

# **INSPECTION REPORT**

## **STANLEY DRAPKIN PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Steeple Bumpstead, Haverhill

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 114728

Headteacher: Mrs Mary Nicholls

Lead inspector: Mr Ray Leeke

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> - 15<sup>th</sup> June 2005

Inspection number: 267987

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	214
School address:	Bower Hall Drive Steeple Bumpstead Haverhill Suffolk
Postcode:	CB9 7ED
Telephone number:	(01440) 730 220
Fax number:	(01440) 730 907
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Gary Kelly
Date of previous inspection:	26 <sup>th</sup> April 1999

## CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

Stanley Drapkin Primary School is situated in the village of Steeple Bumpstead in Essex, close to the town of Haverhill, Suffolk. It is average in size, and numbers have been declining slightly since 2000. It caters for girls and boys between the ages of four and eleven. Most children will have had some pre-school experience before they enter the reception classes. There are currently 214 pupils on roll, which includes 42 children in the reception classes. There are slightly more boys than girls. The socio-economic context of the school is broadly average. Most pupils live in the village and surrounding villages in mainly owner-occupied housing. Some pupils live in rented accommodation or rural isolated homes. In the last full academic year, 27 pupils joined the school and 14 left the school other than at the usual time. This level of pupil mobility is similar to other schools nationally. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. English is the first language of all the pupils. Attainment on entry fluctuates from year to year, but is broadly average. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is below the national average (approximately 13 per cent), but this figure has increased slightly since 2000. There are three pupils with statements of special educational needs, which is average. The ethnic background of over 98 per cent of pupils is white-British.

The school gained the Investors in People Award and a School's Achievement Award in 2003. In 2004 it gained the Healthy Schools Award. From next September the school is participating in the Primary National Strategy Leadership Programme. It has also made a bid with other schools in the local consortium to become a Primary National Strategy Learning Network, with a focus on literacy or numeracy.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
6634	Mr Ray Leeke	Lead inspector	Art and design Physical education
19578	Mr Ted Worby	Lay inspector	
3664	Ms Heather Tyrrell	Team inspector	Science Design and technology Religious education
30782	Ms Sue Crawford-Condle	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Music
33063	Ms Janet Warburton	Team inspector	Special educational needs English Information and communication technology Geography History

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## PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

### OVERALL EVALUATION

**This is an effective school which provides good value for money.** Leadership and management are good. Pupils are happy, behave very well and enjoy their work. By the time they leave the school, pupils are achieving above-average standards overall. The teaching is good overall and this ensures that pupils enjoy learning and achieve well.

**The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:**

- The teaching and learning are very good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6 and so children and pupils in these year groups achieve very well.
- All pupils are valued equally. Provision for those pupils with special educational needs is very good, and for gifted and talented pupils it is good.
- The school provides a very wide range of learning opportunities both within and outside the school day.
- The school has very good links with parents and with other schools.
- Pupils in Year 2 are underachieving because the pace and challenge in the teaching are insufficient at times.
- Some subject leaders do not have an overview of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects across the school.
- By the end of Year 2, standards in religious education do not meet expectations.

The school has improved well since its last inspection. There have been good improvements overall in most aspects of the school's work. Good teaching has been maintained. Weaknesses in scientific investigation at the end of Year 6 and in mental mathematics have been addressed. Provision in the Foundation Stage has improved significantly and is now very good. Pupils' progress has improved in most subjects in Years 3 to 6.

### STANDARDS ACHIEVED

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

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

**Pupils achieve well overall.** In the Foundation Stage children achieve very well in all areas of learning and confidently exceed the goals they are expected to reach by the end of the Reception Year. Although pupils achieve well in Year 1, pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 because more able pupils, in particular, could achieve more in Year 2. As a result, the current Year 2 achieve average standards in reading, writing and mathematics although their test results in 2004 showed that standards were well above average in writing and reading and average in mathematics. In religious education, standards in Year 2 are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. In all other subjects, standards are broadly in line with national expectations. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve very well. Standards are well above national expectations in information and communication technology. They are above average in English, mathematics and science. In all other subjects, standards are in line with national expectations. In the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6, pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils achieve very well.

In Years 1 and 2, pupils with special educational needs achieve well because of good quality, additional support.

**Pupils' personal development is very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good.** The school provides a very good programme for personal, social and health education. Pupils are keen to come to school, work hard in lessons and want to succeed. The school is highly successful in promoting good relationships. Overall, pupils' behaviour in and around school is very good. Attendance and punctuality are satisfactory.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION**

**The quality of education provided by the school is good. Teaching is good** overall and this ensures that pupils achieve well. The teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6 are very good, particularly in English, mathematics and science. In Years 1 to 2 the teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There are many strengths in the teaching in Year 1 but in Year 2 there are some weaknesses because the pace and challenge for the pupils are insufficient at times. Throughout the school the best lessons are vibrant, exciting and very well suited to the varying needs and interests of all the pupils. Assessment is good overall and used well to respond to individual needs. The quality and range of the curriculum are very good overall, although the curriculum for religious education in Years 1 and 2 is too narrow and pupils do not achieve the required standards at the end of Year 2. The school provides an impressive range of extra-curricular activities. The school takes good care to ensure that pupils are safe and secure. The partnership with parents is very good and the school has very good links with other schools.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

**Leadership and management are good overall.** The headteacher provides good leadership and the school is effectively managed. She took up her post in January 2005 and has established very good working relationships with teachers, support staff, parents and the governing body. She has already identified important priorities for future improvements, for example, teaching in Year 2. The governing body provides good governance and ensures that all statutory requirements are met. The leadership of the school has been successful in creating a harmonious and caring ethos in which all pupils are valued equally. However, the leadership of the school by other key staff is sound overall. Some subject leaders and co-ordinators are highly effective and good role models; for example, in ICT, in the Foundation Stage and in the provision of special educational needs. However, the role of other co-ordinators is generally under-developed and there are weaknesses in the way they check the quality of the teaching and learning. The school is well placed to sustain its strengths and make improvements where they are needed.

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

Parents are proud of their school and very supportive of the staff. They judge, rightly, that the school has many strengths. Pupils like being at school. They feel that they are very well supported, that lessons are interesting and fun, but that they have to work hard.

## **IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED**

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

- Improve pupils' achievement and the teaching in Year 2.
- Raise standards in religious education in Year 2.
- Strengthen the role of subject leaders by developing a more systematic and rigorous approach to monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning throughout the school.

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

### **STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS**

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

Pupils achieve well overall. In the Foundation Stage children achieve very well. In Years 1 and 2, pupils achieve unsatisfactorily overall. In Years 3 to 6, pupils achieve very well, particularly in English, mathematics and science.

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

- By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in English, mathematics and science.
- By the end of Year 6, standards in information and communication technology (ICT) are well above national expectations.
- Pupils with special educational needs and gifted and talented pupils achieve very well in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils make good progress in Year 1, but in Year 2 the pace of learning slows and pupils do not always make the progress they should.
- By the end of Year 2, standards in religious education are below the expected standards.

#### **Commentary**

##### *Improvement since the last inspection*

1. At the last inspection in April 1999 children in the Foundation Stage made satisfactory progress overall. By the end of Year 2, standards in reading, writing, mathematics and science were broadly average. By the end of Year 6, standards in English, mathematics and science were broadly average. There have been good improvements in children's achievements in the Foundation Stage, and in English, mathematics and science by the end of Year 6, to reach the current standards. In these areas, the school has worked successfully to improve teaching and raise expectations. However, by the end of Year 2, standards have remained average and pupils' achievement is now less than satisfactory.

