

INSPECTION REPORT

HORMEAD C of E AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL

Buntingford

LEA area: Hertfordshire

Unique reference number: 117439

Headteacher: Mrs Shirley Anne Wilson

Lead inspector: Mr J Earish

Dates of inspection: 16th – 18th May 2005

Inspection number: 267073

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 aided
Age range of pupils:	3 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	65
School address:	Great Hormead Buntingford Hertfordshire
Postcode:	SG9 0NR
Telephone number:	01763 289201
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Appropriate authority:	Local Education Authority
Name of chair of governors:	Peter Mitchell
Date of previous inspection:	June 1999

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Hormead C of E Primary School is a village school situated near Buntingford in rural Hertfordshire. It is much smaller than most other primary schools nationally. There are 65 boys and girls on roll aged 3 to 11 years. Pupils came mainly from Hare Street, Great Hormead and Little Hormead, with about a third of the pupils from further afield, and the socio-economic circumstances of the pupils are favourable. Parents are able to transfer their children to secondary education at the age of 9 or 11 years. Well over three quarters of the pupils transfer to middle schools in Buntingford or Puckeridge at the age of nine years, while the remainder transfer to secondary school at the end of Year 6. In this present year, there is only one pupil in Year 6 and four pupils in Year 5. Just under five per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs. This proportion is below the national average. The range of pupils' needs includes specific learning difficulties, social, emotional and behavioural problems, and physical disabilities. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 14.3 per cent, is broadly in line with the national average. Currently, there are no pupils from the ethnic minorities, and all pupils have English as their first language. Attainment on entry to the school is average, but each year group has a different proportion of higher and lower attaining pupils.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23216	J Earish	<i>Lead inspector</i>	Science; Mathematics; Information and Communication Technology; Design and technology; Physical Education.
9614	C Webb	<i>Lay inspector</i>	
18709	N Bee	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation Stage Curriculum; English; Art; Geography; History; Music; Special Education Needs.

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

Hormead C of E Primary School is a **good** school that caters well for all its pupils, whatever their abilities, backgrounds, age or gender. The teaching is of a good standard and results in good achievement by all groups of pupils. The school provides good value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and pupils achieve well.
- The school is well led and managed.
- Standards are well above average in reading, writing, speaking and listening, mathematics and science by the age of seven years.
- Pupils benefit from a good range of learning opportunities, with very good opportunities for extra-curricular activities.
- The school provides very well for pupils' personal development and, as a result, pupils behave very well, get on very well with one another and are very keen to learn.
- Parents are very supportive of the school, and they ensure that their children's attendance is very good.
- Standards of presentation could be improved by ensuring consistency in handwriting.
- Literacy tasks could be better matched to the wide range of abilities in the Key Stage 2 class.

The school has made good progress since its last inspection. There were only minor issues for improvement, which have been mainly well addressed. Improvements have been made to the school's accommodation, including the installation of a safety base in the Foundation Stage playground and the provision of play equipment. A Nursery Nurse has been appointed to support the learning of the youngest children. The curriculum has been improved and teachers now plan extension work for higher attaining pupils. Improvements have been made to the accuracy of pupils' punctuation and spelling. However, the issue relating to handwriting has been only partially addressed. Although pupils achieve good standards of handwriting in their handwriting books, this is not always seen when they are writing for other purposes.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Great care must be taken when considering the results at the end of Year 6, since most of the pupils leave at the end of Year 4 and transfer to middle school. A few remain behind and transfer to secondary school at the age of 11 years. Last year's results were based on three pupils. A more accurate measure is to consider the value added between age 7 and 11 years for those remaining at the school, which is well above average when compared to that of all schools nationally and of similar schools.

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2002	2003	2004	2004
English	B	C	C	C
Mathematics	B	C	A*	A*
Science	B	E	C	C

Key: A - in the top five per cent of all school nationally; A - well above average; B - above average; C - average; D - below average; E - well below average.*

Similar schools are those with similar percentages of pupils eligible for free school meals.

Pupils achieve well overall. Inspectors judge pupils' achievement by looking at the progress they make over their time in schools, in addition to how well they do in lessons. Inspection evidence shows that pupils' overall achievement is good. Children join the school with a wide range of capabilities, but, taken overall, their attainments are average. Children develop well in the Foundation Stage and achieve well in the Early Learning Goals in all aspects of their development. Pupils continue to achieve well, and pupils in the current Year 2 are attaining standards that are well above average in reading, speaking and listening, writing, mathematics and science. Currently, there is only one pupil in Year 6, and last year there were three pupils. It is difficult to make an accurate judgment on standards by the age of 11 years when based on such a small sample. However, inspection evidence shows that all groups of pupils aged 7 to 11 years are achieving well except in literacy, where the youngest pupils are achieving satisfactorily. This is because activities are not always accurately matched to these pupils' abilities. Overall, pupils' **personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, is very good.** Their attitudes towards learning and behaviour are very good. Attendance is very good.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The school provides a good quality of education for its pupils. Teaching is good overall and very good for pupils aged five to seven years. Teachers are good at ensuring that all pupils are included in lessons; they manage pupils' behaviour well, and make very good use of the skilled teaching assistants who work alongside them in class. As a result, pupils' learning is good. Assessment is good overall, and teachers use this information to plan work that is usually well matched to pupils' individual abilities. However, there were some inconsistencies in the teaching of literacy for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. The older pupils generally achieved well, but achievement is only satisfactory for some of the younger pupils in this cohort. This is because activities are not always accurately matched to pupils' abilities, and some of the younger pupils have difficulty completing the written activities in the time they are given. The school provides very well for the care, welfare and safety of its pupils. The governors take their responsibilities for health and safety very seriously and routinely carry out detailed risk assessments of the school premises. Links with parents, the community and other schools are very good.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good. The leadership provided by the headteacher is good, and all adults share a clear vision for the development of the school. Their energy and enthusiasm have helped to build an inclusive school where all are involved, where teaching is of a good standard, and where children achieve well. Governors are very supportive of the school and have a very clear appreciation of what the school does well and of where improvements could be made. The quality of their work is good. Legal requirements are met.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents expressed very positive views about the school. They particularly like the arrangements for their children to settle in when they first start at the school, so that children like coming to school.

