

INSPECTION REPORT

ST ANDREWS CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Marks Tey, Colchester

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115081

Headteacher: Mrs Lelia Berkeley

Lead inspector: Susan Walker

Dates of inspection: 23rd – 26th February 2004

Inspection number: 257566

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	5-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	160

School address:	Mandeville Road Marks Tey Colchester Essex
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Postcode:	CO6 1HL
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Telephone number:	01206 210638
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Fax number:	01206 212846
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
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Name of chair of governors:	Miss Jo Dudley
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Date of previous inspection:	15 th June 1998
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CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

St Andrews CE VC Primary School is smaller than the average primary school with 160 pupils on roll. Children enter the reception class with a range of abilities, but are generally of an average standard. Pupils are taught in three mixed-age classes during their junior years. There are more boys than girls, especially in Year 3. The majority of pupils remain in the school from the reception class to Year 6. Most pupils come from the surrounding catchment area, which is predominantly private housing with some local authority property. Virtually every pupil is of white British origin and no pupil is at an early stage of learning English. There is a below average number of pupils who are eligible for free school meals. Fewer pupils than is normal nationally are on the register of special educational needs, although three pupils have a Statement of Special Educational Need. The school has recently gained the Healthy School's Award and a School's Achievement award. It is involved in Investors in People and the Essex writing project and is working towards the Active Mark. The headteacher is in her fourth term.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
21678	Susan Walker	Lead inspector	Special educational needs French English Creative, aesthetic, practical and physical subjects
19361	Keith Ross	Lay inspector	
2911	Eric Steed	Team inspector	Science Personal, social and health education and citizenship Humanities
20003	Suzi Metcalfe	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage ¹ Mathematics Information and communication technology

The inspection contractor was:

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¹ The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also includes knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

St Andrews CE VC Primary School is **effective** in producing above average standards in the national tests year on year and ensuring good achievement for most pupils. The school, therefore, provides good value for money. The school is well led by the headteacher and governors who are steadily improving the quality of teaching and learning throughout the school.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- In the 2003 national tests pupils were well above average in reading and mathematics at age seven and well above average in English and mathematics at age 11.
- Achievement is good for children in the reception class and for many pupils in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology.
- Teachers are not consistent in their planning and marking or in setting targets based on what they know pupils can do.
- The role of co-ordinators requires further development so that they are more accurately aware of the inconsistency of practice in teaching and learning.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and relationships are very good.
- The headteacher and governors have a clear vision for future improvement and lead and manage the school well.
- Teaching is good for children in the reception class and for pupils in Year 1 and those in the Year 5 and 6 class.
- Pupils are cared for very well on a day-to-day basis and parents are appreciative of the very good arrangements when their children start school.
- The curriculum does not allow pupils to practise all their skills regularly and creatively in all subjects.
- Teachers' expectations of what pupils can do in writing and handwriting are not high enough.

The school was last inspected in June 1998. It has made satisfactory improvement in addressing its areas for development and improved standards at Year 6, provision for children in the reception class and care of pupils. However, staff and governors have not always worked satisfactorily on other minor issues that are written into the body of the previous report.

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	A	A	C
mathematics	A	A	A	B
science	B	A	C	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.*

Many pupils' achievement is good.

Standards at Year 6 in the national tests in 2003 were well above average in English and mathematics, and average in science. When compared with standards attained when pupils were aged seven, results were average in English, above average in mathematics, and well below average in science.

In 2003, Year 2 standards were well above average in reading and mathematics and average in writing. Teacher assessment in science placed pupils in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. All these results occurred because all pupils gained the expected levels in reading, writing and science

and almost all pupils did so in mathematics. These results occurred because the quality of education was good enough to ensure that pupils achieved well. When compared with schools in similar socio-economic circumstances pupils were well above average in mathematics, above average in reading, but below average in writing.

Inspection findings show that standards at the end of the infants and the juniors are above average in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' achievement in both the infants and the juniors is generally good in these subjects, and in information and communication technology, where pupils get many opportunities to practise their skills. Achievement dips in Years 3, 4 and 5 because teaching does not always promote good learning or build on what pupils can do already. The majority of children in the reception class are above the standard expected nationally and they achieve well because of good teaching and a well-planned curriculum.

Pupils' personal qualities, including standards in moral, social and cultural development, are **good**. Standards in spiritual development are satisfactory. Relationships are very good and pupils co-operate and collaborate well on tasks. Attendance and punctuality are good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Teaching is **good** overall, but is satisfactory in Years 2, 3, 4 and 5, and meets many pupils' needs well in English, mathematics and science. Teaching is good for the reception class and gives children a really effective start in their learning. Assessment is satisfactory. The curriculum is satisfactory. Provision for pupils' support, guidance, and welfare is very good. There are satisfactory links with parents, other schools, and the community.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership of the school is good overall and management is satisfactory. The headteacher provides good leadership. She has a clear vision for the school and has used performance management well to bring about school improvement and to begin to address the dip in achievement in Years 3, 4 and 5. The leadership of key staff is satisfactory. Governance is good. Governors carry out their duties well and meet all statutory requirements. Management is only satisfactory because the co-ordinators and other middle managers do not always work hard enough to ensure that the school's vision is consistently carried out in day-to-day practice.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents have **satisfactory** views of the school. They receive lots of attractive and well-presented information to help them understand the school's practices and to enable them to help with their children's learning. They correctly recognise that teaching is not always sufficiently dynamic in some mixed-age classes to allow their children to make consistent progress. Pupils' views of the school are generally **positive**. They enjoy their opportunities for showing responsibility and taking decisions, and feel that the school takes good notice of their views.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- raise teachers' expectations of what pupils can do in writing and handwriting;
- continue to develop the role of co-ordinators to accept responsibility for ensuring that what is agreed as school practice is consistently carried out, and that their teaching should be models of good practice;
- design a curriculum that allows pupils to practice all their skills regularly and creatively in all subjects;
- ensure the consistency of all teachers' planning, marking and the use of what they know about pupils' abilities to set and use pupils' targets.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Standards reached by pupils in Year 6 are **above average** in English, mathematics and science. Many pupils, regardless of background or ability, **achieve well** in these important subjects. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 3, 4 and 5.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are better than those found in most schools.
- Achievement is good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology for most pupils.
- The majority of children in the reception classes attain better than average standards.
- Achievement in writing and mathematics is satisfactory in the Years 3 and 4 class and the Years 4 and 5 class.