##### *Starting school*

2. When children start in the Reception class assessment data indicates that attainment on entry is broadly average. However, mathematical and early writing skills are currently less well developed. Because of the very good teaching and a rich and stimulating curriculum, children achieve very well and confidently exceed the goals expected by the end of the Reception Year.

##### *The school's results in national tests*

3. The trend in results since 2001 in the national tests at the end of Year 2 was above the national trend in all subjects. Although results have remained consistently above the national average, there has been a decline in mathematics results since 2002. In comparison with all schools nationally, results in 2004 were well above average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. Compared to similar schools, however, results were above average in writing, average in reading and below average in mathematics. Inspection findings show that pupils achieve average standards in reading and writing by the end of Year 2. This judgement is different from the test results because, although in Years 1 and 2 most pupils make satisfactory progress overall in all aspects of English, some pupils in Year 2, particularly the more able, do not achieve as much as they could because of insufficient pace and challenge in the teaching in some lessons. The school has recognised the need to improve this area of its work. In mathematics, inspection findings show that pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve average standards by the end of Year 2.



4. Results in tests at the end of Year 6 have been consistently well above the national average for similar schools since 2001. In 2004, results in all subjects were above the national average and well above average for similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels was above average in English, and well above average in mathematics and science. The target-setting process is thorough and challenging, and the school has regularly achieved its targets in both English and mathematics.

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

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	17.2 (16.8)	15.8 (15.7)
writing	16.0 (16.4)	14.6 (14.6)
mathematics	16.7 (17.1)	16.2 (16.3)

*There were 25 pupils in the year group, 10 boys and 15 girls. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

***Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2004***

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	27.9 (29.4)	26.9 (26.8)
mathematics	28.5 (26.8)	27.0 (26.8)
science	29.7 (29.6)	28.6 (28.6)

*There were 40 pupils in the year group, 23 boys and 17 girls. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.*

***Inspection findings***

***The Foundation Stage***

5. Children achieve very well in all areas of learning because of high quality teaching and learning and because the curriculum is rich and stimulating. Children with special educational needs are well supported and achieve very well. Children confidently exceed the Early Learning Goals by the end of their Reception Year.

***Years 1 and 2***

6. Overall, pupils make unsatisfactory progress by the end of Year 2 and standards are average in reading, writing, mathematics and science. However, their progress is significantly stronger in Year 1, where they achieve well because the teaching and learning are predominantly good and matched well to meet the needs of all the pupils. In Year 2, pupils, particularly the more able, do not always make the progress they should because the pace and challenge of some lessons are not always sufficient. In religious education, standards are below the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus and pupils' achievement is unsatisfactory. In all other subjects standards are broadly in line with national expectations. Boys achieve as well as girls. Improving the pace and challenge of some lessons in Year 2 and raising standards in religious education by the end of Year 2 are key issues for action.

***Years 3 to 6***

7. By the end of Year 6, standards are above average in mathematics and science. In English, pupils are working at the expected level, but records show that they have made very good progress during their time in the school in order to achieve this. Pupils achieve very well because the teaching is consistently very good. Tasks are carefully targeted to meet individual needs, thus ensuring that all pupils are appropriately challenged and supported. The curriculum is rich and stimulating and meets the needs and interests of the pupils very well.

Standards are well above national expectations in ICT. In all other subjects standards are broadly in line with national expectations. Boys achieve as well as girls.

#### *Whole-school issues*

8. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs is about 13 per cent, which is below the national average. Assessment procedures throughout the school are good and all staff know the pupils well. In the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6, pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because the school carries out careful and detailed analyses of the needs and progress of all pupils, and works very hard to ensure that these needs are met. In Years 1 to 2, pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the effective additional support they receive.
9. Higher-attaining and gifted and talented pupils achieve very well in Years 3 to 6 because they are very well supported, challenged and stimulated by the learning opportunities provided for them. In Year 1 they make good progress but some pupils in Year 2, particularly the more able, do not achieve as much as they can because of insufficient challenge in the teaching.
10. Pupils apply their language and literacy skills well in various areas of the curriculum and make good progress in acquiring vocabulary and terminology specific to subjects such as history and design and technology. Their mathematical skills and knowledge are used effectively in subjects such as geography and science. ICT is used very well in other subjects; for example, in art and design and in science, particularly in Years 3 to 6.

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

Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are very good. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. Attendance is satisfactory and punctuality is very good.

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

- Pupils are confident, behave very well in lessons and want to learn.
- Pupils with special educational needs show very positive attitudes to their learning.
- Pupils' personal development is very good.
- The School Council makes a positive contribution to the work of the school.

#### **Commentary**

##### *Attitudes and behaviour*

11. Pupils are confident and enjoy being at school. They arrive punctually at the start of the day and are very keen to learn. Pupils show genuine interest and respect towards one another and towards adults. Whether working together in groups or in pairs the pupils have high regard for the contributions and needs of others. They work hard and try their best and this has a very positive impact on the standards they achieve.
12. Pupils' behaviour in and around school is very good and this enables them to achieve well. In lessons pupils listen very well to one another and to adults. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils are motivated to learn by lively and interesting lessons. They enjoy playing together too, with older pupils looking after the needs of younger ones. Pupils have a strong sense of fairness, and of right and wrong. Parents overwhelmingly believe that the school is successful in promoting good behaviour and that incidents of bullying and harassment are few and swiftly dealt with.

## Exclusions

### *Ethnic background of pupils*

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Asian
Parent/pupil preferred not to say
Total

### *Exclusions in the last school year*

Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed-period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
208	2	0
2	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
214	2	0

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

13. Most pupils with special educational needs show very positive and enthusiastic attitudes to learning across all areas of the curriculum, and this has a positive impact on their achievements. They develop confidence and self-esteem through their enjoyment of lively and exciting teaching. Pupils form constructive and supportive relationships with each other and with adults. In most classes, pupils have opportunities to work collaboratively with a range of different partners and are fully included in any group. Other pupils are particularly sensitive to, and supportive of, the needs of those who may need help in some areas. Where pupils find concentration and behaviour very difficult they are sensitively guided and well managed by teachers and teaching assistants.
14. The school is successful in securing a very harmonious and caring ethos. It ensures that all pupils can take a full part in all that it has to offer. It effectively promotes racial awareness and anti-bullying messages through assemblies, personal and social education and a range of reading material for older pupils.

### *Personal development*

15. Personal development is very good and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are taught about a healthy lifestyle and can talk confidently about the importance of physical exercise, a good diet and their own safety. They have respect for cultures and beliefs different to their own and have a very good understanding of the difference between right and wrong.
16. Throughout the school, children are encouraged to be responsible for their personal well-being as well as their academic achievement. From the Foundation Stage onwards they learn to reflect upon a whole range of topics and issues that help to prepare them for the future.
17. The school provides a very good range of activities in support of personal development. They include:
  - An influential School Council, which has, for example, introduced a mail box where pupils can leave personal messages if they are feeling unhappy;
  - Promoting healthy living through a comprehensive personal and social education programme linked to other curriculum areas such as science and physical education;
  - Providing opportunities to celebrate the talents and achievements of individuals; for instance, in school assembly;
  - Involving pupils in charity and voluntary work such as 'Red Nose Day' to raise awareness of the needs of others beyond the school;
  - Using 'Circle Time' as a means of giving pupils opportunities to express their feelings, views and opinions;

- Providing enrichment activities, during and after the school day, such as arts, sports and educational visits; and
  - Providing older pupils with opportunities to discuss wider personal and social issues such as sex education and drugs awareness, and also to meet people from external agencies, such as police officers and fire officers, whose aim is to guide and help protect youngsters from harm.
18. These activities build self-esteem effectively. Pupils demonstrate good levels of independence and confidence, make sensible choices, and take on responsibility for themselves and others. Older pupils often demonstrate a mature understanding of topics and issues in discussion and this extends their learning and deepens their understanding.
19. Pupils' spiritual development is very good, and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are curious about the world around them. They can reflect on their own feelings and experiences and talk about themselves and others sensitively. They have a very good understanding and respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs. Younger pupils, for instance, speak confidently about why someone in their class is special, and older children share their feelings in writing about the impact that the Holocaust had on Jewish children and their families.
20. Pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils demonstrate a very good appreciation of their own culture through their work in, for example, English, religious education, art and visits to museums and galleries. They are knowledgeable about world religions and appreciate cultural traditions other than their own.
21. Attendance is satisfactory. In 2003/04 the rates of attendance and unauthorised attendance were broadly in line with the national average. Pupils arrive punctually at the start of the day and are keen to begin their lessons. This aspect of attendance has improved since the last inspection. There are effective systems and procedures to monitor and promote good attendance among parents and children.

