

INSPECTION REPORT

ST PIUS X CATHOLIC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Tennyson Road, Chelmsford.

LEA area: Essex.

Unique reference number: 115192

Headteacher: Mr E. J. McConalogue

Reporting inspector: Mr J.P. Myer
OFSTED Inspection Number 4257

Dates of inspection: 6th –8th November 2000.

Inspection number: 225095
Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2000

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Tennyson Road, Chelmsford. Essex.
Postcode:	CM1 4HY
Telephone number:	01245 354875
Fax number:	01245 358926
Appropriate authority:	St Pius X School Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr S O'Donnell
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
John Myer	Registered inspector	Art and Design	What sort of school is it?
		Music	How well is the school led and managed?
John Duncan	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Mike Owston	Team inspector	Science Information and communication technology Special educational needs	How well are pupils taught?
Maureen Hart	Team inspector	Foundation Curriculum History Design and Technology	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? (Spiritual, moral social and cultural development)*
Geraldine Maggio	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical Education Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements
Lorraine Dawes	Team inspector	English English as an additional language	

The inspection of religious education and collective worship is being reported on separately.
* indicates contribution to other aspects.

The inspection contractor was:

Redbridge Advisory and Inspection Service
Lynton House,
255-259 High Road,
Ilford,
Essex.
1G1 1NN

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	12
The school's results and achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	18
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	19
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

St Pius X is a voluntary aided Catholic primary school located in the north-west of Chelmsford. There are currently 168 pupils on roll, which is 35 fewer than there were at the time of the last inspection in 1996. More pupils now live close to the school, and there are more non-Catholic pupils on roll, than was the case when the school was last inspected. The ward in which the school is situated is one of social deprivation. Over 90% of pupils are white, with small numbers of black, Chinese and Asian origin. 39 pupils are identified as having special educational needs of which 32 are at an early stage of assessment, and only one pupil has a statement of special educational need. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is broadly in line with the national average. The attendance rate is very high compared with other schools. At the time of the inspection there were very few pupils in the reception class, however, baseline assessment indicates that the overall attainment of pupils on entry to the school is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is well managed, promotes a strong Catholic ethos, and is a caring and supportive community. Overall, the headteacher and the governing body provide effective leadership, but monitoring and assessment procedures are not being implemented fully. Standards in writing need improving at both Key Stages and the standard of reading needs improving at Key Stage 1. The Standards in the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 tests for English, mathematics and science are significantly better than those achieved in the previous two years. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development are good.
- The school has a strong Catholic ethos.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported.
- Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good.
- Work of classroom support assistants and support staff is very effective.

What could be improved

- The standard of writing at Key Stages 1 and 2.
- The standard of reading at Key Stage 1.
- The monitoring of standards of teaching and learning.
- The consistency of assessment and target-setting.
- The School Development Plan, so that it gives a long term strategic view of school improvement.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection. Schemes of work have been written, and the amount of time allocated to each subject has been reviewed and adjustments made. Pupils' personal development is now good, and is integrated into the school's personal, social, and health education policy. The requirements for pupil registration are met fully. The school development plan includes clear targets and the outcomes of the plan are evaluated. The school has a monitoring policy and assessment procedures have improved, but both these developments need to be implemented more consistently. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 has improved since the last inspection. The overall standard of teaching at Key Stage 1 has declined since the last inspection but the proportion of good or very good teaching has increased. Standards in reading, writing and mathematics at Key Stage 1 are not as good as they were at the last inspection. Standards in mathematics at both key stages are now in line with national averages, whereas, at the time of the last inspection they were above the national average in Key Stage 1. In other subjects standards are similar to those observed at the last inspection, with the exception of music, where standards have improved.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	A	D	A	A
Mathematics	D	C	A	A
Science	E	C	B	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

Pupils enter the school with above average levels of attainment. In the foundation class individual targets are set for literacy, numeracy and personal development, and pupils make good progress towards meeting these.

At age seven, pupils' attainment in the 2000 national tests in reading, writing and mathematics is well below the national average. There has been a decline in the standards of reading, writing and mathematics over the last three years. Inspection findings show that attainment at Key Stage 1 in literacy is below national expectations, but that attainment in mathematics is line with national averages.

At age 11, pupils' attainment in the 2000 national tests in English and science are well above the national average and above the national average in mathematics. These results show a very significant improvement when compared with the results from the previous two years. Inspection findings show that standards in Key Stage 2 are currently in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. In other subjects, standards are in line with national expectations. On the basis of observations during the inspection the school is well positioned to achieve the targets set for English and mathematics in the 2001 national tests for 11-year-olds.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils have very positive attitudes and are enthusiastic about their work. They enjoy coming to school and benefit from being part of an orderly and caring community.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is very good in assemblies and at playtimes, and is generally good in most lessons. Incidences of poor behaviour are dealt with sensitively and speedily. The school's behaviour management programme is working well. There has been one exclusion in the last year.
Personal development and relationships	Personal development is good. Relationships are based on respect and trust. The school's mission statement is reflected in the day to day life of the school. Pupils show initiative and are encouraged to take responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance rates are very high in comparison with other schools.

Pupils' attitudes and values are areas of strength of the school. Pupils are courteous and have a positive attitude to school. No bullying was observed during the inspection and the standard of behaviour was generally good.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged up to 5 years	Aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good	Overall unsatisfactory	Satisfactory and often good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

47 lessons were observed during the inspection. The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 43 lessons, and less than satisfactory in 4.

In the Foundation Stage teaching is good and in half the lessons it is very good. At Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching varies from class to class. In the lower Key Stage 1 class the great majority of teaching is good, while in the upper Key Stage 1 class most lessons are unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 2 one in five lessons are good while one in eight are very good (12.5%) There is an extremely small amount of unsatisfactory teaching at Key Stage 2

In the lower Key Stage 1 class the teaching of literacy is satisfactory and the teaching of numeracy is good, but in the upper Key Stage 1 class the teaching of literacy and numeracy is unsatisfactory. At Key Stage 2 teaching of literacy is good, and in a third of lessons it is very good. Teaching of numeracy at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. 20% of numeracy lessons at this Key Stage are good and a further 20% are very good.

Pupils' learning is less effective in Key Stage 1 than in Key Stage 2. The pace at which pupils learn, and the progress they make, is dependent on the quality of teaching in each class. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught. In most classes work given to pupils with special educational needs is carefully matched to their ability. Learning support assistants offer very effective support to these pupils.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good in the foundation class. The curriculum at Key Stages 1 and 2 meets statutory requirements.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The quality of the support for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has a very positive attitude to the inclusion of pupils with special educational needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are only four pupils with English as an additional language in the school. These pupils are given appropriate support by the class-teacher and learning support assistants. Translation facilities are available if required.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good, and spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils' cultural development has improved since the last inspection, but, overall, is still unsatisfactory.

How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a safe, caring and supportive environment. Assessment procedures and target setting need consolidating.
--	--

The curriculum for reception pupils includes religious education and the six areas of learning identified in the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidelines for the Foundation Stage.

The curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 and 2 meets statutory requirements and includes time to cover the 'Here I Am' programme for religious education. The school has adopted the national strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, and the QCA schemes of work for other subjects.

Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator and by learning support assistants. This aspect of the work of the school is well managed by an experienced and able special educational needs teacher. The needs of a small number of more able pupils are not met fully in a few English, science and mathematics lessons in Key Stage 1 and occasionally in lessons in Key Stage 2.

The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The school provides well for pupils' moral development and they have a good understanding of what is right and wrong. Pupils' social development is good. They care for each other and are polite and helpful. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. This mainly occurs in assemblies, religious education and class reflection times. The provision for cultural development is unsatisfactory, and pupils have relatively few opportunities to explore a range of cultures through, for example, art, music, literature and information technology.

Parents, in the main, are very supportive of the school and its policies. The school works hard to develop positive and constructive relationships with the parents, and keeps them well informed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well managed and the headteacher, deputy headteacher, and governors provide effective leadership. The school development plan does not provide a long-term strategic view of school improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is well organised. The school's finances are very well managed. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Needs improving. The monitoring policy is not being implemented fully. More use needs to be made of data analysis, assessment procedures and target setting.
The strategic use of resources	The school is adequately resourced and staff are deployed appropriately. The contribution made by support staff is particularly effective and is a strength of the school.

The headteacher, key members of staff, and the governing body have a shared commitment to the aims and aspirations of the school's mission statement. Since the last inspection a wide range of policies and strategies have been introduced, but some of these are not being implemented consistently.

Governors are very supportive of the school, are keen to see it succeed, and have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. The financial administration is good and the governing body is well on the way to applying the principles of best value.

The school is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified teachers. The work of support staff in the classrooms, the office, and at lunch times, is of a high quality, and is a strength of

the school. The school is adequately resourced to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum.

Overall, the accommodation is in a good condition and good use is made of every available space. The governing body works hard to maintain and improve the building and the school environment.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The attitudes and values promoted by the school. • The school promotes a strong, Catholic ethos and is a caring community. • Information given about the curriculum and the helpful newsletter. • Children enjoy coming to school. • The induction of pupils into the foundation class. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More activities outside lessons. • Improvement in the standard of pupil behaviour. • The homework policy being implemented more consistently across the school. More challenging work for the more able pupils.

The inspection team agreed with the parents' positive views. With regard to parental comments about what they would like to see improved, the inspection team found that-

- **Out of school clubs;** there is a limited range of out of school sports clubs for pupils in Key Stage 2 and these activities are well supported by parents;
- **Behaviour;** the standard of behaviour in the school is generally good and the behaviour modification programme is working well;
- **Homework;** homework supports the class work across the school, but the homework policy is not consistently followed; and
- **Challenging work;** some of the more able pupils are not challenged sufficiently in a few lessons at both Key Stages.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. During the inspection pupils in the Foundation Stage were seen to be performing at above the expected level of the Early Learning Goals in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. They are performing in line with the Early Learning Goals for the other areas of the Early Years curriculum. The Foundation Stage gives pupils a good start to their schooling.

2. Pupils enter the Foundation Stage at above average levels of attainment. Their attainment is above average in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development and in line in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative and physical development.

3. At the age of 7 pupils' attainment in the 2000 national tests in reading and mathematics is well below the national average. It is below the national average in writing. Since 1996 the school has slipped from a three year pattern of high performance in reading, writing and mathematics to a decline in performance. In 1999 standards were well below the national average in reading, below the national average in writing and above the national average in mathematics. In 2000 there has been a further decline in performance in mathematics whilst the standards in reading and writing remain the same as the previous year. The 2000 test results in reading do not reflect the assessments made by teachers, who overestimated pupil performance. The results in writing were underestimated by teachers although the assessments for mathematics were more in line with the actual test results for pupils. Pupils' attainment in science is in line with the national average. This is similar to pupils' performance in science in 1999.

4. When pupils' attainment at the age of 7 is compared with that of similar schools nationally, reading, writing and mathematics are well below average. The performance of girls is better than that of boys.

5. The number of pupils who achieve above average results at the age of 7 is well below the national average in reading and mathematics and very low in science. However, in writing the number of pupils that achieve better than average results is in line with national averages. In comparison to other similar schools nationally, the number achieving higher than average results in reading and mathematics is very low. In writing it is below and in science it is well below. Assessments made by teachers indicated that more pupils would achieve higher levels than average in reading, writing and mathematics than the actual test results showed. No pupils were assessed to achieve at a higher level than average in science.