Pupils say they enjoy their lessons and feel safe and secure.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Improve the presentation of work by ensuring that the standards of handwriting in projects and exercise books are similar to the standards achieved in the handwriting books.*
- Ensure that literacy tasks are well matched to the wide range of abilities in the Key Stage 2 class, and that there is sufficient time for all children to complete them.

**** This has already been identified by the school and forms part of the recent development plan.***

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

The achievement of pupils is good. Children join the school with a very wide range of capabilities, but, taken overall, pupils are of average ability when they join the school. Boys and girls generally achieve equally well, and pupils with special educational needs (SEN) achieve well.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Foundation Stage achieve well in all aspects of their development.
- Standards are well above average in reading, speaking and listening, writing, mathematics and science by the age of seven years.
- Children aged 7 to 11 years are achieving well overall. However, the younger pupils in this cohort are achieving only satisfactorily in literacy.

Commentary

1. It is difficult to make an overall judgement about attainment on entry to the school when this is based on small numbers of children. Attainment spans a wide range of skills and abilities, with a significant number of lower attainers in some cohorts, but overall it is broadly in line with national expectations for this age group.

2. Children receive a good start to their education in the Foundation Stage class. Good induction procedures serve to ease the children's transition from home to school. They also serve to establish very good links with parents, who are very positive about the start their children receive to their education. Teaching is good, and children also benefit from a well-planned curriculum and from very effective support from all the adults involved. Children achieve well in all of the Early Learning Goals that children are expected to reach by the start of Year 1, and many will exceed them.

3. The number of pupils taking the tests at the end of Year 2 fluctuates considerably from year to year, and is sometimes small. Fourteen pupils from Year 2 were tested in 2004. Therefore, conclusions drawn from the results achieved in a single year may be unreliable, because the performance of a single pupil can have a disproportionate effect on the school's overall performance.

4. Test results for 2004 show that standards in reading attained by pupils aged 7 years were in the top five per cent of all school nationally; standards in writing were above the national average, and those in mathematics were average. In particular, the number of pupils achieving Level 2 in reading and mathematics was in the top five per cent of all schools. The number achieving the higher Level 3 in reading was also in the top five per cent of all schools but was below average in the case of mathematics. Inspection evidence shows that the current cohort of pupils aged 7 are attaining well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics. Standards in science are also well above average. Improvements to the mathematics curriculum have helped to raise standards, particularly for the higher attaining pupils. In addition, the good use of assessment means that pupils' precise needs are well known and are effectively met in lessons.

5. The table below shows the average point scores attained in the Year 2 tests in 2004. One point represents about one term's progress.

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2004

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	20.7 (17.1)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	15.6 (15.8)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.3 (17.8)	16.2 (16.3)

There were 14 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year

6. Parents have the option to transfer their children to middle school at the end of Year 4 or to secondary school at the end of Year 6. The majority choose to transfer at the end of Year 4. Currently, there is only one pupil in the Year 6, and last year there were three pupils. Conclusions drawn from the results achieved in a single year are therefore unreliable, because the performance of a single pupil can have a disproportionate effect on the school's overall performance. For these reasons, the numerical data for this age group normally included in this section of the report have been omitted.

7. It is difficult to make an accurate judgment on standards by the age of 11 years when they are based on very small numbers of pupils. However, an alternative approach is to look at the measure of the value added between Year 2 and Year 6 for those remaining at the school. Last year, it was well above the national average when compared to that of all schools nationally and of similar schools, and when compared with the national distribution.

8. Pupils aged 7 to 11 years are taught in a single mixed age class. Inspection evidence shows that all groups of pupils in this cohort are achieving well except in literacy, where the youngest pupils are only achieving satisfactorily. This is because activities are not always sufficiently well matched to these pupils' abilities, and sometimes there is not enough time for all children to complete them.

