

INSPECTION REPORT

ST HELEN'S CATHOLIC INFANT SCHOOL

Brentwood, Essex

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115307

Acting Headteacher: Mrs S Rainsford

Lead inspector: Mr M J Weaver

Dates of inspection: 10th – 13th May 2004

Inspection number: 257673

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 7 yrs
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	247
School address:	Queen's Road Brentwood Essex
Postcode:	CM14 4EY
Telephone number:	01277 215626
Fax number:	01277 201114
Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Colin Anthony
Date of previous inspection:	March 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

The school is situated near the town centre of Brentwood. It has 108 boys and 139 girls on roll, including 83 children attending full time in the reception year. The majority of pupils are of white British heritage (72.8 per cent) with 36 pupils from 12 other ethnic groups, the majority (ten pupils) being of 'other white origin'. Two pupils have English as an additional language and receive close individual support from an adult but only one is funded for a teaching assistant to support for one and one half hours each week. The attainment of pupils on entry to school is above average. Ten pupils are on the school register for special educational needs at an early observation stage and this is below average. None of the pupils has a Statement of Special Educational Need. The number of pupils joining the school after the normal starting age and those leaving before the end of Year 2 is low. The school has strong links with St Thomas's Infant, Brentwood Ursuline, the Cathedral Church of St Mary & St Helen and St Helen's Junior School. The acting headteacher has been in post for almost nine months.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
9352	M J Weaver	Lead inspector	
9334	Mrs J Mynett	Lay inspector	
29688	M Brammer	Team inspector	English English as an additional language Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History
22704	G Williams	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage ¹ Science Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Special educational needs

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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.

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS	
STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS	8
Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses	
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	
QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL	10
Teaching and learning	
The curriculum	
Care, guidance and support	
Partnership with parents, other schools and the community	
LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT	14
PART C: THE QUALITY OF EDUCATION IN AREAS OF LEARNING AND SUBJECTS	17
AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE	
SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1	
PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

This is an improving school that provides a satisfactory level of education. Underachievement has been evident during recent years in writing and mathematics because of weaknesses in the use of assessment to monitor and improve pupils' work, and recent staffing concerns resulting in some staff leaving, and the headteacher's long term absence. These issues have now been addressed; staff changes have taken place and a greater focus has now been placed upon developing a consistent use of assessment. The school is now making sound progress under the very recent leadership of the acting headteacher who is leading and managing the school well. Standards in English and mathematics have improved during the last year due to some very good teaching. Teaching is satisfactory overall, but with examples of very good practice taking place. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The acting headteacher provides good leadership and management.
- Standards in English, mathematics and science have improved over the last six months, but standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are below average and more computers are needed.
- Although satisfactory overall, the role of subject leaders, many of whom are new to their responsibilities, needs developing, and governors are not sufficiently involved in setting the school's direction.
- Some higher-attaining pupils are not sufficiently challenged and the marking of pupils' work is inconsistent.
- The arrangements to support pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are good and enable pupils to achieve well.
- The caring Christian ethos provides very well for pupils' moral and social development and personal welfare. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are very good.
- Outdoor resources for reception children are not good enough.
- Although staff are vigilant, pupils' safety when entering and leaving school is a concern.

The school has made unsatisfactory progress since the time of the previous inspection. However, although standards dipped in English and mathematics over recent years, there is a marked improvement over the last six months following the appointment of the acting headteacher and her implementation of an effective range of strategies. The results of these actions now show a clear indication of an upward trend in both subjects and the earlier underachievement has been halted. Standards in speaking, listening, and reading remain above average. Standards in ICT have fallen since the previous inspection as the school has not kept pace with the increased demands in technology and there are too few computers. This is being actively addressed with a number of laptop computers having been purchased, although more are still required. Standards in all other subjects remain average. Insufficient outdoor resources limit children's physical development in reception.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
Reading	A	A	A	B
Writing	B	C	C	D
Mathematics	B	B	C	C

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

Achievement is satisfactory. Children in the Foundation Stage attain the goals they are expected to reach by the end of reception and many exceed them in communication, language and literacy, and personal, social, emotional and physical development. Standards at the end of Year 2 are above average in speaking, listening and reading, and average in writing, mathematics and science. Pupils are now achieving satisfactorily because of the effective implementation of many good strategies introduced over the last six months. This is an improvement over the earlier underachievement over previous years and standards have risen since the national tests in 2003 in English, mathematics and science.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their moral, social and cultural development, are good overall. Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and social development are very good and their moral development is good. Pupils' spiritual development other than in religious education, and cultural development are satisfactory. Attendance is satisfactory but, despite the school's hard work, too many pupils arrive late at school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education now provided by the school is satisfactory. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Reception children make a sound start to their learning and this is satisfactorily built upon in Year 1. Pupils' learning in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, while pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well. Although teaching is satisfactory overall, some examples of very good teaching were seen during the inspection. The effectiveness of these very good lessons is diluted, however, by the inconsistent level of challenge provided, and weaknesses in some teachers' subject knowledge. Assessment of pupils' work is generally satisfactory but more could be done to ensure that all pupils are sufficiently challenged. The school provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities, which are enhanced by a number of visits to places of interest and by visitors to school.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The acting headteacher provides good leadership and management. She has introduced a substantial number of initiatives since her recent appointment but these have not yet had time to impact fully on pupils' learning. The disruption of staffing experienced over recent years has had a detrimental impact on standards and staff morale, but these have now been securely addressed and communication has improved. Many staff have new roles of responsibility and a senior management team is now in place. Governors are very supportive of the school and, although not sufficiently involved in the strategic planning of the school, are receiving good information to enable them to improve their involvement. They fulfil statutory duties well and there is full compliance with all statutory requirements.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parents value the support and care shown to their children but wish to receive an improvement in the quality of communication, particularly about the progress their children make. Pupils enjoy school and say that learning is fun. Inspectors agree with these findings.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Develop the role of subject leaders in monitoring teaching and learning in classes.
- Further develop and consistently apply a whole-school assessment and marking policy.
- Drive up standards in writing and ICT, increase the numbers of computers available and ensure a consistent challenge for all higher-attaining pupils by sharing good teaching practice.
- Improve the outdoor provision for children in the reception classes.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning, subjects and courses

Achievement is **satisfactory**. Children achieve satisfactorily in reception and in Years 1 and 2. Standards are above average in English and average in mathematics.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are well above average in reading and above average in science.
- Standards in writing and mathematics are average and this indicates a decline in mathematics since the national tests in 2003.
- A number of improved strategies have recently been implemented and are beginning to ensure that standards rise and that all pupils receive sufficient challenge in their work.
- Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well.