6. At the age of 11, the number of pupils who achieve the benchmark Level 4 and above in the 2000 national tests is well above the national average in English and science and above the national average in mathematics. The test results in English and science are higher than those predicted by teachers. The assessments of teachers for mathematics were more optimistic than actual results. Results in all three core subjects indicate a considerable rise in performance in 2000. This follows a very rapid decline in performance in 1998 in mathematics and science, where standards fell to below the national average and rose to around the national average in 1999. In English performance fell slightly in 1998, but remained above the national average. However, in 1999 performance fell to below the national average. In 1999 boys were performing less well than girls in English, mathematics and science. The test results of 2000 show a very significant recovery from the past two years' performance in all three core subjects. In comparison to the performance of all pupils in similar schools nationally, the standards achieved by pupils in 2000 are well above the average in all three core subjects.

7. The number of pupils who achieved at a higher level than average in the 2000 tests at the age of 11 is well above the national average in mathematics and above in English and science. Assessments made by teachers underestimate the number of pupils that achieve above average results in the tests in all three subjects. The underestimate in mathematics is significant, although the assessment in English is

closer to the actual test results for higher than average achievers. Compared to similar schools the number of pupils that achieve at a higher level than average is well above in English and mathematics and above in science.

8. The school is implementing the national strategies for literacy and numeracy at both key stages. They provide teachers with a clear structure for teaching in order to raise standards when carefully adhered to. The quality of planning for literacy is occasionally unsatisfactory and leads to less effective teaching of literacy in the upper Key Stage 1 class. In science the school has adopted the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority guidance which provides teachers with a sound basis for improving standards. The use of after school booster classes in literacy and numeracy in Key Stage 2 has had a positive effect on raising standards at the end of the Key Stage.

9. Standards observed in English at the last inspection in Key Stage 1 were seen to be in line with national averages and above national averages in Key Stage 2. Standards observed at this inspection are below average in reading and writing in Key Stage 1, whilst speaking and listening remains in line with national averages. In Key Stage 2, on the basis of observations, standards are seen to be in line with national averages. Standards observed in mathematics during the last inspection were seen to be above the average in Key Stage 1 and average in Key Stage 2. On the basis of observation during this inspection, standards are in line with national averages in both key stages. Standards in science are in line with national averages at both key stages. There is evidence of a decline in standards of reading, writing and mathematics in Key Stage 1 since the last inspection. The standards observed during this inspection do not reflect the high level of performance that was achieved in English, mathematics and science in 2000 at the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils in their final year of Key Stage 2 are currently performing in line with national averages. Some more able pupils underachieve in a few English, mathematics and science lessons.

10. In the other subjects, with the exception of music, standards were seen to be in line with national expectations at the last inspection. Standards observed in this inspection indicate a similar picture. Standards in music are now in line with national expectations.

11. Pupils' learning is less effective at Key Stage 1 than at Key Stage 2 where it is satisfactory. The quality of learning is dependent on the quality of teaching provision in classes.

12. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is good. The previous inspection report also indicated that pupils with special educational needs made good progress. Their progress relates directly to the quality of teaching they receive from their class teachers and the Special Educational Needs co-ordinator and the good level of support given to them by Learning Support Assistants. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make progress in line with their peers.

13. The school has set statutory targets for the number of pupils reaching the average level in English and mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2. It exceeded its target for English by a considerable margin in 2000 and was very close to meeting the target for mathematics. On the basis of observations during the inspection and the school's planned programme of booster groups for 2001, it is well positioned to achieve the targets set for 2001.

Attitudes, values and personal development

14. Pupils have very positive attitudes to the school, their peers and their work, arriving early and looking forward to lessons. In this orderly and caring community parents, pupils and staff members relate well to and support each other. Pupils are courteous and exhibited keen interest when talking to inspectors in the classroom, at lunchtimes and in the playground. There is the perception, however, among some parents that the narrowing of the catchment area and the broadening of the intake has produced a roll more difficult to manage.

15. Behaviour is very good in assemblies, the playground and in most lessons and good or satisfactory elsewhere. The few incidences of disruptive or inconsiderate behaviour were usually dealt with

expeditiously and sensitively. Parents expressed concerns about the behaviour in a particular class, but through the school's behaviour management programme teachers and classroom assistants have been able to bring the standard of behaviour in line with that in other classes. Pupils move around the school in an orderly, polite way, and no bullying, gender or racist incidents were observed. There was only one fixed-term exclusion during the past eighteen months. The school is using successfully the Essex Kite Mark Award for Good Behaviour.

16. Pupils are given opportunities to take responsibility. Year 6 pupils usher groups into and out of assemblies, operate the overhead projector for group singing and look after younger ones during breaks from lessons. Pupils from all years return registers to the office twice each day and were observed during play helping their fellows who had fallen or needed to be seen by a first-aider; they continuously demonstrated that they care about each other. During a year 1 tour of the site to identify sources of light, a taller boy volunteered to look after a delicate girl, holding her hand and sometimes putting his arm round her as they moved through the school.

17. Personal development is good, with individual pupil advances noted in sections of the annual reports of pupil progress. All staff members take seriously their responsibility as expressed in the school's mission statement, 'through example and love' to 'ensure that everyone achieves their full potential and realise the valuable role they have to play in the life of the school, parish and the wider community'.

18. The school has maintained its good standards for pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. In 1999 attendance was very high in comparison with other schools and so far this year remains well above the national average. The school continues to have no unauthorised absences and punctuality is no longer an issue.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. At the Foundation Stage teaching is good with half the lessons being very good. The teaching in the Foundation Stage is successful because the teacher has a good knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum and a very good understanding how young pupils learn. As a result the teaching objectives are relevant and clear. The work builds effectively on what the pupils already know and can do and is carefully adapted to meet the learning needs of the more and less able. The teaching shows sensitivity to the needs of young children and the pupils feel valued. The work is clearly explained and pupils receive good feedback on how well they have done and how they can improve. The pupils enjoy their work, they sustain concentration, listen well and are very responsive. Effective learning is the outcome.

20. Overall at Key Stage 1 teaching is unsatisfactory because over one in four lessons is less than satisfactory. There are differences in teaching quality from class to class. In one class all teaching is at least satisfactory with the great majority being good. In the other class the majority of lessons are unsatisfactory with some being poor or very poor.

22. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory in the lower Key Stage 1 class although in the upper class a significant degree of the teaching is unsatisfactory. In the more successful teaching the objectives of the lesson are clear and the teaching is supported by very good resources. Less successful literacy teaching results from weaknesses in the teachers' subject knowledge, a lack of pace and, in a few cases, poor class control.

23. Numeracy teaching at Key Stage 1 is good in the lower class although the lesson seen in the upper class was poor. Where the teacher's confidence in terms of teaching the national numeracy strategy is strong good teaching results but where there are weaknesses this results in lessons where the purposes of the lesson are unclear and where insufficient attention is placed on developing mathematical strategies.

24. Science teaching is satisfactory across the key stage with good teaching in the lower class. The lessons are generally successful because they are well planned to teach specific objectives. The school follows the scheme of work devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and this is providing a most supportive structure in terms of lesson objectives and teaching approach.

25. Only a limited range of teaching was observed in the foundation subjects. This was of a good standard in the lower class although the one lesson observed in the upper class was very poor. This lesson failed because it was not planned carefully enough and behaviour management was weak.

In about a third of the lessons at Key Stage 1 there is insufficient challenge in the work for the more able pupils. In particular this applies to the work in literacy, numeracy and science.

26. Overall teaching is satisfactory at Key Stage 2. One lesson in five is good whilst one in eight is very good. There is only an extremely small amount of unsatisfactory teaching at this key stage.

The quality of teaching is reasonably consistent across the four year groups at this key stage with each class receiving some good teaching and the majority some very good teaching.

In the three year groups where there is some very good teaching no lessons are unsatisfactory.

27. In general the teaching of literacy at Key Stage 2 is good with over a third being very good. Particular strengths relate to the good selection of material and the careful planning of the lessons. The work is well matched to the pupils' abilities and appropriate teaching techniques together with good quality support from learning assistants ensure that high quality work results from the vast majority of pupils.

28. The teaching of numeracy at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall. One in five lessons is good and a similar number very good. In the best lessons the teachers have a good grasp of mathematics teaching and produce work that challenges the pupils. Work is clearly explained and well adapted to meet the needs of pupils of different abilities.

29. In the other subjects at Key Stage 2 teaching is satisfactory although in one geography lesson there were too many activities for the teacher to handle and the lesson proved less successful. The most successful teaching of a foundation subject was observed in one physical education lesson where the high expectations of the teacher coupled with very good organisation produced high quality learning. The expected standards of movements were modelled by the teacher and learning assistant, and pupils were encouraged to reach these high standards through good quality support and encouragement.

30. The particular characteristics of successful teaching at Key Stage 2 include good subject knowledge and concentration on the development of the technical language associated with the subject. This development of specific language is particularly successful in mathematics, history and physical education. Other features of the best teaching at Key Stage 2 include the detailed planning of lessons to clear learning objectives which are then shared with the pupils at the start of the lesson. The work is also modified to meet the needs of the more and less able pupils. Such differentiation was observed in successful lessons in all the core subjects and several foundation subjects. In successful lessons teachers use questioning and demonstrating to support the pupils' learning. The appropriate choice of resources and effective behaviour management also underpin the good quality learning observed in successful lessons. One general weakness that was observed across a number of lessons related to whole class teaching where the text or worksheet being used was too small for the pupils to read.

31. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught at all key stages. The work in most classes is modified so that it can be accessed by pupils with special educational needs and learning assistants support the SEN pupils in the classroom. As a result these pupils make good progress. The very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language make appropriate progress. The teaching meets the needs of all pupils with the exception of the more able pupils in a third of Key Stage 1 lessons and the occasional lesson at Key Stage 2.

32. At all key stages high quality support from learning assistants is proving effective in the classrooms and is having a most positive effect on pupils' learning across the curriculum. The processes whereby teachers make ongoing assessments of pupils' progress and use this information to influence future planning of work are not sophisticated enough. This results, on occasion, in the work for a class, or more often for an ability group, being too easy or too hard for the pupils.

33. Homework is supporting the class work across the school. For example, the projects being produced by the Year 5 pupils at home are making a valuable contribution to the curriculum in science.

There are, however, as the parents highlighted in their questionnaire responses and at the parents' meeting, some inconsistencies in the implementation of the school policy.

34. Information technology is supporting pupils' learning in all classes and enabling pupils to broaden and extend their learning within the different subjects. It concentrates on the core subjects at Key Stage 1 but at Key Stage 2 it broadens to cover nearly all subjects.

35. The quality of the teaching at Key Stage 1 has declined since the last inspection. Previously no teaching was less than satisfactory whereas now a quarter is unsatisfactory. However, the proportion of good and very good teaching has improved. Teaching quality still varies between subjects and there is still a lack of subject knowledge in specific areas with particular teachers. There has been an improvement in terms of teachers' planning and the learning objectives are now tighter. Assessment continues as a weakness and there are still inconsistencies with regard to homework. Issues relating to teachers merely supervising children rather than teaching and having too many activities underway at the same time have to a large degree been addressed.