9. Pupils with SEN are well provided for and achieve as well as their peers. The good ratio of adults to pupils throughout the school enables regular, intensive help to be given to individual pupils. The effective help provided by the school's teaching assistants is a significant factor in the good achievement of the lower-attaining pupils.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes to learning, attendance, behaviour and personal development are **very good**. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is **very good** overall. The level of attendance in the school is **well above** the national average.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about school and relish the responsibilities they are given.
- Pupils' personal development is very good.
- Social, spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good.
- Attendance levels and punctuality are very good.

Commentary

10. The Christian ethos pervades all areas of school life, and pupils are helped to become independent and responsible young people. Pupils usually settle quickly to their lessons, listen attentively and concentrate on their tasks. Many take part in extra-curricular clubs and activities organised during the lunch break and after school. Most pupils are expected to take on responsibilities to support the smooth running of the school, which they do responsibly and without fuss. Class representatives meet with the headteacher twice a term and are confident that their views are considered and valued.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year 2003/4

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	4.4	School data	0.1
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.

11. Pupils are proud of their school, and enjoy attending. However, some parents are still taking their children on holiday during term time despite the school's best endeavours to discourage this. The level of attendance in the school is well above the national average, and all pupils are keen to gain the 100 per cent attendance award. Pupils respond particularly well when teachers' expectations are high, when lesson tasks are demanding, and when they are able to engage in a variety of practical activities. They value the rewards they receive and consider any sanctions imposed as fair. There have been no exclusions in recent years.

12. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good overall.

13. Pupils are very aware of right and wrong. This is because staff give a very positive lead in promoting very good relationships, for example by giving praise and encouragement at every opportunity. Pupils are encouraged to play a full part in their own and the wider community. Extra-curricular activities and residential visits are well attended, and they not only enhance pupils' learning but also help to increase their confidence and self-esteem.

14. Pupils are given very good opportunities to develop spirituality, for example during times for reflection and prayer, and when taking part in school performances. Pupils have very good opportunities to understand their own cultures and those of others, through their learning in subjects such as music, art and religious education, and through activities such as the 'multi-cultural themed lunches'. The school is successfully promoting an awareness of the cultural diversity that makes up contemporary British society, despite its being located in a mainly white rural setting.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education is **good**. Good teaching enables all pupils to make significant gains in their learning and to **achieve well**. The curriculum is good and meets pupils' needs, as well as providing enrichment through extra-curricular activities. The school cares very well for its pupils, and links with other schools and the community are very good.

Teaching and learning

The quality of teaching is good overall, and pupils achieve well. Procedures for the monitoring and assessment of pupils' work are also good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching and learning are good overall, and very good for pupils in Year 1/2.
- The monitoring and assessment of pupils' academic performance are good.
- Skilled teaching assistants play a valuable role in helping and supporting pupils with their learning.
- There were some inconsistencies in the teaching of literacy for pupils aged 7 to 11 years.

Commentary

15. The quality of teaching is good overall. The best teaching was seen in Year 1/2, where it was of very good quality. Teachers plan tasks to ensure that all pupils, including the higher achievers, are challenged to extend their ideas, use initiative and be more independent. Pupils, including those with SEN and the higher attaining pupils, are usually offered tasks that are well matched to their needs so that all are challenged and achieve well in the mixed-aged classes. However, there were some inconsistencies in the teaching of literacy for the pupils aged 7 to 11 years. The older pupils in this class are generally achieving well, but achievement is only satisfactory for some of the younger pupils in this cohort. This is because activities are not always accurately matched to pupils' abilities, and some of the younger pupils have difficulty completing the written activities they are given. In addition, too little emphasis is placed on the need to present work neatly.

16. Teaching at the Foundation Stage is consistently good. The pupils' learning is linked to the Early Learning Goals and to the National Curriculum by good quality planning. There is a strong commitment to help children to learn through planned opportunities for play and for making independent choices. Teacher, classroom assistant, and parent volunteers work well together in setting clear expectations for children's behaviour. Their discussions and interventions are effective in getting children to talk, to think and to behave very well.

17. Learning is good overall, and learning intentions are usually shared with pupils. This ensures that all understand what they have to do and achieve by the end of the activities. Pupils enjoy their learning; they enthusiastically ask questions and are keen to talk about what they are doing. Teachers make good use of this enthusiasm to focus pupils' attention, extend their understanding, clarify and consolidate previous learning, and judge when to move pupils on to the next task.

18. Teachers use good assessment procedures to track progress and match tasks to the needs of the pupils. They record the National Curriculum Levels each pupil is expected to reach each year, and review these regularly. Pupils have their own personal targets to work towards in literacy and numeracy, a strategy that gives them a good understanding of their own learning and of what they need to do to improve. Literacy targets have been identified for reading and writing but these are not consistently referred to in all lessons or in the marking of pupils' work, particularly for the older pupils. Good assessment systems in Reception track each child's progress, and the information is well used when planning future work.

19. Classroom assistants are an important part of the team, and are involved in planning activities and providing individual support for pupils. This improves the quality of pupils' learning and achievement.

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 13 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	3	9	1	0	0	0

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

The curriculum

The curriculum is good overall. It is well balanced, with a very good range of activities to support learning outside the school day. All statutory requirements are met.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils have very good opportunities to take part in activities outside the school day.
- Pupils have good equality of access and opportunity to benefit fully from the curriculum.
- The youngest children in the Foundation Stage are given a good start to their school life.