Commentary

1. Children enter the reception class with a range of skills and abilities, but are of generally average standards, especially in their communication, mathematical and personal and social skills. A small number of younger children and those with special educational needs are still to complete the goals that children are expected to reach in each area of learning when they leave the Foundation Stage, but the majority leave the reception class having exceeded the expected goals, and have started work on the National Curriculum. This is due to effective teaching and a well-planned curriculum.
2. Inspection findings show that current standards in Years 2 and 6 are above average in English, mathematics and science. The current Year 6 group is relatively small and is unlikely to score as highly as pupils in previous years, as they attained average standards in reading and writing in 2000 when they were seven. The vast majority of the current Year 2 class looks set to attain the expected standards with an average number reaching higher standards.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.2 (17.2)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.3 (15.3)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	18.4 (18.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 21 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

3. In the 2003 national tests for seven year olds, standards were well above average in reading and mathematics and above average in writing. Teacher assessment in science placed pupils in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. These results 'occurred' because the quality of education was good enough to ensure that pupils achieved well. At the higher Level 3, pupils exceeded the national average in reading, were slightly below it in writing and were way above what is usual in mathematics. In most years, pupils attain above average standards, particularly in mathematics. When compared with schools where a similar percentage of pupils is eligible for free school meals, pupils were well above average in mathematics and above average in reading, but below average in writing.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	28.4 (29.1)	26.8 (27.0)
Mathematics	29.1 (29.2)	26.8 (26.7)
Science	28.6 (30.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 26 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

4. In the 2003 national tests for 11 year olds, standards were well above the national average in English and mathematics, and average in science. This was because almost every pupil attained the expected level in English and mathematics, with an average number of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in English and 10 per cent exceeding it in mathematics. In science, attainment was average overall because not enough pupils reached the higher than expected Level 5. When compared with standards attained when pupils were seven years old, results were average in English, above average in mathematics, but well below average in science. In most years, however, standards are usually high. Since 2000, the school has always exceeded its targets in English and it usually does better than its targets in mathematics.
5. Analysis of the national data shows that, over three years (2000-03), Year 6 boys performed much better than girls in both English and mathematics. Over a similar period, Year 2 boys exceeded girls' performance in writing. However, where class sizes are small statistics can be misleading and not reflect the true picture. No differences in boys and girls' achievement were noted during the inspection, except in music in the Years 5 and 6 class. Here, girls' achievement was better because they have gained extra knowledge about rhythm and pitch from learning to play musical instruments in addition to their normal school work.
6. Achievement in information and communication technology is good because pupils have frequent access to the computer suite to practise their skills and acquire new knowledge and understanding. Achievement in other subjects is only satisfactory because the school has concentrated on English and mathematics in previous years and insufficient time has been given to other subjects. This has led to pupils knowing the aspects of what they have been taught in history and geography, but not having a full grasp of the topic.
7. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well and the children with special educational needs in the reception class achieve very well. They attain in line with their capabilities and the targets on their individual education plans. The school makes effective provision for such pupils in Years 4 to 6. They are taught separately in English and mathematics so that they can learn appropriate skills and techniques at their own pace.
8. The school has identified a group of pupils who it regards as gifted and talented, and provides good opportunities for such pupils to take part in problem-solving activities on a regular basis. Achievement of such pupils overall is no better than satisfactory, because teaching in some mixed-age classes is not sufficiently dynamic to ensure that they are suitably challenged by the work they are expected to do.
9. Since the previous inspection standards have been maintained at Year 2, but there has been a very marked improvement in standards at Year 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities are **good**. Attendance is **good**. Standards in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have positive attitudes to the school and the staff, and relationships between pupils and with adults are very good.
- Pupils use their initiative and willingly accept responsibility.
- Pupils' moral, social and cultural development are good, but spiritual development is satisfactory.
- Pupils respond well to teachers' very high expectations of behaviour and are well behaved in lessons and about the school.
- Regular attendance and punctuality helps pupils achieve well.

Commentary

10. Pupils of all ages like coming to school and think that they learn a lot and get good support when they need help with their work or relationships. Children in the Foundation Stage mirror the good attitudes and behaviour seen throughout the rest of the school, having settled well and made a positive start to the school. The children happily build good work habits and see the staff as positive role models. Because they have positive relationships with their teacher and supporting adults, they respond well and are willing to try hard to do all that is asked of them. They will exceed the goals for children of their age in personal and social development and are making good progress from an average start.
11. Older pupils work hard, overall, because they have very positive relationships with the staff. Teachers insist on a high standard of behaviour and pupils of all ages respond positively and try hard to live up to these expectations. In lessons, they work well independently or as part of a pair or collaborative group because they are trusted to get on with tasks sensibly. They share resources well, such as computers and reference materials, take turns in using equipment and tidy up after themselves with care, being proud that the school is free of litter and graffiti. Pupils behave well during lessons and at break and lunch times. Older pupils are especially good at helping the younger ones solve their problems and finding friends to play with. Pupils say that the few instances of 'name calling' and bullying are dealt with quickly and effectively. The school tolerates no form of harassment. The pupils are confident that the school takes all such issues seriously and works well with both parties to resolve difficulties. There have not been any exclusions in the past year.
12. Pupils' attendance and punctuality are good. Lessons begin when they should and no time is wasted. These features positively support pupils' good achievements. The school has maintained good attendance levels since the previous inspection.

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. Pupils' personal development is good as a result of the positive personal, social and moral education programme. Relationships are very good, especially between pupils and adults. Pupils are proud of all their achievements, both in and out of school, and are motivated to put hard work and effort into all they are asked to do. The school gives full acknowledgement, not just for pupils' academic and physical skills, but also for the use of their initiative and support for others.
14. Children are encouraged to use their initiative and they accept responsibility well. As well as taking part in the school council, pupils also take responsibility individually and independently, for example, by organising a fund-raising event. The school provides well for pupils' moral and social development through the behaviour policy and moral focus within classes. The

contribution pupils make to the life of the school supports their social development. Their cultural development is also good, and includes learning about life in multicultural Britain. Their learning in music and dance is enhanced by visits into the community and visitors to the school. Spiritual development, though satisfactory, is less well developed. Although the hall has a table with the 'tree of kindness' and a candle to focus their thoughts, pupils have limited opportunities to consider the mystery and wonder of human life or human creativity in lessons.

15. Since the previous inspection the school has improved its overall provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and the quality of relationships, while maintaining the good standard of pupils' attitudes and behaviour.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **satisfactory**. Overall, teaching and learning are **good**. Assessment is **satisfactory**. The curriculum is **satisfactory**. Provision for pupils' support, guidance, and welfare is **very good**. Links with parents are sound and links with the community and partnership schools are **satisfactory**.

Teaching and learning

Teaching and learning are **good** overall, but teaching is only satisfactory in two out of three classes in the juniors. Assessment is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good for children in the reception class, and for pupils in Year 1 and the Years 5 and 6 class.
- Teaching is good in English, science, mathematics and information and communication technology.
- Classroom assistants are used well to support pupils' learning.
- The standard of teachers' planning is inconsistent.
- Marking does not tell pupils how to improve their work.
- The use of targets for improving pupils' writing is variable.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 32 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
1 (3%)	5 (16%)	14 (44%)	12 (37%)	0 (0%)	0 (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.

16. Teaching and learning are good for many pupils, as demonstrated by the results of the national tests. There were no lessons graded unsatisfactory, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. However, there are areas of the school where teaching is predominantly satisfactory and where current school policies have not been fully implemented.
17. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and information and communication technology because they have been school priorities. Teachers have benefited from lots of training, and the resources are at least sufficient in quality to interest pupils. Pupils behave well because teachers have high expectations that they will do so and this leads to easy class management and no time being wasted.
18. Teaching is good in the reception class and is especially good in the areas of personal and social development and communication, language and literacy. The key to the children's success in the reception class is the high quality of teaching by all staff working together as a

supportive team. They plan very effectively a range of challenging activities, holding high expectations that all children want to learn. They work hard to make all experiences enjoyable and monitor children's responses to build on these experiences.