36. At Key Stage 2 teaching has improved. Whilst the proportion of good or very good teaching continues at about a third of lessons there is now only the occasional unsatisfactory lesson whereas before one in five lessons was unsatisfactory. The adaptation of teaching material to make it challenging for more able pupils and the support of learning assistants in classrooms have improved the teaching of the more able. The variation of teaching quality between subjects and issues relating to teachers' subject knowledge highlighted in the previous report are now less pronounced.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

37. The curriculum for reception pupils includes religious education and the six areas of learning identified in the QCA curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the pupils' personal, social and emotional development, the development of their communication, language and literacy skills and mathematics. Structural alterations to the reception classroom and the outdoor area have been planned to meet the requirements of the Foundation Stage more fully.

38. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2 meets statutory requirements and is designed to give sufficient time to cover the 'Here I Am' programme in religious education and the programmes of study in all other subjects. Since the previous inspection, the school has adopted the national strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy and the QCA schemes of work. Teachers make good use of foundation subjects to support the development of basic skills.

39. A limited range of extra-curricular activities is available for pupils in Key Stage 2. Teachers are committed to providing opportunities for pupils to take part in competitive sport through netball and football clubs. Parental support for these activities is much appreciated.

40. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the special educational needs co-ordinator and by the learning support assistants. The achievement of pupils with special educational needs is also promoted through differentiation within teachers' plans. The needs of a small number of more able pupils are not met fully in a few English, science and mathematics lessons in Key Stage 1, and in a small minority of lessons at Key Stage 2..

41. The school's policy and provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory overall. The themes within the 'Fully Alive' scheme are closely linked to the Catholic ethos of the school. Parents are informed, through the school prospectus, of their right to withdraw their child from religious education lessons, collective worship and sex education.

42. Visitors, such as the road safety officer and the parish priest, help pupils learn about the wider community. Members of the parish are welcomed into the school on holy days of obligation and the

priest organises a day of recollection in the parish hall for Year 6 pupils. All pupils are developing an awareness of the world and are encouraged to show concern for the plight of people in disaster areas, for example through the collection for the UNICEF Mozambique fund. They also take part in Operation Christmas and reflect on life as a child in Romania. Opportunities for pupils to link with others around the world through the use of ICT are underdeveloped.

43. The school has good links with the local nursery school. The reception teacher visits the pupils before they are admitted and attends training sessions at the nursery school. Good use is made of information from pre-school providers, parents and baseline assessment to set curriculum and personal development targets for individual pupils. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have opportunities to compete against other primary schools in a range of sporting activities. Links with the local secondary school are good. Year 5 pupils attend a 'taster' day, Year 6 pupils have the opportunity to visit before transfer and the teacher responsible for Year 7 visits them.

44. The overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The school meets the statutory requirements for collective worship. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is good. The provision for their spiritual development is satisfactory. The cultural aspect of the curriculum is unsatisfactory.

45. Opportunities for spiritual development arise mainly through assemblies, religious education and class reflection times. Pupils do not always have opportunities during assemblies to express their thoughts or feelings. Each classroom contains a special focal point for prayer and reflection. The RE curriculum supports pupils' spiritual development, but provision for spiritual development across the curriculum has not been sufficiently considered. Pupils show wonder at the beauty of a baptismal gown and at a double rainbow, and empathy for Victorian children. Other opportunities for spiritual development tend to be incidental rather than planned. There is no organised vehicle, such as a school council, through which pupils can express their views.

46. The school provides well for pupils' moral development. The pupils have a good understanding of what is right and wrong. Good behaviour is promoted throughout the life of the school and reinforced through displays in the entrance hall. Most pupils behave very well, both in classrooms, around the school and in the playground. They are courteous and helpful to visitors. The implementation of a positive approach to behaviour management is proving effective in helping pupils make choices and accept responsibility for their behaviour. The house system enables pupils to feel a sense of belonging to a group beyond that of the class. Pupils are delighted to gain team points and show genuine remorse when they lose a point.

47. The school's provision for social development is good. Pupils show this in the way they speak to one another, volunteer to share resources and help to look after a friend who has fallen over. Older pupils enjoy the responsibility of being prefects and monitors. They carry out their duties with pride. Extra curricular activities provide pupils with the experience of achievement through team effort. In a Year 2 personal, social, health education (PSHE) lesson pupils show obvious enjoyment and a strong sense of belonging when classmates write positive comments about them. Adults provide good models through their dealings with other adults and pupils.

48. Provision for cultural development, although improved since the last inspection, is unsatisfactory. A modest range of resources such as books, artefacts and CDs have been purchased which reflect people from other cultures and other religions, but limited use is made of these. The celebration of festivals is included in the religious education curriculum, but insufficient attention is given to exploring a range of cultures through art, music, literature and ICT.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

49. The school makes satisfactory provision overall for the health, safety and welfare of its pupils, including appropriate child protection procedures. It provides good educational and personal support and guidance, but is less than satisfactory in its monitoring of pupils' academic performance.

50. Parents, staff and pupils were all surveyed in the preparation of the school's Good Behaviour Guide which lays down good procedures for monitoring and promoting acceptable behaviour. Its behaviour modification programme for named pupils who have exhibited challenging behaviour contributes to the school's satisfactory procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour.

51. The cohort files for each class and the individual pupil 'red' files, which contain individual and class targets and results, help make satisfactory the monitoring and support of pupils' personal development. In addition, the PSHE programme is used to good effect for that purpose and parents receive a loose-leaf sheet with their annual reports which covers personal development. However, the school's monitoring and support of pupils' academic progress needs further improvement. Target-setting procedures are under-developed and do not yet fully support individual pupil's progress. The assessment of pupils' attainment and progress and the use of assessment information to guide curricular planning are, therefore, at an early stage of development and need strengthening in order to contribute positively to the standards attained.

52. Procedures for monitoring attendance and punctuality are very good, and have improved since the last inspection. Pupils' attendance continues well above the national average with no truancy or unauthorised absences. The school carries out regular risk assessments and potentially dangerous equipment is checked regularly. However, records for the safety checks of fire extinguishers and the termly evacuation drills were not available.

53. Procedures for dealing with first aid, accident reporting and pupils who are unwell are good, although there is still no medical room. Staff who look after pupils' individual needs are appropriately trained and offer caring and sympathetic support. The quality of supervision at playtimes is good, and there is an excellent instruction and information manual for midday assistants. All teachers and support staff know the pupils well, relate well to them and provide a safe, supportive and caring environment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. Parents, in the main, are very supportive of the school and its policies. Those spoken to at the school gate on several occasions had nothing but praise for the school, its teachers and management. However, there appears to be a faction who are disconcerted to see the diminution of the traditional Catholic school ethos.

55. At the Foundation Stage, school/parent contacts are very good. Parents are provided with good curriculum information so that they may help and encourage their children. They value the home/school diary as a means of regular communication with the school and believe pupils' targets are appropriate. Pupils for their part are eager to come to school, keen to do their 'homework' and, according to the parents, are making good progress, such as in recognising letters in the environment, stringing longer sentences together and counting to higher numbers.

56. The school is building on this good relationship with new parents so that as their children move through the school, the home/school partnership will strengthen. Although the home/school association has withered, groups of parents volunteer to manage the fete, undertake repairs/building work suitable to their experience and help in the school and on trips.

57. Attractive fortnightly newsletters inform parents of developments, such as the opening of the new play area with its Burma Bridge, ask for help round the school, congratulate pupils who have received awards or certificates and remind parents to help with punctuality, wearing of proper uniform and control of head lice. The survey of parental views convinced many parents of the school's wish to listen to them and share their concerns. Parents for whom English is an additional language are supported through the provision of translation facilities if required.

58. Of the seven questions in the Ofsted parents questionnaire with which 20 per cent or more of the respondents disagreed, the inspection team did not find evidence to support five of them:

- **Behaviour:** overall behaviour is good in all areas of the school with only the occasional glitch;

- **Homework:** pupils throughout the school seem to be assigned an appropriate amount of homework and there is an effective homework policy which demonstrates how parents may help their children at home, although there is some inconsistency in the delivery of the policy;
- **Management:** the day-to-day management of the school is deemed to be good;
- **Extra-curricular:** there is a limited range of extra-curricular activities for pupils in Key Stage 2 and these are well supported by parents.
- **Annual reports:** annual written reports of pupil progress are thorough and individually relevant, and the school schedules detailed meetings between parents and class teachers each term, with the final one in the Summer term after the reports have been prepared; the school might, however, provide space for written parental responses.
- **Challenging work:** The inspection team found that in a few English, science and mathematics lessons in Key Stage 2 and in a small minority of lessons in Key Stage 1, a small number of more able pupils are under-achieving.

Inspectors found no evidence to support or discount parental concerns about putting questions to the school and the closeness with which the school works with parents. The school on its part will be addressing these issues.

59. Of the three questions with which 80 per cent or more agreed, the team found evidence to support two of them:

- in conversation with inspectors, pupils reaffirmed that they like the school and are eager to attend every day;
- the school helps pupils mature and take on responsibility, increasing it as they move up the school.
-

60. The majority of parents thought that the school expects pupils to achieve their best. While this was found to be generally the case, there is a concern that some more able pupils are not sufficiently challenged.

61. The school is committed to an open and positive relationship with parents through its home/school agreement which notes that 'parents are the first and foremost educators of their children'. The school fully involves parents in its work from the time parents prepare for their children to start in the reception class through to their move to secondary school. There are positive relationships with the nearby nursery and secondary schools; for instance, a secondary PE teacher helps with team sports. The school receives good quality support from its parent governors who work hard on behalf of the school and its pupils to raise standards and the quality of pupils' learning. The school welcomes any support parents can give and recognises the importance parental intervention has on pupils' learning and on their personal and social development.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

62. The school is well managed and the headteacher, key staff and the governing body provide effective leadership. They have a shared commitment to the aims and aspirations of the school's mission statement, and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. A wide range of policies and strategies have been introduced to address the weaknesses and to raise standards. However, some of the policies are not implemented consistently across the school, and their impact on the quality of teaching and learning needs to be monitored more systematically by the headteacher and senior staff.

63. Some key initiatives have had a positive effect on standards and the quality of education provided. The booster classes for 11- year-olds contributed to the major improvement in last year's end of Key Stage 2 test results. The governing body's decision to increase the number of classroom learning support assistants (LSAs) has had a very positive effect on the support for individual pupils, especially those with special educational needs or behavioural problems. The governing body's decision to maintain the structure of one class for each age group, in the face of falling rolls, has meant that class sizes are relatively low and that pupils correspondingly receive more individual attention. These developments have been effective in improving the quality of education provided.

64. The governing body is well organised and effective. The two governing body subcommittees carry out their delegated responsibilities conscientiously and efficiently. Link governors for literacy, numeracy and special educational needs have been established. 'Named' governors with a particular responsibility for an area of the curriculum, visit the school and provide the full governing body with progress reports on their subject.