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

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	5.3	School data	0.3
National data	5.1	National data	0.4

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

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL**

The school provides a good quality of education. Teaching is good. The curriculum is very good. There is rich provision of extra-curricular activities. The school provides good levels of care. Links with parents and other schools are very good.

#### **Teaching and learning**

The teaching and learning are **good** overall. Teaching is very good in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In Years 1 to 2, the teaching is generally satisfactory overall. The use of assessment is good.

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

- There are many strengths in the teaching of English, mathematics and science in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching which links subjects is particularly successful and pupils achieve good standards in these lessons.

- All pupils are supported well and included in the full range of learning opportunities that the school has to offer.
- Pupils respond very positively to lessons, work hard and often demonstrate high levels of independent working.
- The teaching and learning are good overall in Year 1 but there are weaknesses in the teaching of a small minority of lessons in Year 2 because the pace of learning is too slow and some learning opportunities are missed.

## Commentary

22. The table below shows the range of teaching quality seen across the school.

### **Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 39 lessons**

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
3 (8%)	12 (31%)	13 (33%)	9 (23%)	2 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

23. In the Foundation Stage, children are achieving very well in all areas of learning because teaching and learning are consistently very good. Teachers' assessments of the pupils are meticulous and identify clearly what each child can do, and what they need to do next. These assessments provide the basis of informed teaching that helps the children overcome difficulties and build on what has been learned. High quality planning ensures that all staff are well directed and activities are matched sensitively to the needs of the children. As a result, rich and varied opportunities are provided for children to learn through play and exploration, whilst still focusing on the skills they need to develop for later stages of education. Teachers' expectations are high and this ensures that the children are challenged appropriately and achieve well.
24. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching and learning are very good, particularly in English, mathematics and science, which ensures that pupils achieve very well. The best lessons are vibrant, exciting and very well suited to the varying needs and interests of all the pupils. The pupils respond very positively, enjoy their learning and make very good progress. Classrooms are very well managed and pupils are expected to take on increasing responsibility for their own learning. At best, pupils demonstrate impressive levels of independent working but also co-operate and support each other very well when working in groups. Informative and attractive displays celebrate pupils' achievements and stimulate further enquiry. The questioning techniques used by the teachers assess very effectively pupils' understanding, and challenge them to improve further. Teaching assistants provide good support for individuals and groups of pupils. In most classes homework is used well to consolidate and extend learning that has taken place in school.
25. In some lessons teachers bring together the requirements of two or three subjects in an attempt to make the learning more exciting for the pupils and to break down artificial subject barriers. Pupils respond to these lessons very positively, involve themselves very well in the learning and make very good progress.
26. Overall in Years 1 and 2, the teaching and learning are satisfactory. In Year 1, they are good. In small minority of lessons in Year 2, the achievement of some pupils, particularly the more able, is unsatisfactory because the pace of learning is too slow, and opportunities to extend learning are missed. Pupils try hard in these lessons, but the teaching is not always challenging enough to ensure that they all make good progress. The school has identified this as an area for support and improvement.
27. All pupils are supported well and included in the full range of learning opportunities that the school has to offer. The teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are

very good and this ensures that they achieve very well overall. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers are very skilful in ensuring that pupils with special educational needs receive the support they need to make very good progress. Pupils' needs are thoroughly assessed and clearly identified in their individual education plans. Class teachers develop these plans in close partnership with the very experienced and knowledgeable special educational needs co-ordinator, and take careful account of them in their own lesson planning. Most teachers have high expectations of pupils' progress and this is shown in the way they plan sensitively to meet all needs.

28. Assessment arrangements are good overall, with particular strengths in the Foundation Stage and in Years 3 to 6. In the best lessons teachers' assessments are used effectively to provide teachers with the information they need for future planning. Pupils know what they do well, and what they have to do next to improve, and this ensures they make good progress. Teachers assess pupils' work thoroughly and constructively, and careful records of pupils' progress are kept on electronic files. These records are mostly used well to track the progress pupils make. However, there is some inconsistency in their use across the school. Marking is generally good but varies in quality. It is conscientiously undertaken and, at best, it helps the pupils make good progress by identifying strengths and targets for future improvements.

## **The curriculum**

The range and quality of the curriculum are **very good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum is enriched by a very good range of after-school activities.
- Subjects are often linked very well to provide a range of connected experiences.
- The curriculum is inclusive, and all pupils have the opportunity to take part in all the school has to offer.
- The school prepares its pupils very well for the next stage of education.
- In Years 1 and 2, the curriculum in religious education is too narrow.

### **Commentary**

29. The breadth and range of curricular opportunities in the school are mostly very good and meet the needs of all the pupils. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The curriculum is mostly broad and balanced. However, in religious education in Years 1 and 2, the curriculum is too narrow and pupils do not reach the required standards. Since the last inspection the curriculum in the Foundation Stage has improved significantly, and now meets the needs of the youngest children very well.
30. Teachers work extremely hard to make the curriculum exciting and relevant to the pupils at this school. Plans clearly identify what is to be learned by pupils and ensures progression in their learning. Some subject leaders and co-ordinators are highly effective, for example in ICT, in the Foundation Stage and in the provision of special educational needs. They work closely with all staff to ensure that the curriculum is rich, stimulating, and meets the needs of all the pupils. In other areas, however, the role is under-developed and subject leaders do not always have a whole-school view of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects.

### *Opportunities for enrichment*

31. The school provides a very good range of activities which enrich the curriculum. These are well attended and include an impressive range of extra-curricular clubs. The quality and range of these activities make a very positive impact on pupils' attitudes to learning and to their achievement.

32. The school is particularly successful at linking subjects. For example, aspects of history, art and physical education were combined to plan a lesson about ancient Greek games. These opportunities deepen pupils' understanding, increase their motivation and enjoyment and have a positive impact on the standards they achieve.

#### *An inclusive curriculum*

33. The curriculum is inclusive and all pupils have the opportunity to take part in all the school has to offer. The curriculum provided for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The co-ordinator works closely with all the teachers and learning support assistants to ensure that the curriculum is suitably adapted to meet a variety of individual needs. This ensures that these pupils achieve very well. Catch-up materials are used effectively and targeted support is provided for small groups and individuals as needed. Very good provision is made for gifted and talented pupils. They are supported well, given every opportunity to develop their area of talent, and achieve well.

#### *Preparation for the next stage of education*

34. Good links exist with the local high school, and this ensures a seamless transfer and a continuity of learning for pupils at the end of Year 6.

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

Care, guidance and support are **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The arrangements for the care, welfare, health and safety of the pupils are good.
- Pupils receive very good support, advice and guidance from all the adults in the school.
- The views of pupils are sought, valued and acted upon whenever possible.