19. The best teaching is provided in Year 1, where very good teaching allows pupils to build on the basic skills that they have developed in the reception class. Pupils are given interesting tasks to carry out and their work is displayed well and celebrated. Teaching in the Year 5 and 6 class is effective in building up pupils' self-esteem, encourages them to participate fully in lessons and sets them challenging problems to solve. This approach improves their learning and encourages them to use those skills of inference and deduction necessary to attain the higher levels in the national tests. Pupils' views are taken fully into account in this class and this aids their progress.
20. In Year 2 and the Years 3 and 4 and Years 4 and 5 classes, teaching is not normally delivered to this standard. This mirrors parental concerns. Often this is because teachers have not decided a clear purpose for the lesson or the skills that pupils are to learn, but rather describe in their planning the activity that will take place.
21. Teachers' marking has not developed well enough since the previous inspection. In too many subjects, work is just ticked or initialled and this approach does not tell pupils how to do better in their work. Where learning is most successful, staff are getting pupils involved in responding critically to what has been done, as when they read and comment on each other's written work or evaluate each other's performance in physical education.
22. Teaching assistants are used well to support pupils' learning. They are well prepared for lessons and know the role they are to play. Those pupils with special educational needs who are taught by a teaching assistant feel well supported and enjoy their learning.
23. In classes where teaching is most successful, the ethos is positive and pupils are confident learners. Almost all older pupils feel that they learn a lot and have to work hard to succeed.
24. Assessment is satisfactory. The development of target setting and the tracking of pupils' progress are rightly included in the school improvement plan. The headteacher has put a good quality policy in place, but teachers are not consistently adhering to it. It is intended that pupils should have targets to improve their writing, and in certain classes, such as Years 1 and 2 and in the Years 5 and 6 class, it is obvious that they are being used. Pupils do not have formal targets in other subjects. Generally, teachers are noting which groups of pupils struggle or succeed in lessons, but the quality and use of such information is variable. Assessment and the use of such information are good in the reception class and are one of the reasons why children achieve well.

The curriculum

The school provides a **satisfactory** breadth of curricular activities. The range of enrichment activities is **satisfactory**. The quantity and quality of both the resources and accommodation are **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs.
- Insufficient time is allocated to art and design throughout the school, and to geography and history in the junior years.
- The curriculum is planned effectively for English, mathematics science and ICT, but there is not enough attention given to planning the progressive development of skills and ideas in other subjects.
- There are insufficient extra-curricular opportunities for infant age pupils.
- Subjects other than English are not used effectively enough to develop literacy skills.

Commentary

25. Since the previous inspection, the school has made the necessary changes to enable full coverage of the programmes of study for English and mathematics. In mathematics, there is more emphasis on number than on other aspects of the curriculum. Although the school meets all statutory requirements, inadequate overall provision remains for geography and history in the junior years, and art and design is an area for development throughout the school. Pupils of all abilities and backgrounds have equal access to all activities provided. Religious education and daily acts of collective worship are provided in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus.
26. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good in the main school and very good in the reception class. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when it was satisfactory. Older pupils have good opportunities to learn at their own pace in separate sessions that take good account of the targets of their individual education plans.
27. There are currently no pupils who are at an early stage of learning English. Pupils from ethnic minorities are valued and are fully integrated into school life.
28. The curriculum is planned effectively for English, mathematics and science, and this is reflected in the above average results that the school achieves. Planning is less secure elsewhere, where opportunities are often missed to link subjects and to promote skills and ideas learned in other subjects. There are insufficient opportunities for pupils to write in their own words in other subjects. Insufficient time allocations to geography and history have resulted in gaps in pupils' knowledge in junior classes because the programmes of study are not fully covered. This was also the case at the time of the previous inspection. A long-term curriculum plan is in place that meets the needs of the current mixed-age classes for subject coverage. It does not deal with the progressive, planned development of skills and ideas. The headteacher is fully aware of this and has plans in place to rewrite the planning to coincide with the establishment of single-age classes in the next academic year.
29. The school has suspended swimming provision for some time because parents were unwilling to contribute to the cost of a coach to the swimming baths. However, in the summer term, curricular provision will resume in a local outdoor pool, so that all pupils will have the opportunity to learn to swim the required distance before they leave the school.
30. The school provides adequately for after-school activities for older pupils, but opportunities for infants are in need of development. Currently, only country dancing is available to them. The inadequacy of current provision has been recognised and opportunities for all pupils are about to expand, with a recorder group, an art club and a gardening club already at the planning stage. There is satisfactory provision for a range of educational visits arranged to enhance pupils' understanding through practical activities. Curriculum enrichment, overall, is satisfactory and the headteacher has good plans to make it more creative so that it aids pupils' learning.
31. Overall, the school's resources for learning are satisfactory. There is good practice in obtaining supplementary resources from other sources so that the needs of pupils and the curriculum are met. This is an improvement since previous inspection, when resources were unsatisfactory.
32. The accommodation is satisfactory overall and is used to the best advantage, especially in arranging for small group work in limited space. The library shares a room with the computer suite, but this does not prevent pupils from using it for investigative work.

Care, guidance and support

The provision for pupils' care and welfare and compliance with statutory health and safety requirements is **very good**. The provision of support, advice and guidance is **satisfactory**. The school involves pupils **effectively** in its continued development.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Child protection procedures are very good.
- Health and safety procedures, including risk assessments, are implemented very effectively.
- Effective arrangements are in place to take account of pupils' views and concerns.
- Induction arrangements for children starting school in the reception class are very good and strongly appreciated by parents.
- The school is successful in ensuring that pupils develop trusting relationships with adults in the school.
- The school actively promotes a healthy lifestyle for its pupils.

Commentary

33. Procedures for helping children to settle in the reception class are very effective and ensure that they soon get used to school routines and enjoy coming to school.
34. The children's questionnaires clearly indicate that all pupils have trusting and supportive relationships with adults they can confide in if they are worried or hurt. The school has very good procedures for child protection and all staff are aware of their responsibilities and duties if they feel a child is at risk. A detailed and carefully maintained early identification file is kept when the school has any concerns. There are good procedures in place to help identify and control health and safety risks and thereby ensure that the premises, equipment and working practices are safe. The local education authority supports the school well by feeding back on the school's annual internal monitoring of all health and safety requirements.
35. The school's commitment to encouraging its pupils to develop a healthy way of living has been rewarded by the Healthy School's Award and it is now working towards the Active Mark which recognises what the school is providing in physical education.
36. The school council is used effectively to involve pupils in decision-making. They take ideas from their class councils to the main forum and feedback decisions to classmates. Effective action often follows realistic requests, for example, the lunchtime 'interests' club suggested and run by the pupils. School rules, including those appropriate for classroom and playtime, are shared with pupils at assembly. Children in the reception class and pupils in the Years 5 and 6 class are involved in the good practice of assessing their own progress.
37. The headteacher correctly gauges the strength of this aspect of the school's provision. This is a marked improvement since the previous inspection when this aspect was judged to be good.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has **satisfactory** links with parents. There are **satisfactory** links with the community and with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good provision of information to parents, although some pupils' annual reports do not include academic targets for improvement.
- Procedures to deal with concerns and complaints are good.
- The Parent Teacher Association supports the school very well with fund raising and resources.
- Good termly information regarding the curriculum gives parents an opportunity to help their children in a practical way.

