

INSPECTION REPORT

HOLY TRINITY CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Halstead

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115066

Headteacher: Miss M Ryan

Reporting inspector: Mr C Ifould
20962

Dates of inspection: 09 - 12 December 2002

Inspection number: 247529

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Beridge Road Halstead Essex
Postcode:	C09 1JH
Telephone number:	01787 472096
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs R Mayes
Date of previous inspection:	22 May 2000

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20962	Mr C Ifould	Registered inspector	Science Information and communication technology History Educational inclusion English as an additional language	How high are standards? a) The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
14083	Mr A Anderson	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) 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?
8139	Ms B Johnstone	Team inspector	Religious education Music Foundation Stage	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
20534	Ms N Perry	Team inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs	
22669	Mr T Prosser	Team Inspector	Mathematics Geography Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Holy Trinity is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School for boys and girls aged 4-11. It is of average size with 225 full- and 17 part-time pupils on roll. Only four of these are from non-white British backgrounds. Two have English as an additional language, but neither is at an early stage of language acquisition. The school catchment has both private and council housing, and part of it is recognised as an area of social disadvantage. Nine per cent of the pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is about average. Twenty-one per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs, which is also about average. This includes just three with statements. Until quite recently, children have entered the school with relatively low standards but those entering in 2002 had broadly average attainments. The proportion of pupils joining and leaving the school during term-time is becoming relatively high.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education. Attainments in English, mathematics and science are well below national expectations by Year 6. Although more than a third of teaching is good, a quarter is less than satisfactory. An effective substantive headteacher has been in post for only just under two terms, following several temporary headteachers, the last of whom was in post for a year. There has been a full staff of permanent teachers only since September after many recent changes. The majority of subject leaders have only recently been appointed, as have most of the governing body. While some key improvements have been made recently, with a high level of support from the local authority, the school is not yet enabling its pupils to achieve the standards of attainment and behaviour that they should and gives unsatisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Good teaching and learning for children aged under five.
- Effective links and good quality information for parents, particularly about pupils' progress.
- Procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare, and for monitoring and supporting their personal development.
- Procedures for monitoring and improving attendance.

What could be improved

- Standards of attainment by Year 6 in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT), and by Year 2 in English; the action taken to meet the school's targets; the effectiveness of strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy skills.
- Standards of teaching and learning; the contribution of staff with management responsibilities, including their monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching, and induction of staff new to the school; the effectiveness of the use of new technology to support teaching and learning.
- Pupils' understanding of the impact of their actions on others; the behaviour of a small but significant minority of pupils; provision for their spiritual development; pupils' concentration and independence, and their knowledge of their own learning.
- The adequacy of the hall used for assemblies, physical education and meals.

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

In accordance with section 13 (7) of the School Inspections Act 1996, I am of the opinion, and Her Majesty's Chief Inspector agrees, that special measures are required in relation to this school.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in May 2000, when it was found to be underachieving. The areas identified for improvement included: standards in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2; the development of pupils' information technology (IT) skills; the presentation and marking of pupils' work; and, links between strategic management and finances. Financial management is now good. There has been some improvement in pupils' IT skills since a computer suite was installed but this is not yet sufficient to bring pupils' attainments up to national expectations. Marking and presentation remain a concern, and standards by Year 6 have declined. In addition, the quality of

teaching and some pupils' behaviour have worsened. There has been insufficient improvement since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	2000	2001	2002	2002	
English	E	D	E	E*	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E very low E*
Mathematics	D	C	E	E*	
Science	D	E	E	E*	

Standards by the end of Year 6 have declined since the last inspection; the E* rating means that results were in the lowest five per cent nationally. The school did not meet its statutory targets. In National Curriculum tests for Year 2 in 2002, results in reading, writing and mathematics were all similar to the national average. This represents a decline in reading and writing standards over time but an improvement in mathematics. Most Reception children are achieving well and pupils in Years 1 to 4 are achieving satisfactorily. Many of those in Years 5 and 6 are not achieving as well as they should.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory: most pupils are keen to learn and like school, but a minority are not as well motivated and sometimes hinder learning.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory: most pupils conduct themselves responsibly, but a significant minority exhibit unacceptable behaviour at times.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory: most are courteous, responsible and form good relationships with adults and other pupils. However, many allow themselves to be distracted and do not consider the effect that this can have on others.
Attendance	Unsatisfactory: authorised absence is above the national average.

Standards of behaviour are reported as having declined significantly soon after the last inspection. This has been rectified for the most part but there remain a significant number of pupils whose behaviour can be very challenging, and a tendency among some of their classmates to be influenced when this happens and not think about how this is affecting their own and others' learning.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory

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.

There have been 23 changes in teaching staff in the last two years, including five changes in headteacher. This has contributed to the overall decline in teaching quality since the last inspection, although the good teaching of children in the Reception class continues to be a strength of the school. Some teachers have high expectations of pupils' attainments and behaviour, and manage their classes well. Others do not challenge and manage their pupils as well; their planning is not as effective or as well informed by their ongoing assessments of the pupils' learning. A general weakness is in the development of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology knowledge and the use of these skills in other subjects.

English and mathematics are taught satisfactorily as subjects. The school meets the needs of most of its pupils satisfactorily, but the oldest are not achieving as well as they should because of the disruption to their teaching and the poor behaviour of some in recent times. Most pupils' independence is not encouraged sufficiently, and this includes their knowledge of their own learning. The majority make an effort to learn and contribute to their lessons.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory: the school meets statutory requirements for teaching the National Curriculum and religious education.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory: these pupils have individual education plans and suitable support to meet their learning needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory: the very few whose home language is not English have an acceptable command of the language and progress as well as their classmates.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall: pupils' spiritual development in lessons is unsatisfactory because they are given too few opportunities to reflect on and understand matters of importance. Their moral, social and cultural development is sound.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall: procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare and for monitoring and promoting their personal development are good. Consistent and useful assessment and recording of pupils' academic attainments applies only to English, mathematics and science.

The pupils now benefit from a long-term plan that maps out their learning throughout the school. A good range of educational visits, a satisfactory programme of after-school activities, and French lessons for Year 6 enhance the curriculum. First aid and health and safety arrangements are very good. The school has satisfactory links with parents and provides them with good information about its work. A parent-teacher association provides good support and many parents help their children with homework regularly.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The sound leadership by the headteacher and some key staff is not yet matched by all those with management responsibilities, some of whom need training and opportunity to fulfil these. Many are new in post.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory: although many are new to the role, governors carry out their responsibilities effectively.
The school's evaluation of	Satisfactory: the school knows its strengths and weaknesses, and

its performance	senior staff and governors are developing more systematic procedures.
The strategic use of resources	Staffing and most accommodation and resources are used satisfactorily but class computers are especially under employed.

The school is adequately staffed and resourced. Some classrooms and the playing field are good resources. New classrooms to replace one of the temporary buildings are due soon. The outdoor area for the under fives and the playground for Years 1 and 2 are less than ideal, and the hall used by the school is located inconveniently and provides inadequate accommodation. Those responsible for financial management apply principles of best value in their budgeting and spending decisions.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like going to school, are expected to work hard and do their best, and become more mature and responsible. • The approachability of the headteacher and teaching staff, and the quality of teaching. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision for extra-curricular activities. • Ways of working with the school and better information about how well their children are getting on. • The behaviour of some pupils.

The inspection team considers that, while the range of extra-curricular activities for the older pupils is satisfactory, there is too little provided for younger ones. The team found that the school provides a good range of information for parents, and opportunities for them to meet and discuss their child's progress. The team agrees that some pupils' behaviour needs further improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The proportion of the pupils attaining the standards expected by the end of Year 6 was well below the national average in English, mathematics and science in 2002. When compared to schools of a similar nature, the results in all three subjects were among the lowest five per cent in the country. Results for this age group have been in decline since the last inspection. The proportion of the pupils attaining higher than is expected in these three core subjects was also well below that found in other schools. Girls have generally outperformed boys.
2. The proportion of those in Year 2 attaining the standards expected for their age in national tests in reading, writing and mathematics in 2002 were the same as the national average but well below those found in similar schools. From a high point just after the last inspection, results in reading and writing have declined. Results in mathematics have improved. Teachers' assessments of standards in science by the end of Year 2 were well below those found in other schools. The proportion of the pupils attaining higher than is expected was broadly the same as the national average in writing, mathematics and science but well below average in reading.
3. Attainments on entry to the school have historically been below average. The last inspection found below average attainment on entry and predicted that those in Reception would attain the expected standard in only three of the six areas of learning for the Foundation Stage. The attainments of those currently in Reception were broadly average on entry and it is expected that the majority will reach the expected standard in all six areas of learning by the end of their Reception year.
4. Standards in speaking and listening are below expectations throughout the school. The pupils' vocabulary and their ability to express themselves, especially of those who are lower attainers, are markedly limited. Many do not listen carefully to each other or to adults. Reading standards are improving and are close to what is expected in most age groups. Many pupils still lack a range of ways to tackle new words. The pupils' writing standards are linked closely to their oral skills. While broadly in line with expectations in Years 1 and 2, few of the older pupils write at sufficient length or use interesting words and sentence or story structures. Standards of handwriting, spelling and presentation, particularly in Years 3 to 6, are well below what is expected.
5. Standards in mathematics are satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and improving in Years 3 and 4. By Years 5 and 6, the higher-attaining pupils have not been challenged sufficiently and there are fewer of these pupils than would be found in most other schools. Standards in science, as in information and communication technology (ICT), are not as good in Years 5 and 6 as elsewhere in the school. The new and more comprehensive schemes of work for these subjects have not yet been taught in their entirety and there remain gaps in the knowledge and skills of the older pupils.
6. Attainments in music and physical education are broadly in line with national expectations throughout the school. Standards in religious education meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus in Years 1 and 2 but fall below requirements by the time that the pupils reach Year 6. In both geography and history, standards are in line with national expectations in Years 1 and 2, and remain so in Years 3 and 4. By Years 5 and 6, standards in history have fallen below expectations, but there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about attainments in geography. There was insufficient evidence to make any judgement about standards in design and technology in the school. Attainments in art are below national expectations throughout the school.
7. The children achieve well in the Foundation Stage in Reception and generally sustain this through Years 1 and 2. In the past, many pupils entered the school with attainments that were below average and achieved well in English and many other subjects. There is a higher standard on

entry to the school now, and the expectations of success in the tests for those in

Year 2 should be raised accordingly. Standards in mathematics in Years 1 and 2 have been rising. New schemes of work and better provision for science and information and communication technology are raising standards in these core subjects.