### **Commentary**

#### *Pupils' care, welfare and safety*

35. There are good arrangements for pupils' welfare, health and safety. Child protection arrangements are very good and a high priority is placed on pupils' safety. Pupils understand how to use equipment safely and staff are vigilant in ensuring that all pupils are supervised and safe. The school promotes healthy living very well and gained the Healthy School Award in 2004. Pupils are made aware of the importance of a healthy lifestyle, including a good diet, regular exercise and personal safety. This makes an important contribution to their personal development, self-esteem and their attitudes to learning.
36. Relationships are based on mutual trust and respect, and pupils are comfortable in approaching adults to discuss problems or concerns. Personal issues are dealt with very effectively in personal, social and health education lessons and in Circle Time.
37. New pupils are inducted well into the school. They are sensitively supported by the staff and quickly settle into the life and routines of the school.

#### *Support and advice*

38. The varying needs of different groups of pupils are met very well and all pupils are included fully in the life of the school. In particular the academic and personal progress of pupils with special educational needs is closely monitored and very good support is given. Because of the close relationship between adults and pupils in the school, a positive working atmosphere is created in which all pupils, and particularly those with special educational needs, feel secure

and confident. It encourages them to communicate their ideas and to try to do work which is more challenging.

39. Throughout the school, pupils' achievements and their personal development are generally monitored carefully and they are given good feedback on the progress they are making. Very good guidance and support ensure that pupils make good progress overall. Pupils feel secure and valued and take a pride in their school.

#### *Involving pupils*

40. The processes for seeking pupils' views are highly effective. In particular, the work of the School Council is taken very seriously by the whole school and it provides a very good forum for pupils to express their views. Pupils know that their views matter. Staff listen closely, welcome pupils' ideas and comments, and act upon them. Because of this, pupils develop good levels of self-confidence and are keen to take on responsibilities.

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

The partnership with parents, other schools and the community is **very good**.

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

- Parents involve themselves well in the school and are very well informed about their children's progress.
- There are very good arrangements for the transfer of pupils to their secondary school.
- Links with the community are good.

### **Commentary**

#### *Links with parents*

41. The school enjoys very good relations with parents. They are very supportive of the school and the education it provides for their children. The school provides good information for parents. Regular newsletters and notices keep parents well informed about activities in school. Details of forthcoming topics are provided for parents regularly so that they can support their children's work at home and this contributes well to the progress pupils make at school. The school has provided workshops to discuss the school's approach to the teaching of literacy and numeracy. This has helped parents support their children's learning at home.
42. Annual reports for pupils give parents good-quality information about the progress of their children. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are consulted regularly to review their children's progress. The headteacher and her staff are very welcoming to parents, who feel that all staff are approachable and any concerns can be discussed openly. This close partnership with parents ensures that the needs of pupils are well met, and that pupils achieve well.

#### *Links with other schools*

43. The school has very good links with local schools. A particular strength is the involvement of the school with the Colne Valley Consortium of fifteen schools which collaborate to share ideas, expertise and best practice. Transition arrangements to the feeder secondary school are very good. They include opportunities to participate in joint sporting events, visits to the high school, and visits by high-school teachers to teach in Year 6. These occasions provide valuable opportunities to support teachers' professional development as well as enhancing pupils' learning opportunities.

#### *Links with the community*



44. The school has good links with the local community, which it uses well to support pupils' learning, for example, in history, art and design, and religious education. Visits and visitors provide an effective extra dimension to the curriculum and widen pupils' experiences. There are some particularly good links with local sporting organisations such as the Haverhill Rugby Club and Braintree District Council's "Fit for Fun" programme and these make a significant contribution to pupils' attitudes to sports and exercise, as well as to their achievements.

## **LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT**

Leadership is satisfactory overall. The headteacher took up post in January 2005 and has made a good start to her headship. The governance of the school is good. The leadership of the school by other key staff is sound. Management is good.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- ICT, provision for special educational needs and the Foundation Stage are led and managed very well by co-ordinators.
- There are weaknesses in the way subject leaders check the quality of the teaching and learning.
- The leadership of the school has a strong commitment to inclusion and the needs of individuals.
- Arrangements for the induction of new staff and professional development are generally good.
- The school provides good value for money.
- The school has begun discussions about its strategic priorities, but these are not yet established.

### **Commentary**

45. The headteacher has made a good start to her headship. Several areas of school provision have been reviewed, including aspects of the curriculum, teaching and learning and the role of the senior management team. Many appropriate priorities for development and improvement have been identified by the headteacher through consultation with the governing body, staff and pupils. She is keen to introduce new curriculum initiatives and further develop the monitoring and evaluation skills of subject leaders and co-ordinators. She recognises the need to improve the teaching in Year 2.
46. Some subject leaders and co-ordinators are highly effective and good role models; for example in ICT, in the Foundation Stage and in the provision of special educational needs. These co-ordinators have a good over-view of standards and quality across the school, identify strengths and weaknesses, and secure improvements where they are needed. In other areas, however, the role is under-developed and subject leaders do not always have a whole-school view of the strengths and weaknesses in their subjects. In addition, they do not always have enough opportunity to influence the teaching and learning of other colleagues in the school. Monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning take place by some subject leaders, but are not yet systematic or rigorous enough to identify in detail strengths and weaknesses across the school.
47. A very caring and harmonious ethos exists throughout the school and every member of staff is highly committed to inclusion and equality of opportunity. The special educational needs co-ordinator provides very good leadership in this area. She ensures that provision for the most vulnerable pupils is a priority in the school and that they achieve very well. She uses her professional expertise very well to guide and oversee a rigorous process of analysis of data and of pupils' needs. She ensures that this information transfers directly into high-quality planning and teaching, and is followed by very detailed monitoring of progress which is continually evaluated.

48. There is a strong commitment to staff induction, development and training. The deputy headteacher organises activities well to meet the training priorities in the school improvement plan and to meet individual needs and performance management targets. This ensures that they make good progress in the development of their professional skills. The school contributes very well to the Graduate Teacher Programme. Currently the school has a student on the programme as well as a newly qualified graduate. Because they are trained and supported well, they are able to make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning in the school.
49. Arrangements for financial management are good. Systems are efficient and expenditure is monitored regularly by senior managers and school administrators as well as the finance committee of the governing body. Decisions to spend money are informed and relate to the school's priorities. The school applies the principles of best value well to the management and use of resources, such as external contracts to provide meals at lunchtime and to refurbish the school entrance. It has also taken decisions to increase resources in needy areas of the curriculum, including English, religious education, science and ICT.
50. The school is effective in many aspects of its work. It achieves good standards overall. The quality of education and the ethos of the school are good. It has improved its performance in many areas since the last inspection. The school's expenditure per pupil is average. The school, therefore, provides good value for money. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when value for money was judged to be only satisfactory.
51. The governance of the school is good. The governing body is ambitious for the school, committed and very supportive of the work of the headteacher and staff. Governors are well informed and review their own effectiveness on an annual basis. They receive regular reports from the School Council, subject leaders, co-ordinators and the headteacher. They are not afraid to challenge information and make suggestions for improvement to the headteacher. Improving the school is at the heart of their work and they make a significant contribution to the quality of education for the pupils. Governors have begun discussions to identify longer-term strategic priorities. Currently, these are unclear.

## Financial information

### ***Financial information for the year April 2004 to March 2005***

Income and expenditure (£)		Balances (£)	
Total income	604,027	Balance from previous year	35,320
Total expenditure	572,429	Balance carried forward to the next year	31,598
Expenditure per pupil	2,674.90		

52. The school accrued a large balance to carry forward into its budget for 2005/06. This position arose largely because of financial savings made on staff changes over the last year.

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

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

Provision for children in the Foundation Stage has improved considerably since the last inspection and is now very good overall. Thorough early assessments of the children confirm that attainment on entry to the school is broadly average in all the areas of early learning. However, mathematical and early writing skills are less well developed with the current cohort of children. Children enjoy their learning and achieve very well to exceed the goals expected of them by the end of the Reception Year overall because of the very good teaching and the rich and stimulating curriculum.