Commentary

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average points score in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
Reading	17.5 (17.4)	15.7 (15.8)
Writing	15.1 (14.9)	14.6 (14.4)
Mathematics	17.0 (17.0)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 77 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

1. The results of the Year 2 national tests and tasks in 2003 were well above average in reading, average in writing and above average in mathematics. This indicates that standards in reading and writing were sustained since the previous year and that mathematics improved. Pupils' rate of improvement has been broadly in line with the national rate of improvement over recent years. When compared to schools with similar low numbers of pupils claiming free school meals, standards were above average in reading, below average in writing and average in mathematics.
2. Current standards in Year 2 are well above average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. This shows an improvement in writing and the consistent underachievement evident over the last four years, because the inconsistent challenge for higher-attaining pupils has been halted. Standards in science are above average. Standards in ICT are below average and have not kept pace with the increased demands of the curriculum, but standards in the other subjects fully inspected are average.
3. Since the recent appointment of the acting headteacher, a wide range of strategies has been implemented that is beginning to have an effective impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning across the school, including greater focus on matching work to pupils' abilities. The literacy and numeracy strategies are well established and pupils' work is now more effectively monitored against the National Curriculum levels. In science, pupils develop their skills, knowledge and understanding well, but there is insufficient drive to improve the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3. Clear strategies are now in place to address this weakness with a sharper focus being placed on improving pupils' skills in investigative and problem solving activities. In ICT, pupils' unsatisfactory achievement is now being addressed. The school has recently bought a number of laptop computers to provide a more flexible use of resources and opportunities for using ICT across the school in all subjects.

- Standards in reception are in line with national expectations overall, with particular strengths in communication, language and literacy, and physical, personal, social and emotional development. Standards in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and mathematical development, are average. Most pupils throughout the school achieve satisfactorily, while those with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve well because of the good support they receive from teachers and classroom assistants.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes, behaviour and relationships are **very good** and continue to be strengths of the school. Pupils' social development is **very good**, their moral development is **good** and their spiritual and cultural development are **satisfactory**. Attendance is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most pupils behave very well, have positive attitudes and are eager to learn.
- The very good relationships throughout the school promote a productive learning environment.
- The strong provision for pupils' social and moral development enables pupils to value and respect others and to have good awareness of knowing right from wrong.
- Too many pupils arrive late at school.

Commentary

- Pupils show very positive attitudes to their learning and activities in school. They are enthusiastic and spoke confidently and articulately about *'the interesting work and fun lessons'*, and the fact that *'teachers always help you'*. Their only wish is for *'more room and a bigger playground'*. The behaviour of most pupils is very good although, in a small number of lessons that are less well managed, a small minority of pupils become restless, lose focus and become disruptive. Pupils respond very well to incentives and the school's reward systems. They enjoy being 'star of the week' and 'worker of the week'. The school is a harmonious place with no evidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour, and pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well integrated into the life of the school.
- Pupils' moral development is good. Pupils know right from wrong, have helped to devise their class rules and are fully aware of how their actions affect others. Pupils gain an awareness of others less fortunate than themselves and seek to support some people in other parts of the world by supporting charities. Pupils' very good behaviour reflects their developing self-discipline and has resulted in an absence of exclusions.
- Pupils' social development is very good, resulting in very constructive relationships being forged with staff and amongst the pupils themselves. This promotes a good working environment and has a positive impact on their achievement. Even the youngest children quickly learn to work and play well together. Pupils readily accept responsibility as a 'helper' and complete their tasks conscientiously. Older pupils know they need to behave well and set a good example to the younger pupils, often acting as 'buddies' looking after the youngest ones at lunch or break time.
- The school seeks to promote an awareness of British and other cultures. This is celebrated through displays around the school such as works by famous artists, through visits to places of interest and visitors to school. The school has maintained links with an African school until recently, which helped promote an awareness of a foreign culture, particularly as its headteacher also visited the St Helen's school on one occasion. Pupils' awareness of the multi-cultural diversity of British society is now beginning to be addressed, supported by the involvement of some parents and visitors from different ethnic backgrounds.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2002/03 (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data:	4.8	School data:	0.7
National data:	5.4	National data:	0.5

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

9. Pupils are happy to come to school and are eager to learn. The level of attendance is broadly average, but the level of unauthorised absences is higher than average. This is mainly due to the way in which the school monitors and records absence. While most parents bring their children to school punctually in the mornings, a significant minority are often late. This is mainly due to problems with parking but results in their children missing registration and 'settling in' at the start of the day, causing some disruption for the rest of the class.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is **satisfactory**. The overall quality of teaching is also satisfactory, with some good and very good teaching being seen. Assessment is satisfactory overall but requires further development. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum that is enriched by well-planned visits to places of interest and by visitors to school. Staff provide very good quality of care for all pupils, and links with parents and the community are satisfactory.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching and learning is **satisfactory**. Assessment is good in reception classes and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Some good examples of teaching are evident in several classes, but there is an insufficient sharing of good practice to improve the overall quality of teaching.
- Teachers expect and mostly achieve high standards in pupils' behaviour.
- Improvements in monitoring pupils' work, has satisfactorily addressed pupils' underachievement in English and mathematics.
- Assessment in reception contributes well to children's learning but improvement is needed in Years 1 and 2 in tracking and targeting pupils' progress, particularly in mathematics.