8. Achievements by the end of Year 6 have been declining for the past few years and results in tests for the pupils in Year 6 in 2002 in English and mathematics were below most other schools when compared with the results obtained by the same cohort of pupils when they were tested in Year 2 in 1998. The school has information showing that the transience of pupils is beginning to contribute to lowering its results. Pupils who have remained at the school have generally progressed satisfactorily although are still not achieving the standards found in other schools.
9. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve in line with their abilities. Progress for these pupils during Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory but unsatisfactory during Years 3 to 6.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. The pupils' attitudes to the school are satisfactory. Many settle down quickly in registration, assemblies and class; they are motivated, enthusiastic and eager to learn. They are proud of their work and achievements; most are attentive to their teachers, ask and answer questions willingly, and offer their own ideas and opinions freely. Most parents agree that their children like school. However, a significant minority of the pupils lack motivation and have difficulty in maintaining interest in lessons. This has a negative impact on their own and, sometimes, others' academic standards.
11. Overall standards of behaviour are satisfactory. Most of the pupils act in a mature and responsible manner. They are quiet and orderly when moving around the school and their manner in the classrooms, at breaks and at lunchtimes is good. The children in the Reception class consistently behave very well. However, a significant minority of pupils in Years 1 to 6 present challenging behaviour at times, which can disrupt learning and the smooth running of the school. Because of this, teachers have to spend a disproportionate amount of time on behaviour management. Unsatisfactory conduct was observed where there was weak supervision, poor class control or a lack of stimulation in the work set. Some members of staff have low expectations of behaviour and some lack effective behaviour management strategies. Exclusions in the year prior to the inspection comprised one permanent and 12 fixed-term exclusions; there have been six fixed-term exclusions in the current academic year. A significant number of parents expressed concern about the standards of behaviour in the school.
12. Relationships in the school are satisfactory. Most of the pupils relate well to their teachers, to other adults and also to one another. They are polite, courteous and welcoming to visitors. During assemblies, the majority are respectful of the occasion, willingly join in hymn singing and bow their heads reverently during prayers. However, many are easily distracted and become very restless. Some find difficulty concentrating in lessons, when working in groups and when collaborating with each other. They lack social skills, have too little knowledge of their own learning and do not understand the impact of their actions on others.
13. Personal development is satisfactory. In the classrooms, some pupils readily take responsibility for themselves and work independently in lessons but many find this difficult and require constant supervision. The older pupils respond well to the formal responsibilities they are given around the school. For example, Year 6 pupils help to supervise younger pupils at lunchtimes. The pupils make an input into the school rules for behaviour, and into those that apply in their own classroom. The recently introduced school council offers them an opportunity to contribute to the way in which the school is run. The school supports local, national and international charities and the pupils learn to be aware of others less fortunate than themselves. They are taken on a wide range of social and educational visits, including a residential trip for the older pupils. The majority of parents agree that the school helps their children to become more mature and responsible.

14. Generally, most pupils have positive attitudes to their learning. They show themselves to be very accepting of disability; they are supportive and caring of one another. Some, including a number who have special educational needs, do not always pay attention to their teachers or listen to each other.
15. The attendance rate is below the national average. Recent absence has been mainly because of a small number of persistent offenders who have now left the school. The rate of unauthorised absence is broadly in line with the national average.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. About a quarter of teaching is less than satisfactory, concentrated mainly at the end of Key Stage 2 and the beginning of Key Stage 1. This high proportion makes teaching unsatisfactory overall. There is also over a third of teaching that is good and a small proportion that is very good. Teaching of children in the Reception class is consistently good. There is also a high proportion of good teaching of pupils in Years 2 and 3, and of some pupils in Years 4 and 5.
17. There was a similar high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching when the school was first inspected in 1996. When the school was last inspected, in 2000, seven per cent of teaching was judged unsatisfactory, so there has been an appreciable decline since then. During this period there has been a very high turnover of teaching staff. In the past two years alone, 23 teachers have come and gone, and this has clearly had a very unsettling effect on the quality of teaching and learning.
18. The good teaching is founded on secure knowledge of the pupils' needs and prior attainments. Lessons and tasks are planned and introduced well, with questioning that draws good recall and thinking from the pupils. The pupils are clear about what is expected and the teachers keeps a check that this is happening. The pace of learning is maintained well and any untoward behaviour managed effectively. Praise is used well.
19. Unsatisfactory teaching is seen in lessons that lack focus and where there are lower expectations of the pupils' achievements and behaviour. Work is not as well matched to the pupils' needs, with all pupils being set the same tasks in some cases. Some behaviour is allowed to become disruptive when managed inconsistently and when the teachers do not use their voices appropriately. In some cases, pupils' work is praised too highly when not deserving of it.
20. Many of the teachers are not effective when responding to pupils' work and giving them guidance on how to improve. Some expect too little of pupils, especially those who are higher attainers. Information about how well the pupils are doing in lessons is often not used well enough to ensure challenge and good progress in following lessons. Most of the teachers do not make sufficient use of classroom computers to support teaching and learning in other subjects.
21. English and mathematics are taught satisfactorily overall as subjects, although there is some unsatisfactory teaching of both. Some teaching of English and literacy is good. This is based on detailed planning that identifies key questions and vocabulary, extension activities and homework. However, there is insufficient planning for the use of literacy, and numeracy, to support teaching and learning in other subjects. Planning for those who have special educational needs or are lower attainers is generally stronger than for the pupils who are higher attainers. Most of the teachers have good knowledge of the literacy and numeracy strategies and of what they are teaching.
22. Science has not been well taught over time because teachers' planning did not give the pupils access to the full requirements of the National Curriculum programmes of study. This has been improved and most teaching of the subject is now good. In these lessons there is probing questioning and a strong focus on allowing the pupils to think about and discuss their responses; they also have good access to specific vocabulary. There is a similar picture with information and communication technology, where the provision of a computer suite, the introduction of national guidance and focused training for all staff have strengthened teaching and learning.
23. Religious education is taught satisfactorily but the older pupils would benefit from more opportunities to express themselves at greater length in writing. There was very little teaching of

design and technology, geography and history during the inspection and the quality of teaching seen in lessons may not be representative of what happens throughout the school. Reference to standards attained by the pupils suggests that geography is being taught satisfactorily, but that, by Year 6, history is not. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the teaching of design and technology, although the lesson seen was very good. Physical education is taught satisfactorily overall but there is insufficient activity in some lessons. Music teaching is satisfactory.

24. In general, the pace of the pupils' learning slows as they move through the school. The majority of pupils are keen to learn and apply themselves well in lessons. However, there is not enough emphasis on giving pupils, particularly many in Years 3 to 6, sufficient challenge in lessons or on setting and using targets to give the pupils good information about how they can improve. Nor are they given opportunities for greater independence in promoting their own learning. There is a residue of unhelpful attitudes and some unsatisfactory behaviour from a minority of pupils that also hinder the learning of these and other pupils when they are not well managed or given an appropriate role model.
25. Activities are matched appropriately for the pupils with special educational needs. Teachers know these pupils well and liaise thoroughly with support assistants; as a result, these pupils are generally well supported in their learning. All have appropriate educational targets and these are reviewed at least termly, or sooner if appropriate. Pupils with special educational needs have access to an appropriate range of resources in line with their abilities. Application of the agreed approach to managing these pupils and maintaining high expectations is not always consistent and this impacts on the learning of pupils. Although the school works hard, and usually effectively, to meet the special needs of its pupils, a few have emotional and behavioural difficulties that are too complex and severe for the school to be able to meet them. This, too, impacts on the learning and attainment of all.

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

26. Curriculum provision is satisfactory overall. The school meets the statutory requirements for the National Curriculum, religious education, and sex and health education, including drugs awareness. The children in Reception have an appropriate curriculum for the Foundation Stage. The school has addressed the uneven number of pupils in each year group by having mixed-age classes and planning a curriculum based on a rolling two-year topic structure. Curriculum maps have been put in place for the foundation subjects to ensure continuity and progression at the planning stage. Pupils with special educational needs have suitable individual education plans so that they can make progress.
27. Although the curriculum is broad, it lacks balance and relevance for some of the older pupils. This is particularly the case for the higher attainers who are not being suitably challenged in English, mathematics and science.
28. Although there are policy statements for each subject, most are out of date and need to be reviewed. The governors are expecting to receive revised and updated policies for most subjects for their endorsement during this academic year. Most of the current policies lack statements or guidance in areas such as the use of information and communication technology, equal opportunities or spiritual, moral, cultural and social development. The school does not have a policy for gifted, talented or higher-attaining pupils. It has recently carried out a review of its long-term planning and schemes of work, the latter being a mixture of national guidance and commercial schemes. The curriculum maps and schemes of work now in place form a sound basis for curriculum planning.
29. Teachers plan work for the pupils based on these maps and schemes. There is a suitable bias towards the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information and communication technology, and religious education. Day-to-day planning is variable, with some being very detailed and some containing learning objectives that are too vague and merely describe

activities. Some teachers use their planning sheets to record the strengths and weaknesses assessed during the lesson and this is helpful to them in future planning. However, this practice is not employed consistently.