The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are very good. The co-ordinator has developed a cohesive and effective team which puts great emphasis on learning through play and exploration, whilst focusing on the skills children need to develop for later stages of education. Teachers and support staff interact with the children sensitively and with high expectations. Regular, detailed assessments, combined with exemplary planning, ensure that activities are well matched to the needs of individuals. The accommodation is adequate and attractive, and children have continuous access to activities in a separate, secure outdoor area.

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

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

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

- Staff have consistently high expectations and make them clear to children.
- Very good relationships encourage confidence and high self-esteem.
- Children have very positive attitudes to learning.
- Routines are well established and children move between activities confidently.
- Children play and work very well together.

#### **Commentary**

53. Pupils achieve very well and exceed the standards expected of them by the end of the Reception Year because the teaching and learning are very good. The excellent teamwork of the adults in the Reception classes gives the children very good role models for co-operation. They have good attitudes to their learning and to each other. They settle quickly, eager for what is coming next, focus on their activities and consequently make very good progress. They know how to share and take turns; for instance, at selling tickets in the class travel agency. Adults support all children sensitively, but particularly those who have behaviour difficulties, through a set of 'five finger' classroom rules: eyes looking, ears listening, lips quiet, hands still, mind awake. These are simple, consistent and easy for children to remember. Routines, such as a sequence of claps to indicate tidying up time, are well established and help children to become independent in their learning. The children are relaxed, nurtured and secure. They show evident pleasure in their work. Adults and children treat each other with courtesy and respect. This leads to trusting relationships and helps the children achieve well.

## **COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children listen carefully.
- Children have good knowledge of initial letter sounds.
- Children have positive attitudes to writing.
- Assessment is continuous and is used to inform teachers' planning and children's targets.

### **Commentary**

54. On entry to the school, some children currently in the Reception Year had weaknesses in early writing skills. However, all children achieve well in reading, speaking and listening, and achieve very well in writing to confidently reach the standards expected by the end of the Reception Year because the teaching and learning are very good. A strong emphasis is placed on encouraging talk, with the result that children are keen to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings. Teachers and teaching assistants are highly skilled at encouraging this, both through demonstrating talking and listening to children and through the stimulating learning opportunities they provide. Stories are chosen sensitively to link with the children's own experiences as well as the themes and resources in the classroom, and this helps to consolidate their knowledge and understanding. Children listen very well and clearly love hearing stories, joining in with the parts they know or predicting what might happen next. During the Foundation Stage, children progress through a carefully structured phonic programme. Teachers provide a wide range of writing opportunities often skilfully linked to the role-play area, and children are encouraged to write for a real purpose. Children's positive attitudes to writing lead them to attempt to write unknown words confidently. More-able children are beginning to construct their own sentences using their knowledge of a range of simple words.

## **MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Children are beginning to use mathematical language confidently.
- Children achieve very well.
- The teaching and learning are very good.
- Opportunities to use ICT are planned and used effectively.

### **Commentary**

55. By the end of the Reception Year most children are confidently reaching the expected standards in mathematical development, even though on entry to the Reception class, mathematical skills were less well developed with the current cohort of children. Their achievement is very good because the teaching is very good. Teachers ensure that children are learning in a meaningful context. Staff are adept at helping children explore mathematical ideas. This includes giving them time to think, encouraging them to describe how they do things as well as giving correct answers to questions. Children develop good mathematical knowledge, language, understanding and skills, and have many opportunities to count and to compare size and shape.

## KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers plan this area of learning very thoroughly, using the local environment well.
- Children are encouraged to be curious and to ask why things happen.
- Opportunities to use ICT are planned and used well.

### Commentary

56. Teaching and learning are consistently very good, ensuring that children achieve very well. By the end of the Reception Year, most children are on course to exceed the standards expected at the end of the Reception Year. They have a very wide range of opportunities to find out about the world around them. The very good teaching in this area is characterised by the quality of questions that make children think about their own and other cultures. They show great interest in new experiences, asking how things work and showing each other how to do things. Good opportunities are provided for the children to use ICT. This encourages them to try out new ideas and record what they have found out through writing and creating pictures on the computer screen. High-quality interaction between adults and children enriches the children's vocabulary and extends both their scientific and their cultural understanding.

## PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Teachers provide very good experiences to enrich children's physical development.
- Children have very good outdoor access to a range of large wheeled toys.
- Other areas of learning are supported well through physical activity.

### Commentary

57. Children achieve very well and are on course to confidently exceed the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year because the teaching and learning are very good. Teachers have high expectations and a lively and enthusiastic teaching style. There are well-planned opportunities to promote children's physical development, both through outdoor sessions, through planned activities to develop fine motor control, and through sessions in the school hall. Activities are carefully planned by the staff to meet the needs of all pupils. Children with special educational needs are sensitively supported, all are encouraged to take full part and they achieve very well. Resources for this area have improved since the last inspection.

## CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

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

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Creative development threads through all the areas of learning.
- Children are interested, have fun and enjoy their learning.
- Learning experiences are rich and diverse.
- Children have good opportunities to initiate their own activities.

## **Commentary**

58. Children achieve very well and are on course to confidently exceed the standards expected by the end of the Reception Year. Teaching and learning are very good. Originality and expressiveness are highly valued. Teaching is enthusiastic and animated, with staff modelling roles skilfully and encouraging all children to join in. This significantly raises the quality of the experience so that children's play becomes purposeful. Children are beginning to evaluate work and think of ways to make it better. The learning environment provides a very strong stimulus for children's creativity. Role-play areas are set up in the Reception class and children enjoy initiating their own activities there; for instance, in the seaside café. They are fully engaged and use their imagination well. They enjoy singing familiar songs and learning new ones. They listen to music attentively as part of their daily programme, and repeat and create sound patterns accurately using percussion instruments.

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

### **ENGLISH**

Provision in English is **good**.

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

- Pupils achieve well overall, and very well in Years 3 to 6. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
- The teaching and learning are good overall. They are very good in Years 3 to 6.
- Very good links are made with other subjects and pupils use their literacy skills effectively across all areas of the curriculum.
- Most teachers have good subject knowledge and very high expectations, and use their enthusiasm to inspire pupils.
- Assessment is used well in most classes to identify and share with children what they need to do next to improve.
- Most lessons are well planned to take account of the needs of all groups of pupils.
- Some pupils in Year 2, particularly the more able, do not achieve as much as they can because of insufficient challenge in the teaching.

## **Commentary**

### *Results*

59. Test results in Year 2 in 2004 show that pupils reach well-above-average standards in reading and writing. They achieve as well as pupils in similar schools in reading and better in writing. Results in writing have improved consistently since 2001. Inspection findings show that the current pupils achieve average standards by the end of Year 2 but many pupils in Year 1 are working at levels which are higher than expected. This judgement is different from the test results because, although in Years 1 and 2 most pupils make satisfactory progress overall in all aspects of English, some pupils in Year 2, particularly the more able, do not achieve as much as they can because of insufficient pace and challenge in the teaching. The school has recognised the need to improve this area of its work.
60. In 2004, national test results for Year 6 show that pupils reach above-average standards and achieve much better than pupils in similar schools. This has been the case consistently since 2001. Inspection findings show a similar picture. Many pupils currently in Years 3, 4 and Year 5 are reaching standards well above the average and are making very good progress. In Year 6, the current pupils are working at the expected level, but records show that they have made very good progress during their time in the school in order to achieve this. This represents a similar picture to that found in the last inspection. The target-setting process is thorough and challenging, and the school has regularly achieved its targets in English.