65. Most of the key issues raised at the time of the last inspection have been dealt with satisfactorily. A programme to support pupils' personal development has been introduced; schemes of work have been written; the school now meets requirements for pupil registration at the beginning of the morning and afternoon sessions; and the time allocated to subjects has been reviewed. The annual school development plan (SDP) has been improved by carefully costing each priority and identifying how the outcomes are evaluated. The headteacher and the governing body were also required to produce and implement a monitoring policy and develop the school's assessment procedures. A policy for monitoring the standards of pupil attainment and the quality of teaching and learning has been written but is not being consistently implemented. The key aspect of monitoring the standards of teaching and learning in each class has lapsed in the last year. The last inspection report stated that the school's assessment procedures needed further development in order that assessment informs and influences teaching. In response to this an assessment policy was written and the school collects and analyses data from the end of Key Stages 1 and 2 tests, the non-statutory assessment tests for pupils in years 3, 4 and 5, and information from other standardised tests. Teachers need to be more aware of how the data can be used to raise standards of pupils' attainment and the implications this has for their teaching. The school has recognised the need to address this issue by including it in the SDP.

66. Each year a draft school development plan is prepared by the headteacher and presented to the governing body for its consideration. A final SDP is drawn up after detailed discussion with the governors. The plan identifies the achievements of the previous year and staff development needs for the current year. The section of the SDP that deals with premises is based on a four-year strategic plan for the development and maintenance of the school site and the building itself. However, the main part of the SDP only identifies priorities and developments that are planned for the next twelve months, and therefore it does not provide a long term strategic view of school improvement.

67. The school's finances are very well managed. The governors receive regular reports about the levels of expenditure. The governing body is capable of making significant financial decisions in order to support educational priorities. For example, the decision to maintain a school structure of one class for each year group in the current year, was funded by the previous year's under-spend of £35K, and a further £6K from this year's budget. The governing body is well on the way to applying the principles of best value. The appointment of the local borough council to provide ground maintenance, and the use of a local bank that gives preferential rates, are good examples of the use of competitive tendering. The governing body has consulted with parents over the issues of school uniform, homework and the PHSE policy. It is prepared to challenge and realign the school's priorities during the process of formulating the SDP. The governing body has begun to compare the school's performance and standards against those of similar schools, and is increasingly focussing its attention on target setting and ways to raise the standard of pupils' attainment.

68. The school is adequately staffed with appropriately qualified teachers. The contribution made by the support staff is particularly effective and is a strength of the school. The governing body's decision to increase the number of LSAs working in the classroom has meant that the support given to individuals and groups of pupils is of a consistently high standard. Teaching and non-teaching staff have job descriptions and individual action plans, which show how their knowledge and skills are to be developed during the year. Subject leaders have opportunities to evaluate planning and carry out classroom observations, but the outcomes of this form of monitoring needs to be managed more effectively so that it has a direct impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning. A draft performance management policy has been reviewed by the governing body and is due to be finalised this term. The headteacher and members of the governing body have attended performance management training.

69. The use of resources to support pupils' learning is adequate. In the past, subject leaders have been allocated a set amount of money to buy resources for their subject. Because of financial constraints in the current year, the subject leaders have to 'bid' for money to buy, or replace equipment.

70. Overall, the accommodation is in a good condition, and good use is made of every available space. The governing body works hard to maintain and improve the fabric of the building and the school site. It makes good use of discretionary grants to support developments. The resources sub-committee of the governing body has drawn up a detailed four-year plan for the development of the school and has involved the Local Education Authority (LEA) in a feasibility study of the proposed developments. The improvements to the playground area carried out last year gives pupils a wide choice of activities at playtimes. They enjoy using the new playground equipment and play happily, sensibly and safely on it.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. The following issues should form the basis of the school's action plan.

1. Raise the standards of pupils' writing by-
 - a) giving the pupils more opportunities to write at length;
 - b) ensuring that the teachers' medium term plans meet fully the requirements of the National Literacy Strategy (NLS) and that the teachers' short term plans are based entirely on the medium term plans; and
 - c) improving the teaching of planning, drafting and editing skills.
2. Raise the standards of reading at Key Stage 1 by-
 - a) improving the teachers' subject knowledge of literacy, especially of word level work;
 - b) ensuring that the teacher's plans follow more closely the content of the NLS; and
 - c) broadening the range of books the pupils read.
3. Implement fully the school's monitoring policy.
4. Ensure that assessment procedures and target setting have a greater impact on classroom practice.
5. Expand the School Development Plan so that it contains a long term strategic view of school improvement.

Other areas for development to be considered for inclusion in the Action Plan are shown in sections marked 'points for further action' at the end of each subject section report and in the paragraphs numbered: 79, 95, 114, 129, 135, 143, 153, 160, 171, 179 and 188.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

47

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	6	13	22	2	1	1

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR– Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	175
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	25

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR-Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	47

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	4

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	95.73
National comparative data	94.1

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	12	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	6	8	9
	Girls	12	14	14
	Total	18	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (73)	80 (72)	83 (93)
	National	88 (82)	89 (83)	91 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	10
	Girls	13	14	16
	Total	23	16	26
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (76)	82 (86)	93 (97)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
		2000	13	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	11	12
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	23	22	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	92 (68)	84 (70)	96 (75)
	National	79 (71)	71 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	11	12	10
	Total	22	23	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (65)	96 (67)	82 (67)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (78)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	3
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	0
Indian	1
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	3
White	155
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White		
Other minority ethnic groups		

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR-Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	112

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	400,729
Total expenditure	401,044
Expenditure per pupil	2,157
Balance brought forward from previous year	36,008
Balance carried forward to next year	35,693

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	171
Number of questionnaires returned	58

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	42	51	2	5	0
My child is making good progress in school.	26	51	12	7	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	23	46.5	21.5	7	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	16	59	12	9	4
The teaching is good.	24	57	3	7	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	22.5	47.5	22	5	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	45	33	19	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	42	48	3	7	0
The school works closely with parents.	24	45	21	5	5
The school is well led and managed.	37	30	15.5	17.5	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	40	45	8.5	6.5	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	9	24	28	25.5	13.5

Twenty seven parents/carers attended the parents' meeting prior to the inspection.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

72. The school is a member of the Essex Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and provides funded places for four-year olds. A small number of autumn-born pupils have been admitted to the reception class. Baseline assessment indicates that the overall attainment of these pupils on entry to school is above average. Attainment is above national expectation in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Pupil attainment is in line with national expectation in knowledge and understanding of the world; creative development and physical development. Good use is made of baseline information and pre-school records to plan a carefully-structured teaching programme. Individual targets for literacy, numeracy and personal development are set and communicated through the home/school diary. Pupil progress towards these is well supported by parents and reviewed regularly by the teacher. Consistently good teaching enables pupils of all abilities to make good progress. The teacher anticipates that most pupils will achieve the national expectation, i.e. the early learning goal, in all areas of learning by the end of reception. At least half of the current group will be able to progress onto the national curriculum by that time.

Personal, social and emotional development

73. Pre-school provision makes a positive contribution to pupils' attainment in this and in other areas of learning. Pupils are able to work and play together well. They share resources and take turns as they match dominoes or manipulate the computer mouse. They take part enthusiastically in collaborative activity, such as controlling the movement of a parachute. Resources are easily accessible and the children treat them with care. They show awe and wonder in a beautiful family heirloom, a baptismal gown belonging to their teacher. Adults provide good role models for the children, listening carefully and respecting their contributions to group discussions.

Communication, language and literacy

74. This area of learning is well taught and builds effectively on the children's attainment on entry. Open-ended questions are used effectively to encourage pupils to give detailed responses. Knowledge of initial sounds is taught through practical activities and is reinforced through displays. The children enjoy recognising letters on the computer screen and on the wrappers in their lunch boxes. They have fun with language and demonstrate their knowledge of initial sounds when substituting alternative words within sentences. The children listen attentively to stories, talk about what they have heard and are able to sequence the main events. They have positive attitudes to writing and use their phonic knowledge to develop their emergent writing skills, such as writing shopping lists. They write their own names and make labels for models. Strong partnership with parents supports the children's reading development. The children enjoy practising reading and word-recognition skills at home. They are beginning to create their own sentences using key words.

Mathematical development

75. Many opportunities are used throughout the day to develop the children's mathematical ability. They count the spots on the dominoes to match accurately and are able to sort into those containing less than or more than a given number of spots. Most can count to ten and some well beyond. They practise ordinal numbers as they line up for assembly and most can use 'first' to 'sixth' accurately. The children's understanding of positional vocabulary is reinforced as they lift the parachute up and down, and exchange places by running underneath or round the outside. They are developing a good understanding of 'one more than' and 'one less than' and some are able to say what is 'two more than' a given number.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

76. Opportunities to learn from first-hand experience are effective in developing the children's observational and language skills. They enjoy investigating a pumpkin, and describing its texture and appearance. The children are able to predict what might happen when pieces of pumpkin are left overnight in water or on an open tray. The children show a good awareness of their immediate and local

environment. They can recall visiting other parts of the school and make a good attempt at drawing maps to represent their route to the post office. They can describe weather conditions and interpret weather symbols. The children are able to recite the days of the week and most can say what day it will be tomorrow. The children enjoy using computers and are able to control the mouse to read the story of PB Bear on the screen. They show an understanding of change and time when talking about how they have changed since they were babies. They know that clay dries out in the air and will break if dropped. The children use scissors to cut card and collage materials to make models of themselves with moving parts.

Physical development

77. During a warm-up session in the hall, the children show how they can follow instructions, march in time to music, and run in a controlled way. The children are developing good control of pencils and paint brushes. Further developments are required to meet the needs of pupils in the Foundation Stage, in particular outdoor provision and these are itemised in the school development plan. The reception class has been moved to a classroom from which it will be possible to provide a designated outdoor area, a covered verandah and a wet area indoors.

Creative development

78. Close observation using mirrors enables pupils to paint self-portraits. They know how to mix colours and control the paintbrush to apply detail to their work. The children can mould clay to make heads and use tools to mark some features. They use pencils to draw and colour pictures of the inside of a pumpkin. Most children are able to clap and play a steady beat.

Points for further action:

79.

- Develop outdoor provision and use this area to promote learning in all areas of the foundation curriculum.
- Provide more frequent opportunities for sand, water, imaginative and creative activities.
- Establish a balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities.
- Develop pupils' understanding of other cultures and beliefs.

ENGLISH

80. At age eleven, performance in the 2000 national test in English was well above national averages and higher than that of similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher level (level 5) was above the national average. In their four years in Key Stage 2, the majority of last year's year 6 pupils made more progress than might have been expected. However, some of the more able pupils had not progressed as much as they might. In 1996, when the school was last inspected, standards were sound; between 1996 and 1999 performance in the tests rose then fell to below national averages. In terms of inspection observations and analysis of work in Key Stage 2, standards are in line with national expectations for the majority of pupils, with some underachievement of the more able. Standards in speaking and listening are above national expectations.

81. Pupils' attainment was below the national average in last year's end of Key Stage 1 tests for 7 year olds. The proportion of pupils gaining the expected level in reading (level 2 or above) was below national averages and well below that of similar schools. In writing, performance was well below both national averages and that of similar schools. A smaller proportion of pupils gained the higher level (level 3) than is the pattern nationally. In 1996, when the school was last inspected, standards were above the national average and have fallen in the last two years. Observations and analysis of work during the inspection indicates attainment in literacy is below national expectations. Standards in speaking & listening are in line with national expectations, with a higher proportion of pupils being above average.

82. Pupils communicate effectively through talk in both key stages. They listen attentively and demonstrate good recall of what they have heard in the whole class part of the literacy lesson. They listen well when working in pairs and groups, and readily contribute to discussion about learning. On the

few occasions observed where individual behaviour was potentially disruptive, other pupils in the classes ignored this problem and concentrated on their work.