Commentary

38. The school has improved the quality of its information for parents. Weekly newsletters and termly information on the taught curriculum keep parents up-to-date and well informed and this enables them to support their children's learning in practical ways. The governors' annual report is both 'eye catching' and very informative. A nicely presented and informative prospectus together with a collection of well-prepared and useful leaflets on various aspects of school life, give a clear overview of the school.
39. Pupils' annual reports meet statutory requirements, but do not always show academic targets to enable parents to help their children. This was an issue at the previous inspection.
40. The school is approachable and provides a friendly welcoming environment and encourages parents to discuss any problems with the child's teacher and the headteacher since most problems can be sorted out in this way. However, if parents are still dissatisfied a very detailed and effective complaints procedure is in place and all parents are given a very helpful leaflet that gives a summary of the procedure. There is a weekly open session after school, but this facility is not at present well used by all parents who have concerns to discuss.
41. The work of the Parent Teacher Association provides valuable support for the school, including the raising of substantial funds to enrich the school environment and the curriculum.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management of the school are **satisfactory**. The headteacher's leadership is **good**. The leadership of key staff is **satisfactory**. Management is **satisfactory**. The governance of the school is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governance of the school is effective and is helping to improve the school.
- The headteacher provides purposeful and resolute leadership.
- Subject co-ordinators provide good leadership in mathematics, science and information and communication technology. Other subjects are managed satisfactorily overall.
- There is a good school development plan that is designed to bring about improvement.
- The school ethos is good.
- Performance management is used effectively to bring about improvement.
- The Foundation Stage is led and managed well.
- The role of the co-ordinators is in need of further development, particularly in ensuring that agreed practices are carried out.

Commentary

42. The governors provide a strategic direction for the work and improvement of the school. They have come a long way in the last four terms in understanding the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They now look beyond the results of the annual national tests, and work in classrooms alongside teachers to get a fuller picture. They receive full and detailed reports on updated policies and plans so that they share the headteacher's vision for the future. They have raised their expectations of how all staff should discharge their duties, and are beginning to take good steps to see that staff perform in accordance with their expectations. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties and suitable training allows them to hone their skills.
43. The headteacher shows clarity of purpose and has high aspirations for where the school is going. She supports and challenges staff and governors. For instance, she is steadily making staff more aware that, although the results of the national tests are a source of pride, other areas are only reasonably effective. She constantly models the best practice to staff and pupils. The high number of experienced and long-serving staff who have taught in few other schools are a barrier for carrying out improvements more quickly. She is correct in judging

improvement since the previous inspection to be satisfactory, with some positive features. It is improving all the time.

44. The improved provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and a commitment to a more creative curriculum, while maintaining pupils' good achievement, means that the school's ethos is now good.
45. Teaching is being effectively monitored, staff are receiving one-to-one help to improve and the standard of day-to-day teaching has risen from being satisfactory, overall. Staff have been shown that good teaching works to improve learning in all subjects, not just to improve results in the national tests. The headteacher has recognised the importance of planning to teach important skills, and this is now part of the school improvement plan.
46. There is a good school development plan that is focused on improving standards in writing, speaking and listening and practical science, as well as improving assessment, creativity and target setting. Outside agencies recognise the improvement in strategies for communication and for guiding and supporting members of the school community.
47. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is managed well. The headteacher, who is the co-ordinator, is committed to inclusion and equality of opportunities for all. The reception class teacher manages her team of adults effectively and the staff work together as a supportive team.
48. Assessment and staff performance management have become effective management tools. The local education authority data shows that pupils do not make good progress from Year 2 to Year 4. Pupils' performance and targets are discussed with staff to improve any weaknesses in learning and these targets are reviewed during the year. There is a good programme of courses for teachers, which links to both school priorities and performance management. This is overseen by the headteacher to ensure that best value for money is obtained.
49. Management by other members of staff is broadly satisfactory. The previous inspection report pointed out that both the role of the deputy headteacher and that of the co-ordinators needed to be developed. This has occurred recently to some extent because the headteacher has made staff more aware of national standards of leadership and management and given them time to carry out their roles. The deputy headteacher now has a more proactive role, for instance, in managing the input of assessment data and leading two subjects, but still does not have the impact on raising standards, which is common in many schools.
50. The senior management team co-ordinates the most important subjects of the curriculum (English, mathematics, science and information and curriculum technology) and provides training for staff. There has been some opportunity for these staff to observe lessons, monitor books and check planning. In many instances their personal knowledge and enthusiasm have a positive effect on standards. However, co-ordinators do not yet accept responsibility for ensuring that what is agreed as school practice is consistently carried out, nor that their teaching should be a model of good practice, for instance, in marking pupils' work, managing pupils' targets, classroom tidiness and the display of pupils' work. Other co-ordinators are beginning to update policies and schemes of work in order to move their subjects forward.
51. The day-to-day management of the school runs smoothly thanks to the efficient office administrator. The management of finance is satisfactory. The school is currently acquiring a new classroom for September 2004 and money has been set aside to deal with the resultant costs of setting up a seventh class. The governors keep a shrewd eye on obtaining best value. Day-to-day finance is well managed. Parents think that the school is well led and managed. Overall, although there is a different headteacher, the main picture is similar to the previous inspection.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	481,184
Total expenditure	438,258
Expenditure per pupil	2,900

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	68,000
Balance carried forward to the next	43,000

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is **good**.

52. Children enter the reception class in the term in which they become five. As the youngest enter after the Easter break, the oldest, most confident and mature children move into the Year 1 class. This enables the school to keep the number of children in the Foundation Stage and the infant classes in line with the nationally recommended 30 to maximise opportunities for learning.
53. At the time of the previous inspection there were weaknesses in the quality and quantity of resources, the learning environment and the lack of opportunity for outdoor and interactive play. The school has made good improvements in each area since then. A good well-resourced curriculum matched to the early learning goals² has been implemented. Assessment is good. The co-ordinator has devised a thorough day-to-day monitoring and assessment strategy to enable the regular planning of activities to develop learning further.
54. The key to the children's success is the high quality of teaching by all staff working together as a supportive team. Curriculum leadership is good and this leads to good teaching and learning. Staff plan very effectively a range of challenging activities, and have high expectations that all children want to learn. They work hard to make all experiences enjoyable, and monitor children's responses in order to build on their experiences. Staff meet regularly to modify plans, making sure that the curriculum meets the needs of all children. Consequently, provision for children with special educational needs is very good. The curriculum also meets the needs of the higher ability children.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning of a range of activities and support is good.
- Very clear and well-established routines give children confidence and a feeling of security.
- Adults actively group children to work together on a range of activities
- There are clear and high expectations about behaviour.