61. Standards in speaking and listening are above average across the school. All pupils are eager to answer questions, share their ideas and give reasons for their opinions. This is because teachers have high expectations that pupils will explain themselves clearly and because they encourage them to use a range of vocabulary with precise technical terms linked to specific subjects. Because pupils in most lessons are encouraged to share their ideas with one another, they prepare what they want to say and so are able to express themselves clearly and coherently. Year 1 pupils are sufficiently confident to take the 'hot-seat' to answer questions from the class in role as a character from a familiar book. Pupils with special educational needs are particularly helped to develop their speaking to express more sophisticated thinking and therefore to participate in learning at a higher level than their written skills may allow. Where these good practices are not evident, pupils are articulate and eager to talk but are not challenged enough, particularly in Year 2.
62. Standards in reading are average throughout the school, but some pupils, particularly in Years 4, 5 and 6, achieve well. Currently, in Years 1 and 2, girls achieve better than boys. Generally, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have a good range of strategies for decoding unknown words and read a range of varied, but almost exclusively fiction, texts. Nevertheless, boys have steadily improved their reading over time while girls have remained the same. Targets for the current year suggest that this gap may disappear in 2005, but the school has not fully explored these issues. Reading records are used very well in some classes to tell pupils what they need to do next in order to improve. This practice is not, however, consistent across the school. There is good support for parents in helping their children to read, and pupils with special educational needs enjoy the reading club where parents, trained by the co-ordinator for special educational needs, give additional support on a regular basis.
63. Standards in writing are generally average across the school but in Years 1, 4 and 5 are above or well above average. In Year 6, the current pupils are working at the expected level in writing, but records show that they have made very good progress during their time in the school in order to achieve this. Some particularly able pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 are very enthusiastic writers and respond well to interesting experiences provided by the school by writing at length in a range of styles, including poetry and novel-length fiction. Most pupils again benefit from the close links between subjects. Most pupils in Year 1, including those with special educational needs, are confident independent writers and have a very good understanding of the different requirements of the notes they write in history and the reflective account of a character's feelings in English. Pupils in Year 2 could achieve more.
64. The teaching and learning are good overall. They are very good in Years 3 to 6 and satisfactory in Years 1 and 2. Most teachers are very knowledgeable about how to teach English and demonstrate to children all the stages that they need to follow, so pupils understand exactly what they have to do. In most classes teachers have a good understanding from their assessments of what pupils need to learn next and this helps them to plan thoroughly for successful lessons where all pupils do well. Very good use is made of ICT resources to make the teaching and learning lively and stimulating, but these are not available in all classes. Most teachers have expectations that children will improve all the time and will work at a fast pace. As a result, pupils, including those with special educational needs, are enthusiastic about their work and are confident in what they can do. Where the teacher's expectations are lower, the tasks given are less interesting and not always appropriate to the needs of all pupils.
65. Satisfactory subject leadership and management is given by a relatively recently appointed co-ordinator. There is a clear action plan in place. Some monitoring of teaching and learning is undertaken but this aspect of the role is relatively under-developed. Insufficient attention has been given to checking the quality of teaching and learning and identifying strengths and weaknesses across the school.

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

66. Very good links are made between English and the rest of the curriculum, while maintaining a rigorous focus on the learning objectives for English. As a result, pupils gain an excellent understanding of the purposes of their learning. They are very successful in applying and adapting their literacy skills in many different contexts and this provides them with a particularly good foundation for moving into Key Stage 3.

***Example of outstanding practice***

**The pupils in Year 4 had recently visited The Henry Moore Foundation to see and explore large, outdoor sculpture. This was an excellent lesson.**

Pupils were asked to write about their experiences in different forms of poetry such as haiku, tanka, a chorus and a cinquain. They had clearly gained a very good understanding of different forms of poetry before this lesson as they used the correct terms and could explain what makes one form different to another.

The teaching was precise. It encouraged the children to use their imagination as well as first-hand experiences of observing and touching the sculpture. It challenged them too to think of similes, alliteration, rhyme and rhythm and, for those who could, to think of using at least one of these features in each poem they wrote. Additional support for individuals and small groups ensured that all pupils had an opportunity to express themselves through one of the forms of poetry discussed.

The pupils were inspired to write. Ideas just poured forth onto the page. Some pupils quietly worked on their own while others talked together about the visual images of the sculptures that were freely available as reminders on work tables, wall displays and also rotating as a slide show through the application of ICT. The poetry they wrote had form and bold images unique to each child's interpretation of their experience. They were so keen to write that many had written at least two poems in different forms in the time and a few were completing a third. Some read their poems to one another, whilst a group in receipt of additional support took turns in reading their lines of poetry aloud to the teacher. All pupils achieved exceptionally well.

## **MATHEMATICS**

Provision in mathematics is **good**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Pupils achieve very well in Years 3 to 6 and, by the end of Year 6, standards are above average. This is a good improvement since the last inspection.
- Detailed planning by many teachers ensures that pupils of all abilities achieve very well in Years 3 to 6.
- Teaching and learning are good overall. They are very good in Years 3 to 6.
- Assessment arrangements are good in Years 3 to 6.
- Pupils make satisfactory progress overall by the end of Year 2. They achieve well in Year 1, but the pace of learning is slower in Year 2.

### **Commentary**

67. In 2004, national test results for Year 6 show that pupils reach above average standards and achieve better than pupils in similar schools. This has been the case consistently since 2001. Inspection findings show a similar picture. Currently standards are above average and pupils achieve very well. The target-setting process is thorough and challenging, and the school has regularly achieved its targets in mathematics.
68. Test results in Year 2 in 2004 show that pupils reach average standards but do not, however, achieve as well as pupils in similar schools. Boys performed better than girls. Although results at Year 2 have remained mostly above the national average since 2001, there has been a decline since 2002. Inspection findings show that, by the end of Year 2, pupils make broadly



satisfactory progress and achieve average standards in mathematics. There are no significant differences in the performance of boys and girls. Year 1 pupils are making good progress in all areas of mathematics. However, in Year 2, the pace of learning is slower and, while tasks are designed to meet the differing needs of pupils, they are not always explained well.

69. The teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2, although stronger in Year 1. In Years 3 to 6, teaching and learning are very good. In these lessons the teachers are ambitious for the pupils and expect them to do well. Pupils respond very positively to these high expectations and make rapid progress. Generally teachers use assessment in lessons well to establish what the pupils know and can do, and also use this information effectively for future planning. Consequently, pupils with special educational needs achieve very well across the school because they have good attitudes to learning, work is matched to their abilities and they are well supported in lessons. Lessons include challenges to meet the needs of the higher-attaining pupils and these pupils achieve very well too.
70. The good and very good teaching ensures that pupils enjoy mathematics and achieve well overall. The strengths of the good teaching include:
- Effective use of Smartboards as visual aids;
  - Lively teaching which engages pupils' interest and makes learning fun;
  - Making links across the curriculum and introducing real-life contexts which make lessons more interesting for the pupils;
  - Very good planning which takes account of the needs of a wide range of pupils and sets out a good sequence of teaching, ensuring that the learning is broken down into manageable steps, thus ensuring success;
  - Informative marking which tells pupils how well they have done and how they can improve;
  - Very effective use of homework to consolidate and extend learning;
  - Very good management of pupils' behaviour;
  - High levels of teachers' subject knowledge, and an enthusiasm for mathematics; and
  - Very good use of small discussion groups to ensure that all pupils are involved.
71. Where teaching is satisfactory, in Years 1 and 2, assessments are not always used well enough to challenge and extend pupils' learning. The pace of learning is slower than in the good lessons and, while tasks are designed to meet the differing needs of pupils, they are not always explained well. As a result pupils are not always clear about what they have to do.
72. The leadership and management of mathematics are satisfactory. The subject leader for mathematics is a good role model for other staff and pupils. He is knowledgeable and his innovative teaching of mathematics across the curriculum has been used as an exemplar at staff meetings. The curriculum is well organised and the use of medium-term plans ensures coverage of the National Curriculum programmes of study and the National Numeracy Strategy objectives. Most teachers adapt these plans very effectively to meet the needs of their classes. However, some aspects of the role are under-developed. Monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning are undertaken, but is not yet systematic or rigorous enough to identify in detail strengths and weaknesses across the school.