83. The majority of pupils are confident and motivated readers, developing a range of strategies for reading. In Key Stage 1, more able pupils make use of phonic knowledge in reading unfamiliar words and have a reasonable sight vocabulary but, in general, pupils' knowledge of their own reading strategies is vague. Pupils' understanding and ability to discuss their reading scheme book is satisfactory but they do not readily discuss favourite books or authors. In Key Stage 2 pupils have more opportunity to develop their personal tastes in reading and discuss their favourite authors and genres more readily. Pupils use inference and deduction when discussing their reading and refer to the text to justify their views.

84. Achievement in writing at both Key Stages is lower than that for reading to a greater extent than the pattern nationally. However, pupils speak positively about writing and are proud of their work. Pupils write frequently for short tasks within the literacy hour, but have few opportunities for sustained writing. The development of strategies for planning, drafting and editing writing is poor. Little narrative writing is evident. The range of non-fiction forms of writing is addressed through the National Literacy Strategy though there is little evidence of pupils using these forms in their independent writing. Standards of spelling are generally satisfactory; Key Stage 2 pupils use dictionaries independently. The use of IT to support the development of English is limited, with more emphasis on word processing handwritten work than on drafting and editing on screen. By Year 6, pupils have established a good handwriting style.

85. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported by learning support assistants. Pupils in Key Stage 2 with English as an additional language are attaining in line with other pupils.

86. In Key Stage 1 most teaching was judged to be satisfactory with a third unsatisfactory. Insecure subject knowledge has a negative effect on pupils' reading and writing development. In Key Stage 2, all teaching observed was judged to be at least satisfactory with most good or very good.

87. The National Literacy Strategy (NLS) is implemented in all classes. The quality of planning is inconsistent. In one class the medium-term planning is very confused, and bears little relation to the teacher's weekly plans. In classes where planning is logical, lessons are coherent with independent tasks building on whole class teaching. Learning is consolidated and developed over a series of lessons. In all literacy lessons, learning objectives are shared with the pupils and reflected upon at the end of the lesson. This has a positive impact on learning. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy necessitated changes in teaching methods. These have yet to be fully supported with training. NLS support for the school is scheduled for this academic year.

88. In lessons where teaching is satisfactory or better, an effective range of methods including explaining, modelling, prompting reflection and questioning is used. In one lesson, clear explanation with good use of questioning enabled pupils to grasp the difficult concept of passive verbs. In another, the use of technical language and good modelling, developed pupils' explicit understanding of verb tense. High quality support by learning support assistants encourages pupils with special educational needs to contribute to the lesson and consolidate their learning. Teachers use questioning in whole class parts of the literacy hour to develop and check on learning, but rarely use pair discussion to enable all pupils to develop and express their thinking before the chosen pupil answers. No drama or role play were observed during the inspection. The closing plenary session is used to reinforce learning objectives and for pupils to share their work.

89. Resources for teaching reading, though good in the Foundation Stage, are limited in Key Stage 1 by the heavy reliance on scheme books. The range of texts for group reading is currently being addressed, with relevant and appropriate information books as well as fiction. Pupils are given their reading book by the teacher; these are usually appropriate for their skills, though not always. Key Stage 2 reading resources are of better quality though rather limited in years 3 and 4. The use of guided group reading is established and becoming effective in developing pupils' reading strategies and response to reading. Pupils speak positively about the books and the discussions they have in these sessions. Parents are involved in their children's reading through the home/school reading diary.

90. The library provides a valuable opportunity for all pupils to choose books for personal reading. Classes visit the library once or twice a week. The library is in a pleasant area with books at an accessible height. Information books are in good condition and up-to-date, and there is a chart to guide pupils in finding a book. The fiction stock for older readers includes a range of popular authors, but few books have positive images of people from ethnic minorities. The fiction stock for younger readers reflects ethnic diversity more fully. Book areas in Key Stage 1 classrooms lack the 'atmosphere that fosters a love of books' cited in the school's Book Policy. There is little positive promotion for reading beyond the books of pupils' work displayed near the book trolleys. In the Foundation class literacy is clearly a priority and the book resources reflect this. In all classrooms displays of information books relevant to current learning across the curriculum are accessible to the pupils.

91. Differentiation for lower attaining pupils is mainly by outcome and support. Learning Support Assistants are very effective in supporting learning and maintaining pupil concentration. Some differentiation by task supports the extension of more able children in KS2, e.g. more able pupils given a more challenging task involving preparation for performance.

92. Pupils' performance in English is tracked year by year and the underachievement of less able pupils is identified, but not potential underachievement of able pupils. The Essex positive statement bank is used each term for summative records of reading and writing. Group reading records are effectively used by some teachers to inform their teaching. Ways of recording reading progress are currently being piloted by the English co-ordinator. Target-setting began in September and is at an early stage of development. Pupils appear responsive to the idea of individual targets. Marking of written work is variable, with only some instances of developmental comment.

93. Leadership and management of English has been affected by long-term absence. There are plans for LEA support for the National Literacy Strategy this school year, and the co-ordinator has recently received 'key teacher' NLS training.

94. In 1996 English was reported to be sound in attainment with satisfactory or better teaching. Pupils were judged to be making satisfactory progress across the key stages. Since then attainment has fluctuated below and above national standards. There were few opportunities for drama and role play, and this is still the case.

Points for further action:

95. Improve the quality of writing at Key Stages 1 and 2, the consistency of teaching and assessment, and the monitoring of standards and quality of teaching by

- ensuring opportunity for the 'key teacher' NLS training to be shared with the whole teaching staff;
- ensuring there is a consistent approach to medium term planning which provides coherent programmes of teaching and gives pupils opportunities to write at length;
- improving the teacher's subject knowledge, especially of word level work in Key Stage 1, and in writing at Key Stage 1 and 2;
- improving the teaching of planning, drafting and editing skills;
- introducing more drama and role play into literacy lessons;
- analysing assessment information to identify what pupils of all abilities need to do in order to reach the next National Curriculum level, and use this to inform target-setting;
- broadening the range of books used for the teaching of reading in Key Stage 1 by providing a core collection of quality children's literature;
- developing the resources for group reading across the school;
- improving book areas in classrooms so that readers are encouraged to choose, respond and express opinions about books.
- having regard to the need for positive images of people from ethnic minorities in the school literature stock; and
- ensuring the above strategies for improvement are monitored and evaluated regularly and action taken.

MATHEMATICS

96. In the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 national tests attainment in mathematics was seen to be above average and in comparison to similar schools attainment was seen to be well above average. There has been a significant recovery in overall attainment since 1998, when pupils' performance fell from well above the national average in the previous year to below the national average. The focused use of the National Numeracy Strategy booster classes has made a good contribution to the raising of attainment in mathematics in 2000. The governing body set a target of 85% of pupils reaching Level 4 or above in 2000 and this was almost met with an actual result of 84%. In 1999 pupils' performance was close to the national average and in line with performance of pupils in other similar schools. The performance of girls in 1999 was better than boys, which was a similar picture to the previous three years' performance.

97. The number of pupils achieving the higher levels in the 2000 national tests for 11-year-olds was well above the national average and well above the average for similar schools. This is an improvement on the previous year's results. In the 2000 tests average ability pupils achieved better results than those predicted in the teacher assessment, however, higher attaining pupils performed less well.

98. The overall trend for mathematics at the end of Key Stage 2, in the last three years has been one of peaks and troughs with the school performing at well above average in 1997, dipping to below average performance in 1998, with a slight recovery in 1999. This has been followed by a further improvement to above average levels of performance in 2000.

99. Standards in lessons seen during the inspection in Key Stage 2 are in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 6 can count on and back within two decimal places and can multiply decimals by ten and one hundred. They are confident in their working out of equivalent fractions and can convert improper fractions to mixed numbers. The majority of pupils can work out the formula for determining the perimeter of regular shapes. Most of the pupils can calculate the perimeter of irregular shapes and more able pupils can work out the perimeter of complex irregular shapes. They can read and plot co-ordinates with confidence.

100. In 2000 national tests at Key Stage 1, pupils were performing at well below the national average, and well below when their performance was compared to that of pupils in similar schools nationally. There has been a decline in the performance in mathematics when results are compared to those in 1999, where pupils were seen to be performing at below the national average. The number of pupils of higher ability in 2000 was well below the national average and very low when compared to similar school nationally. This is a further, more significant decline in performance since the number of higher ability pupils in 1999 were seen to be close to the national average. There is no significant difference between the performance of boys and girls in the subject at Key Stage 1.

101. On the basis of teacher assessments in 2000 teachers made an accurate assessment of the number of pupils that achieved Level 2 or above in the tests, but underestimated this in 1999. In 1999 and in 2000 teachers overestimated the number of pupils that would achieve the higher level 3 in the tests.

102. In the past three years the performance of pupils in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 has declined from being above average in 1997, followed by a peak in performance in 1998, to being seen as well below average in 2000.

103. Standards seen in lessons during the inspection in Key Stage 1 indicate that pupils' performance is broadly in line with national expectations. Pupils in Year 2 are developing an understanding of place value. They can plot numbers on a number line to 60 and can accurately add multiples of 10 to any given numbers. The majority of pupils can count in 2s and some show increasing confidence in counting in 10s. More able pupils are aware of the patterns of numbers when finding number pairs to 20. All pupils are developing the understanding that addition can be done in any order.

104. In the main pupils are making satisfactory progress in their learning of mathematics in Key Stage 1. In Year 1 pupils are developing an understanding of ordinal number. They understand what odd and even numbers mean and can add numbers together to a total of 20. They are refining their skill of measuring and have a good grasp of comparative language.

105. At Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in Year 3; however, this is not maintained in Year 4. In Year 3 pupils are confident in counting in 2s, 3s, and 5s and know addition and subtraction facts to 20. They are beginning to understand that multiplication is repeated addition and are developing the use of brackets in their work on multiplication. Pupils in Year 4 are hesitant in their knowledge of times tables for 3, 5, and 10, and an insecure understanding of the 4 times table. Pupils' progress in Years 5 and 6 is at least satisfactory and in the main good. In Year 5 more able pupils can convert improper fractions into mixed numbers with confidence. They can use a range of calculations to work out long multiplication.

106. The National Numeracy Strategy has been satisfactorily implemented and all pupils experience a daily mathematics lesson, based on the requirements and recommendations of the framework. In the majority of classes this is done at least satisfactorily and in upper Key Stage 2 implementation is of good quality. Where the implementation is less successful it is as a result of teachers not being fully aware of the ability of pupils within the class and not providing relevant differentiated tasks to support them in their learning. This leaves more able pupils not being sufficiently challenged.

107. In all classes the involvement and support offered by Learning Support Assistants is of very good quality and the majority of pupils with special educational needs make good progress as a direct result.

108. The majority of pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to their learning in mathematics and a genuine interest for the subject. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to volunteer contributions during the oral starter session of lessons. They work hard to explain their thinking and the process of their work. Pupils enjoy being accurate in their use of correct mathematical language. Their enjoyment of the subject contributes to a atmosphere of sustained attention in many classes. In a few instances disruptive behaviour and time wasting activities affects the progress of other pupils in the class.