30. The school is appropriately inclusive and pupils with special educational needs receive their full entitlement to the National Curriculum and are fully included in all aspects. There are opportunities to work in groups selected by ability and in mixed-ability groups. None are withdrawn from the National Curriculum. Support is given mainly in classrooms with access to appropriately matched activities; this meets pupils' individual needs satisfactorily. There is full access to all activities, including educational visits and residential trips.
31. In order to get to the hall for physical education, assemblies and lunches, the pupils have to walk down the driveway and out of the school gate. Overall teaching time suffers from the need to allocate at least ten minutes per session to accommodate this. If a class has a daily assembly and physical education lesson, twenty minutes of curriculum time is wasted. Furthermore, the nature of the hall limits the scope of activities that it can be used for.
32. At present, there is very little consistent or rigorous monitoring of the overall curriculum. As a result, the development of the pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding as they progress through the school is not being tracked efficiently. This has meant that there has not been equality of access for older pupils in their time at the school. However, younger pupils are given satisfactory access to teaching and learning opportunities. The new computerised system now being implemented could prove to be a very useful tool for assessing overall progress in English, mathematics and science.
33. A good range of visits to places of interest enhances the curriculum. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 can go on an extended residential trip. This not only supports their personal and social development but also contributes well to learning in subjects such as geography, history and physical education. There is good provision for extra-curricular activities, including sport, music and art, although younger pupils do not have sufficient access to these. Some pupils take part in local events such as a music festival and sporting competitions.
34. Good links with the local secondary school helps the transfer of Year 6 pupils. It provides a French instructor but, although there are some curriculum links in English, mathematics and science, connections between other subject co-ordinators are few. The community makes a good contribution to the pupils' learning. For example, there are regular visits from the local vicar; an Indian woman spoke to pupils about her experiences and way of living; and a visiting theatre group dramatised scientific material. Most year groups carry out studies and surveys involving visits into the locality, helping the pupils to develop a sense of their community. There are no regular or sustained links with local industries.
35. Overall provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. This represents a decline since the last inspection but the school recognises a recent improvement from the inadequate provision that existed. Provision for the pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory; in the last inspection it was found to be satisfactory. The pupils are not given sufficient chances to reflect on the things that are important in their lives and many opportunities to develop their understanding are missed. Singing is a regular part of assemblies and this helps to develop creative and expressive awareness. In some other subjects spiritual development is not planned for sufficiently and, although chance opportunities present themselves frequently, the overall provision is inadequate. Religious education lessons do not focus on developing spiritual insight and appreciation often enough. However, the satisfactory provision for circle time does enable feelings to be expressed, as in a Year 2 lesson, when the pupils spoke about the things that made them feel angry.
36. Provision for moral and social development is satisfactory; in the last inspection it was found to be good. The pupils are taught right from wrong and they make their own class rules. The rewards system is used fairly, and moral teaching is a part of assemblies, and religious and personal, social and health education lessons. The pupils are given opportunities to work together: for example, extra-curricular provision enables different age groups to learn from each other. Suggestions about improving the school environment are made in the school council and the pupils are given responsibilities around the school: a group of pupils from Year 6 promotes positive recreation in the playground and is given responsibility for supervising younger colleagues at lunchtime.

37. Provision for cultural development is satisfactory, which is as it was in the last inspection. There are trips to museums: Years 5 and 6 visited the Guildhall at Lavenham recently as part of their work on the Tudors, and artistic groups coming into the school include a theatre group and local musicians. There is also an opportunity for a day trip to France. Some of the pupils take part in musical concerts in school and elsewhere. Provision for multi-cultural development is satisfactory: there are displays around the building and the library has resources that promote understanding of the diverse society in which we live. Religious education lessons involve the pupils in learning about different world faiths. Multi-cultural provision has been monitored by a working party that included a member of the governing body. Satisfactory provision is made for promoting racial harmony within the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school provides effective care for its pupils. The headteacher places a high priority on pastoral care and gives good leadership in this aspect. All members of staff are caring, dedicated and committed to the welfare of the pupils in their charge. They are very approachable and supportive. Procedures for dealing with first aid and the treatment of minor injuries are very good. Experienced and well-trained teaching assistants give good support both for the teachers and the pupils. Procedures for child protection are securely in place and fully understood by all teaching and support staff. The governing body and the headteacher take their health and safety responsibilities seriously and all the required health and safety inspections, including risk assessments, are carried out systematically and recorded meticulously. There is consistent safe practice in lessons, particularly in physical education. Conscientious and vigilant teachers and assistants supervise morning breaks well but supervision during the midday break is weak and behaviour management is often ineffective.
39. The school has sound procedures for promoting and monitoring discipline and good behaviour. For example, the behaviour policy is supplemented by an anti-bullying policy, which is currently under review, and by rules for the playground and individual classrooms. However, not all staff have sufficiently high expectations of what constitutes acceptable behaviour and discipline is not always administered consistently and effectively. The class teachers and teaching assistants know their pupils very well and have detailed understanding of individuals' personal needs. Procedures for monitoring and promoting personal development are good.
40. Procedures for recording and monitoring absence are good. Registers are completed correctly, reasons for non-attendance recorded consistently and absences followed up rigorously. Good use is now made of the education welfare service for promoting good attendance.
41. Pupils' learning needs are identified early and external agencies are notified and involved as required. Class teachers monitor progress termly and identify those requiring additional support. Some pupils attend specific initiatives where this is appropriate. Individual education plans are well maintained and include appropriate targets, usually no more than three, and are generally linked to targets for literacy and numeracy. There are, sometimes, also targets to help pupils manage their behaviour. The school works effectively with a wide range of external agencies, including special schools.
42. The school is less effective in assessing, recording and using information about the pupils' attainments in order to raise standards. The teachers keep useful records in English, mathematics and science but not for any other subjects. These records are used to set targets with pupils and their parents. However, targets were hardly referred to during the week of the inspection, which did not help the pupils to keep in mind what they had learned and what they needed to do to improve. The local authority has provided a very useful computerised system for recording test results and attainments in English, mathematics and science. This is also capable of forecasting targets for future learning and in tests for pupils in Year 6. The pupils' data have been entered into this recently and the assessment co-ordinator and other teachers are beginning to make use of its capabilities. Pupils' annual reports give useful information to parents about what their children have learned during the year, but class assessment folders hold little information to show how judgements are arrived at and how this information is used to influence future teaching and learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

43. Relationships between the school and parents are satisfactory. The school enjoys the support of the majority of the parents. There are a small number who help regularly in the classrooms and many accompany the pupils on school trips. There is a strong parent-teacher association, which has raised a significant amount of money to provide such things as extra teaching resources. A good number of parents support homework and home reading and are consistent in entering appropriate comments in the home-school reading books.
44. A significant number expressed concerns including some about homework, which the inspection team judged to be satisfactory. A high number do not agree that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team, while finding that there were few opportunities for younger pupils, judged the overall provision for extra-curricular activities to be satisfactory.
45. A significant number of the parents do not consider themselves to be well informed about how their children are getting on. The inspection team did not support these views and judged communication between the school and home to be good, for example:
- the school sends out regular, informative newsletters and individual letters about specific events and activities;
 - it publishes a comprehensive, informative prospectus;
 - the governors hold an annual meeting with parents and publish an annual report;
 - parents are given an informative annual report that clearly indicates the progress their children are making and sets targets for improvement;
 - parents are offered the opportunity to attend appropriate consultation meetings to discuss their children's work and progress with teachers, although these are not always well attended;
 - recently, meetings have been arranged so that parents could find out about how subjects are taught and learnt; these, too, have not been well attended;
 - the teaching staff are welcoming and approachable, making themselves readily available to parents at the start and end of each day; and,
 - there are plenty of opportunities for parents to speak informally to their child's class teacher.
46. The school works closely with parents of pupils identified as having special educational needs and they are kept well informed about their children's progress; any difficulties are discussed with them fully at an early stage. They are involved in reviews of their children's individual education plans and annual reviews.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

47. The headteacher has been in post for less than two terms and has given sound leadership during her short time at the school. She has continued the work of her immediate predecessor in re-establishing an emphasis on raising standards through improving teaching, learning and behaviour. She has gained good knowledge of strengths and weaknesses in teaching, and, with strong support from the local authority, has given support and training in areas found needy for development. The school's current development plan was put in place by her predecessor and has given satisfactory guidance and priorities for moving the school forward.
48. The deputy head and two key stage co-ordinators form the remainder of the school's senior management team and have significant experience at the school. All have other major responsibilities, including between them subject, aspect and special educational needs co-ordination. The key stage co-ordinators carry out teachers' performance management satisfactorily, but there has been little opportunity for the senior management team to observe a significant amount of teaching and learning directly.
49. The majority of subject co-ordinators are relatively new in post and have not yet had sufficient time to make sufficient impact on standards in their subjects. Although there is now a permanent teaching staff after the many changes that have occurred, it has not yet been possible to delegate co-ordination of all subjects and the headteacher is keeping a watching brief on two until a

suitable teacher becomes available. Two teachers are receiving training to support two newly qualified teachers concurrent with being their mentors. A satisfactory range of courses is also provided for those who are newly qualified. However, these measures are not yet ensuring that teaching and learning are always as effective as they need to be. A useful staff handbook has now been compiled to support staff new to the school, but there are few up-to-date policies to give consistent guidance. There is a commitment to improvement from staff that is not yet matched by an overall capability to succeed.