### **Mathematics across the curriculum**

73. Pupils are using mathematics well as part of their work in other subjects; for example, in geography, science and music.

## SCIENCE

Provision in science is **good**.

### Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 achieve very well and standards are above average. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
- Pupils in Years 1 achieve well but the pace of learning slows in Year 2.
- Teaching and learning are good overall and very good in Years 3 to 6.

### Commentary

74. Teacher assessments in 2004 for pupils in Year 2 indicated that the proportion reaching the expected level was below average. The proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in science was average. Inspection findings indicate that standards are average overall. Pupils in Year 1 make good progress and achieve well, including those with special educational needs. In Year 2, pupils' progress is unsatisfactory overall because the pace of learning is too slow, particularly for the more able.
75. Results in national tests in Year 6 were consistently above average until 2003, when they dropped for the next two years, albeit remaining above the average for similar schools. In 2004 the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels in science was well above average. Inspection findings show that in Year 6, standards are above average but records show that the current cohort of pupils have made very good progress during their time in the school in order to achieve this. Pupil progress and achievement in scientific knowledge and understanding are consistently good or better, particularly from Year 4 to Year 6. Pupils are very adept at organising and carrying out scientific investigations and can present their findings in various ways such as tables and line graphs. This aspect of science has clearly improved since the last inspection and has contributed to good provision being maintained.
76. In Year 1, pupils make good progress because tasks are matched very well to the needs of the pupils and the lessons are interesting. Because of this, pupils enjoy their lessons and achieve above-average standards. They are developing good skills of observation and have a good understanding of life processes and living things. In Year 2, pupils' progress is generally unsatisfactory, because the pace of learning slows. The teaching is generally sound, but opportunities to extend pupils' learning are sometimes missed.
77. In Years 3 to 6, pupils make very good progress because the teaching and learning are consistently very good. Teachers are enthusiastic about science. This enthusiasm is caught by the pupils who are very keen to learn. They are developing very good skills in planning, completing and evaluating their investigations. Teachers demonstrate good subject knowledge, for example, in the use of appropriate scientific terminology, and this extends the pupils' vocabulary. Teachers are skilled in giving pupils the confidence to take responsibility for organising equipment and materials, and tackling their investigations. This develops independence and a disciplined, scientific approach to the pupils' work. Regular opportunities are provided for using ICT, and this has resulted in pupils developing a wide range of scientific language, diagrams, charts and graphs to communicate their ideas.
78. Leadership and management of the subject are broadly satisfactory. The subject leader has had responsibility for science only since the beginning of the academic year. She has improved the range of resources and has begun to review the science policy. However, aspects of the role are under-developed. Insufficient attention has been given to checking the quality of teaching and learning and identifying strengths and weaknesses across the school.

79. The science curriculum is enriched through the use of the school grounds and through a gardening club. Pupils grow and sell plants in the spring to parents and members of the local community. These opportunities bring science alive for the pupils and develop further their understanding of the natural world.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

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

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- Some pupils in Years 3 to 6 confidently use advanced skills.
- The subject leader has a very good understanding of ICT and inspires pupils and other staff to follow his example.
- Where it is available, ICT is used very well to make links with other subjects and to make the teaching in those subjects exciting and stimulating.
- Not all classes are equipped with this technology and not all teachers have the same high level of personal skill or confidence.

### **Commentary**

80. Many pupils in Years 3 to 6 reach standards well above national expectations. This represents very good improvement since the previous inspection. In Years 1 and 2, standards are in line with expectations.
81. In Years 3 to 6, pupils are making very good progress and some pupils use advanced skills with confidence. High quality resources are used very well by knowledgeable and enthusiastic staff who benefit from the very good subject leadership. Pupils are able to access information from a very wide range of multimedia sources. In Years 1 and 2, where classes have more limited resources and where the confidence and skill of some teachers are less secure, pupils make satisfactory progress.
82. Overall provision for ICT has been significantly improved since the last inspection and this has had a significant impact on raising achievement, particularly in Years 3 to 6. All classes are allocated substantial weekly time in the well-equipped ICT classroom and this has met the need, identified in the previous inspection, to ensure that not too many pupils work at one computer. Because the classroom is an internal space, however, poor ventilation makes it an uncomfortable working environment.
83. Only one ICT lesson was observed during the inspection, but ICT played a significant part in lessons observed in many other subjects in Years 3 to 6. This inspection evidence shows that the quality of teaching and learning overall is good, but this does not represent an even picture throughout the school. In Years 4, 5 and 6, pupils are able confidently to combine different kinds of information by, for example, developing 'PowerPoint' presentations to show the results of their research in history. They can find information from the internet and CD-ROM, select what is helpful, word process and design it to the required form and combine it with different types of image and sound so that it will best give information to their audience. These skills are less well developed in Years 1, 2 and 3, where classrooms lack multimedia facilities and computers are not yet networked. A scrutiny of work in these classes shows that ICT is most often used for producing printed text; for example, to label the parts of a plant in science. Teaching assistants have improved their confidence and knowledge through training and, as a result, support pupils well. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and especially benefit from the expertise of the teaching assistants.
84. The leadership and management of the subject are very good. The co-ordinator has very good subject knowledge, and his enthusiasm for the opportunities ICT offers is infectious. Both pupils and teachers are inspired by his enjoyment of the subject and most staff respond well

to the very high expectations which he sets. His leadership makes a significant contribution to improving staff expertise and confidence as well as raising standards of the pupils. Future priorities include improving staff confidence and expertise, particularly in Years 1 to 2.

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

85. In Years 3 to 6, ICT is used very well in other subjects. Pupils are able to access a wide range of information and extend the ways they analyse data and record their findings. There are fewer opportunities to do this in Years 1 and 2 because resources are not as good. However, the school has plans to address this imbalance of resources in order to raise standards further in Years 1 and 2.

### **HUMANITIES**

Pupils' work in geography and history was scrutinised, but few lessons were observed. Discussions took place with subject leaders and pupils.

#### **Geography**

86. One lesson was seen in geography, in Years 3 to 6, where teaching and learning were very good. Elsewhere, the evidence available from work in books and on display and discussion with pupils indicates that they are working at the appropriate level in Years 1 and 2 and above the expected level in Years 3 to 6. Planning is based on the QCA national guidance, which ensures good progression of topics and skills across the school.
87. In the Year 5 lesson which was observed, pupils made very good progress in comparing three different environments because the teacher used high-quality resources (including her own video film of three local environments, tailored to meet the lesson objectives) to develop and extend pupils' ideas. In evaluating the three places one pupil explained that a high-quality environment "...depends on what you define as quality – it means different things to different people..." and this was the beginning of an extended discussion at a high level to which pupils with special educational needs contributed particularly well.
88. A Year 3 project to match teaching staff to their perfect holiday by reviewing variable factors had also given pupils a good stimulus to consider variations in climate, distance and facilities. They had approached the task with enthusiasm and made good progress because a good range of resources was used, there were good opportunities for discussions, and the topics were interesting and stimulating.
89. Two lessons in Years 1 and 2 were observed and **history** was involved in a cross-curricular lesson in Years 3 to 6. Where teaching was very good, Year 1 pupils were fascinated by the comparison of modern with pre-electric household artefacts. They were able to deduce that things must have been done very differently in the past, for example, ironing must have taken much longer. Through the skilful questioning of the teacher, pupils also began to understand that old, battered and rusty objects were once new and innovative to their first owners. They were enthusiastic and worked very well at a fast pace, making very good progress in their understanding of chronology. These same pupils had also been enormously helped by a visit to a toy museum where they could directly compare their own experiences with those of children in the past. In a Year 5 lesson pupils were equally engrossed in their re-enactment of the ancient Olympics and were able to contrast the ancient and the modern games and discuss their significance for the country and people of the time. Where teaching was satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, pupils had only limited access to images of the subject – small photographs in books – and found it more difficult to make interesting deductions from these. Because there were only limited opportunities to explore their own ideas and the expectations were lower, pupils made much slower progress.