109. In six out of seven lessons teaching of mathematics is at least satisfactory and in three out of six lesson it is good or better. The majority of teachers have at least a satisfactory knowledge of the subject and a clear understanding of the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy. In the best lessons teachers plan effectively, make good use of the different elements of the mathematics lesson, by using the oral and mental starter to consolidate pupils' numeracy skills. Good links are made with previous learning and pupils are given an indication of how the lesson will develop. Clear learning objectives are set within the overall learning objectives for the year group. Pupils are provided with differentiated tasks to suit their level of ability. Less than satisfactory teaching occurs in the upper class in Key Stage 1. In this class the teacher does not have sufficient strategies to plan for challenging pupils and subject knowledge is insecure.

110. The medium term planning for mathematics follows a consistent format and generally acts as a good support. There is some inconsistency in the use of the medium term plan and in some classes insufficient attention has been given to the use of resources and the time-scale for units. The overall assessment arrangements for mathematics are underdeveloped. Teacher have access to performance data for their classes, however there is little evidence that the information is used consistently to inform planning and targeted intervention. Target setting procedures at class and individual level are similarly underdeveloped. The school has not yet developed a portfolio of standards and there is a lack of clarity in relation to standards required at the end of each year and key stage. The use of homework in the subject is inconsistent. In some lessons it supports the work pupils have been undertaking in the class, in other lessons homework is not provided.

111. The subject benefits from the leadership of the deputy headteacher who has taken on the role of subject leader. She is encouraged and supported in her work by the well informed numeracy governor. She has worked hard to implement the national Numeracy Strategy in terms of planning and resourcing the subject adequately. Nevertheless her role remains underdeveloped in terms of assessment and monitoring the quality of teaching and learning. She has made progress in helping teachers to

understand performance data and the need to track progress, however teachers are not consistently using assessment information to inform planning and teaching. However her own work on data analysis and predictions, indicates that the school is confident in achieving its target of 78% of pupils reaching Level 4 or more in the 2001 end of Key Stage 2 tests.

112. Progress since the last inspection has been inconsistent. The significant improvement in pupil performance from 1996-1997 at the end of both Key Stages has not been sustained, although the standards achieved by pupils in the 2000 end of Key Stage 2 tests were above the national average. Standards observed during the inspection are in line with national averages as was the case at the last inspection. The satisfactory to good teaching has been sustained in Key Stage 2, particularly at the upper end of Key Stage 2. However the good to very good teaching that was observed in Key Stage 1 has declined.

The introduction of Learning Support Assistants to all classes has had a positive impact on all pupils' learning, especially those pupils with special educational needs. There is more evidence of investigative and problem solving work particularly in Key Stage 2 and less evidence of the consistent use of commercial schemes. There is evidence of pupils using their numeracy skills in other subject such as science and geography in Key Stage 2. Overall pupils have improved their ability for quick mental recall.

113. Assessment arrangements for the subject remain weak. Marking is especially inconsistent as a means to support pupils in their progress. The use of ICT to support mathematics is underdeveloped.

Points for further action:

114. Ensure that effective strategies are put in place to improve the overall performance of pupils at the end of Key Stage 1, whilst maintaining and improving the performance of pupils in Key Stage 2 through:

- developing an effective system for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning;
- improving the quality of teaching where it is unsatisfactory;
- ensuring that staff are confident and effective at providing differentiated independent tasks;
- ensuring that staff are given appropriate strategies for managing the disruptive behaviour of some pupils;
- ensuring that planning for the Numeracy Strategy is consistent;
- improving the overall arrangements for assessment;
- implementing effective strategies for target setting at class, group and individual level; and
- improving the quality and consistency of homework in the subject.

SCIENCE

115. In the Year 2000 national tests in science at the age of eleven the school achieved well above the national average. However, the results from year to year are not consistent and have shown great variation, this resulting from variations in the ability of cohorts of pupils and changes in teaching staff. Despite this, over the last four years attainment at the school in science has risen slightly more than in other schools nationally. The standard of science observed during the inspection is in line with the national average but pupils are keen to do well in science and a number are working through commercial revision guides both at school and at home. Because the science teaching is consistently sound across the school such revision is putting these pupils in a strong position in terms of the 2001 national tests.

116. At the higher level results are above average and have been so for the last few years. Several teachers have attended training which focussed on the particular requirements of the higher levels in science and teachers, particularly at the upper end of Key Stage 2, build into lessons opportunities for the more able pupils to cover the more advanced work.

117. Standards in the Key Stage 1 national assessments in science are in line with national averages. They have been at this level for several years. In the Year 2000 national assessments no pupils achieved the higher levels although the previous year's results at this higher level were above average. The problem in Year 2000 related to teachers' lack of understanding of the requirements of the National Curriculum at the higher levels.

118. The standards observed during the inspection are in line with the national averages at the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils show appropriate knowledge and understanding of science across the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. For example, by the age of 7 most know the basic parts of the body, they are aware that there are many sources of light and know that some materials are manufactured and others are natural. By the age of 11 most can undertake an investigation to compare everyday materials on the basis of their material properties and record their results on a computer generated table. They understand about temperature and understand how the position of the sun appears to change during the day. They have understanding of reversible and non-reversible changes. Pupils have a good understanding of technical vocabulary which supports the quality of their work. Although pupils' work in science was not directly observed in every year group, the scheme of work and the teachers' medium term planning show how the requirements of the National Curriculum for Science are met over Key Stages 1 and 2.

119. A good proportion of the work involves the pupils in practical and investigative work and this enables them to develop the skills of experimental and investigative science. By the age of 7 pupils are able to investigate the way a ball bounces. By eleven they can make sensible predictions of the speed of dissolving at different temperatures, they are aware that only one variable should be changed at a time and they are able to measure temperature and speed accurately. They show awareness of health and safety issues.

120. Across Key Stages 1 and 2 the quality of pupils' recording of their investigations is below expectations. This relates to a lack of guidance for teachers in the progressive development of recording investigations and the expectations for recording at the different ages.

121. The teaching of science is satisfactory at Key Stages 1 and 2. Although teaching was not observed in the Year 3 and Year 5 classes, discussions with pupils together with the scrutiny of pupils' work and of teachers' planning indicates that teaching is satisfactory in these classes. The lessons are generally successful because they are well planned to teach specific objectives. The school follows the scheme of work devised by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority and this is providing a most supportive structure in terms of lesson objectives and teaching approach.

122. The best science teaching at Key Stage 1 involves the pupils in practical discovery. In the Year 1 class the pupils made a tour of the school looking for different sources of light rather than simply learn these from a book. This motivated the pupils and generated good quality discussion between the teacher and pupils. This in turn led to effective learning. In less successful lessons opportunities for an investigative approach are not taken with consequent effects on the quality of the learning and pupils' interest.

123. After a year when no pupils reached the higher National Curriculum levels the Key Stage 1 teachers are building into the work activities which offer scope for pupils to develop their knowledge and skills to the more advanced levels. In some cases these activities are offered as an extension after the tasks for the whole class have been completed rather than being integral to the complete learning experience. In one class few children completed the basic work and therefore few were able to access the more advanced work.

124. The teaching at Key Stage 2 is consistently satisfactory across all year groups. The teachers make every effort to teach science through an investigative and experimental approach and the work builds carefully on the pupils' previous experiences. Appropriate attention is given to the development of technical terms which the pupils use with confidence in their work. Skills are carefully taught. For example, in Year 4 pupils were introduced to the thermometer in a whole class grouping in order to explain the key points. They then did an activity on paper of reading thermometers before being asked to make readings from real thermometers in small groups. The preparatory work equipped the pupils well for the practical measuring task and as a result the quality of the pupils' measurement was good. On occasion opportunities are missed to develop the pupils' skills at this key stage. For example, pupils are not always given the opportunity to think of the apparatus that they might need for an investigation or how results might be recorded in a table. Sometimes they do not have the opportunity to repeat practical work where the results appear anomalous or produce a graph to represent their experimental findings.

125. Opportunities for pupils to reach more advanced levels are built into the work of Key Stage 2 classes, particularly the upper classes. For example, after structured class work Year 6 pupils had the opportunity to investigate by themselves the effect of changing another variable in their dissolving investigation. The science work is also adapted for less able pupils. These pupils also receive good support from learning assistants in a number of science lessons.

126. Opportunities for revision and consolidation of previous work are provided by classroom displays. For example, in Year 6 there is the opportunity to look through a binocular microscope to observe crystals produced as part of earlier work.

127. The subject leader has made a contribution to improving performance through monitoring the school's results and through a programme last year of monitoring the quality of science teaching throughout the school. This identified the need to develop the teaching at the higher National Curriculum levels. Action on this has led to increasing percentages of eleven-year old pupils achieving the higher levels.

128. Standards at both key stages are similar to those observed at the previous inspection. The teaching quality is also similar to that previously observed. At Key Stage 1 the effective questioning and explanation of work identified in the previous report continue to be areas of strength. At Key Stage 2 there has been a marked improvement in teaching through an investigative approach. Resources for the higher Key Stage 2 levels noted as a weakness in the previous report are now satisfactory. The teaching is more consistent in quality now than it was. Previous issues relating to the implementation of the policy at Key Stage 1 and progression at Key Stage 2 have been overcome. The situation of no children achieving the higher levels at seven highlighted in the previous report repeated itself in the 2000 assessments. This is an issue although in the intervening years pupils have achieved the higher level. For example, in 1999 the number of pupils reaching the higher level was at the national average. Observation during the current inspection shows that teachers have taken some steps to provide opportunities for pupils to reach the higher levels.

Points for further action:

129.

- Increase the number of pupils achieving the higher National Curriculum levels at Key Stage 1 to at least the national average by ensuring that teachers are aware of the requirements of these levels.
- Improve the quality of recording of investigations.
- Ensure that science is taught in all Key Stage 1 science lessons through an investigative approach where this is possible.
- Ensure that maximum opportunities are given to develop pupils' investigative skills

ART AND DESIGN

130. Only a few lessons were seen during the inspection. The evidence from these lessons, observation of pupils' work around the school and in the art portfolio, reviews of the medium term plan, and a discussion with the subject leader, show that the majority of pupils achieve the standards expected. These standards are similar to those reported at the last inspection.

131. Year 1 pupils successfully use different materials to record their ideas of bonfire night. They show confidence in the use of paint and glue, and can use wax crayon for rubbings of autumn leaves. Some pupils produce carefully constructed pictures of a bonfire by using matchsticks and fabric. In Year 4 pupils are able to create a multi-media collage on the theme of transport. In this lesson pupils with behavioural problems were well supported by the learning support assistant and the class teacher, and made good progress with their work. Year 6 pupils design, decorate, and make hats in different styles. However, some pupils became frustrated with their work, as the designs were not sufficiently detailed to enable them to resolve the problems they met when making the hats out of card. The year 6 class has

made some very effective designs using the computer by printing and reprinting different shades of colour. This work is based on the painting of a snail by Matisse. Each Key Stage 2 pupil has a sketch-book, but, overall, the standard of drawing in these books is unsatisfactory and shows little attention to detailed observation.

132. Teaching is satisfactory overall and in some lessons it is good. In a good Year 1 lesson, the class teacher was well organised and resources were well prepared. At the beginning of the lesson the techniques that the pupils were going to learn and use were explained clearly. As the lesson progressed the teacher talked to pupils about their work and encouraged them to improve. Lessons are well organised and managed. Pupils enjoy the subject and are generally well behaved and sensible. The medium term plans follow the QCA guidelines for art and the teachers' short-term plans are based on these.