Commentary

10. The quality of teaching, although satisfactory overall, has declined since the previous inspection. However, some examples of very good teaching were seen during the inspection in reception and in Years 1 and 2, where good subject knowledge, high expectation, good pace and effective challenge for pupils of all abilities ensured that pupils concentrated and achieved well. On these occasions, pupils interacted very maturely with one another, discussing aspects of the subject effectively and were developing good understanding of the focus of the lesson. Although some examples of very good teaching are present, there is insufficient sharing of good practice among staff to improve the overall quality of teaching. Occasionally some teaching, although satisfactory, did not ensure fully that pupils' behaviour was appropriate and their concentration was seen to wane.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 22 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	2	10	10	0	0	0

The table gives the number of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

11. The acting headteacher has used statistical information well to inform staff of the pupils' attainment compared to national and similar schools, the underachievement in writing over the last four years and occasionally in mathematics. This has led to a review of the assessment procedures from which to develop a coherent whole-school system to replace teachers' own individual systems. Similarly, the weak challenge for higher attaining pupils has been recognised and is also being addressed. Inspection findings show that an improvement in the level of challenge has taken place. Sound plans are now in place for subject leaders to observe teaching and learning in classes to determine how effectively pupils' learning is developed across the key stages. This has now started in core subjects and supplements the recent initiative where staff review and moderate pupils' work in books.
12. Assessment procedures are good in reception and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. The information gathered is used comprehensively to guide teachers' planning of lessons. Pupils' progress is now monitored carefully since the appointment of the acting headteacher and targets for improvement are made. More rigour is required, however, to consistently track and target pupils' achievement in all subjects, particularly in English, mathematics and ICT. The acting headteacher has set effective plans in motion to develop an agreed whole school assessment policy. Where targets are set, they are shared with pupils and their parents, and on those occasions, pupils' knowledge of their own learning is generally good. Targets set for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are focused clearly on what pupils need to learn next, and are fully supportive of their learning, particularly in reading and writing. The recording of their progress is effective and of a high quality, being performed mainly by teaching assistants in close consultation with teachers.
13. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent between teachers and does not ensure that all pupils know how to improve. In those classes where marking is used well, pupils are clear about what they need to do next. Marking generally improves pupils' presentation of their recorded work but there is inconsistent encouragement toward good presentation in all classes, and marking in one class does not adhere to the school policy. Clear plans are now in place to develop a rigorous marking policy in conjunction with the whole-school assessment policy.

The curriculum

The curriculum is **satisfactory**. The accommodation and resources are **satisfactory**, but outdoor resources for reception children are unsatisfactory and more computers are required. Daily acts of collective worship meet statutory requirements and effectively develop pupils' awareness of biblical events.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The curriculum is broad and balanced with an increased focus on improving standards, particularly in writing.
- The curriculum is enriched by a range of visits to places of interest and by visitors to school.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good.
- The accommodation is satisfactory overall, but there is insufficient outdoor provision for reception children and too few computers.

Commentary

14. Curriculum planning is satisfactory. This reflects the findings at the previous inspection. It is well balanced in reception and Years 1 and 2 with an emphasis on improving pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. The more recent focus on developing pupils' writing seeks to ensure that there is no further underachievement. The initiatives recently introduced have had a positive impact on the attainment of higher-attaining pupils, who now receive satisfactory levels of challenge in most subjects. Occasionally their progress is limited, such as in one ICT lesson, where all pupils were required to complete work at the same pace.
15. The curriculum is enhanced by a wide range of visits to places of interest such as museums and art galleries and by visitors to school, including musicians and a theatre group. This enriches pupils' awareness of their own and other cultures. Additionally, visits to Brentwood Cathedral and St Thomas's Church have contributed to pupils' awareness of church sculpture and paintings. This also has a satisfactory impact on pupils' spiritual awareness.
16. The provision for pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language is good. Effective planning ensures that they receive appropriate work and are successfully helped by teachers and classroom assistants. Individual education plans are linked well to pupils' needs and are now reviewed by the recently appointed special educational needs co-ordinator, who is developing support resources and assessment for reception children. Although there is no designated co-ordinator for pupils with English as an additional language, effective support is given individually and this has enabled them to achieve well during their time in school. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are satisfied with the support their children receive.
17. The school accommodation is satisfactory overall and a sound range of resources is provided in most subjects with the exception of ICT. Classrooms are generally bright and decorated with examples of pupils' work. Spending on outdoor resources has been prudent over recent years due to the expected move to another site in two years time, but this has resulted in a lack of effective planning for outdoor provision for reception children, resulting in insufficient resources. Although there is a designated, but small, area for outdoor play, staff planning ensures that children use the play area satisfactorily at different times for their physical development. There is, however, no covered area or 'soft surface' for children to play on other than the small grassed area, resulting in insufficient opportunities for outdoor physical development, during the winter months in particular. This also has an impact on children's potential progress in their mathematics and science work.

Care, guidance and support

This is a very caring school. Systems to ensure pupils' health, safety and welfare are very effective and pupils are very well supported during their time at school. Pupils feel it is a very safe and secure school.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school provides a very caring and supportive environment where pupils can grow into confident and happy individuals.
- Staff are vigilant regarding pupils' safety at the start and end of the school day but potential safety concerns are clearly evident.
- The sensitive induction arrangements ensure an effective start for new pupils to school.
- Pupils are confident that they can turn to an adult in school if they have a concern or need help.

Commentary

18. The provision for pupils' health, welfare and protection is very good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Parents are pleased at the supportive family atmosphere in which their children are well cared for, treated equally and feel secure. Arrangements for child

protection and procedures relating to health and safety are well thought out, and governors conscientiously take responsibility for health and safety issues.

