achieve well in lessons because of the good teaching. However, the amount and quality of work in pupils' books in some classes show that there is not enough emphasis placed on the subject.

72. In the best lessons, teachers planned the lesson well. They made the lessons interesting by showing the pupils artefacts and used good questioning skills to encourage pupils to think deeply about their feelings. In a Year 6 lesson, pupils wrote very sensitively about the persecution of Jews during World War Two. This lesson showed that pupils empathised with a character after reading the book 'Rose Blanche'. In a Year 5 lesson, pupils were encouraged by the teacher to think about heaven and hell. They used Bibles and the teacher made the lesson interesting with his lively style. Pupils had their own ideas about heaven and hell and drew very good pictures to show their feelings. Younger pupils learned about the differences between a Sikh wedding and a Christian wedding and were encouraged to respect their own faith and the faith of others. Assemblies make a good contribution to developing the pupils' spiritual awareness. In some classes, the work is not matched to the ability of the pupils as in the case of the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, who complete the same work at the same level. This means that higher ability pupils are not being sufficiently challenged and the Year 1 pupils are set work that is not appropriate to their needs.

73. The subject co-ordinator has a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and has carried out some good monitoring by looking at pupils' work and observing lessons. She has fed back her findings to staff, and this has improved standards.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

74. Only one lesson was seen in art and design and one in physical education. No lessons were seen in design and technology or music. Pupils were observed singing and playing in assemblies. Analysis was made of pupils' completed work on display around the school and of teachers' planning. Pupils' work in an art and in a food technology club was scrutinised. A soccer match with another school was observed.

75. Standards in **art and design** are average by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2, and completed work shows that they experiment with a variety of materials and explore shape and pattern. They use paint and crayon on fabric, adding texture with beads, string and wool threads to create patterns. They discover about line, form and the use of colour. Children make a particularly good start in developing their skills in art in the Reception class because the teacher is an art specialist and, also, the co-ordinator for art. Here children experience a whole range of creative opportunities with many different forms of media, including ceramics. In Years 3 to 6, pupils learn about the difference between warm and cold colours and the use of shades of green when painting landscapes in the style of famous artists, such as Monet and Constable. In the one lesson sampled, teaching was good. Pupils use digital photography to take photographs of themselves to recreate the pictures depicting relationships, moods and feelings they have observed in the work of famous artists such as Hockney. They learn that straight lines can be made to represent anger and curving lines peace or calm. There is some use of ICT, but this could be used more to promote pupils' progress. Too little use is made of sketchbooks and pupils have weak drawing skills. Good design work is seen in the creation of African and carnival masks and in the screen-printing for T-shirt designs. The subject is satisfactorily led.

76. Standards in **music** are above national averages by Year 6. The subject is developing into a strong feature of the school. The school's aim is that all pupils should have the opportunity to play a musical instrument and this is being rapidly achieved. Peripatetic music teachers offer weekly lessons in trumpet, recorder and keyboard. The impact is that pupils performing in assembly show good skills in these instruments. Pupils of all ages enjoy singing, and they sing well. The school

choir is of a good standard and has regular performances in school assemblies as well as in the local community at churches, nursing homes and at other schools. The school's musicians also take part successfully in a range of activities and engagements, such as a young musicians' prom and playing with a local brass band. There are three school musical drama productions each year, highly acclaimed by parents, in which music plays a key role and pupils have opportunities to perform to an audience of parents and visitors. There is a good range of resources, including brass instruments and keyboards. The subject is well led by an experienced teacher of music.

77. **Design and technology** was not a focus for the inspection and no lessons were observed. Therefore, judgements about provision and the quality of teaching cannot be made. However, some of the pupils' work was sampled. Good work was seen in the pop-up designs for stories about Cinderella and in burglar alarms in Year 6. The work related to burglar alarms was linked well to the study of electricity in science.

78. It is not possible to make a judgement about the provision and quality of teaching for **physical education** because only one lesson in Year 5 was sampled. In this, the quality of teaching was very good. The pupils were worked very hard and they enjoyed learning how to deliver and take a 'pop' pass in rugby. The teacher controlled the group very well and used pupils very effectively to demonstrate the finer skills of timing when passing of the ball. Discussions with the co-ordinator and scrutiny of other evidence show that pupils participate in a wide range of activities. For a small school, they are very successful in inter-school sports such as swimming, football, netball, cross-country and athletics. The school is rightly proud of the pupils' achievements and the teamwork being developed through participation in sport. Currently, the co-ordinator is in the final stages of applying for the 'Active Mark Gold Award' for participation in physical education.

79. The community is very involved in developing sport. For instance, Essex County Cricket Club and Colne Community College are involved in teaching. Members of Colchester United Football Club give quality coaching to pupils.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Only one lesson was seen in PSHE/CZ. From this and scrutiny of pupils' work, observation of assemblies, lunchtimes and playtimes, pupils' achievement is good.

Commentary

80. Pupils participate well in the school council. Supported by a member of staff, they draw up agendas and discuss issues raised by other pupils such as bullying, playground behaviour, safer journeys to school and lunchtime clubs. The council has a long history of liaison with school governors, the parents' association and the community. This is a good example of how pupils develop good personal and social skills. In the one lesson seen, teaching was good and encouraged good discussion by pupils in circle time in Year 5. Pupils speak confidently and are not afraid to share their views and to listen carefully to those of others. All are given the opportunity to participate. Personal development is supported in other subjects. For example, in English, pupils learn how to debate and argue their case; in physical education, pupils work co-operatively with soccer coaches. Staff use assemblies well to promote pupils' self-esteem through presenting topics such as 'Being confident'. Personal development is also supported and reinforced well by the use of the school's reward system. Achievement certificates are given to mark pupils' efforts and contributions to school life and to recognise those giving help to others, such as 'helping younger children on the playground' and 'good leaderships skills'. The subject is soundly led and there is a good planning that covers an appropriate range of topics such as relationships, bullying, sex education and healthy lifestyles. Resources are good.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

<i>Inspection judgement</i>	<i>Grade</i>
The overall effectiveness of the school	4
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	3
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2
The quality of education provided by the school	3
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	3
The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	3
The effectiveness of management	4

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