#### **Religious education**

Provision in religious education is **unsatisfactory**.

### **Main strengths and weaknesses**

- The curriculum in Years 3 to 6 is rich and broad.
- Pupils do not achieve the expected standards of the locally agreed syllabus by the end of Year 2 because there are weaknesses in the teaching.
- There are weaknesses in the leadership of the subject.

### **Commentary**

90. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Years 3 to 6, and achieve the expected standards of the locally agreed syllabus. However, by the end of Year 2, progress is patchy and standards do not meet expectations overall. The teaching and learning in Years 1 and 2 are unsatisfactory overall. In Year 1, pupils make good progress and clearly learn a lot from first-hand experience and from talking about a range of issues such as what makes their friends special to them. In Year 2, however, the teaching is unsatisfactory overall. Insufficient attention is given to what pupils have already learned and the work is not always challenging enough for the pupils.
91. In Years 3 to 6, the teaching is satisfactory and the pace of learning improves. Lessons are planned in detail and effective use is made of a wide range of resources. The school is using the revised locally agreed syllabus in Years 3 to 6 and this is providing pupils with a much wider and richer range of lessons and activities than the commercial scheme of work used to deliver lessons in Years 1 and 2. Pupils are developing a sound understanding about world religions and beliefs. ICT is used well to deepen pupils' understanding, for example, in Year 6, when pupils undertook a 'virtual tour' of a synagogue to research and write about its important features.
92. The leadership and management are unsatisfactory. The subject leader has been responsible for religious education since the beginning of the academic year. She has identified some future priorities for development but insufficient attention has been given to checking the quality of teaching and learning and identifying strengths and weaknesses across the school.

### **CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS**

These subjects were sampled as few lessons were observed. Some of the pupils' work was scrutinised, as were teachers' plans and curricular documentation, and discussions took place with both teachers and pupils.

#### **Art and design**

93. Standards in art and design throughout the school are broadly in line with national expectations, and pupils make satisfactory progress. Judgements during the last inspection were similar. Throughout the school there are some very good examples of pupils' work; for example, observational drawings of fruit and vegetables in Year 1 based on drawings by Matisse, and some excellent observational drawings of flowers in Year 5, based on the work of Georgia O'Keefe. In Year 6, pupils had creatively represented movement in a "People in Motion" topic through drawings and three-dimensional models with springs. There are some good examples of computer-generated designs. However, there is insufficient continuity and progression in the development of skills, knowledge and understanding, and this restricts the progress pupils make. In the three lessons observed the teaching and learning were broadly satisfactory and pupils made satisfactory progress, although opportunities to extend pupils' skills and understanding were sometimes missed. All pupils were included well in the lessons and teaching assistants made a positive contribution to their learning.

#### **Design and technology**

94. Overall, standards in design and technology are broadly in line with the national expectation. There are some good examples of pupils' work in design and technology throughout the school but standards vary and pupils' progress is uneven from class to class. At best, pupils use a wide range of materials and tools, and some acquire a good range of skills in designing and making. For example, pupils in Year 1 have made models of a playground, using card, cutting pipe cleaners and modelling clay. By the end Year 6, pupils can assess, for instance, the properties of different materials in the design of a purse. In practical work they can make large cam models and complex illuminated Christmas table decorations. They use a good range of subject vocabulary in their written work and in discussion. However, this range of skills is not always consistently developed in all classes. Only three short observations of lessons were made. In these lessons, pupils generally achieved well because there was good pace and challenge to the teaching and a strong emphasis on planning, making and evaluating. However, the standards achieved in these lessons were not representative of the broader range of evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work across the school, where standards were more generally satisfactory.

### **Physical education**

95. No lessons were observed in Years 1 and 2 and, therefore, judgements on whole-school provision cannot be made. However, the teaching in physical education lessons in Years 3 to 6 is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Based on three lessons observed in Years 3 to 6, standards are judged to be above national expectations. Pupils achieve very well because very good links are made with other subjects, and lessons are exciting and challenging. Teachers have very good subject knowledge, and use questioning very well to assess pupils' achievements and challenge them to do better. In the athletics and dance lessons, a strong emphasis was placed on pupils' self-evaluation of their work. This helped pupils understand better what was required in a successful performance and they could use this information to improve further. Those pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and take a full part in all activities. There are several gifted and talented pupils who perform at county, and one at national, level in gymnastics and others who are very talented footballers and swimmers. These pupils are supported and challenged very well. An impressive range of extra-curricular activities and inter-school competitions significantly enhances the profile of physical education in the school and makes a positive impact on the standards achieved by the pupils.

### **Music**

96. Only one lesson in music was observed during the inspection and therefore no judgement can be made on overall provision. The school provides very good opportunities for pupils to learn to play a wide range of musical instruments and a good proportion of them do so. Pupils who join in the music clubs or who have instrumental tuition are learning to read music. There is a school choir and orchestra. Membership to both is open to all pupils, illustrating the school's commitment to inclusion. An improvement since the last inspection is the school's employment of peripatetic teachers for piano, string and brass instrument tuition.
97. Singing in hymn practices was in tune and most pupils were engaged, although some of the younger children were hampered by not being able to read the words to songs displayed on the overhead projector. The school orchestra accompanied well the singing for the older children, with pupils playing different instruments keeping time with each other and with the singing.
98. The lesson observed was satisfactory and pupils made satisfactory progress. They learned about the importance of good posture and clear pronunciation when they are singing and tried hard to explain words such as 'tempo' and 'mood'. Initially, sheets of words handicapped their singing; their heads were down and consequently the sound was not clear. After a review by the teacher the second practice was much better and the pupils sang with improved expression and real enjoyment.

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

99. Pupils benefit from a well-planned programme of personal, social and health education. The school embarked on a Healthy School project in 2002, which resulted in a Healthy Schools Award in 2004. This has had strong impact on children's attitudes and learning. For example, the teacher leading the project researched the benefits to health and vitality of drinking water regularly. This resulted in the installation of water coolers in the school and every child has been provided with a water bottle. Other initiatives within the project include improvement of the learning environment. Parents, staff, pupils and governors have all been involved in developing the school grounds. The impact on learning is positive; pupils can play happily in a pleasant environment and return to lessons feeling refreshed and ready to learn. The Essex and Southend Healthy Schools Project has held up the good practice at Stanley Drapkin as exemplary. The school is on course to receive an Advanced Healthy Schools Award.

## **PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS**

***Inspection judgement***

***Grade***

<b>The overall effectiveness of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
How inclusive the school is	2
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	3
Value for money provided by the school	3

<b>Overall standards achieved</b>	<b>3</b>
Pupils' achievement	3

<b>Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities (ethos)</b>	<b>2</b>
Attendance	4
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	2
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	2

<b>The quality of education provided by the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The quality of teaching	3
How well pupils learn	3
The quality of assessment	3
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	2
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	3
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	3
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	2
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	2
The quality of the school's links with the community	3
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

<b>The leadership and management of the school</b>	<b>3</b>
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	3

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