Commentary

20. The curriculum is well planned and balanced, and embraces all subjects of the National Curriculum, including religious education. Although the nature of the school demands that pupils are taught in classes with a wide age range, teachers plan the curriculum well to meet the needs of individual pupils. The great majority of parents agreed that their children find activities enjoyable and interesting.

21. Learning is successfully extended through a very good range of special events, visits and activities to broaden pupils' experience and enrich their learning. These include visits to Fowlmere Bird Reserve and Kentwell Hall. The school also provides a wide variety of sporting and artistic activities outside the school day to promote art and design, physical education, music and drama, science, chess, calligraphy, gardening and the use of computers. Most of the pupils take part in these activities. This is similar to the finding of the previous inspection report.

22. The school's ethos and values promote equality of opportunity for all its pupils, and ensure that overall they are fully included in all aspects of school life. The provision for pupils with SEN is good. Teachers support these pupils well and develop individual education plans (IEPs) that identify what they need to do to improve. Equally effective is the support given in lessons by teaching assistants, who make good use of the information in pupils' IEPs to support the learning activities. These plans are reviewed regularly and parents are kept informed. However, teachers could focus more on the targets when marking pupils' work.

23. The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is good. Children work from a good, well-planned, imaginative curriculum, linked to the national guidance, which fully meets their needs. As a result, children achieve well and enjoy learning.

24. The policy and guidelines for teaching personal, social and health education (PSHE) are currently under review. However, the provision for PSHE, including drugs abuse and sex education, is good. It contributes to the pupils' positive attitudes and behaviour and prepares them well for adult life. The curriculum is enhanced and pupils' learning extended by a good range of visits, including residential trips, and by visitors into school. At the Parents' Meeting, it was clear that the parents were impressed with the PSHE programme that was offered to their children, and inspectors support their view.

25. The accommodation is good. The premises are welcoming and generally well maintained, and staff make good use of the space available. There is a good number of teaching and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. Resources for delivering the curriculum are good overall.

Care, guidance and support

The school cares very well for its pupils. Procedures to ensure the care, safety and welfare of pupils are **very good**. Pupils receive **very good** support, advice and guidance. The school has **very good** systems for consultation with pupils.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school's procedures for setting targets and involving pupils in their learning are very good.
- Pupils' relationships with adults are very good.
- The school takes pupils' views into account when decisions are made.

Commentary

26. The health, safety and welfare of the whole community are high priorities for the school, and the procedures followed are very good. Governors carry out regular risk assessments, and security measures are regularly reviewed. Trained personnel administer first aid and carefully record and monitor all incidents. Child protection procedures are well known, and all staff know what to do in cases of concern.

27. Pupils are well aware of their academic targets and try hard to achieve them. They know exactly what they have to do to improve their work, and find teachers' comment in their books helpful. Although personal development is not formally monitored, teachers have a very good understanding of the pupils in their care. The very good relationships between pupils and staff create an atmosphere of mutual trust and respect. Pupils are confident that their concerns will be dealt with swiftly and effectively.

28. Pupils feel the school genuinely seeks and listens to their ideas. Class representatives are proud to put forward the views of their peers to the headteacher during their regular meetings. This gives pupils very good opportunities to share views and opinions with others, and to work towards consensus.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school continues to enjoy a **very good** partnership with parents. Links with the local community are **very good**, as are those with other schools and colleges.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Parents' support for and involvement with the school are very strong.
- Links with the pre-school on site are now very good.
- Community support for and involvement with the school are very good.

Commentary

29. The school's relationship with parents is very good. Parents appreciate the Christian education their children receive, and the local population value the school as a focal point for the community. Parents support the school's aims and ambitions and are actively involved in school life. For example, one of the most successful fund-raising events run by the enthusiastic parent teacher association is the annual 'Bonfire Night' party. This attracts approximately six hundred people, who consider it a 'good night out' and a highlight of the season.

30. Parents receive very good information about their children's progress and school events through newsletters, parents' meetings and informal discussions. Attendance at consultation meetings is excellent; almost all of the parents attend. The school will always telephone those parents who are unable to attend, to ensure they have the most recent information about their children's progress. The quality of documentation produced for parents is very good and the prospectus and governors' report meet statutory requirements. The pupils' annual reports are good overall. They are clearly written and easy to understand. In addition, a governor is in school every Tuesday afternoon to listen to parents' concerns and explain the work of the governing body.

31. The school has very good links with its partner schools, and these benefit pupils and staff alike. There is shared training for teachers, as well as curriculum working groups and activities to support the moderation of pupils' work. There are also very good links with the local secondary school, with students enjoying their work placements at the school. The school works closely with the local pre-school to ensure that children are well prepared for the next stages in their education. In addition, the school supports students from the local university who are training to be teachers.

32. There are very good links with the community. The school is an important part of the local community and provides opportunities for residents to help in school. For example, they hear children read and help run the gardening club, and a 91 year old teaches children the art of using watercolours. The school works closely with the local church, and the vicar helps in classrooms and shares assemblies. School news is always featured prominently in the parish magazine.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership. The school is well managed. The governing body makes a good contribution to the leadership of the school and its success.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The headteacher provides good leadership and has clarity of vision and a sense of purpose.
- Governors take a keen interest in the work of the school and contribute substantially to its effectiveness.
- The school's annual improvement plan is of good quality and clearly maps out future development.
- Self-evaluation is well established and is embedded within the culture of the school.