50. Many of the governors are also relatively new to the role or in the responsibilities that they hold. In the last two years, much of their time has been concentrated on dealing with major financial and disciplinary issues arising from the previous inspection and on the process of appointing a new headteacher. They have also been under strength during this time and still do not have a full complement of parent governors. Those in key posts fulfil their functions well and there is a sensible committee structure and timetable for their meetings. They meet their key statutory responsibilities but are now aware that they need to be more evaluative when presenting information about test results, attendance and the provision for special educational needs in their annual report to parents.
51. Financial management has improved greatly since it was an issue at the last inspection. The school has received a lot of support from the local authority in meeting this issue and there are now very secure procedures in place to ensure that the school's finances are well managed. A significant balance carried forward in the school's budget is to help finance and equip new classrooms due to be built in the near future. The school's bursar is well trained and very capable, and works closely with the local authority, the headteacher and key governors to provide good day-to-day and long-term financial management and the best value for money within the current budget. However, until there is a significant improvement in pupils' attainments by Year 6, the school will not give satisfactory value for money overall.
52. Leadership and management of the provision for special educational needs are good. The co-ordinator has good understanding and experience of working with pupils who have special educational needs. Management of all procedures such as arrangement of reviews, including annual reviews, and the necessary paperwork are all up to date and well organised. The school has adopted the revised code of practice and all staff are aware of the new terminology relating to levels of need. Policy reflects these changes and a register of special educational needs is still maintained so that staff are kept informed of any changes as they occur. The local authority provides funding and this is used well in the employment of an appropriate number of support staff. The governing body is kept well informed on matters relating to this area and the school meets statutory requirements fully.
53. The school now has a permanent teaching staff, including several teachers who share responsibility for classes. This arrangement is beneficial in enabling the school to manage, for instance, a teacher returning from a maternity leave. There is a satisfactory balance among the teachers of ages, experience, gender and qualifications. Teaching and learning are well supported by additional adults working as teaching assistants or giving learning support to pupils identified as having particular special educational needs. They are given appropriate training, including in supporting pupils' literacy needs and in the use of information and communication technology. The school is adequately staffed.
54. Overall, the school's accommodation is unsatisfactory. There are well-advanced plans for major building work to replace two of the demountable classrooms, but the work currently planned will not solve all deficiencies in accommodation. The school is situated in attractive grounds, comprising hard surface playgrounds and a grass sports field. However, the play area for the younger children is very small and is an awkward shape. There is a separate safe and secure play area for under fives but this is very small and is on a slope, thus restricting outdoor play activities, particularly the use of large wheeled vehicles. Disabled access into and throughout the school is limited.
55. The school is clean and well maintained. In some classrooms and communal areas, the pupils' work is displayed effectively and adds to a stimulating and attractive learning environment. There is good provision for the children in Reception. There are enough classrooms for the number of

pupils but the space in some is limited and can place restrictions on, for example, practical activities. Some classrooms provide access to others and traffic throughout the building can be disruptive. There is a very well equipped computer suite and a good-sized library. The hall is inadequate. It is situated outside the school grounds and a lot of time is wasted travelling to and from it for assemblies and physical education lessons. There is barely enough space to seat staff and pupils for assemblies, or for older pupils in particular to use apparatus. Lack of space also means that older pupils eat their packed lunches in classrooms rather than joining the rest of the school in the hall. Facilities for the storage of resources are adequate.

56. Learning resources for most subjects are satisfactory and in some they are good, for example, in English and information and communication technology. The school benefits from a wide range of fiction that is readily accessible to the pupils in their classrooms.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57. In order to improve standards and the quality of education provided by the school, the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) raise the pupils' standards of attainment by Year 6 in English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology, and by Year 2 in English by:
 - a. setting and meeting meaningful and challenging targets for individuals and groups of pupils;
 - b. using a broad range of assessment opportunities to identify pupils' learning needs systematically, and planning and teaching to meet those needs; and,
 - c. identifying opportunities for developing and using the pupils' literacy, numeracy, and information and communication technology knowledge and skills in other subjects.
(paragraphs 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 68, 69, 70, 71, 74, 76, 79, 86, 87, 89, 92, 95, 96, 121)
- (2) eliminate the high proportion of unsatisfactory teaching and raise the quality of teaching and learning generally by:
 - a. monitoring the work of all the teachers regularly to identify their strengths and weaknesses, so that good practice in the school can be shared and further training be given to improving weaknesses;
 - b. enabling those with management and mentoring responsibilities to carry out the necessary induction, monitoring and support; and,
 - c. making full use of new technology to aid teaching and learning through, for instance, ensuring that teachers use computers when they plan, record and report.
(paragraphs 16, 17, 19, 20, 21, 60, 72, 75, 77, 78, 81, 84, 90, 91, 98, 118, 124, 132)
- (3) improve:
 - a. the behaviour of the small but significant minority of pupils who cause most disruption to their own and others' learning, particularly through more consistent behaviour management by all teaching and support staff;
 - b. the pupils' understanding of the impact of their actions on their own and others' learning and behaviour, and giving guidance and better opportunities for them to develop their concentration, independence and better knowledge of their own learning; and,
 - c. the provision for the pupils' spiritual development, by identifying and using opportunities in all subjects for them to have meaningful and stimulating experiences and to reflect on them.
(paragraphs 10, 11, 12, 24, 25, 35, 39, 42, 72, 83)
- (4) continue to bring to the attention of the local authority the inadequacies of the hall used by the school, including:
 - a. the considerable amount of teaching and learning time lost in moving to and from the hall;
 - b. its inaccessibility during inclement weather; and,
 - c. the lack of changing and storage space for its use for physical education.
(paragraphs 31, 54, 61, 133)

In addition, the headteacher, governors and staff should ensure that standards meet national expectations in religious education and history by Year 6, and in art and design throughout the school.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	53
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	24

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	19	19	12	1	0
Percentage	0	4	36	36	23	2	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents almost two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	234
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	22

Special educational needs

	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	52

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	21
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	23

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.5
National comparative data	0.5

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 (Year 2)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	14	9	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	20	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	84 (85)	83 (85)	83 (88)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	19	19	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (90)	83 (93)	83 (88)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

Individual totals for boys and girls have been omitted because the total number of girls equals less than 11 therefore pupils could be identified.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	17	11	28

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	10	12
	Girls	8	7	8
	Total	17	17	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	61 (57)	61 (74)	71 (65)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	10
	Girls	7	7	7
	Total	15	16	17
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	54 (63)	57 (76)	63 (63)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Categories used in the Annual School Census
White – British
White – Irish
White – any other White background
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean
Mixed – White and Black African
Mixed – White and Asian
Mixed – any other mixed background
Asian or Asian British - Indian
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background
Black or Black British – Caribbean
Black or Black British – African
Black or Black British – any other Black background
Chinese
Any other ethnic group
No ethnic group recorded

Exclusions in the last school year

No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
197	12	1
0	0	0
1	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
1	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	0	0
38	0	0

The table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It gives the number of exclusions, 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)	10.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.4
Average class size	26.9

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	11
Total aggregate hours worked per week	178

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001-2
	£
Total income	577 262
Total expenditure	565 849
Expenditure per pupil	2 254
Balance brought forward from previous year	45 438
Balance carried forward to next year	56 851

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	23
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	23
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	242
Number of questionnaires returned	49

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	45	47	2	4	2
My child is making good progress in school.	37	47	12	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	24	57	10	6	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	35	51	10	2	2
The teaching is good.	49	45	2	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	49	12	2	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	49	39	4	4	4
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	45	4	4	4
The school works closely with parents.	31	47	14	6	2
The school is well led and managed.	24	63	8	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	53	4	4	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	47	29	4	6

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

58. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. There is a Reception class as well as one that combines Reception with Year 1. In the latter, the Reception children attend mornings only, joining with the main Reception class in the afternoons. Four-year-olds are admitted in September on a part-time basis. They begin full-time schooling at the start of the term in which they have their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 17 part-time children in the Reception class and 13 full-timers. In the Reception/Year 1 class, there were eight full-time Reception children.
59. When they enter the school, the children's attainments are broadly average. By the end of the Reception year, the majority of them are likely to achieve the early learning goals in the six areas of learning; a few will already have begun the early stages of the National Curriculum. There has been a good improvement in the standard of work since the last inspection when the majority of the children were expected to achieve only three of the early learning goals. The progress of those who have special educational needs is satisfactory. The progress of higher-attaining children is good.
60. Procedures for assessing children when they enter the school are good. Teachers, and other adults in the classrooms, keep detailed records that ensure that the children's individual progress is carefully monitored. The assessment data is used well to set personal targets. The majority of teaching in the Foundation Stage is good but there are a few areas for improvement in the mixed age class. Most of the work is carefully planned and suited to the needs of each particular child. Teaching is consistently good in the Reception class but is often less than satisfactory when these children are mixed with those in Year 1. Very good use is made of other adults in the classrooms and they make a valuable contribution to the children's learning. The governor with responsibility for the Foundation Stage visits one or other of the classes each week. Liaison arrangements for parents are good: visits are made to children's homes before they begin school. The Foundation Stage co-ordinator provides effective leadership and has a clear understanding of the way that the provision is to develop.
61. Resources are satisfactory and are readily available. The outdoor area is unsatisfactory. Although safe and secure, it is small and unattractive. Although the co-ordinator has plans to make it more pleasant, space will remain limited.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. The majority of the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for personal, social and emotional development by the end of the Reception year. Many play well together. They know how to take turns sensibly and to share resources; they have good relationships with each other and with the adults in the classrooms; they know about the class rules; and, most are sensibly behaved. In a good lesson, the teacher enabled the children to share their ideas with each other as they passed a parcel round in a circle. In turn, they each talked about the present they would like to buy their friends. The secure learning environment established in the Reception classroom enables them to gain confidence when talking in front of each other.