19. Staff are vigilant regarding pupils' safety but, together with parents, are rightly concerned at the difficulties caused by the cramped school car park, through which pupils have to pass at the start and end of the day, and the lack of a pedestrian crossing. The school has very tight procedures for controlling the movement of pupils travelling on buses and ensures pupils' safety, but the lack of a zebra crossing continues to cause concern. However, despite the best efforts of staff and governors, they are unable to fully resolve this safety issue. A large number of parents bring their children by car, but are unable to do so whilst the school buses are present, resulting in too many pupils arriving at school late.
20. The induction procedures for children starting school in reception are good, with home visits being made by staff to meet new parents and their children. Children settle happily into their new routines because of the kind and caring way they are introduced to the school, their teachers and classmates. Transition to Year 1 and later into the junior school is well managed and ensures that pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education.
21. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal and academic development are satisfactory. Teachers know their pupils well and target setting in some subjects helps pupils to be aware of how well they are doing. This contributes well to their learning and helps pupils to develop a responsibility for their own learning. Good systems are in place to support and guide pupils with special educational needs, supported by relevant outside agencies. Parents are very positive about the school and feel it treats their children fairly.
22. Pupils are very happy and feel it is a very safe and secure school. They are well known by staff and are confident that they can turn to a member of staff if they have a problem or are unhappy, knowing that issues will be dealt with swiftly. Opportunities to consult with pupils and take their views into consideration are satisfactory, including their ideas and views in 'Circle Time' and in contributing to setting class rules.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The partnership with parents, the local community, church and other schools is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents generally have positive views about the school but feel that communication could be improved.
- Parents provide good support for their children's learning at school and at home.
- Pupils' reports to parents have not provided sufficient information about pupils' progress.

Commentary

23. Staffing concerns over the last two years have led to a weakening in the good relationships with parents evident at the time of the previous inspection. The school is seeking to build a closer liaison with parents to ensure that they are fully informed, while also providing them with opportunities to become involved in their children's education. Parents expressed satisfaction with the work of the school. They value the caring attitude of staff and acknowledge that, despite the current staffing and leadership concerns, the school runs smoothly. However, they would like to receive better and earlier communication regarding events, their children's progress and more involvement in school activities. Inspectors find that the school provides an appropriate level of contact with parents to inform them of a wide range of school events, but previous end-of-year reports have not been satisfactory. While identifying what their children have covered they have not been evaluative in reporting how well pupils are doing in each subject or identifying how well they are achieving in relation to what is expected for a child of that age. Reports have previously been circulated too late in the term for parents to pick up on any concerns teachers have identified.

24. The school operates an 'open door' policy where parents can speak with teachers if they have questions or concerns. There is some degree of consultation with parents through informal discussions and parental surveys, and the school has identified the need to establish a more formal mechanism for seeking parents' suggestions and views. The weekly newsletters provide good details of forthcoming activities and events and the reading diary offers effective weekly contact between home and school. Curriculum information is shared with parents each term so they are aware of what is planned, and provides information that enables them to help their children during holidays. Parents' support of their children's learning through listening to them reading and helping with spellings is aiding their achievement well. Parents are kept fully informed about the progress of their children through regular consultation and review meetings.
25. Links with the local community and partner institutions are sound. Local visitors and explorations of the area, and visits to popular food stores and fast food restaurants, where older pupils learned to make pizzas, help support and enrich aspects of the curriculum. The well-established links with the church are fostered through church services and visits linked to art and design, while some weekly assemblies are taken by the local priest. A small number of parents volunteer to help in the school on a regular basis assisting groups in the classroom, undertaking various tasks and acting as escorts on school visits. The recent changes to lunchtime arrangements have resulted in an increased space being available in the hall that should enable more parents to be invited to attend various class assemblies or other school activities. An enthusiastic group of parents organise a large number of social and fund-raising activities each year through the parents' association, in conjunction with St Helen's Junior School, which raises substantial funds for both schools. Pupils' transition into the junior school is effectively promoted through appropriate meetings and visits for parents. Links with the Ursuline are fostered with visits from the orchestra and community service activities from sixth-form students each term.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

The leadership and management by the acting headteacher are good. Leadership and management of other key staff are satisfactory. Governance of the school is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The acting headteacher provides effective leadership and is managing the school well.
- Leadership of the curriculum by the acting headteacher is good, but the role of subject leaders is underdeveloped in monitoring teaching and learning.
- The recently developed school improvement plan is a more effective mechanism toward improving standards.
- The governing body is well informed and has only recently become effectively involved in setting the strategic direction of the school.
- Induction of new and newly qualified teachers is good.

Commentary

26. Leadership and management, although judged as good as this at the previous inspection, have improved since that time due to a clearer focus on raising standards and better communication with staff and governors. The acting headteacher has a good awareness of what needs to be done since her unexpected appointment at the beginning of the current academic year. Standards and progress had declined over recent years, with clear underachievement in pupils' writing and occasionally in mathematics. However, since her appointment, staff morale has improved because the level of communication has improved, and confidence in the leadership of the school has been restored. The school is now securely on an improving track. The acting headteacher has instituted a senior management team that is highly supportive, and now includes the special educational needs co-ordinator. Improved open discussion with all staff now ensures more effective planning and the establishment of more rigorous systems. Senior staff clearly understand what needs to be done and now have

a clear vision for raising standards within the happy and secure environment that has been previously established.