Commentary

33. The leadership and management of the headteacher and key staff are good. The headteacher provides good leadership and has a clear vision for the school. She has worked hard to involve all staff and the governing body in moving this small school forward, and all have a good understanding of what needs to be done to improve the school further. Through her careful monitoring, the headteacher has a very good understanding of the strengths to be shared and weaknesses that need to be addressed. For example, the dip in attainment in mathematics in 2003/4 was carefully analysed, and was explained by a decline in the proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 3. Action was taken and the school successfully addressed this weakness. Inspection evidence shows that the results for the current Year 2 are now well above average.

34. The school is well managed. The performance of all staff is carefully monitored to ensure that the pupils have the best possible opportunities. Any weaknesses are quickly identified and appropriate action is taken to seek improvement. The school works closely with local colleges, and students regularly work in classes to enrich the learning opportunities for pupils. Finances are well managed, and there are clear and appropriate plans for allocating the money that has been brought forward from last year.

Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	305,386.00	Balance from previous year	21,824.00
Total expenditure	296,502.00	Balance carried forward to the next	32,708.00
Expenditure per pupil	4,492.00		

35. The school had a carry forward figure of about 10 per cent. This includes money saved during a recent period of extended illness and maternity leave, when the headteacher took on a significant teaching commitment. In addition, the school saved money as a result of a redundancy. These savings have been incorporated within a three-year spending plan, which will see the carry forward figure well within national guidelines.

36. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities and are very committed and supportive. They know the school very well and understand what needs to be improved, while appreciating the strengths of the school. Governors successfully fulfil their role as 'critical friend' to the school through their monitoring of its work in their committees and in regular meetings of the full governing body. They ensure that statutory policies and guidelines are implemented and monitored, including those for race equality.

37. The school development plan is of good quality and clearly maps out future development. It is based on a detailed analysis of the school's context and sets out precise and measurable targets for the future. The headteacher and governors monitor performance well and use the data to review progress and to guide future action.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

38. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. The six part time Nursery children work very well alongside the 12 Reception children each morning. Cohorts vary in size and ability, and are often small. Information collected when the current cohort of Reception children started school shows that most were at the expected levels for their ages. Induction procedures are very good and ensure that the children happily settle into school and quickly learn how to work confidently alongside the older children in Reception. Parents are very pleased with the information they are given when their children start school and with how well their children are doing. Children achieve well because activities are well planned to develop learning in all areas. Two teachers teach the children, one of whom is unqualified. In addition, they are well supported by a Nursery nurse for part of each day. Relationships between the adults and the children are very good. Assessment procedures are good, and adults collect information on the children and use this well to plan lessons and to place children into ability groups. There are no children formally identified as having special educational needs, although a few children are causing some concern. Learning resources are satisfactory and are used well to support all areas of learning.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is of very good quality.
- Adults support learning well. They interact sensitively when children work in small groups or alone.
- The children develop very positive attitudes to learning and achieve very well.
- Behaviour is very good.

Commentary

39. Most children are on course to exceed the expected levels by the end of their time in Reception. Children are able to conform to the high expectations of the staff, and the very good role models provided by adults help children to learn what is expected of them. Relationships are very good. The children are friendly and polite, confidently ask for help if they are unsure of what to do, and often ask questions to find out more. The children have lots of opportunities to choose activities themselves, and they work very well, either in small groups or independently. In addition, they enthusiastically work on activities that have been selected for them. Teaching is of very good quality. Personal independence is very well developed. For example, each morning the children are encouraged to self-register as they identify their name and stick it on the board. Achievement is very good.

COMMUNICATION, LITERACY AND LANGUAGE

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- The children are well supported in all that they do, and as a result they achieve well.
- The children respond very positively to lessons.

Commentary

40. Teaching in communication, language and literacy is of good quality and children achieve well. There are many good opportunities for children to develop speaking skills. Most children speak very confidently during class discussions, and adults value what they say. In addition, children learn to listen very attentively because of the high expectations of the teachers and the Nursery nurse. There are good opportunities to develop writing skills, and children of all ages were seen starting to write letters on their own. The oldest children can confidently write their names and are beginning to develop a good idea of what a sentence looks like. Children's previous work shows that they are achieving well.

41. The school provides reading books and games which parents use at home to help their children develop their language and literacy skills. The youngest children handle books carefully, and enthusiastically look at the pictures as they begin to tell the story. Reading is well promoted, and by the end of the Reception class the children show a good awareness of how print carries meaning, and many are starting to recognise familiar words. Higher and average attaining children use their knowledge of sounds well to help them when they read. Most children are on course to exceed the expected levels.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in mathematical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teaching is good.
- The children respond very positively as they work with numbers and shape.
- Vocabulary related to this area is promoted well.