Communication, language and literacy

63. By the end of the Reception year, most of the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for speaking and listening, reading and writing; a few should exceed them. The majority speak clearly and are attentive listeners. Although some are reluctant to join in speaking for any sustained length of time, there are a few who are very confident, answering questions fully and using a wide range of vocabulary to explain their ideas. The pupils enjoy listening to stories and listen well to instructions. Many read simple words and understand the meaning of texts. There

are a few who talk about the different characters in a story and retell what they have read. The children's writing skills develop well: many write their own name and spell simple words such as 'Mum' and 'Dad'. They know the names of most letters and use sounds to help with their writing. The higher-attaining children write in short sentences to express their ideas and use recognisable letter shapes. In one lesson, the teacher had a good response when she asked the class what they would write in a letter to Father Christmas. When it came to putting the exercise into practice, some of the pupils, having quickly thought of ideas, began writing immediately and with confidence. Work is marked carefully and annotated to show if it was unaided, thus providing another means of charting each individual's progress.

Mathematical development

64. By the end of the Reception year most of the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for mathematical development, with a few exceeding them. Many count easily to ten and back, and some go beyond this confidently. They count the number of bears, add one more and find the new total. They write numbers, many placing them in the correct order, and match numbers to objects. The children discuss different shapes and know some of their names. They are familiar with some mathematical terms such as 'longer than' and 'shorter than'. During the day, good use is made of vicarious opportunities to reinforce mathematical skills. The children use nursery rhymes and counting songs, and count the number present at registration.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. By the end of the Reception year most of the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for knowledge and understanding of the world, with a few exceeding them. Many know what they do at different times of the day, such as breakfast, home time, evening and bedtime. They identify sounds made by shakers and identify them as similar or different. They understand why metal does not break when it is dropped and identify everyday articles, knowing the difference between inanimate objects and living things. The children understand the different type of clothes needed for hot or cold weather. They use information and communication technology well, manipulating the mouse to complete simple tasks. Teachers make effective use of resources, enabling the class to be involved in simple experiments and to make predictions. All these activities are used well to extend understanding. The children talk about the Nativity story and know some of the things that happened. A group of women from St. Andrew's Church knitted figures for the classroom crib scene. The children took some of these figures home to remind them of the Christmas story.

Physical development

66. By the end of the Reception year most of the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals for their physical development. They develop confidence in using their bodies in different ways. In one lesson they moved around the hall, taking care not to bump into each other, by marching along, jumping in the air and making different shapes with their arms and legs. They threw small quoits to each other and showed developing hand and eye co-ordination, after which, they sang a nursery rhyme and moved in time to the music. In the outdoor area, bikes and scooters are used well with some careful steering in evidence. The majority of teaching is good. Appropriate care is taken to ensure safety.

Creative development

67. By the end of the Reception year most of the children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in creative development. They enjoy painting and take care when making Christmas cards. They explain what they are doing as they use play dough to make different shapes. Imaginative skills are good, as in the home corner where calls are made on the pretend telephone and messages are written. The class joins in singing and know most of the words of simple songs from memory. The teachers' careful preparation enables the development of creative skills through effective use of resources. Other adults in the classroom offer effective support in all aspects of creative work.

ENGLISH

68. In national tests for eleven-year-olds in 2002, the proportion of the pupils gaining the national expectation was well below the national average. This was also true of the proportion attaining a higher level than expected nationally. When compared to schools with a similar background, results were in the lowest five per cent nationally. Standards were also below average when prior attainment is taken into account. The comparative performance of boys and girls showed that boys generally did less well than girls, although no obvious differences were noted during the inspection. The ambitious targets set for the school for 2002 were not met and, overall, standards in English have declined since 1999.
69. National tests in reading for seven-year-olds in 2002 showed that the proportion of pupils achieving the national expectation was broadly average, but was below average when judged against similar schools. Again, this was also true of the proportion attaining a higher level than expected nationally. Standards in writing were below the national average and well below average when judged against similar schools. The performance of boys and girls in reading and writing was broadly similar. Overall, standards in both reading and writing have declined since 2000.
70. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, including those from minority ethnic backgrounds, those for whom English is an additional language and those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in relation to set targets and work; this is because of effective collaboration between support staff and teachers. In Years 3 to 6, the pupils' progress is not satisfactory.
71. Across the age range, standards in speaking and listening are generally below average. The listening skills of many of the pupils are markedly under-developed and this is impacting negatively on standards. There has been a decline since the previous inspection where speaking skills were in line with national standards. Some pupils speak clearly with relevant responses, indicating that they have listened carefully and understood. The lower-attaining pupils struggle to express ideas beyond the most basic levels and lack confidence. Most of the teachers ensure appropriate opportunities for pupils to explain their thoughts, share ideas and contribute to whole class discussions. They generally make good use of questioning and value contributions; as a result, the pupils are beginning to develop greater confidence in their speaking.
72. Listening skills are being developed effectively in some classes. Where instructions are followed, especially when this involves a change of activity, the pupils settle quickly to new tasks and are clear about what they have been asked to do. However, a significant number engage frequently in low-level chatter, call out and do not listen well to their teachers or to each other. Such a casual attitude to learning is unsatisfactory and is impacting on their own learning and that of other pupils. Some teachers are not applying the school's behaviour policy effectively and are not insisting on good attention.
73. Current standards in reading generally show some improvement compared with the last inspection and are satisfactory. However, the older pupils are not making sufficient progress to impact on overall standards. Most of the pupils demonstrate positive attitudes, although some expressed a clear dislike of reading. The teaching of reading is under further development: positive attitudes are being fostered through a wider range of books, banded to different levels of ability, and increased opportunities to read in lessons as well as in quiet sessions. While this promotes interest in books, opportunities to practise reading skills are not being used by all teachers consistently or effectively. Reading assessments are in place but these are not yet providing an accurate record of reading levels so that teachers can track progress and develop skills.
74. Many of the pupils read with increasing fluency and accuracy. By the age of eleven, they have encountered a range of fiction and non-fiction texts, including myths and legends, autobiography, humorous stories and poetry. Some remember what they have read and discuss themes and characters. They are progressively aware of the differences in layout and style between fiction, non-fiction and poetry and this is helping them to develop their vocabulary. There is not enough emphasis on the use of reading skills, for example; to research topics in other subjects. As a result, pupils are not applying their knowledge of non-fiction texts or their research skills. This impacts on literacy skills across the curriculum.

75. The higher-attaining pupils in all age groups generally demonstrate positive attitudes. They express pleasure in reading and read regularly at home, either to other family members or to themselves. Younger children make some good use of picture clues. Lower achievers are still struggling; they lack enthusiasm and do not read regularly at home. Many still read word by word and do not apply their knowledge of sounds routinely to words they do not know; they tend to make wild guesses or look to the listener for help. This is because, in most literacy lessons, there is a lack of emphasis on phonics teaching. Many of the teachers have low expectations in this regard.
76. Across the school, standards in writing are below average. This shows a decline since the previous inspection. Writing generally lacks length, imagination and well-sequenced sentences. Word sounds are not yet being used sufficiently to help writing and too many pupils regularly make errors in basic spelling and punctuation. In literacy lessons, there is not enough good quality teaching of sentence structure. Expectations of the pupils' use of basic skills are far too low. While there has been some use of national initiatives to help improve literacy skills, there is no evidence that these are making a difference to learning or that they are impacting on attainment. Outcomes from these initiatives have not been evaluated.
77. Some of the pupils are beginning to use their improving reading skills effectively to help them develop their understanding of spelling, grammar and punctuation in their writing. Word sounds are helping them to spell correctly, as is recognition of letter combinations; most of the pupils can use dictionaries. Where teachers stimulate imagination effectively, the pupils write more imaginatively and enthusiastically. The higher-attaining pupils are not being appropriately challenged.
78. While teachers encourage different forms of writing, such as lists, flow diagrams, instructions and playscripts, opportunities for extended writing were not seen during the inspection and examples in the work scrutiny were limited. The use of information and communication technology is developing and is beginning to contribute to learning in all age groups. This is an improvement since the last inspection but it is not consistently identified in planning and was not seen in lessons during the inspection.
79. The standard of handwriting across the school is variable and is unsatisfactory overall. This does not maintain the position at the last inspection. There is no expectation that the good handwriting seen in some books should be employed elsewhere. While some pupils develop a neat cursive script, too many in all age groups are still not forming letters properly or consistently, nor are they joining their writing. A number grip their pencils awkwardly. Many of the teachers are failing to address the problems, not giving consistent models and communicating low expectations of the whole school style of handwriting.
80. Standards of presentation are also generally unsatisfactory. In some classes, pupils take great care with presentation of their work and are clearly proud of their achievements. This is because their teachers have consistently high expectations. However, scrutinised work was frequently undated, without a title and had no clearly stated learning objectives. There has been insufficient progress in addressing this key issue since the last inspection. As a result of the support they receive, pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language are making satisfactory progress in their learning.
81. Overall, the current teaching of English is satisfactory throughout the school, with some good and very good teaching and some that is unsatisfactory. While most teachers plan as recommended by the National Literacy Strategy, there are some inconsistencies in style and quality. Better planning is sometimes very detailed, including key questions and vocabulary, reference to homework and extension activities. However, planned opportunities for extended writing in literacy lessons and other subjects are not yet in place and teachers are not consistently helping the pupils to make connections across subjects. This is unsatisfactory and is preventing further development and progress; it contributes strongly to continuing low attainment in English.
82. Some teachers are confident and secure in their knowledge of the literacy strategy; they know their pupils well, are enthusiastic in their teaching and offer good support in the development and use of vocabulary. They give adequate time for discussion at the end of lessons. In some

lessons, they share with pupils what they want them to do and how this links with previous learning. Older pupils, including those with special educational needs, are more actively involved in learning opportunities. This does not happen in all classes.