27. The acting headteacher is enabling subject leaders very effectively having implemented strategies, to improve the quality of monitoring of pupils' work, curriculum planning, teaching, learning and standards in their respective subjects. They are conscious of the school's high expectations and are keen to improve upon their roles and responsibilities as subject leaders. Leadership and management of the provision for special educational needs by the newly appointed co-ordinator are good with effective systems in place for supporting and recording pupils' learning. Although there is no appointed co-ordinator for pupils with English as an additional language, there being only two pupils, the provision made for them is good. The school makes good use of support agencies and is committed to continuing professional development to respond to individual and school needs, linked closely to the school improvement plan.
28. The new school improvement plan is well conceived and provides greater opportunities for securing improvements in standards through more rigorous reviews of planning and moderation against National Curriculum levels, and planned growth in the proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels. Members of the governing body, although much better informed since the acting headteacher's appointment, recognise that they have not been sufficiently involved in setting the direction of the school to ensure that school improvement and progress is effective. Governors have spent considerable periods of time in seeking to clarify and agree actions for the school's planned move to another site, but acknowledge that they have not been sufficiently involved in ensuring that actions to overcome underachievement have been identified and addressed. They are now aware that several procedures, such as whole-school assessment and the marking system have been insufficient for a number of years and need to be improved and formalised. Governors fully support the acting headteacher's plans for improving these systems, and are keen to develop their role in the governance of the school. Governors have now become more involved in strategic planning and implementation of essential plans, which should ensure a structured and strategic monitoring of the work of the school to identify improvement and current and future needs. This is a positive move.
29. New and newly qualified staff are fully included in all of the school's activities including planning, moderation of pupils' work and the development of improved assessment. Newly qualified staff are mentored effectively and all statutory requirements for their training are met.
30. The previous and current financial year carry forward is within the recommended guidelines. Governors have spent monies prudently and made sensible allowances in reserving capital for the planned move to another school site, but although they have taken advice from other schools, such as in the type and number of computers required, and outdoor provision for reception children, they have yet to fully ensure that sufficient resources are available. The recommendations of the most recent audit report have been addressed and day-to-day financial controls are very effectively and efficiently managed by a bursar, with regular financial reports being issued to governors.

Financial information for the year April 2003 to March 2004

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	670,081	Balance from previous year	27,319
Total expenditure	668,747	Balance carried forward to the next	28,653
Expenditure per pupil	2,870		

31. The principles of best value are soundly understood by the acting headteacher, who is ensuring that staff and governors are now informed of the principles of comparison and

challenge. Insufficient involvement of governors has previously been evident, but is now in place for advising and consulting them on strategic planning. They are fully involved in securing best value for purchased goods and services.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

32. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory and is underpinned by teaching ranging from satisfactory to very good. This is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory with a number of well taught lessons observed during the inspection. Assessment of children's learning is good.
33. Reception children's standards when they start school are generally above those expected for their age. Trends over time indicate that most children achieve the levels expected by the end of reception. Current reception children are making satisfactory progress and most are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals² by the end of the reception year, with a significant number likely to achieve above expected standards. Leadership and management are good. Good use is made of assessment to record children's progress through the year and this information is shared appropriately with parents. Children with special educational needs are well supported and achieve well. Parents are very pleased with the arrangements for settling-in children to the school and value the teachers' pre-school induction visits to meet their children. The quality of support given by teaching assistants is satisfactory overall and on occasions is good or better, and makes a significant contribution to the children's learning.

Personal, social and emotional development

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good admission procedures help children to settle into school smoothly and arrangements at the end of the reception year support effective transfer into Year 1.
- Children behave very well.
- Good relationships between adults and children promote a well-ordered and purposeful atmosphere in classes.

Commentary

34. Most children have very good levels of concentration and confidence and are likely to reach and often exceed the expected goals. They listen attentively and speak confidently when they report on their activities. They play together amicably and share resources fairly. Children are happy and settled in school, they know routines well and enjoy taking responsibility such as tidying-up the classroom and carrying the register to the office. Teaching is always sound and occasionally very good. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour, and praise and positive encouragement are used to promote good listening, enabling children to maintain their concentration and keenness to participate in learning.
35. The balance between guided and free choice activities is well planned resulting in good relationships and a well organised environment. Children take the good opportunities given to them to select activities, carry out jobs around the classroom, take responsibility for some of their learning from an early age and to learn to act independently. Adults provide good role models for children, treating each other and children with respect. The good provision for personal, social and emotional development has been improved since the previous inspection. Overall, children's achievement is good.

² Early Learning Goals are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make in connection with communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical and creative development.

Communication, language and literacy

The provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The development of children's literacy skills is planned well, enabling them to achieve successfully.
- Children develop their speaking and listening skills well.
- Strong teaching of letter sounds successfully promotes the development of good reading and writing skills.

Commentary

36. Teaching and learning are good and most children are likely to exceed the Early Learning Goal by the end of the reception year. Children achieve well. Children's speaking and listening skills are well developed; high expectations have been established so that children speak clearly and audibly and others listen attentively. Children are encouraged to ask questions and make comments about each other's work. Adults effectively extend children's vocabulary during activities and letter sounds and names are taught well, including rhymes and songs. Most children write their own names unaided, while higher-attaining children write one or two sentences independently, using capital letters and full stops accurately. Most write three-letter words correctly and good progress is being made by the children to write independently.
37. Good assessment of children's work ensures that activities are pitched at the right level of challenge for each child. Children have good opportunities to write in other areas of learning. They use writing for labelling and making lists, as well as recording events and activities. Children have a good appreciation of books and enjoy listening to stories. Most children make good progress in their reading, a third of the children reading a range of words and simple sentences, while higher attainers talk about characters in a story and are able to predict possible outcomes of the stories they read. The good provision in communication, language and literacy is an improvement since the time of the previous inspection.

Mathematical development

The provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children develop their mathematical understanding well.
- Adults effectively encourage children to talk about their learning and to use correct mathematical vocabulary.
- Occasionally lower-attaining children require greater challenges.

Commentary

38. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and most children are expected to achieve the Early Learning Goals. A large proportion of higher-attaining children have already achieved these and by the end of the reception year will exceed them. Most children correctly count to 20 and write numerals to ten. Higher attainers recognise and competently write numerals to 20. They know different ways of adding numbers to make five and record these as addition sums. They successfully investigate the different colours of the children's eyes, and record their findings graphically. They sort objects by one or two criteria and sequence a series of pictures correctly. They know the names of regular flat shapes and name three-dimensional shapes such as a cube. They use correct terms to describe size, such as 'shorter', 'taller', 'bigger' and 'smaller'. They accurately match money in a purse. Standards in mathematical development have generally been maintained since the previous inspection, but although simple role play games are provided such as in serving customers in the shop, they are not always well

matched to lower attainers abilities and the use of adding and subtraction is not firmly consolidated.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

The provision for children's knowledge and understanding of the world is **sound**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good experiences are provided to develop children's knowledge about the world in which they live.
- Children investigate, observe and experiment with accuracy and enjoyment.
- Children have insufficient access to ICT resources.