Commentary

42. Teaching is good in this area of learning and most children are on course to exceed the expected levels by the beginning of Year 1. Adults plan a good range of interesting activities to promote mathematical understanding. A scrutiny of previous work shows that activities have been carefully matched to the needs of individual children. Children have good opportunities to develop their understanding of numbers and how they are written. Colourful number lines are displayed around the classroom so that children become familiar with numeric signs and symbols. Children have regular opportunities to write numbers, and most of the oldest can easily recognise numbers over 10. The higher-attainers can count 'faces' on a graph generated by the computer and correctly identify some numbers over 20.

43. Discussions with children show that most children can name basic shapes such as circles, rectangles, squares and triangles. Adults question children well, and in many incidental ways they constantly use a variety of mathematical words relating to concepts such as place, quantity, or time, to help develop vocabulary. Because many of the children are confident speakers they quickly begin to use accurately words such as 'symmetry'. The children achieve well, because they work very amicably together, concentrate well and listen very attentively to instructions from adults.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD,

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children respond positively to activities, because these are exciting and imaginative, and as a result they achieve well.
- Teaching is good.
- The computers are used well to support learning.

Commentary

44. Teaching is of good quality, and children are on course to exceed the expected levels by the end of Reception. These standards are higher than those reported in the previous inspection. Staff stimulate children's curiosity and enhance their understanding by planning interesting activities that are cleverly linked to topics. During the inspection the children were studying a topic on mini-beasts. Children were seen looking for mini-beasts in the outside area and could easily name ladybirds, bees and butterflies. They were amazed and enthralled to be able to watch butterflies hatch and tadpoles turn into frogs. They talked about the life cycle of a butterfly, and the oldest children could explain the life cycle of a frog. These activities are carefully graded to extend the higher attaining children. Children's previous work shows that they begin to develop an understanding of the past as they sequence pictures of people of different ages. They confidently talk about where they live and are beginning to understand that they all have an address. All children can use the computers with confidence and are achieving well.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision in physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The children confidently take part in all physical activities and achieve well.
- Teaching is good.
- Activities are well planned to support all aspects of this area of learning.

Commentary

45. Most children are on course to exceed the expected levels by the time they start in Year 1. Teaching is of good quality, and children achieve well in all aspects of this area of learning. They enjoy physical activities both indoors and out. Children were seen in the outside play area riding wheeled vehicles with good control and using climbing equipment confidently and safely. They also have good opportunities to use the school hall to learn how to use movement and dance to express their feelings. In addition, there are well-planned activities that reinforce and develop the skills needed to mould, roll and cut materials such as dough and clay, and to use paintbrushes, pens and pencils. Two of the youngest children were seen making sausage rolls from play dough and cutting them expertly into equal pieces just as their mums do!

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision in English is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are well above average at the end of Year 2 and the pupils achieve well.
- Teaching is good overall.
- Most pupils show positive attitudes to the subject.
- Work is not always well presented and is not always matched accurately to pupils' individual needs.

Commentary

46. In Year 2, standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are well above average, and achievement is good. This is because the quality of teaching and learning for pupils in the mixed aged Year 1/2 class is very good. Lessons are well planned, and the teacher has very high expectations in respect of listening carefully at all times and completing the activities. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support the subject. Pupils in Year 2 were seen using the computers confidently as they developed their knowledge of words containing 'oon' such as 'moonlight'. In return, the teacher is a very good listener and values what each pupil says. As a result, the pupils are eager to please and enthusiastic when answering questions, and they generally respond very positively in lessons. Consequently, learning is very good.

47. The quality of teaching differs between the key stages. The older pupils, in Years 5 and 6, are achieving well in this class for pupils aged 7 to 11 years. However, achievement is only satisfactory for some of the younger pupils there. This is because activities are not always accurately matched to these pupils' abilities. When this happens, some pupils have difficulty completing the written activities they are given. In addition, there is too little emphasis on the need to present work neatly. In the only lesson seen in Key Stage 2, learning was satisfactory overall. There were good opportunities to speak, but listening skills were not always effectively promoted. The lesson encompassed all aspects of literacy well, but when the pupils began their writing activity there was no promotion of handwriting targets or the need to write neatly. Pupils with SEN were well integrated into this lesson, and the teacher used the interactive whiteboard well to encourage the scanning of texts when reading.

48. There are inconsistencies in the quality of marking throughout the school. The best examples clearly inform the pupils of what they need to do to improve. Assessment systems are good for reading and writing. Although reading records vary in quality, the best ones identify what the pupils have to do to get better. Literacy targets have been identified for reading and writing, but these are not consistently referred to in lessons or in the marking of pupils' work. This also applies to the targets on the IEPs for pupils with SEN.

49. The co-ordinator has been in post for only a short time but has already completed some monitoring of teaching and learning. She has a very good understanding of what is needed to improve the match of work to the differing abilities of some of the pupils in Key Stage 2, and an action plan is being drawn up. The library has been refurbished and has a satisfactory selection of books. All pupils have opportunities to be involved in drama productions, which enhance the subject well. The school offers good opportunities for out-of-school activities to develop pupils writing skills, such as 'Newspaper writing on the computer'.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

50. Writing skills are used well across the curriculum to extend learning in subjects such as history, geography and science. As a result, pupils use their skills to write for a good range of purposes. Speaking and listening are developed well because pupils have good opportunities to discuss their ideas in most lessons. Information and communication technology (ICT) is used well to support learning in literacy across the school. Pupils have good opportunities to write in history, but pupils' previous work shows that written accounts are not always presented neatly.