83. The pupils are frequently grouped by prior attainment with appropriately prepared work that generally meets individual needs. However, several lessons seen during the inspection relied too heavily on whole class teaching and activities that were not matched sufficiently, particularly for the higher-attaining pupils. The use of assessment is underdeveloped. Pupils have reading and writing targets although no reference was made to them in the lessons seen. In many classes, targets were not visible enough to have significant impact on teaching and learning. Low expectations too often result in outcomes remaining only satisfactory.
84. Marking is inconsistent and is currently unsatisfactory. Scrutiny of work showed some good examples of evaluative comments and supportive next steps. An effective, whole school approach to marking that is consistently used by all staff has not yet been developed. Generally, there has been insufficient progress in addressing this key issue.
85. The subject leader is enthusiastic and has worked hard to promote literacy standards. She has identified areas requiring improvement in her action plan and has increased resources to meet the demands of the curriculum, including development of the library. Strategies for raising standards in reading and writing have not resulted in the progress that was expected. There has been some monitoring of pupils' work; lessons and planning have yet to become part of a more rigorous, systematic approach to checking of the curriculum and of the quality of teaching and learning. Senior managers do not have a sufficiently clear knowledge or understanding of the quality of teaching and learning in the subject, nor are they well enough acquainted with the inconsistencies in practice or the impact of the range of initiatives in place. Taking all aspects of the subject into account, improvement since the previous inspection has been limited and is therefore unsatisfactory.

MATHEMATICS

86. According to the 2002 national tests, the percentage of Year 6 pupils reaching the expected level 4 or above was well below the national average. Performance in comparison to similar schools placed the school in the lowest five per cent nationally. The general pattern of attainment by Year 6 over the last four years has been of falling standards.
87. The results of the 2002 National Curriculum tests showed the percentage of pupils in Year 2 who reached the expected level 2 or above as being in line with the national average. The proportion achieving the higher level 3 was above the national average. In comparison with similar schools, performance was well below the national average. The general pattern over the last four years shows that standards have been below the national average but rose in 2002 to be in line with national expectations.
88. By the age of seven, pupils know place value to 100 and begin to make use of 'sets of numbers' to aid calculations. For example, pupils in Year 2 count in twos, fives and tens. They begin to understand multiplication and division, and use them to solve simple word problems. They identify simple shapes, and sort and classify data according to given criteria, presenting their findings in simple block graphs and pictograms. In the lessons seen, teachers stressed the importance of using correct names and mathematical terms. The fact that the higher-attaining pupils were not fully challenged was a weakness in the previous report and this has now been addressed for this age group. This improved level of challenge is reflected in the number of pupils achieving the higher level 3 in Years 1 and 2. Overall progress is satisfactory.
89. By the age of 11, pupils have a sound understanding of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They understand and use different strategies to make calculating easier and to solve a variety of problems. They simplify and use fractions and convert them into decimals. They name and identify the properties of two-dimensional shapes and calculate the perimeter of both regular and irregular patterns. Shapes and figures are constructed using co-ordinates and a variety of

graphs and charts. They have begun to interrogate data and make interpretations. However, overall progress is unsatisfactory. The work presented to the higher attainers in Years 5 and 6 is of greater quantity rather than more demanding. The quality of provision for these pupils was an area of concern in the previous report and their needs have still not been met successfully. Challenging work that will develop their mathematical learning is required and teachers' expectations of them need to be raised.

90. Although occasionally unsatisfactory in Years 3 to 6, teaching is generally satisfactory. Mental arithmetic at the start of lessons is often challenging and carried out at a good pace. Unfortunately, this rate is not always maintained: in a number of classes there is a lack of urgency, especially when pupils work independently or in groups rather than as a whole class. Some teachers' failure to define tasks clearly is a significant factor in this problem. The pupils are often not given a clear indication of the time available for the work they have been set or how much is expected of them by the end of a given period. In good lessons, learning objectives are clearly focused, and teachers use searching and effective questioning techniques that challenge thinking and build understanding. Lessons are well balanced, including both the introduction and consolidation of concepts and active involvement in practical activities. The pupils use mathematical reasoning and apply it in a variety of contexts. In both Year 1 and Year 4/5 classes, very good class organisation, a structured introduction and planned activities gave the lessons a clear direction. Plans for organisation follow the suggestions of the numeracy strategy.
91. Ongoing assessment is a significant weakness in the teaching of mathematics. Examination of work indicates that very little marking of real value takes place. Planning indicates that work is aimed at different levels of attainment but this is not reflected in the pupils' books or in a number of observed lessons. As tasks are often planned to meet individuals' needs by defining the outcome, the higher-achieving pupils are usually simply provided with additional tasks at the same, ineffective level of challenge. This was noted especially where work in one lesson for pupils in Years 5 and 6 was not only unchallenging for the higher attainers but for the most of the rest of the class as well. However, most of the teachers plan work and support effectively for lower attainers or those who have special educational needs. Overall, planning and the ongoing assessment of work for mathematics are unsatisfactory and if standards are to improve then these areas need to be addressed.
92. There is very little evidence of computers being used to develop understanding of mathematics. Some data handling work has taken place but there is no evidence of work involving spreadsheets or of the use of control programmes. Although an activity session where pupils demonstrate their mathematical skills in other curriculum areas has been held, there is very little evidence of numeracy skills being used on a regular planned basis in other subjects.
93. The co-ordinator for mathematics is new to the post and is keen to develop the subject. During the inspection she demonstrated that she is a good practitioner. She has already arranged for the local education authority advisor to work in partnership with her to check on teaching and learning. This is an area that needs to be addressed and could prove of great value in helping to improve standards. Resources to support the curriculum are good.
94. Since the last inspection, standards, especially for the higher attainers in Years 1 and 2, have improved. However, overall standards have declined by Year 6. Contributing factors include poor planning, poor assessment of ongoing work, low expectation of higher attainers, poor teaching and high staff turnover. The overall provision for the subject since the last inspection, especially by the end of Year 6, has been unsatisfactory.

SCIENCE

95. Standards in the subject are well below those expected by the end of Year 6. Results in national tests have been well below the national average for three of the last four years and below the national average in the other. For the last two years, the school's results have been in the lowest five per cent nationally when compared to schools with pupils from a similar background. The new headteacher believes that a root cause of this was the school's previous scheme of work for the subject, which was inadequate and did not meet the requirements of the programme of study

of the National Curriculum. The school's new scheme is based on national guidance and gives a more secure basis for teaching and learning. However, it will be very difficult for the pupils in Year 6, and for some in Year 5, to gain the full range of knowledge, skills and understanding that are expected for their age.

96. Standards of attainment based on teachers' assessments of the pupils in Year 2 in 2002 were also well below those found nationally and in similar schools. However, the proportion of these pupils gaining a level higher than that expected for their age was above the national average. Standards of work by the pupils now in Year 2 are in line with those expected for their age. They know about different stages in the human life cycle, and match the young and adults of a variety of animals. They know the names of significant parts of the human body. They identify differences between living and non-living things. When beginning to learn about electricity, the pupils mark electrical sockets on a map of their classroom and identify toys and games that need electricity to make them work. They know that there needs to be a circuit for electricity to flow, and they connect cables, clips, bulb and battery holders, buzzers and switches to make working circuits.
97. In Year 4, the pupils learn about the movements of the earth, sun and moon and their relationship with seasons and the measurement of time. This is also learnt by the pupils in Years 5 and 6, many of whom are less sure of their facts than those in Year 4. In addition, those in Year 6 learn about life cycles, features and habitats of plants. They study food and diet, and learn about micro-organisms and some of the effects that these have on humans and foodstuffs.
98. Overall, and particularly when related to the standards attained by the pupils by the end of Year 6, provision has been unsatisfactory. However, the school has had many changes of staff in recent times and only since the beginning of the term in which this inspection took place has it had a full complement of permanent staff for the first time since the last inspection. Teaching in the three lessons seen during the inspection had many good features. In two lessons involving pupils in Years 3, 4 and 5, the teachers had good knowledge of their subject and had planned well to meet the needs of all the pupils. Good support was given by teaching assistants to pupils with special educational needs. Both lessons were well resourced. The pupils enjoyed the activities and were keen to complete them to the best of their abilities. Thoughtful questioning, both verbally and on commercial worksheets, engaged pupils well and caused them to answer carefully. In the other lesson, which involved pupils in Years 5 and 6, these worksheets were also used well. This lesson was not as effective as the others because of the amount of time spent in managing some pupils' unacceptable behaviour at the expense of constructive teaching and learning. Marking does not often give pupils useful information about how well they have learnt and what they need to do to improve. There are displays with scientific content in some classes but little of it stimulates the pupils' interest; there is almost no pupils' work in the subject on display in the school. There is little evidence that information and communication technology supports teaching and learning as well as it should.
99. A teacher who is relatively new to the school manages the subject; however, she has long experience and good expertise in co-ordinating teaching and learning of science. She has made good use of national guidance and a commercial scheme to put in place a much better overall scheme of work for the subject, and is now intending to review the subject policy to reflect these changes. She was given a small amount of release time last year and used this to carry out a review and re-organisation of resources and some monitoring, but has not been able to, for instance, observe or work alongside colleagues in classrooms in order to raise standards of teaching and learning. The school has adequate resources and gives good additional stimulus through visits from a science theatre group and a travelling 'astronomy' roadshow. It also benefits from support from a local authority adviser and a 'bridging project' with a local secondary school in preparation for transfer. Although these improvements are beginning to have a positive effect, the school has not yet made adequate progress since the last inspection in raising standards of attainment.