Commentary

39. Teaching and learning are satisfactory and most children are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goal by the end of the reception year, while some will exceed it. Children have good observational skills. Well planned activities enable children to correctly sort and classify pictures of the life cycle of seeds and animals in chronological order. Most children sort by using two criteria. Children know that plants need water and light to grow. Good questioning and encouragement by adults effectively supports the development of children's skills of looking for similarities and differences. Children's ICT skills are not as well developed as they need to be, due partly to the limited number of computers available. The quality of provision has been sustained since the previous inspection, which although unsatisfactory is being actively developed in classes.

Physical development

The provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Most children develop good control and co-ordination through the wide range of activities provided.
- The regular use of outdoor climbing equipment and large wheeled toys outside promotes children's physical development well.
- The outdoor accommodation does not provide a covered area for children to play outside in inclement weather.

Commentary

40. Teaching and learning are good and most children are likely to reach the Early Learning Goal by the end of the reception class. Children's skills in cutting, drawing, sticking and manipulating construction toys are at least satisfactory and often good. Children are developing good skills of pedalling and control using wheeled toys. They use the climbing apparatus confidently and demonstrate good body control. Children's achievement is good. Provision for physical development is good overall and has improved since the time of the previous inspection, but weaknesses in providing opportunities and resources outdoors for children to use large construction and climbing equipment are evident.

Creative development

Provision for creative development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children have experience of a satisfactory range of media and materials.
- Staff give satisfactory attention to the development of skills and techniques.
- Many children achieve satisfactory standards with some better.

Commentary

41. Teaching and learning in creative development are satisfactory and most children are likely to achieve the expected standards by the end of the reception year. Children's imaginative development is promoted satisfactorily. They are taught to use paint, paper and different textured materials in order to create pictures and objects imaginatively. Adults support children well and encourage them to talk about their work using the correct technical terms, although only a small number of higher attainers were able to read simple 'product names' that they had cut from magazines. There is no evidence available of children using ICT in lessons to learn to change colours and create lines of different thickness. Children memorise simple songs and rhymes. They practise the names and shapes of letters by drawing them in the air. Children listen closely to different types of music in assemblies, and they join in and sing tunefully. The role-play area, currently a restaurant, is used effectively to enable children to use their imagination and to express their ideas, serve customers, take telephone calls and even take the telephone to a customer advising him that someone wishes to speak to him/her. Provision has generally been sustained since the previous inspection, but in one lesson, one fifth of the children showed satisfactory cutting skills.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGE 1

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The underachievement in writing over recent years has been effectively addressed with pupils now achieving average standards.
- Standards are well above average in reading and above average in speaking and listening.
- Pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour are a strength in their learning.
- Pupils' social and cultural development is supported well.
- Assessment and marking of pupils' work is not consistent or rigorous.
- Insufficient use is made of ICT for word processing and editing.

Commentary

42. At the previous inspection the pupils were attaining well above average standards and improvement since then has been unsatisfactory. In recent years higher-attaining pupils have not attained as well as they should in writing in particular because of the lack of well planned work to match pupils' abilities. The school is confident, and inspection evidence confirms, that improvements have been made following the appointment of the acting headteacher, resulting in more appropriate challenge for all pupils, particularly for the higher attainers. Similarly, the significant underperformance of boys, evident from the national tests in 2003, has also been addressed with no significant gender difference now evident as work is more carefully matched to pupils' abilities. Pupils' achievement is now satisfactory.
43. Standards in writing have improved and are now average. The acting headteacher identified this as a particular concern over recent years with staff successfully taking steps to address it. Clear evidence of this action was seen in a Year 1 lesson where pupils were given the opportunity to practise their skills in a wide range of different styles. Pupils in Year 2, however, do not all have the same experience and the range of writing in some classes is too narrow. Pupils are taught to join their letters and, overall, their written work reflects their very good attitudes towards work.
44. Pupils attain very well in reading. Pupils are taught the skills they need to build up unfamiliar words and they practise these. Many pupils receive good support for their reading at home, with their reading diaries making an effective link between parents and teachers to support

pupils' learning. Although the library has a range of non-fiction books to support learning across the curriculum, the range of fiction books to support higher-attaining pupils is narrow and impacts adversely on Year 2 pupils who find it difficult to talk about their favourite authors.

45. Standards in speaking and listening are good. Pupils usually listen carefully both to their teachers and to their peers. This is seen in the responses they make and reflects their very good attitudes and behaviour. In formal situations pupils speak well and explain their thoughts clearly. For example, in a Year 2 class a pupil says that '*a caption is like putting a label on a picture*'.
46. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and the literacy strategy is well established. Teachers demonstrate good management of pupils' behaviour and concentration, which results in pupils further developing very good attitudes that have a positive impact on their learning. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress. Teachers make good use of talking partners to enable pupils to think about their learning. Pupils make insufficient use of ICT for drafting and editing their work.
47. Leadership is satisfactory. The subject leader has begun to monitor the quality of teaching and learning and pupils' work in books. Teachers' planning is monitored but teachers are not yet receiving feedback about this. Assessment procedures currently lack rigour and pupils' progress is not consistently tracked closely to support good learning. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not ensure that pupils know how they might improve. As a result, management is weak and has not ensured that effective systems have been developed and used consistently over recent years, resulting in underachievement in writing by most pupils.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

48. Pupils' competence in speaking, listening and reading supports their learning in all other subjects well. Pupils in different year groups write about science experiments, the Great Fire of London and retell Bible stories but the use of extended writing to support and enhance learning in other subjects, although now satisfactory, could be developed further.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average but higher-attaining pupils do not reach their potential.
- Teaching and learning were good in lessons seen, but are satisfactory overall.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and support their learning well.
- Not enough use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning.