133. At the time of the inspection in 1996 the school did not have a scheme of work for art. By 1998 a policy and a long term plan for the subject was in place. The policy was updated last year and now includes statements on art in the early years and how information technology (IT) should be part of the art curriculum. The school has adopted the QCA guidelines for art. The organisation and the planning of the art curriculum have improved since the previous inspection.

134. The subject leader for art is enthusiastic and well qualified. She has developed her expertise in art by attending courses and the outcomes of these are shared with teachers and the governing body. The subject leader keeps a photographic record of samples of work from each class. This record shows that work of famous artists is used to inspire the pupil's own work, and that good quality work is produced by the pupils using paint, clay, textiles and observational drawing. The subject leader has spent some time observing teaching and learning in each classroom, but needs more time to follow up these visits and to track pupil attainment. The school is adequately resourced for art. The subject leader is building up a useful collection of reference materials for the teachers to use.

Points for further action.

135.

- Improve the standard of observational drawing in the sketch-books.
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the revised National Curriculum.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

136. Only two lessons were observed during the inspection, both in Key Stage 2. On the basis of this evidence, together with the scrutiny of teachers' plans, displays of pupils' work around the school, photographic evidence of completed tasks, informal discussion with pupils and with the subject leader, attainment overall at both key stages is satisfactory.

137. Some of the work of pupils at the upper end of Key Stage 2 has close links with the art and design curriculum. Pupils design hats and use a range of materials and techniques to create a finished product. Discussion with pupils shows that they are able to evaluate designs and products and to suggest modifications. Moreover, they speak confidently about work from previous years.

138. Pupils enjoy the subject, not least when they follow a simple recipe to bake a standard biscuit. The classroom assistant works well with a small group, paying due attention to hygiene and safety. Pupils

apply intellectual and creative skills to thinking about and creating a biscuit for a special occasion. Good links are made with homework; pupils are expected to test out their biscuit design.

139. Pupils in lower Key Stage 2 have the opportunity to examine a range of photo frames before designing their own. They are able to measure and cut accurately and to make their photo mounts stand. The work is well structured by the teacher, who provides a story-board for the pupils and takes care to recap on each stage of the process. This ensures that any pupils who may have been absent are not disadvantaged. Pupils are able to talk about how they overcame difficulties, but are unable to explain some of the vocabulary used by the teacher, such as 'evaluation of design'.

140. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are beginning to investigate levers and they know that these are used in products such as scissors. By the end of the key stage they are able to cut a range of materials with reasonable accuracy and use split pins to create moving parts. They can also use a needle and thread to stitch simple glove puppets and add facial features to create expressions. Photographic evidence includes other examples of satisfactory work covering the various elements of the programmes of study.

141. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but could be improved, for example, by ensuring that pupils understand some of the terms associated with the subject such as 'evaluate'. More opportunities for pupils to talk during whole class discussion would sustain the interest of the whole class and inform assessment of their progress. The use of sentence starters would help younger pupils complete written tasks more successfully. The time allocated to the teaching of the subject is adequate overall, with some practical elements being completed at home. Pupils enjoy applying their skills to design and make tasks such as an egg-cup competition. This work shows very good application of intellectual and creative skills.

142. Since the previous inspection, an enthusiastic and knowledgeable subject leader has been appointed. She monitors the pupils' work through the scrutiny of teachers' plans and classroom displays and supports colleagues informally. The subject leader has a strong commitment to her professional development and is keen to develop the subject but there are no planned opportunities for her to observe lessons and share her expertise.

Points for further action:

143.

- Develop the role of the subject leader to include monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the subject and the standards achieved.
- Check that assessment of pupils' attainment informs teachers' plans.
- Ensure that the skills outlined in the scheme of work are taught progressively across both key stages so that all teachers can build on pupils' previous learning, and
- Develop further the work of ICT to support the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

144. Only a few lessons were observed during the inspection and most of these were in Key Stage 2. Additional evidence was collected from looking at samples of work in both key stages, informal discussions with pupils in their final year of Key Stage 2, classroom display and discussion with the subject leader. On the basis of this evidence, attainment is satisfactory at the end of both Key Stage 1 and 2. Pupils' attitude to geography is positive. They are enthusiastic, well motivated and particularly enjoy opportunities when they can work collaboratively on sharing fieldwork experience or outcomes of enquiry activities. Pupils apply themselves well to tasks, and ask relevant questions in order to clarify their understanding of geographical concepts.

145. In the reception class pupils discuss confidently their observations of the weather. They are able to interpret weather symbols and select those which represent each day's symbols.

146. Pupils in Year 2 are developing their enquiry skills through exploring the features of the contrasting locality of an island. Good links are made with the English curriculum through the choice of an appropriate storybook, which acts as the main stimulus for this investigation. Pupils can compare the similarities and differences between their own environment and that of a remote Scottish Island, which they can locate on the map of the United Kingdom. They are developing appropriate geographical vocabulary such as island, mainland, bay, croft, sea and ocean as a result of this enquiry. Pupils are also developing their map making skills through their efforts to produce a map of their journey to school. They can name the countries of the United Kingdom.

147. Pupils in Year 6, in their studies of rivers, are confident in their use of key words such as meander, tributary and source. They can relate their learning to the local features of the River Chelmer. Good links are made with the science curriculum through the work on the water cycle. Pupils show confidence in explaining the water cycle, using appropriate terms, such as evaporation and condensation as a result of practical experimentation. Pupils can name the capital cities of the United Kingdom, identify European countries on a map and name oceans of the world.

148. The quality of teaching overall is satisfactory. The teaching in upper Key Stage 2 is satisfactory, however the quality of teaching throughout the other year groups is inconsistent and ranges from unsatisfactory teaching to satisfactory teaching. This inconsistency occurs in both key stages. Where teaching is satisfactory teachers follow carefully the scheme of work for geography. Opportunities are taken for pupils to learn from first hand experience. Lessons are set within the context of previous lessons so that pupils are able to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Teachers use good questioning skills and introduce pupils to appropriate geographical language. They organise opportunities for pupils to develop the skill of enquiry through the provision of good quality secondary source material to support their work. For example pupils were confident and selective in their use of secondary source material to help them with their follow up work from a field trip to Harwich. Teachers have high expectations in relation to presentation of work and set clear learning objectives for the lesson.

149. Where teaching is less successful, teachers have an insecure knowledge of the subject and struggle with making the scheme of work accessible for pupils. There is a low expectation in terms of the presentation of work and tasks are not always appropriately differentiated for all ability groups. Pupils do not always finish their work and are unclear of the purpose for particular activities. For example, pupils who were investigating the human influence on the environment over a period of time could identify differences but were not at the stage of thinking about the consequences of human actions.

150. The subject leader has recently reviewed the policy for geography, but this is not implemented fully. The scheme of work is comprehensive and is appropriately detailed and supportive for teachers to implement the curriculum well. There are clear expectations related to the amount of time that needs to be allocated to the subject, along with specific learning objectives for each year group, the range of activities and resources required. The subject leader has been proactive in purchasing good quality of resources for the subject, however she is aware of the need to develop the resource bank even further in line with the scheme of work. The scheme of work has a newly built in assessment process at the end of each unit of work, but there is no evidence of this being put into practice as yet.

151. There is some evidence that the quality of provision for geography has improved since the last inspection and the standards of attainment are satisfactory. There are now clear time allocations for the units within the scheme of work and there are good links identified with other National Curriculum subjects. Resource allocation has been improved in terms of book provision and the range of maps available for both key stages. The school has maintained its commitment to providing good quality field trips for all pupils in accordance with the requirements of the scheme of work.

152. Where the provision fails to have made significant improvement it is in relation to the consistency of good quality teaching throughout both key stages and the improvement of standards. There is still a need to further develop the range of ICT resources. Pupils' map skills do not appear to have improved since the last inspection. The subject leader has worked hard to improve the quality of provision within the subject, however her monitoring and evaluation role is underdeveloped.

Points for further action:

153.

- Develop the role of the subject leader to incorporate the responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the subject and the standards achieved by pupils.
- Improve the quality of teaching so that there is consistency of good practice in both key stages
- Ensure that the new assessment procedures for geography are fully implemented so that assessment practice informs future planning.
- Produce an exemplification of standards portfolio for the subject to help teachers develop an understanding of high expectations for pupil performance at the end of each key stage
- Continue to resource the scheme of work in general terms and more specifically in terms of ICT resources.

HISTORY

154. Pupils' attainment in history is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are able to draw on a range of sources to make accurate comparisons of school life in Victorian times with the present day. In another Key Stage 2 class, pupils show a good understanding of the differences between Tudor monarchs and their influence on people's lives. Video material helps younger pupils in Key Stage 2 to develop a good understanding of life as a Celt or Roman and to give reasoned arguments about which they would prefer to be.

155. Good opportunities to learn from first-hand experience are provided in Key Stage 1 when the teacher supplies train sets belonging to different family members. Pupils are keen to explore these artefacts and the lesson helps to develop their enquiry skills by leading pupils to consider how toys have changed over time. They are then able to use this knowledge to order the artefacts on a simple time-line.

156. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to good. Teachers' own enjoyment of history, well-structured lessons and interesting resources contribute to good teaching and pupil attainment. Good use of differentiated activities in some classes and the sharing of learning intentions enables all pupils to make progress. Teachers pay good attention to the development of basic skills for example, pupils' ability to take notes from a passage read aloud is supported by the teacher's emphasis on key words.

157. Each class has an adequate stock of basic resources to support their units of work. The annual school journey and other educational visits to places such as Lullingstone Hall, Oaklands Museum, the Victorian classroom at the Braintree Museum and Castle Hedingham are used very effectively to support study units. History makes a significant contribution to pupils' social and moral development, for example when pupils compare their school life with that of Victorian children or the influence of Tudor monarchs on people's lives.

158. The subject leader is enthusiastic and knowledgeable. She monitors standards in the subject by looking at pupils' work and teachers' plans. A small number of classroom observations have been carried out and some staff meeting time has been allocated to checking that key elements are being covered.

159. Since the last inspection the school has reviewed the time allocated to the teaching of history and it is now sufficient to cover the programme of study. Parents have taken part in an evening of historical activities. Some additional resources have been purchased, including videos, books, CD ROMs and artefacts. The QCA scheme of work for history has been adopted and medium-term plans show a wide range of activities which are designed to build systematically on previous skills.

Points for further action:

160.

- Develop the monitoring role of the subject leader by making it more systematic.
- Identify assessment opportunities and challenge in all year group plans in order to extend more able pupils into the higher levels.
- Further develop the use of ICT to support historical understanding in both key stages.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

161. Pupils' attainment in information technology is in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages.

162. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have appropriate experiences of information technology and have developed skills in line with expectations across the National Curriculum Programme of Study. For example, they are able enter data about their favourite crisps and produce a block graph of their results and investigate hair colour displaying their results as a pictogram. They are able to manipulate geometric shapes to produce pictures. They are able to gather information from a variety of sources which they use to support their work in literacy. They word process text and add a design surround.

163. At Key Stage 2 information technology is used to support the curriculum across almost all areas of the curriculum. By the end of the key stage pupils have acquired the skills and competencies outlined in the National Curriculum across the prescribed areas. For example, they are able to use the computer to produce artwork in the style of Matisse which exhibits good use of design and colour. They are able to undertake mathematical investigations using a spreadsheet and combine text and pictures to support their work in history. Pupils are able to access the internet confidently to gather information to support class work. They use computer programs to control variables in a program which models the actions of forces in science.