ART AND DESIGN

100. Overall attainment is below expectations; this shows a decline since the previous inspection. Although the range and amount of available artwork were limited, the curriculum indicates that an appropriate range of activities is undertaken in a variety of media, apart from three-dimensional work. Work shows that the development of techniques is limited and generally lacks imagination and creativity.
101. Drawing, including observational drawing, lacks maturity and this suggests a lack of direct teaching. Sense of colour and the way it can be used to create mood and atmosphere are not being properly developed through such means as the study of the work of famous artists. Discussions with pupils show that they understand the basics of colour mixing. They know the difference between primary and secondary colours and have some understanding of shades and tones. However, they were not able to describe the uses of different pencils and how they might be used for shading.
102. One art lesson seen during the inspection was good: planning was detailed and took good account of links with other learning. Other lessons observed were unsatisfactory and planning was weak. There is not much artwork displayed around the school and the general standard shows that skills are not being developed beyond the most basic levels. Discussions with pupils indicate that they clearly enjoy many of the art activities. They generally work well together and have positive attitudes. However, they tend to regard the subject as relaxation and have no clear recollection of much of the work they have done.
103. Sketchbooks are not yet being utilized appropriately or regularly and this is unsatisfactory. They could be used, for example, to encourage the higher-attaining pupils to explore and develop their ideas before they commence their final piece of work. At present, sketchbooks do not contain adequate planning or experimentation and work is often carried out carelessly and without enough attention to detail or sufficient annotation. They are sometimes used for little more than scribble, with little pride in presentation. Work is frequently undated, untitled and without learning objective or notes. There is limited evidence of teachers evaluating the pupils' plans or of them doing this themselves. Marking is not sufficiently detailed to help the pupils understand what they must do to improve and there are no comments on the careless and untidy way in which some use these books. Work is frequently not marked at all. The same sketchbook is not kept throughout a child's school career and therefore clear evidence of year-to-year progression is missing.
104. Although the co-ordinator is hoping to organise an art week during the summer term, there are no trips to galleries and no visiting artists at present. Across the curriculum, scrutiny of work in pupils' books and around the school clearly demonstrates the subject's low status. The use of art to support learning in other subjects is limited, although there has been some progress in the use of information and communication technology and this has produced some attractive artwork. The use of drawing to illustrate written work in English and other subjects is often scrappy. The school possesses a range of prints of famous artwork but they are not yet sorted for use. No evidence was seen or presented to show that cultural development is being enhanced through learning about the work of famous artists; during discussions with some older pupils, they were unable to recall any significant names. Art is not yet impacting on their spiritual awareness.
105. The subject manager is well qualified, enthusiastic and an able practitioner. Although she is keen to develop art across the curriculum and has correctly identified in her action plan some areas requiring further development, she has not yet been able to bring about significant change in the subject. National guidelines have been adopted, which have improved the range of activities planned and increased class teachers' subject knowledge and confidence. Resources are generally well matched to meet the needs of the curriculum. However, there has been no further development of the curriculum to ensure the clear mapping and progression of skills and techniques across the school. The co-ordinator is aware that the policy for art and design requires updating to take account of national guidance. The current arrangements for the teaching of art over a two-year cycle means that some areas are not covered for a whole year; the school needs to consider how this is impacting on the teaching and learning of the skills and techniques. Monitoring of art and design is limited. The monitoring of planning is not rigorous enough and there is no systematic monitoring of teaching and learning with feedback to staff. The school has not yet developed a systematic structure for the assessment and recording of attainment. Overall progress since the previous inspection has been limited.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106. No planning or samples of work were made available. Information has been gained from limited paperwork and discussions with pupils and the subject co-ordinator. It is therefore not possible to make secure judgements on attainment, teaching and learning.

107. One lesson was observed during the inspection. The teaching was very good, with effective planning and confident delivery. Discussion with some pupils in Year 6 shows that they enjoy the subject but have limited recall of the work they have done over time. When describing their current work involving Tudor houses, they do not fully comprehend designing and making processes, indicating that work is heavily teacher-directed. Their descriptions of basic

processes and techniques used, coupled with the fact that they consider design and technology to be the same subject as art and design, suggests attainment to be below nationally expected standards.

108. The subject is under-developed and has a low status across the school. The current two-year curriculum cycle means that some areas of the subject are not covered for a whole year and the school needs to consider how this is impacting on teaching and learning. A full two-year cycle has not yet been completed and the co-ordinator is in the process of noting what has been taught and learnt.

109. The co-ordinator is well qualified, enthusiastic and an able practitioner but she has had little time to implement any significant changes. She has audited the school's resources, gathered them together and ensured that they are labelled, appropriately stored and easily accessible to staff. Resources are good and match the curriculum; there is a very good range of tools and materials, including construction kits. The subject policy does not yet make reference to the adopted national guidance. At present there is no consistent programme of monitoring teaching and learning or of teachers' plans. There is no assessment of attainment and progress and staff have no clear idea on standards. Progress since the previous inspection has been unsatisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

110. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons in Years 1 and 2 and only two lessons were seen in Years 3 to 6. This was because of the way in which the curriculum is organised over a two-year rolling programme of topics. The subject is taught alternately with history in 'blocks' of time over a number of weeks or a term. Judging from the few lessons seen, from talking to some of the pupils and from scrutiny of previous work, standards by the age of seven and in Years 3 and 4 are broadly in line with expectations. No work for Years 5 or 6 was available as they had not yet begun their geography topic and, although pupils in Year 6 had a clear recall of some of the work from the previous year, it was not sufficient evidence to make a conclusive judgement.

111. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 begin to understand maps by looking at objects from the side and above. They make simple plans of imaginary islands and locate sites. They recall and talk about the variety of food they have examined and eaten while on holiday or that is displayed in the classroom; they realise that different types of food are eaten in different countries. Good use is made of the locality in their study of transport.

112. In their work on the environment in Year 3, the pupils ask geographical questions and respond to them. In their study of a village map, they provide grid references and, either individually or in pairs, make accurate measurements of distances. They construct a plan of a village showing the main uses of the land. They become skilful at identifying key features on maps. In their work on the environment, the pupils in Year 4 have been carrying out a survey of the amount of rubbish being deposited on the school site. The information is analysed, conclusions drawn and

strategies suggested for dealing with the rubbish, many of which involve additional work for the caretaker.

113. Year 6 pupils provided information on their Year 5 study of a contrasting location. They gained a sound knowledge of occupations, agriculture, economy education and lifestyle and some of the reasons for these. However, the evidence available is not sufficient to assess overall standards.
114. Evidence available in Years 1 to 4 suggests that teaching and learning are effective. Pupils use co-ordinates to locate places and measure accurately when calculating distances from the maps. Links with other subjects are not well developed and there is no evidence of information and communication technology being used. Visits to support the geography curriculum are used effectively and resources are adequate to support ongoing work.
115. Teachers plan work thoroughly, adapting nationally produced guidelines to suit their pupils' needs. Procedures for assessing and recording attainment and progress have not yet been developed. The subject is taught in blocks of time, which means that there are prolonged

periods during the school year when no geography is being taught; the effectiveness of this approach needs to be evaluated. In the next educational year it is intended that a new member of staff will take over co-ordination of the subject and will have to consider the above concerns.

HISTORY

116. On the limited amount of evidence available, standards of attainment by the pupils in Year 6 are below those expected. They have patchy recall of what they have learnt in the subject. There has been no systematic development of their skills of historical interpretation and enquiry. The pupils in Year 2 are on course to meet expectations for their age. They study the lives of famous people in the past and recall Alexander Graham Bell's invention of the telephone and the work done for the sick by Florence Nightingale. They can identify that a television, vacuum cleaner and jet aeroplane would not have been present during Florence Nightingale's lifetime. During the inspection, the pupils in Year 2 watched a short television programme about Louis Braille. The pupils learned about his development of a script that can be read by the blind, and benefited greatly from Braille books and maps in the classroom. They also used a Braille writer. This gave them good first- as well as secondhand knowledge about conditions affecting those with impaired sight.
117. The pupils in Year 6 study aspects of the reign of Henry VIII, and learn facts about him and his six wives. They also learn about the founding of the Church of England and the destruction of the monasteries. During a lesson, the pupils began to compare the lives of the poor and the rich in Tudor times based on copies of contemporary images.
118. This was one of the two history lessons seen during the inspection and one in which several aspects of the teaching were unsatisfactory. The pupils' progress was hampered when the teacher strayed from the lesson's objective to give a range of facts about other aspects of Tudor life, especially crime and punishment, with insufficient reference to the rich and the poor. The images given to the pupils were not well chosen and they found it very difficult, for instance, to understand that a picture of a skeleton holding a child by the hand was intended to show that it was being led away by Death. Because teaching was not sufficiently focused and the resources were not always helpful, by the end of the hour's lesson the majority of pupils succeeded only in cutting and sticking a number of pictures into their books and writing one or two captions. The presentation in their books was untidy and there was too little writing. Marking was not helpful in guiding the pupils to attain higher standards. In the other lesson observed, involving pupils in Year 2, the teaching was good. The television programme chosen was very suitable for the pupils' age and interest, and additional resources supported learning about Louis Braille very well. The teacher's questioning was thorough and allowed the pupils to think about their answers. By the end of this lesson, the pupils had a good understanding of the life of Louis Braille and the significance of his invention. This was enhanced by research carried out at home by many of the pupils, involving their using computers, encyclopaedias and other books.