Commentary

55. This is a high profile area of learning for children in the reception class. Standards are better than average and children achieve well. There has been a very careful identification of what adults want children to learn and how they are expected to behave. Teaching is very good. Lessons are carefully planned to help children learn to live and work together. Discussions and role-play activities help children successfully learn the difference between right and wrong. Children know and trust the teacher and supporting adults, and ask for help to learn. They are developing the confidence and ability to take turns, and share resources and equipment, because of adults carefully establishing good routines. These routines help children to clearly understand how to behave and work well together. The curriculum is carefully planned to give a good balance between those activities that are directed by an adult and those that the

² Early learning goals – these are the standards that children are expected to reach by the end of their reception year. They refer in particular to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning, for instance, in language and literacy children should be able to write their own name and be beginning to write simple sentences.

children choose for themselves. Staff develop children's co-operative and collaborative skills as well as encouraging them to work independently. Children regularly talk with adults about contributing to the smooth running of the classrooms, they get out and return resources to their proper places and keep the room neat and tidy. As a result, children are eager to come to school and join in all activities with enjoyment, interest and enthusiasm.

Communication, language and literacy

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Planning is good and is based on an accurate assessment of children's skills and needs.
- Good use is made of the National Literacy Strategy for reception children to develop speaking and listening skills and a love of books.
- The reception classroom is well equipped and stimulating, with attractive displays to celebrate learning.
- Teaching is good, and all adults are positive role models for children.

Commentary

56. Standards are above average in this area of learning. Children achieve well because in all activities there are good opportunities for children to develop their language skills. Children are encouraged to develop a wide vocabulary, through a good range of high quality activities that promote communication. Frequent opportunities are provided for role-play, which also develops children's vocabulary. Those children who have special education needs in the development of their communication skills are fully included. Adults tailor many activities to meet their specific needs.
57. Teaching is very good because adults draw on children's natural fascination with words by using stories and poems as well as non-fiction books. Songs and discussions occur both formally and informally throughout the day. The teacher reads stories well, helping children to identify letters and match them to sounds. She follows this by helping children to record their opinions and stories and learn the shape patterns of letters and words. The room has a book corner that is well used by children to look at books. They also have a listening centre where they can listen to stories and follow them in the books. They can stop and start the machine to ensure they do not miss any part of the story. Teachers provide good opportunities for formal letter and writing practice. The classroom is equipped with a good range of writing and marking resources, so that children can write down their thoughts and ideas without having to wait to tell an adult and have them record for them.

Mathematical development

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The direct teaching of number and other areas of mathematics, and the monitoring of children's skills, develops their learning well.
- Adults harness children's enjoyment of mathematics with carefully planned play activities.

Commentary

58. Children enter the reception class with a wide range of mathematical skills, but are average in ability overall. By the time they leave, standards are above average and children achieve well. They count accurately and recognise number shapes to at least 40. Many are able to count and identify really high numbers, and use common symbols such as + and – when writing number stories. This is as a result of high quality planning by the teacher to develop children's full mathematical potential and continual monitoring of progress to achieve that potential.

59. Teaching is good. The teacher makes good use of the National Numeracy Strategy activities, and stories that involve several characters to further children's understanding of number. The staff made good use of a pancake-making activity to enable children to appreciate the need to do things in order and to measure out ingredients. The staff were well briefed about the abilities of each child and asked a good range of challenging questions to encourage children to think and compute.
60. Play activities are well planned to encourage children to develop their mathematical skills. For instance, having purchased groceries in the supermarket they have to total their spending and pay at the till, relying on the shop-keeper to give them the correct change.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good planning ensures that children develop computer skills.
- A good range of activities is planned to develop children's general knowledge of the world around them.

Commentary

61. All children achieve well as a result of the good quality of teaching and learning. The quality of planning is good and gives children a wide range of activities to develop the skills of observing and commenting on the world around them. The good use of computer programs enables the children to extend their knowledge of language and mathematics while learning how to use the equipment to develop their computer skills.
62. Listening to music and joining in songs and stories from different countries helps children understand that not everyone comes from this country, and that people around the world all have music and stories available to them. The topic about houses and homes supports children's multicultural development. Teachers make good use of simple scientific enquiry skills to encourage children to use their sense to investigate. For instance, when making pancakes they see the change that occurs in ingredients by stirring and heating. They smell, feel and taste a lemon and contrast this experience with tasting and feeling sugar. They observe the difference between butter over the heat and as a solid block, and how that change is reversible, whilst that of the pancake mixture is not.
63. By the time they leave the reception class, standards are above average. Children have good understanding about the natural world, about animals and other creatures and how to look after them. They have good knowledge about what they can do well, and of how to live and work with others along with knowledge of what they can do well and how to live and work with others.

Physical development

The provision for physical development is **good**

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching and learning is good and provides children with many occasions to practise their physical skills.
- A range of construction equipment helps children develop their dexterity.
- Many opportunities to use brushes and markers help to improve to a good standard children's hand and eye co-ordination.

Commentary

64. Children enter school with a wide range of physical skills and leave reception having attained beyond the early learning goals. They make good progress over the year and achieve well. Standards are above average. There is a good focus on the development of the fine motor skills of handling pencils, scissors, brushes, and other tools. For instance, all children write daily with a range of markers, and practice writing letters and shapes, space groups of letters into word shapes using a finger, and aim to get the letters, such as in their names, of an even size and accurate shape.
65. Teaching is good. Teachers plan well the direct development of children's gross motor skills in formal physical education sessions. Children can climb, throw and catch, skip and move round the space in the hall and learn to modify their behaviour to ensure that all activities are performed safely. They experimented with using simple equipment such as bats and bean-bags to 'toss' pancakes. They have a well-planned range of more investigative activities to choose from. As a result, of these experiences all children are able to use a wide range of resources with dexterity.

Creative development

Provision in creative development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching of direct skills is combined well with good opportunities for children to learn through play.
- Children are encouraged to use a wide range of creative materials.

Commentary

66. Standards are above average and children achieve well because the development of physical and creative skills are carefully linked in the planned curriculum. The children's skills are assessed as they enter the school and found to be wide ranging, but good opportunities are provided to meet specific needs. The teacher plans effectively for children to develop specific skills under the direction of an adult, but also provides children with good opportunities to investigate and play together.
67. Teaching is good. With adult support children have successfully looked at a range of houses from well-known stories and compared these with their own houses. They enthusiastically discuss colour and texture and work out how to show them in their own work. Using boxes, paper, tape and glue they make a satisfactory home for the 'roamer,' looking at and copying the houses of characters from their story books. They use paint and brushes well to give different effects, for instance, 'stippling' to give the appearance of brick. The opportunity to paint freely and use a range of modelling materials is very good, as is the opportunity to play together in large and small spaces. Children make up their own stories and have free access to a good range of resources to enhance their work.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH AND MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

English

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils do well in the national tests.
- Standards are above average in speaking and listening and in reading.

- Insufficient attention is paid to the use of writing targets, handwriting, presentation and writing in other subjects.
- The co-ordinator does not take sufficient responsibility for monitoring whether planned improvement is consistently carried through.
- Teaching is very good in the Year 1 class and in the Years 5 and 6 class.
- The library is much improved.