Commentary

49. Although the 2003 national test results identified that pupils' attainment was above average at the expected level, the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3 was below average. Linked to this is the inconsistent attainment of higher-attaining pupils over recent years. This was a key issue at the previous inspection and progress since then has been unsatisfactory for this group of pupils. Specific steps are now being taken to address this concern, such as effectively matching work to all pupils' individual abilities. Inspection evidence indicates that standards are now improving, particularly following the appointment of the acting headteacher and her more rigorous approach to effectively challenge pupils, resulting in their achievement now being satisfactory. This has also addressed the earlier concern where boys' performance was significantly worse than girls. No significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls is now evident. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are well supported and achieve well.

50. The quality of teaching and learning observed was good, but it is satisfactory over time, however, taking into account the work done in books and from discussions with pupils. The numeracy strategy is established and teachers have secure subject knowledge. Good learning in lessons is supported by a brisk pace with a range of mental activities to give pupils a secure grasp of number. Pupils are asked to explain their thinking, and good use of mathematical vocabulary supports their learning well. Pupils work well together, reflecting their very good attitudes and behaviour, which contribute well to their social development. The teachers' planning provides for pupils to work at a level that matches their ability. Overall, teaching is not better than satisfactory because of a lack of consistency in the work set for pupils in Year 2. One class has covered topics about the properties of shapes in greater depth than the others and has also done more difficult work in number. This class also provides greater challenge for higher-attaining pupils and targets are set for the pupils to encourage higher standards. Little evidence of work was available on data handling, capacity and mass.
51. Leadership is satisfactory, but management is weak. The subject leader has now begun to monitor teaching and learning, and teachers' planning is monitored but teachers are not yet receiving feedback about this. Weak management has resulted in assessment procedures that lack rigour and pupils' progress is not tracked closely enough to support good learning. The marking of pupils' work is inconsistent and does not ensure that pupils know how they might improve.

Mathematics across the curriculum

52. Few examples of mathematics being used to support learning in other subjects were seen and this is unsatisfactory. In science, pupils used a pictogram to record data they had collected about eye colour and in an ICT lesson, Year 1 pupils used number satisfactorily when following instructions that included measurable units.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The quality of teaching is satisfactory over time with evidence of better teaching during the inspection week.
- Good emphasis is placed on the use of scientific vocabulary.
- Leadership and management are improving and are now generally satisfactory.
- Assessment is sound overall. Data is being used to identify areas for development, particularly for raising the number of pupils attaining the higher Level 3.
- The use of ICT is not sufficiently planned for in lessons.

Commentary

53. Standards achieved in the 2003 national tests and tasks were above those normally expected but the number of pupils achieving Level 3 was well below average. The school has acknowledged this weakness and more effective progress is now being made, with clear indications from lesson observations that standards are rising, particularly in improving the focus on developing pupils' investigative and problem-solving skills. The earlier gender differences have been resolved and no significant differences are now evident between the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well supported in class and achieve similarly to their classmates.
54. In the lessons observed, teaching varied between satisfactory and good with the majority being good. Planning is detailed, and secure knowledge of the subject is reflected in clear explanations and probing questioning. Pupils display enthusiasm and positive attitudes towards their work, with good interaction observed between teacher, support staff and pupils.

Emphasis is placed on the use of a fair test in pupils' investigative work, and the focus on providing pupils with more opportunities to develop their skills of investigative science is a developing strength. Pupils are given the opportunity to work collaboratively, which they do well, and this extends their use of scientific language. Effective lesson planning provides challenge for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teachers' expectations are clear and sufficiently detailed to ensure that pupils understand what they are expected to learn and do. Investigative activities are purposeful and help to ensure pupils' understanding. A number of laptop computers have been provided to support pupils' learning but teachers do not yet plan for these to be used sufficiently to build pupils' knowledge or to support their work in science. This situation is exacerbated by too few laptops being available which limits pupils' use of ICT.

55. The subject leader has a clear vision for future development, including identifying strategies for raising standards at the higher Level 3. She acknowledges that more rigorous monitoring of planning, teaching and learning is essential to raise standards and to ensure that a consistent approach is given within parallel year group classes.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are below average.
- The school does not have enough computers to support good learning and insufficient use is made of ICT in other subjects.
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good and this helps their learning.
- The subject leaders are new to the role but are keen to see pupils' learning improve.
- The newly appointed teaching assistant makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning.

Commentary

56. Standards are low, but the school has recently bought a number of laptop machines, to support the classroom personal computers to give more opportunity for pupils to get hands-on experience. There are too few machines for all pupils in the larger classes to share a computer and this is slowing pupils' learning. Teachers and a competent teaching assistant provide satisfactory guidance to pupils for using computer programs but standards have fallen since the previous inspection because of the insufficient focus on, and use of ICT. Provision has not kept pace with requirements in the subject and pupils' progress over time is unsatisfactory.
57. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall with some good teaching also evident. In one good Year 2 lesson, the teacher promoted good learning by confident demonstration and by asking the pupils to reflect on what they had done as they used different tools from the tool bar to draw, spray, fill and amend pictures. Pupils work very well together when sharing a laptop. Where teaching was satisfactory, the teacher showed secure subject knowledge, consolidated the language that pupils need to be familiar with, and matched work to pupils' abilities. Year 1 pupils were introduced to the basic uses of the keyboard and the mouse and generally made satisfactory progress although the task was insufficiently challenging for higher attaining pupils.
58. Two newly qualified teachers carry responsibility for the subject and are keen to see standards rise. They have undertaken a clear analysis of what needs to be done to drive up standards and have developed a new assessment and tracking system set against the National Curriculum levels, to ensure that all pupils' learning is effectively recorded. The system is due to be implemented in the forthcoming term. The school has also appointed a teaching assistant to support individuals in ICT, and this is already improving the provision for pupils, particularly for lower attainers. The school has a satisfactory policy for the pupils to access the Internet.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

59. Insufficient use has been made of computers across all subjects, partially due to the lack of an appropriate number of machines and previously weak leadership since the previous inspection. However, some good examples are evident, such as Year 2 pupils using a 'colour magic' program to support work in history on 'The Great Fire of London'. Year 1 pupils used directional language in geography, supported by practical work on the computer, while other Year 1 pupils recorded a pictogram of eye colours in science. Teachers do not usually plan to use computers in lessons other than ICT, and pupils do not have enough opportunities to draft and edit their writing on the computer, or to use a computer to support their learning in mathematics.