MATHEMATICS

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards are very good at the end of Year 2.
- All pupils achieve well.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, with a strong focus on developing pupils' numeracy skills.
- Support staff are used well and are very effective in promoting learning for all pupils.

Commentary

51. Standards are well above average in mathematics at the end of Year 2, and pupils are achieving well. Parents have the option to transfer their children to middle school at the end of Year 4 or to secondary school at the end of Year 6. The majority choose to transfer at the end of Year 4. Currently, there is only one pupil in Year 6, and last year there were three pupils. It is difficult to make an accurate judgment on standards by the age of 11 years on the basis of such a small sample. However, inspection evidence shows that all groups of pupils are achieving well. In addition, the measure of the value added between Year 2 and Year 6 for those remaining at the school is well above the national average.

52. The school has worked hard to raise standards in mathematics by the end of Year 2. Standards had declined over the last two years and were average overall. The school has successfully addressed the weakness in the curriculum, and the proportion of pupils likely to achieve the higher Level 3 has risen significantly as a result of very good teaching. All groups of pupils are now achieving well. This is due to improvements to the curriculum, teachers' planning, the use of assessment information, and the introduction of the 'Springboard' mathematics programme to help children who are experiencing difficulties with mathematical ideas.

53. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall and very good in Year 1/2. Teachers are very aware that within the mixed aged classes there is a wide range of ability, and they plan carefully to meet the needs of all pupils. Groupings of pupils are flexible, so that teachers can work with older or younger ones according to their ability, and consequently the needs of the most able and those with learning needs are properly met. Marking is satisfactory overall, and there were some examples of good practice which helped pupils understand what they have done well and what they need to do to improve. However, this was not consistent across the school. Assessment activities are good and are used well to inform the next stages of learning. All pupils have targets for learning, but these are not always referred to during lessons.

54. The school has a good number of teaching assistants and parent helpers, who are valued members of the team. They are effective at giving pupils help and support, for example by supporting small groups of pupils to ensure that their needs are met while the teacher works with other groups. In addition, they provide the teacher with valuable insights into how individual pupils are learning, and carefully report their observations so that teachers can track the progress of groups and individuals.

55. Leadership and management are good. The co-ordinator has a good understanding of the strengths and areas for development in the subject. For example, she has worked hard with colleagues to review and change the curriculum for pupils aged 7 to 11 years to take account of the variable age of transfer. In addition, the school has helped raise the profile of mathematics by providing mathematical games for pupils to take home and practise with their parents.

Mathematics across the curriculum

56. Mathematical skills are developed well in other subjects. In ICT, for example, pupils use pie charts and bar graphs to analyse surveys. Charts, graphs and tables are used in science to record and analyse data. Pupils practise measuring carefully and accurately in practical activities during design and technology.

SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- Standards are well above average by age seven years, and pupils achieve well.
- Pupils have many good opportunities to plan their own investigations.
- Pupils enjoy science.

Commentary

57. Standards are well above average by the age of seven years, and all groups of pupils are achieving well. At Key Stage 2, parents have the option to transfer their children to middle school at the end of Year 4 or to secondary school at the end of Year 6. The majority choose to transfer at the end of Year 4. However, the scrutiny of work and the evidence obtained from talking with pupils shows that all groups of pupils are achieving well across this Key Stage.

58. The curriculum is of good quality, with opportunities for pupils to carry out their own experiments and to plan their own investigations. Work is based on national guidance and on a rolling programme that takes account of the fact that most pupils in the mixed age class leave at the end of Year 4. Teachers plan interesting practical investigations which pupils of all abilities find absorbing and enjoyable. Teachers are good at encouraging pupils to think scientifically, to plan fair tests and to draw simple conclusions based on the results of their experiments. For example, older pupils are able to separate mixtures by using a range of techniques, including filtering, evaporation and condensation, and can compare the absorbency of different types of paper by accurately measuring the water, using the metric scale. Younger pupils can design and build their own electrical circuits, and investigate the human senses as part of a project on the human body. There is generally a good level of challenge in tasks, and good use of scientific vocabulary and ICT.

59. It is not possible to make a secure judgment about the quality of teaching and learning overall, as it was possible to see only one lesson during the inspection. However, evidence from the scrutiny of work and from talking with pupils shows that lessons are carefully planned so that pupils of different abilities are sufficiently challenged. Tasks are usually well matched to pupils' individual needs, and there are no significant differences in attainment between boys and girls. Teachers use assessment information well to plan their lessons and to track the achievement of groups and individuals.

60. Pupils say they enjoy science. Their very positive attitudes contribute greatly to the quality of learning. They particularly like the opportunities to design their own experiments and for working in small groups and pairs. This makes a very good contribution to pupils' social development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

Provision in ICT is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses:

- There are good resources, including laptop computers linked to the Internet.
- The subject is used effectively across the curriculum.