Commentary

68. In the 2003 national tests for pupils aged seven, standards were well above average in reading and above average in writing. In most years, pupils attain above average standards. When compared with schools in similar situations, attainment was above average in reading, but below average in writing. Standards for 11 year olds in the 2003 national tests were well above average in English. When compared with the standards attained when the pupils were seven years old results were average in English.
69. Children start the National Curriculum after a rich curriculum in the reception class, where they attain above average standards. Inspection findings show that standards are above average in Years 2 and 6 where achievement is good and sometimes better. Overall, achievement is generally good, but is satisfactory in two classes in the juniors. Attainment in Year 2 is better in speaking and listening and reading than in writing. The school provided a useful opportunity for older pupils to improve when they practised their debating skills with a local member of parliament.
70. The school has carefully monitored pupils' attainment. It was noticeable that 70 per cent of Year 6 pupils were attaining the higher Level 5 in reading, but only 7 per cent were doing so in writing. The school is now part of the Essex writing project that ensures that pupils develop their writing skills through watching literacy videos. Writing tasks are then developed which demand that pupils use empathy and inference. The school's involvement in this project is a positive influence on pupils' learning in improving their thinking and note-taking skills and developing a more creative curriculum.
71. The quality of teaching and learning is good and this has had a positive impact on pupils' skills in reading, speaking and listening. Where teaching is most successful, lessons are stimulating, enthusiastic and teachers constantly challenge pupils to move on in their skills and thinking. Consequently, pupils learn quickly and are engrossed in the tasks set. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and, therefore, little time is lost in lessons.
72. There is unsatisfactory variation in the way that teachers make use of pupils' writing targets to improve their learning. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 and in the Year 5 and 6 class are securely involved in gauging what they have learnt and knowing when they have met their targets. However, teachers' expectations are not high enough concerning pupils' writing and handwriting skills. The school has correctly recognised that standards of presentation and handwriting do not match pupils' ability. It has very recently introduced a new handwriting scheme to remedy this weakness.
73. Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a scheme of work and a policy to guide teachers, and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. The marking issue identified in the previous inspection remains to be fully addressed. Resources have improved in quality and quantity and are now satisfactory. The headteacher has improved the library, which is now well resourced and well organised. There is, however, limited evidence of displays of different types of books or the promotion of different authors in most classrooms. The school has made effective use of an advisory teacher from the local education authority to improve teachers' skills in teaching drama. However, the co-ordinator does not ensure that agreed policies are consistently carried out in all classrooms.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

74. During lessons and interviews, pupils supported their knowledge and arguments with good speaking and listening skills. Scrutiny of written work does not display such support, and opportunities are being missed to involve pupils more effectively in those aspects of English that include library-based investigations and writing in their own words. Useful links were developed between literacy and art and design during the recent arts week.

French

Provision in French is **good**.

75. Pupils in the oldest two classes are given the opportunity to learn French. In Years 5 and 6, pupils respond very well to their regular French lessons. They are excited about their learning and are beginning to develop a secure French vocabulary, for example, to describe items of clothing. Very good teaching from a native French speaker enables pupils to develop a good accent and aids their cultural development.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 are good.
- The quality of teaching and learning is unacceptably varied.
- The quality of marking is erratic and is best where the quality of teaching and learning is very good.
- Work in shape, space and measures and data handling is not as well developed as it is in number.

Commentary

76. In the 2003 national tests for seven year olds, standards were well above average in mathematics. In most years, pupils attain above average standards in mathematics. When compared with schools where a similar percentage of pupils are eligible for free school meals, pupils attained well above average results. In the 2003 national tests for 11 year olds, standards were well above the national average in mathematics. When compared with standards attained when pupils were seven years old, they have made above average progress in mathematics.
77. Standards are above average by the end of Years 2 and 6, which is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils have a very good start to their mathematical education and achieve very well in Year 1 because of very effective teaching and learning. Pupils' progress through Year 2 is good. For the next three years their achievement is satisfactory, until once more it becomes very good in Year 5 and 6. Here, pupils of different capabilities, especially those capable of attaining higher levels, are challenged well. Teachers of the oldest pupils assess the quality of their work through careful marking. They annotate work to remind pupils of what they have succeeded in achieving and how to improve further. They set pupils targets to help them build on what they have already attained. Those who need help and support have work carefully planned to meet their specific needs.
78. Teaching is generally good, although it varies in quality from class to class, and this is reflected in pupils' achievement. All teachers use the outline of the National Numeracy Strategy well in their planning, but the degree of knowledge and competence to teach some aspects of mathematics varies between teachers. Teachers share the purpose of the lessons with their pupils and return to this objective at the end of the lesson to check how well pupils have come to grips with new skills. In the better lessons, teachers also help pupils see how the

current lesson will support their future learning. In the oral session at the beginning of the lesson, pupils use small white boards so that they can quickly show what they know and understand. This allows teachers to adapt the lesson plan accordingly, enabling the lesson to move forward with a greater degree of challenge and pace. Teachers have high expectations that behaviour will not get in the way of pupils' and pupils respond well in lessons.

79. Weaker teaching is characterised by a slower pace and less challenge for the majority of the class as teachers do not have information about pupils' progress at their fingertips. Weaker subject knowledge means that all aspects of mathematics are not covered in sufficient depth.
80. The leadership and management of mathematics are good because of the continuous trend of high standards in mathematics in the national tests. The co-ordinator has been in post for many years. He has had frequent opportunities to observe teaching and learning in classes. There is a satisfactory action plan for future improvement and data gained from assessments is analysed to establish satisfactory targets for future work.

Mathematics across the curriculum

81. The basic skills of number and numeracy are satisfactorily taught in classes, especially for younger and older pupils. The use of mathematical skills is satisfactory in other curriculum areas, but more attention could be given to planning how skills can be extended in other subjects. Dates and timelines are used in history, measuring in design and technology and graphs in science, and this consolidates pupils' mathematical knowledge and skills.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are above average in Years 2 and 6.
- The school has improved standards since the previous inspection.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils are excited by science and enjoy their lessons.
- Assessment is not used effectively to raise standards to the higher levels.
- The co-ordinator is driving forward improvements in the subject.

Commentary

82. In 2003, teacher assessment in science placed pupils in the top 5 per cent of schools nationally. The national tests for 11 year olds showed that pupils attained average standards compared to all schools nationally, but standards were well below average compared to the potential they showed when they took the national tests as seven year olds.
83. Inspection findings show that attainment at the expected level is above the national average in Years 2 and 6, but below the national average at the higher Level 5 at the end of Year 6. The members of staff have worked hard and effectively to raise standards since the previous inspection, for at that time standards were 'broadly average,' with no Year 6 pupils attaining Level 5.
84. The previous report stated that the purpose of the lessons was not always clear and that little account was taken of the needs of pupils of different abilities. There was no day-to-day assessment and assessment was not used to plan work. Whilst improvements have been made in these aspects, there is still work to be done. The school is implementing improved assessment procedures that are intended to track individual pupils' progress and to enable teachers to match tasks to pupils' abilities. Alongside this, a new scheme is being introduced to focus more securely on investigative science. The improvements made since the previous inspection were clearly seen in lessons observed, for example, in Years 1 and 2. Here, pupils

were suitably challenged to undertake practical investigations, to predict outcomes, to make observations and to explain results.