164. Although the basic requirements of the National Curriculum are currently being met at both key stages there are a number of opportunities for using information technology across the curriculum that are not currently being exploited sufficiently. In the Year 5 class pupils were typing out plays that they had previously written. Although they learned to set the work out in columns, to use bold text and to use a spell check they missed a valuable opportunity to compose their plays on the computer. In the Year 6 class the opportunity was not taken in a science lesson to use a computer to produce a line graph from the pupils' measurements of the rate of cooling of a liquid.

165. The teaching of information technology at both key stages is satisfactory. Teachers teach the skills of information technology alongside subject knowledge and skills. In the most effective teaching observed at the school information technology enabled the pupils to achieve a higher standard of work in their curriculum studies than might otherwise have been possible. For example, in the Year 6 class pupils used a graphics program to simulate the style of the artist Matisse and produced work of a high standard that was strong in both colour and design.

166. The school has an eight computer bay within the staffroom which is being well used to develop the pupils' skills. Classes are timetabled for a session each week in the computer bay and also take the opportunity at other times to use the facility. However, it is rather cramped and because half the class have to sit nearby undertaking other activities it means that teachers are unable to give the information technology group their full attention. Where learning assistants work alongside the teacher this eases the problem somewhat. Some good work was observed when a learning assistant brought a group to the information technology room to undertake their group work as part of the literacy hour. Pupils work in pairs in the computer room and good quality discussion takes place between them. The teaching observed in the computer bay was generally on a one to one basis with the teacher moving from computer to computer to offer support. Whole group teaching would be more efficient in some cases but the school does not have the projection facilities or large screen monitor required for this. The school recognises the limitations of the small computer bay and plans for a new information technology room are currently being drawn up

167. There is variation in the skills and understanding of the teachers in relation to information technology. There has recently been extensive staff training in information technology under a government scheme and the majority of teachers now have sufficient understanding and skills to use a range of basic programs to support work in their year group.

168. The school is in the process of moving over to the scheme of work for information technology developed by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority. This scheme offers a good structure for the teaching of the subject and following it ensures that all aspects of the National Curriculum are appropriately covered. The subject leader has made a thorough evaluation of information technology across the school and uses this information to guide future developments in terms of staff training and purchase of resources. The school has a basic collection of software that enables the National Curriculum requirements to be met. This collection is being expanded all the time.

169. A number of pupils have gained experience of information technology at home and some have sophisticated skills. These skills are well used in some cases. In the Year 5 class pupils are producing a homework project on the planets as part of their science work. Where pupils have used computers for all or part of this work the standard of the information technology work is sometimes very high. In one specific case the project booklet includes good quality word processing, the incorporation of text and images from the internet and computer generated graphs. The last report mentioned that the school does not take sufficient account of the skill levels that pupils have acquired at home. In many respects this criticism still holds because there is little evidence of pupils working at differentiated levels of information technology in the classroom. In a number of cases the work is not sufficiently challenging to those pupils who had already acquired skills at home beyond those required in the lesson. Pupils enjoy their work in information technology, they work hard and co-operate well in pairs.

170. Standards in information technology are similar to those observed at the previous inspection. Since the previous inspection the use of information technology has improved in a number of respects although a small number of the weaknesses identified at this time remain. The use of computers to draw graphs at Key Stage 2 was identified as a weakness in the previous report. Progress has been made in this area and pupils are using the computer for graph work. Although the use of control was not observed at this inspection, discussions with pupils and reference to the school's planning indicates that the shortcomings in this area have been overcome. The computer is now being used for problem solving activities and there are opportunities to access CD ROM. Subject plans do now detail the use of information technology and improvements have been made in terms of assessment. The insufficient release time of the subject leader to support teachers in classrooms continues as an issue although the limited time currently available has been used to very good effect. Insufficient account is still taken of pupils out of school experiences with information technology.

Points for further action:

171

- Maximise opportunities to develop the skills of information technology when using the computer as a tool to support the work in subjects.
- Consider the acquisition of technology that supports group or class teaching in information technology.
- Recognise pupils who have acquired information technology experience and skills outside of school and ensure that classroom work further develops these skills.
- Provide the opportunity for the subject leader to support teachers in the classroom.

MUSIC

172. Only a few lessons were seen during the inspection. The evidence from these lessons, observations in whole school assemblies, reviews of medium and short term planning, and a discussion with the subject leader, show that the majority of pupils achieve the expected standards. Standards are now more even across the school than they were at the time of the last inspection. However, unlike the last inspection, there were no lessons seen where the standards exceeded national expectations, nor were lessons seen in which the standards were below national expectations.

173. The standard of singing in whole school assemblies is good. Pupils sing enthusiastically and their diction is clear. Almost all the youngest pupils in the school know the words of the hymns and join in with the actions which describe the words. This is an improvement on the standard of singing seen in assemblies during the last inspection in 1996.

174. Pupils in year 1 are developing their skills of auditory discrimination by identifying different sounds from a tape recording. They are also able to follow instructions and change dynamics while play unpitched percussion instruments. In this lesson a pupil with special educational needs was actively encouraged to take part in all aspects of the lesson and played successfully a rhythm on an instrument to the whole class. In year 5 pupils are working towards recording a musical interpretation of a 'journey into space'. They are beginning to develop their ideas about musical form and structure by working in groups to compose simple pieces of music using pitched and unpitched percussion instruments. In a year 4 music lesson, pupils are learning to listen carefully to a tape of 'The Carnival of the Animals' and then discuss their interpretation of the music.

175. In the few lessons seen the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and in one lesson it was good. Where teaching is good the teacher plans the lesson well, uses correct musical terminology when explaining the task to the pupils, and the lesson is conducted in a lively, enthusiastic manner. Pupils enjoy music lessons. They are keen to take part in group activities and listen attentively and critically while other pupils are performing.

176. When the school was last inspected the school did not have a music curriculum that showed how skills should be developed from year to year as pupils progress through the school. Following an in-service training day led by the LEA music adviser, the school decided to adopt a commercially produced scheme. The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) guidelines for music have recently replaced this as a scheme of work. A 'curriculum map' has been written to show how all the elements of the music curriculum are to be covered. The quality of curriculum planning has therefore improved since the last inspection.

177. The school does not have a specialist for music, but the subject leader has worked hard to improve the quality of music. When last inspected the resources for music were limited. Since then new instruments have been purchased and there are now sufficient instruments for whole class lessons. However, some of these instruments are in a poor condition and need to be replaced. There are relatively few instruments that can be used to support pupil's understanding of music from different cultures. The subject leader recognises that there is a need to widen the repertoire of music from different cultures, and intends to buy new CDs when money is available.

178. 11 pupils have individual music lessons given by visiting music specialists. Keyboard, violin, flute, piano and recorder tuition is given to these pupils. As well as playing at the Christmas concert, these pupils have occasional opportunities to play together and to perform to the whole school. This did not happen when the school was last inspected. Year 2 and year 5 pupils take part in the area music festival each year and the school has also provided actors and dancers for this event.

Points for further action;

179

- Monitor and evaluate the introduction of the revised national curriculum for music.
- Increase the resources that can be used to develop pupils' understanding of music from different cultures.
- replace the instruments that are in a poor condition.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

180. Only four lessons of Physical Education (PE) were seen during the inspection. There were no lessons observed in Years 5 and 6. Additional evidence was collected through scrutiny of plans for PE, the portfolio for the subject and discussion with the subject leader. This evidence indicates that attainment is average at the end of both key stages.

181. In dance at Key Stage 1 pupils move in imaginative ways and respond well to the stimulus of music. They explore different movements in order to represent the animals and birds in the Rainforest. Pupils are very enthusiastic in their work.

182. In gymnastics pupils in lower Key Stage 2 are developing the skill of linking movements into sequences. When working on apparatus they are developing confidence in and control of their actions. They are aware of the importance of preparing their bodies for physical activity, through warming up their muscles. In games pupils are developing skills and tactics for playing the game of hockey, such as dribbling and passing the ball. Pupils in Key Stage 2 enjoy PE. They are enthusiastic and show a willingness to work well in teams. They work hard to refine their skills through careful attention to the teacher's directions.

183. All pupils wear appropriate clothing for indoor lessons. Most pupils are appropriately dressed for games lessons outside.

184. Overall the standard of teaching in PE is satisfactory. In some lessons teaching is very good, however some unsatisfactory teaching was observed. The best teaching is where teachers have a very good understanding of the PE curriculum and are enthusiastic about the subject. Teaching builds on pupils' previous learning, clear learning objectives are set and lessons provide pupils with opportunities to refine skills and develop new ones. High expectations are set for behaviour throughout the lesson. Pupils are encouraged to show responsibility for getting out and putting away the apparatus and equipment, whilst being made aware of the safety aspects of the subject. Learning Support Assistants become actively involved in lessons and provide very good support for pupils with special educational needs.

185. Where teaching is less than satisfactory it is as a result of teachers' insecure subject knowledge and a failure to plan effectively for the lesson. Insufficient attention is given to the effective management of pupil behaviour, which results in pupils not giving their full attention to the directions of the teacher, which can be potentially dangerous. Learning objectives are not made clear to the pupils, tasks are unchallenging and pupils are given insufficient time to assess and refine their work.

186. The overall standards for PE remain the same as when the subject was last inspected, in that they are satisfactory at the end of each key stage. The curriculum for PE has developed well since the last inspection. There is now an up to date policy and comprehensive scheme of work for the subject, which outlines the time-scales for each unit in each year group. Planning for the subject is secure and in sufficient depth in most units with the exception of some short-term planning for dance. The scheme of work includes clear learning objectives for each unit, along with suggested activities, vocabulary for pupils to know and resources to be used. Lessons now include a planned warm up and recovery session. The school continues to invest in specialist support for the teaching of swimming and some games. There has been an improvement in resources for PE, particularly in terms of games equipment for both key stages. Pupils are able to take part in extra curricular team activities as well as awards schemes for gymnastics.

Where improvement has been less successful it has been in terms of the implementation of the dance unit of the curriculum. The school still uses commercial tapes for dance, which can be limiting if lessons are not adapted to suit the needs of individual classes. Pupils still need to develop the skill of assessing their own and each other's work in all aspects of the PE curriculum.

187. The subject leader for PE is knowledgeable and very enthusiastic. She has been proactive in attending training courses for herself and is willing to share her expertise with colleagues. Her efforts to develop specialist support, extra curricular activities and resources for the subject are evident. There is a portfolio for PE, which documents extra curricular events in the subject but this needs to be further developed by including exemplars of standards in each unit for both key stages. There is a new assessment system for the subject, which is not yet fully implemented. The subject leader's responsibility for monitoring the quality of teaching and learning in the subject is under developed.

Points for further action:

188.

Raise the overall attainment in the subject through;

- the development of a consistent and comprehensive monitoring programme;
- the provision of support where poor teaching needs to be improved;
- the expectation of pupils to evaluate their own and others' work during lesson;
- the improvement of the overall quality of the dance curriculum and especially the quality of short term planning for dance;
- the development of an exemplification of standards portfolio for PE; and
- the implementation of an effective assessment system.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

189. Religious and collective worship are reported separately under the section 23 inspection schedule.