Commentary

61. The school's considerable investment in interactive whiteboards and wireless laptop computers is enabling pupils to use ICT effectively across the curriculum. The success of this strategy owes much to the good leadership and management of ICT. This is having a positive effect on the quality of learning and the rate at which pupils make progress. A scrutiny of work and discussions with pupils show that they are offered good levels of challenge to develop their skills.

62. It was not possible to see the direct teaching of ICT during the inspection, and it is therefore not possible to make a secure judgement about the quality of teaching and learning overall. However, there is evidence of good levels of attainment in pupils' use of word-processors, databases, painting and drawing, and of the use of the Internet for research and communication.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

63. Scrutiny of teachers' planning and of examples of previously completed work shows that ICT is used well in other subjects to enrich learning. For example, in literacy, younger pupils develop simple word-processing and reading skills. Older pupils continue to develop their word-processing skills and are able to merge text, graphics and digital images. In numeracy, younger pupils develop their skills in counting, matching and sorting, and using simple databases. Older pupils have used spreadsheets and databases and can use Logo, a control protocol for programming an icon to draw mathematical shapes. Pupils are able to access the Internet for research in history, geography, science, art and design and religious education, and older pupils are able to send and receive email. Pupils have also made their own PowerPoint presentations about smoking and health.

HUMANITIES

64. **Geography** and **history** were not part of the inspection focus; and no judgement can be made about provision in these subjects. One geography lesson was seen. In this good lesson, pupils in Year 1 and 2 considered the different types of work carried out by people in their immediate locality. Activities were well matched to the different abilities within this class, which enabled all groups of pupils to achieve well. They showed very good attitudes to their work and concentrated well. Well-planned educational visits greatly enrich the history and geography curriculum. In particular, school journeys to Scarborough or Weston-super-Mare reinforce and build on the historical and geographical skills the pupils have been taught in school. In addition, the oldest pupils visit Kentwell Hall as part of their study of the Tudors. Owing to the timing of the inspection, there was little evidence of pupils' previously completed work.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

65. It is not possible to make a secure overall judgement about provision, including teaching and learning and standards, in art and design, design and technology, music and physical education. Inspectors talked to teachers about their work, spoke to pupils about what they had learned, watched video evidence and examined pupils' work. These subjects were not a focus of the inspection.

66. It is evident from a scrutiny of work on display, and from discussion with pupils and an examination of completed work, that pupils experience an interesting **art and design** curriculum. Teachers plan effectively, using the nationally recommended guidelines, and make good links with other subjects, and in particular ICT. In the single art and design lesson observed during the inspection, the oldest pupils were developing their skills at drawing still life by depicting simple arrangement of fruit in the style of Cézanne. There were good opportunities to share ideas and improve their work after discussions with each other and with their teacher. Pupils responded very positively to this task and behaviour was very good. Standards were judged to be above those expected for their ages.

67. **Music** is taught by a visiting specialist teacher. Younger pupils were seen working together combining sounds as an ostinato accompaniment to the music. The teacher showed good questioning skills and used praise well. On another occasion, pupils were observed singing together and paying particular attention to phrasing, rhythm, pulse and pitch. On both occasions the pupils' attitudes to music were good, and they performed well together and concentrated well. All pupils have good opportunities to take part in musical productions, and older pupils learn to play the recorder.

68. Pupils have a good understanding of the processes of designing and evaluating work in **design and technology**. For example, younger pupils have made machines by using a range of materials, including wood and card. They have considered different ways of joining materials together and the means of propulsion. Pupils are guided through the evaluation process and are encouraged to judge how successful they have been and what they could improve. Good links are made with other subjects, such as with history when the older pupils make 'Tudor' houses, and with science when designing circuits for model lighthouses. In addition, pupils have the opportunity to extend their designing and making skills during an after-school 'junk modelling' club.

69. Pupils experience a varied **physical education** curriculum, including aspects of movement, gymnastics, dance, swimming, team games and adventurous activities. Standards in swimming are very good. Many of the older pupils can swim over 200 metres and are very competent in using water skills. The school places much importance on encouraging positive attitudes to exercise and maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Children are provided with a very good range of sporting clubs and activities, including gymnastics, circuit training, wide games, short tennis, football, table tennis and rounders.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

70. Just one full PSHE lesson was seen during the inspection, so no overall judgement can be made on teaching and learning or on provision. In the lesson seen, the teacher initiated a discussion about the importance of wearing fluorescent and reflective clothing so we can be seen at night. Pupils were involved in a range of activities, listened very well and were reluctant to stop when it was time for lunch. Healthy living is promoted very well throughout the school, and pupils are encouraged to be aware of the value of exercise.

71. Pupils show awareness of how they should treat others with consideration and respect. They are able to share views and ideas and co-operate to support each other's learning. Pupils across the school are seen to care about the feelings of others. They learn what it means to be a good citizen and are encouraged to express their views and opinions. Class representatives regularly meet with the headteacher to discuss issues about living in the school community. Older pupils take on many responsibilities which help the school to function as a well-ordered community and at the same time promote very good social attitudes. For example, they help the youngest children during lunchtime by helping them cut up their food and by clearing away at the end of the meal.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

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

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