85. Pupils who were interviewed expressed their liking for science and so were very willing to talk about their experiences. Younger pupils understand the principle of fair tests and their comments and answers show that their knowledge is secure. Older pupils were able to design a fair test for a given problem, by using their knowledge gained in earlier lessons. The overall quality of teaching seen was good throughout the school. This represents an improvement in the junior classes where it was only satisfactory at the time of the previous inspection. A developing strength of teaching and learning is the good use of questioning to find out what pupils know. The very good relationships in the school result in pupils sharing, co-operating and collaborating very effectively during practical sessions, factors that contribute to their good learning. Conscientious, well-informed teaching assistants support pupils with special educational needs very well. There are no significant differences in the standards attained by boys and girls from any background. Overall, pupils' achievement is good.
86. Work in pupils' books supports their learning in mathematics effectively, but is not so well focused for improving writing skills. Marking of work is regular, but too often does not tell pupils how their current standards may be improved.
87. The headteacher has taken on the role of co-ordinator. She has good subject knowledge and is experienced in leading the subject. Consequently, leadership and management are already good and set to improve as her assessment and investigative science plans take full effect.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in information and communication technology is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Achievement is good across the school.
- Assessment, although satisfactory, needs further development.
- The curriculum is good and is well focused on the development of pupils' skills and knowledge, with some good links to other subject areas.
- The slow speed of Internet access is handicapping pupils' learning.

Commentary

88. The quality and provision in information and communication technology is good and has improved well since the previous inspection. This is because each class has up to four sessions a week in the computer suite, along with the opportunity to practise and develop skills further within classrooms. Pupils have regular, good quality learning opportunities and they achieve well as they progress through the school. Standards are now satisfactory for all areas of the curriculum, for each year group, and for all pupils, regardless of their gender or special educational need. Pupils use the equipment with confidence, including the use of the Internet, computerised white boards, overhead projectors, digital cameras and scanners, with competence and confidence. From the youngest to the oldest they open, work and exit a good range of programs, identify different icons and use addresses to research on the Internet. Unfortunately, Internet access is erratic and thus slows learning. By Year 6, pupils understand and work with more advanced programs to program stage directions linked to scriptwriting and drama and to control traffic lights using their science skills. They have begun to use presentation packages to compose slide shows, but the more advanced skills such as the addition of video clips, fade-ins and outs, as well as adding a running commentary, still have to be mastered.
89. The quality of teaching and learning is good and this is a positive improvement on the previous inspection. Staff are well supported to develop their skills, and are encouraged to use a range of programmes to extend work in other curriculum areas. Lessons are generally carefully

planned and focused upon the development of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding of how a computer can support their work. In the suite, teachers insist on high standards of behaviour and pupils rise to these expectations. Learning is good, and pupils work hard in the suite to produce good amounts of work within the very carefully structured sessions. Time is not wasted. Teachers are good at selecting questions that give good guidance to learning. Pupils listen carefully to instructions, concentrate and are able to work independently as well as collaboratively. For instance, when investigating the weather database, Year 4 and 5 pupils helped each other highlight dates for precipitation.

90. The co-ordinator for information and communication technology gives a good lead to the subject. His involvement in other classes' lessons enables him to monitor both teaching and learning. Since the previous inspection he has focused on providing a range of good quality resources, including the provision of the suite of computers with an interactive white board and training for staff to develop their skills, knowledge and understanding of what pupils need to achieve well. Management is satisfactory. The scheme of work and policy has been updated as the resources have improved. His focus now is on establishing an assessment strategy to help teachers identify what pupils know, understand and can do and how to develop skills further. Although the school has updated resources there is still work to be done. Some of the class-based computers need replacing with machines that can be networked.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

91. Information and communication technology is linked well to other subjects of the curriculum. Consequently, skills, knowledge and understanding are promoted effectively in subjects such as science, geography, history and English. Links with English, science and geography and the development of researching skills are especially well developed. Pupils use the Internet and CD-ROM's to investigate the Aztecs and Tudors, and present the work using their good word-processing skills, compose time lines and use spread sheets and graphs in their mathematical work.

HUMANITIES

92. Work was sampled in geography and history. No geography lessons were seen and only one history lesson. Consequently, no judgements could be made about overall provision. Discussions with pupils in Years 2 and 6, together with a scrutiny of pupils' books and teachers' planning, indicates that in both subjects standards are satisfactory at the end of Year 2 and in need of some improvement at the end of Year 6. Overall, this is an improvement in geography from when it was a key issue at the time of the previous inspection, because standards have risen, there is a scheme of work, better resources and fieldwork trips are in place.
93. Pupils' knowledge and understanding in **history** in Year 2 is satisfactory and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils who were interviewed gave sound evidence of using specific observational skills in order to discriminate between old and new artefacts. When talking about the two historical figures and an historical event that they had studied, they displayed a satisfactory idea of chronology by placing in order the three periods that they had studied. Pupils interviewed in Year 6 were able to explain in some depth those aspects of the programmes of study that had been covered. In these cases they sometimes displayed above average knowledge and understanding, using sound historical ideas to state similarities and differences between contemporary cultures and events, for example, between the Tudors and the Aztecs. However, questioning and answers uncovered large gaps in their knowledge of other events, people and movements from the studied history units. Pupils are learning in depth about only some elements of the periods studied, rather than also receiving sufficient information to enable them to gain knowledge of the broader picture. This is unsatisfactory and is effecting their overall achievement.
94. The same picture emerged in **geography**. Pupils in Year 2 have sound knowledge of the work that they are expected to have covered and their achievement is satisfactory. In Year 6, again

pupils' knowledge and understanding of what they have learned is satisfactory, for example, for weather patterns, but elsewhere they have wide gaps in their knowledge of the information that they are expected to have covered. For instance, their understanding of location and settlement was insecure when first questioned but, when given information, they could work out why a settlement might occur in some locations and not in others. The gaps in their knowledge and understanding are adversely affecting their overall achievement.

Religious education

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are effective links so that pupils' moral development is promoted.
- Pupils' knowledge and understanding of festivals and beliefs of a range of other faiths is limited.