119. In general, the pupils enjoy the subject and are keen to learn all that they can. They are less keen to take pride in the way that they present their work. Those with special educational needs are not often given tasks or support matched to their individual education plans and make unsatisfactory progress, as do most other pupils.
120. There is no specialist co-ordinator for the subject and it has had a low priority for development since the last inspection. The headteacher has a watching role at present and intends to appoint a subject co-ordinator at the earliest opportunity. The policy for the subject is due for revision this year. Since the last inspection, the school has adopted national guidance on what could be learnt and when, and this has given a more secure structure to the development of the pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding. Resources are satisfactory. Overall, the subject has made insufficient progress since the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

121. Standards of attainment by the pupils in Year 6 are below those expected of their age. They have not been following a scheme of work during their time at the school that has enabled them to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in a thorough way. Until two years ago, the school had a relatively low ratio of computers per pupil and the equipment was shared around the classes. The provision of a suite of computers and the introduction of national guidance on teaching and learning of the subject have enabled the school to improve the pupils' opportunities for improving their attainment. In the past two years, many pupils have been taught by adults whose subject knowledge and skills were not adequate.
122. The pupils in Years 1 and 2 are on course to meet what is expected of their age. Most use information and communication technology confidently, particularly when working with word-processing and paint box applications. Those in Years 3 and 4 are beginning to catch up on learning and applying what they should know and be able to do. They are similarly adept at changing fonts, font sizes and colours, and aspects of the layout of their word-processed work. They create images using pencil, brush and spray features of a paint box programme. They also know how to use the symmetry feature and the facility to import images, resize them and repeat patterns. As yet, they have limited knowledge of other uses of the computers. The pupils in Years 5 and 6 know and can do little more than those in Years 3 and 4. In addition to the applications referred to above, they can access the internet but not all are sure of how to use a search engine to locate information independently. The pupils have a small amount of experience in using control applications and toys.
123. Three lessons were seen during the inspection, all involving use of the computer suite, and teaching was good overall. One lesson, with pupils in Years 5 and 6, involved revision of accessing information on the Internet. The teacher had identified the website that the pupils were to use and simply gave instructions to the whole class that guided them to this. Expectations were low and the pupils' independence was not encouraged. Planning was minimal. There was good teaching of Years 3 and 4. There were clear links to the subjects being supported in both lessons and the pupils responded well to this. Teachers explained and demonstrated tasks well, and made good use of contributions from pupils. Good relationships between the adults and pupils, and positive and supportive praise, helped the pupils sustain their work. This also applies to most pupils with special educational needs who make good use of the subject and learn well. No teaching of the pupils in Years 1 and 2 was seen. It is a subject that the great majority of pupils enjoy very much, and in which they make a particular effort to do well.
124. It is only since the provision of a suite of computers in May 2001 that the subject has been taught and learnt in a regular, systematic way. Prior to this, all teaching and learning was reliant on the one or two computers in each class, and this made it difficult for all the pupils to have sufficient time to learn or consolidate their skills and knowledge. Now that there is a suite, the classroom computers are not often used and this is a waste of about half the resources available for the subject. Their use is rarely identified in planning, yet the school's schemes of work for this and most other subjects are guided by national exemplar schemes that identify potential opportunities for information and communication technology to be used.

125. The subject co-ordinator is very experienced and has good subject knowledge. A new policy has been written and endorsed by the teaching staff but not yet by governors. All teachers and teaching assistants have been trained in the use of the equipment, and some teachers have good knowledge of information and communication technology and its use in supporting a range of other subjects. The school is well resourced, but recognises the need for a rolling programme of replacement of ageing classroom computers. While the subject now has better resources and planning than at the time of the last inspection, the use of much of the resources and the standards attained by the time that pupils leave the school are unsatisfactory.

MUSIC

126. By the end of both Years 2 and 6, attainment is in line with expectations; in the last inspection it was found to be above this. Throughout the school, the pupils' achievement is satisfactory, as is their progress in gaining confidence as performers, with those who sing in the choir achieving very well. Those who have special educational needs also make satisfactory progress. Those who attain well in the subject make satisfactory progress in lessons and good progress in extra-curricular provision.

127. Throughout the school, the pupils sing well, with clear diction and a good sense of pitch. Many remember lyrics easily. However, they are not as skilled when playing tuned percussion instruments. The pupils in Year 2 play untuned percussion to add sound effects to a poem, practising their parts and then performing them satisfactorily when the poem is read. Those in Year 6 know how to create short rhythmic and melodic patterns on classroom instruments but some are unsure about the names of the notes and find it difficult to maintain a regular beat.
128. Teaching and learning are satisfactory; in the last inspection teaching was found to be good. Staff involve the pupils in a range of practical music-making activities. For example, the pupils in Year 6 sang a round in two parts; they practised their short, melodic patterns in groups and came in at the appropriate point when the song was performed. Younger pupils use information and communication technology for simple composition but there is no provision for this in Years 3 to 6. Music is listened to in assemblies. The pupils show satisfactory attitudes toward the subject. They enjoy singing and handle instruments with care. Those who attend choir practices are enthusiastic.
129. Extra-curricular provision is good. There is a recorder group and also a choir, which is about 40 strong. Concerts are held in school at various times during the year. Choir members have performed at out-of-school venues, including the Royal Albert Hall and the regional 'Music for Youth' festival. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Choir rehearsals provide further opportunities to develop social and collaborative skills.
130. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. The co-ordinator is working to improve the unsatisfactory assessment procedures. Resources are adequate, but there is a shortage of xylophones and glockenspiels. Improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory. There has been a decline in the standard of work and in the quality of teaching. There is a lack of provision for information and communication technology in Years 3 to 6.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

131. Standards of attainment in physical education are in line with national expectations and broadly similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. The overall standard of teaching was satisfactory. In total, five lessons were observed: one involved pupils in Years 1 and 2 and four in Years 3 to 6. In the former, the introduction was carried out at a brisk pace with the pupils using the available space well. There were good links with literacy as the pupils used the letters of the alphabet to form and maintain shapes before progressing to represent different characters through movement. They succeeded in making and maintaining body shapes and developing balance and control.
132. Teaching in the lessons involving the older pupils was satisfactory in two and unsatisfactory in the other two. In the satisfactory lessons, pupils were fully challenged throughout the session, especially in the outdoor lesson when, on a very cold day, they did not have time to get cold or stray off task. The unsatisfactory elements in the other two lessons consisted of unchallenging tasks and prolonged inactivity while the pupils listened to lengthy instructions; this resulted in some lack of motivation and co-operation.
133. The curriculum for physical education is broad and balanced. Swimming is available for pupils in Years 3 to 6 and the majority are able to swim 25 metres before their final year. There are no formal assessment procedures for tracking progress. Apparatus and equipment are adequate. The co-ordinator is keen to develop the subject and to maintain a good range of extra-curricular activities, which are now in place. Outdoor facilities for physical education are satisfactory but the design and location of the hall are very restrictive. It is small and narrow with projecting corners and stored furniture creates a hazard. Its location means that the pupils have to change in the main school building and then walk along muddy footpaths to gain entry. The hall's use as a dining room results in the floor getting dirty and being left in an unsuitable state for some afternoon activities. The ten minutes required to allow for access is a significant waste of lesson time when aggregated over the many necessary journeys.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

134. By the end of Year 2, standards of attainment are broadly in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus; by the end of Year 6, they are below this level. There has been a decline in the standard of the older pupils' work since the last inspection. Achievement is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2, but otherwise is unsatisfactory. Likewise, those with special educational needs and higher-attainers make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and 2 but their progress after this is unsatisfactory.
135. The pupils in Year 2 know about special occasions, such as birthdays and weddings and make their own cards to celebrate the Hindu festival of Divali. They talk about preparations for Christmas, show a satisfactory understanding of the Nativity story and also write prayers to thank God for the world around them. By the end of Year 6, knowledge of different world faiths is limited. Understanding of why religion is important in some people's lives is insecure. Years 5 and 6 know some of the stories in the Old Testament of the Christian Bible, writing about how God helped David in the story of 'David and Goliath'. They read Psalm 23, write about its meaning and also know some of the ceremonies of Judaism. They understand that Jewish people celebrate the festival of Shavuot and that a special service is held in the synagogue. However, many are unsure about the key events of the Christian faith. They do not know the difference between the Old and New Testaments in the Bible, or in which the stories of Jesus are to be found. Their written work is often brief with their own thoughts or opinions under-expressed. They sometimes fail to relate new learning to personal experience. The pupils' attitudes toward the subject are satisfactory. Most share ideas with each other and settle quickly to written tasks.
136. Teaching and learning are satisfactory. Effective use is made of questioning to extend understanding. For example, in a Year 4 lesson, the teacher read from the Good News Bible about the angel Gabriel visiting Mary. He asked specific questions after allowing pupils to discuss the story among themselves, thereby giving them a more secure understanding of its importance in the sequence of events. In Years 5 and 6, there is limited provision for the written expression of individual ideas or for reference to personal experience. The last report highlighted the need for teachers to place more emphasis on the cultural aspects of different religions and this has now been done. The report also stated that teachers did not have a high enough expectation of written work and, although there has been some improvement in presentation, opportunities for older pupils to write at length are still inadequate. Marking was found to be a weakness in the last inspection: there is still no consistent approach to the marking of written work in Years 3 to 6. Satisfactory provision is made for the pupils to use information and communication technology. For example, Years 3 and 4 made good use of computers to produce their responses to the Hindu story of 'The Elephant and the Blind Man'.
137. There is satisfactory leadership and management of the subject. The co-ordinator is monitoring the time allocated to older pupils' lessons to ensure that it meets requirements. Assessment procedures are unsatisfactory in that they do not specifically relate to the syllabus requirements and are not used to inform curriculum planning. Resources are good and include a range of books and artefacts. Generally, the subject makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. However, there are limited opportunities for spiritual development within lessons. Satisfactory provision is made for the pupils to work together and this enhances their social skills. However, overall improvement since the last inspection has been unsatisfactory.