HUMANITIES

History was inspected in full and geography was sampled. Religious education was inspected by diocesan inspectors.

Geography

60. In the few lessons seen in geography, teaching and learning was satisfactory overall. In addition, from scrutiny of pupils' books, wall displays and discussion with a group of older pupils, it was evident that the amount of work recorded is small and that provision has been inconsistent in Year 2 classes. This indicates weaknesses in the management of the subject. Year 1 pupils develop their skills and knowledge of the local area by using maps and by going out to look, while Year 2 pupils were able to talk about the difference between the amenities at the seaside and those in the Brentwood area. Teachers consolidate pupils' learning as they discuss and reflect with pupils about what they have seen. Pupils' good attitudes and behaviour were clearly demonstrated in the lessons seen. The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' social and cultural development.

History

Provision in history is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are average but teaching and learning in one class was very good.
- The pupils have very good attitudes and behaviour and this helps their learning.
- The subject makes a good contribution to the pupils' cultural development.

Commentary

61. Pupils attain average standards that reflect the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils achieve at a satisfactory rate and progress over time is satisfactory.
62. Teaching and learning are satisfactory, but very good teaching was seen in one Year 2 class. In this lesson, the teacher explained the main events of the Great Fire of London very clearly, using probing questions effectively to test pupils' knowledge, and this was further developed by the use of a web site to demonstrate how the fire spread. In this lesson, pupils demonstrated very good attitudes and behaviour that contributed well to their learning. Pupils have good recall of previous work as they talk about the life of Florence Nightingale. The teacher's very good management of the pupils and her secure subject knowledge led to pupils learning very well. Although no lessons were seen in Year 1, discussion with pupils identified that they have visited Brentwood Museum where they have satisfactorily developed their understanding of aspects of life that are 'old and new'. These well-planned visits contribute well to pupils' cultural development, as they receive information about the changes in styles of paintings, sculpture and artefacts of British and other cultural origins.

63. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The overall curriculum is satisfactory and is supported by visits to places of interest such as museums and Brentwood Cathedral, but there is a lack of consistency in the three Year 2 classes in what pupils learn and insufficient sharing of good practice in order to drive up standards. This is unsatisfactory. The subject leader has commenced monitoring teachers' planning, with staff discussing plans in each year group, and is fully aware of the standards reached at the end of Year 2, but has yet to monitor teaching and learning in classes.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

Work in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education were sampled because of the limited observations possible.

64. It was possible to observe only one Year 2 lesson in **art and design**, but teaching and learning in this were satisfactory. Work in Year 2 is linked to the study of some famous painters including Piet Mondrian and Andy Goldsworthy, with pupils presenting their own work after the style of William Morris. Year 1 pupils develop a satisfactory range of skills using different media, such as when they draw and colour faces of people who help them and when they made a collage of fishermen casting their nets. In this work they display examples of mixing colours and making animals using papier-mâché. Pupils use paint, pastels and coloured art pencils to create decorative art and design and, although standards are variable in different classes, they are satisfactory overall. Art and design contributes satisfactorily to pupils' spiritual and cultural development, but insufficient evidence was available to demonstrate pupils' use of ICT in supporting their work.
65. No observations were possible in **design and technology** but discussion with pupils and evidence in pupils' work, including using split pins as fasteners, making wind up toys and simple sliding mechanisms, indicates that pupils are developing satisfactory skills in planning and making activities. Discussion with Year 2 pupils showed their enthusiastic approach to the subject and a growing understanding of simple mechanical principles. The curriculum is satisfactory and is enhanced by the opportunity for pupils to take part in a creative arts week planned for the end of the summer term. The subject leader has been involved in monitoring teachers' planning but has yet to monitor teaching and learning in classes.
66. From the evidence available when observing one **music** lesson in Year 1 and from hearing pupils' singing during several acts of collective worship, music is clearly an important part of the curriculum that impacts positively on pupils' spiritual, social and moral development. The singing witnessed was of high quality with pupils in Years 1 and 2 singing joyfully, fully aware of the words, and in a harmonious manner. In the lesson observed, pupils listened attentively to their teacher and responded positively as she effectively developed pupils' skills in using pitch and rhythm. Pupils displayed particular enjoyment during the lesson.
67. Only one Year 2 dance lesson could be observed in **physical education**. In this, pupils performed a range of folk dance activities, developing their prior learning satisfactorily. They were enthusiastic in using a wide range of movements and, while they showed good spatial awareness, they lacked sufficient focus on refinement and co-ordination. ICT was used effectively to support pupils' timing and rhythm as folk music was played. Pupils worked together well, responded positively to the teacher and readily planned their own group sequences to perform to their classmates. The lesson was satisfactory overall.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

68. No lessons were seen in this area of the school's work and so no judgements are made about the overall provision. The school considers pupils' personal development as an important part of its work and provides opportunities at various times of the day for sharing their news for the day and giving their views. Pupils receive teaching in sex education through the Catholic 'Here I

am' programme and guidance in personal safety. Pupils develop very good social skills and speaking and listening are developed well as pupils give their views.

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	4
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	5
Value for money provided by the school	4
Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4
Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	2
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3
The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	4
How well the curriculum meets pupils needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	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	4
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	4
The governance of the school	4
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).