Commentary

95. During the inspection it was possible to see only one religious education lesson, in the Year 4 and 5 class. For this reason, an overall judgement on provision cannot be made. In order to gain additional information, pupils in Years 2 and 6 were interviewed and teachers' planning and pupils' written work were scrutinised. The school adheres to the locally agreed syllabus, with the use of supplementary materials, to aid planning and coverage, supplied through the local education authority. Overall, standards are in line with what is expected in the locally agreed syllabus and pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
96. Teaching is satisfactory. During the observed lesson, and when interviewed, pupils demonstrated sound knowledge of both Christian beliefs and of stories from the Old and New Testaments. Although pupils' written work bears witness to the study of Judaism during the current school year, their knowledge of festivals and beliefs is sketchy. In contrast, knowledge and understanding of major Christian festivals is sound and occasionally good, often supporting pupils' moral development through discussion of the right or wrong actions of biblical characters. As religious education is linked in planning with aspects of personal and social education, pupils spend satisfactory periods of time considering the importance of their families and friends, and of the emotions that these studies produce. Older pupils are able to link the rules for Christian living with their everyday lives, for example, when explaining their attitudes to opportunities to help and support younger pupils. Pupils are aware that there are people in the world who are less fortunate than them, and this understanding is shown in their support for charities and sponsored events. Pupils express an interest and liking for religious education. During the observed lesson there was good support for studies in English.
97. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The lack of monitoring of classroom practice means that there is not a pattern of continuous improvement. Improvement since the previous inspection is satisfactory.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

98. No lessons were seen in either art and design or design and technology, so no overall judgement can be made about provision. The school has a rolling programme for art and design. This has resulted in pupils having limited skills because they do not have sufficient opportunities to practice regularly enough with a full range of media. The policy is due for updating to give teachers and pupils more guidance. Opportunities are missed to use information and communication technology to support older pupils' learning, either by exploring suitable Internet sites or using attractive art programs. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory.
99. The school takes part in an annual 'arts week' with other neighbouring schools, which allows pupils to work alongside an artist. The current project is centred on the story of the 'Iron Giant'. Observation of a video of this project, shows that pupils thoroughly enjoyed taking part in the activities and are proud of what they have achieved. They developed satisfactory skills in

design and technology as they rolled newspaper to construct frameworks for the giant's breastplates and used a good number of techniques and materials to join parts together. Pupils used tools with a good degree of accuracy to cut and shape materials and to assemble them competently. The oldest pupils are confident in discussing work in design and technology. They describe how they plan to construct and evaluate a fairground ride, complete with control technology. Standards and achievement look to be satisfactory on the basis of the range of evidence seen.

Music

Provision in music is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The specialist teaching of singing and recorder playing is good.
- Leadership and management are effective.

Commentary

100. The school has maintained the satisfactory standards reported by the previous inspection. Pupils attain the levels expected for their ages and abilities. Achievement is satisfactory. The oldest girls' achievement is better than the boys because they bring the experience of playing a musical instrument to class lessons. All pupils sing in tune in assemblies and during lessons, keeping in time to the piano or taped music. They play a range of percussion instruments and use these to accompany their singing. In lessons younger pupils demonstrate patterns of high and low notes using the glockenspiel, chime bars and hand positions, though some still confuse high and low notes [*pitch*] with singing loudly or softly [*volume*]. Older pupils identify different types of sound [*timbre*], the way sounds are combined into tunes [*texture*] and how sounds are organised [*structure*] within tunes heard on professionally performed tracks of a compact-disk. They recognise the patterns of singing a 'round' and perform such, correctly reading notation for crotchets and quaver patterns. Pupils are making good progress in developing their recorder playing skills as a result of the skilled specialist visiting teacher.
101. During the inspection two lessons of class music were observed. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Planning is thorough, especially for older pupils, and built on an evaluation of work covered previously. Relationships are good and pupils enjoy their work. Older girls in particular are keen to answer questions and to contribute lessons. Teachers have a satisfactory range of personal skills to demonstrate activities, giving a positive role model for pupils. Teachers manage behaviour well, planning and working hard to ensure all pupils are fully included and achieve as they should. As lesson time is very short, teachers make a prompt start and maintain a good pace although, for younger pupils, there is a high degree of teacher control, which limits opportunities for individual creative development.
102. The curriculum covers all aspects of music making. Teachers assess pupils' progress using the tasks from the scheme at the end of a period of work. Music gives good support to the development of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils are encouraged to share their skills in assemblies and competitions. They listen to a range of different music and identify the moods, colours and movements to go with what they hear. This music is drawn from around the world and from different times in history, in assemblies and in lessons.
103. The range of instruments available, and other resources such as commercially produced compact-disks and music books, is satisfactory. The new co-ordinator is a skilled musician, gives satisfactory leadership and has good management skills. Having ensured that the policy and scheme of work have been updated, her action plan is matched to the school development plan.

Physical education achievement

Provision in physical education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school is working towards the Active Mark, which recognises how the school promotes the subject.
- Year 6 girls have effective opportunities to lead their lesson 'warm up' activity.
- Some lessons are too short to develop pupils' skills fully.
- The school is unaware of how many pupils are in line to attain the national standards in swimming.

Commentary

104. Overall, teaching and learning are satisfactory. Standards are in line with what is expected and pupils' achievement is satisfactory. This reflects the broad picture found at the previous inspection.
105. Pupils are given good opportunities to take responsibility. Year 6 girls demonstrate good technical skills and have the confidence to correct others' performance when leading the class 'warm up' activity. Pupils also organise an annual skipathon and are keen to improve pupils' skipping skills.
106. The school timetables lessons in physical education in 30-minute slots that follow on from each other, while leaving the hall empty at other times of day. This limited allocation does not allow pupils much time to practice and refine their skills, particularly if they (or previous classes) are late into the hall. This was seen when pupils in the Years 4 and 5 class practised their skills in performing forward rolls, but did not have time to learn how to do headstands if they were not already capable of doing so.
107. Pupils' achievement is sometimes not aided when teachers adhere rigidly to the lesson structure of individual work, followed by paired work and then whole class work. This was seen when Year 2 pupils satisfactorily developed their skills in moving in the style of a robot, adapting their movements to fit the music played on the piano and CDs, but did not improve their performance when working in pairs.
108. The school's provision for swimming has lapsed due to the fact that parents were unwilling to make financial contributions towards transport. This means that the school has no up-to-date records of achievement in swimming. There are now secure arrangements for swimming to resume in the summer term, so that pupils should learn to swim to the expected standard before they leave the school.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

Provision in personal, social and health education and citizenship is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school council is taking an active role in the running of the school.
- Pupils learn much during the planned occasions for them to define and discuss their views about aspects of school life.

Commentary

109. There has been satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection when there were few opportunities for pupils to gain knowledge of citizenship. Pupils of all ages now take an active part in class councils and in voting for their representatives on the school council. Further, class representatives take very seriously their personal role in reporting back to their

classmates. Personal, social and health education is presented both as discrete lessons and as opportunities arise during the day. In class, teachers have brought in personal and social development sessions that enable pupils to discuss issues of common concern and consider relationships. As pupils feel that teachers are fair and listen to their views and that they are trusted to do things on their own, they are happy to share their opinions and concerns with others in a 'circle'. They are happy to take turns and listen carefully to the teacher and each other.

110. Sex education is taught appropriately as a statutory part of the science curriculum and there is an input from the school nurse for pupils in Year 6. The local community police officers present aspects of personal safety and drugs education. Some lessons are used to enable pupils to discuss specific topics that concern them, for example, the need for games to play during wet breaks and lunchtimes. Some good arrangements are made to raise pupils' self-esteem through joint lessons between Year 6 and Year 1 pupils. These activities make a good contribution to pupils' personal development.

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	3
Overall standards achieved	3
Pupils' achievement	3
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	3
Attitudes	3
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
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	4
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	4
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	3
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	4
The quality of the school's links with the community	4
The school's links with other schools and colleges	4
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	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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