

INSPECTION REPORT

ST. MARY'S C OF E PRIMARY SCHOOL

Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115176

Headteacher: Mrs. Sue Grocock

Reporting inspector: Marianne Harris
23288

Dates of inspection: 3rd – 5th June 2003

Inspection number: 247542

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

© Crown copyright 2003

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Aided
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Main Road Woodham Ferrers Essex
Postcode:	CM3 8RJ
Telephone number:	01245 320505
Fax number:	01245 320505
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Reverend Mary Cottee
Date of previous inspection:	26 th – 28 th January 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subjects	Aspect responsibilities
Marianne Harris 23288	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Geography Music Foundation Stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further? How good are curricular and other opportunities? The school's use of assessment.
Jan Leaning 9569	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents? Pupils' personal development
John Viner 22170	Team inspector	English Art and design Design Technology History Physical Education	How well is the school led and managed? Special educational needs English as an additional language Educational Inclusion

The inspection contractor was:

e-Qualitas Limited, Langshaw, Pastens Road, Limpsfield Chart, Oxted, Surrey. RH8 0RE.

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

The Complaints Manager, Inspection Quality Division, The Office for Standards in Education, Alexandra House, 33 Kingsway, London. WC2B 6SE.

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	6
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	11
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	11
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	12
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	13
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	14
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	15
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	16

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

20

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

With 74 pupils on roll, St. Mary's is a much smaller than average voluntary aided Church of England primary school. It is located in a small village in Essex, and the children come from generally advantaged backgrounds. There are no children learning English as an additional language, and most have a white United Kingdom heritage. The number of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals is low. The proportion of pupils who are on the school's profile of special educational needs is about average, as is the proportion of pupils who have a statement of need. These needs vary, but are mainly for learning difficulties. When they come into school the children have a wide range of ability, but, overall, the skills and knowledge that they have are what could be expected for children aged five.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

St. Mary's is a very good school. Standards of work seen during the inspection were well above average in English and mathematics. Over the past few years, the overall results in national tests have improved at a faster rate than seen in many other schools. Teaching throughout the school is very good and all pupils achieve very well. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The school provides very good value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils achieve very well.
- Teaching is very good throughout the school.
- Leadership and management are very good.
- Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development is excellent and as a result pupils have excellent attitudes to school.
- Pupils are given many very good opportunities to enrich their learning outside normal lessons.
- There are very good procedures for assessing how well pupils are doing.
- The school provides very good information for parents and parents have exceptionally positive views of the work of the school.

What could be improved

There are no key issues arising from this inspection. There are minor issues that the school have already identified as priorities within their improvement plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made very good improvement since the last inspection. Issues have been tackled very effectively. Standards, overall, have risen steadily, teachers now have high expectations of pupils' learning and behaviour, and all subjects are taught rigorously. The work that the pupils do has been monitored to make sure they all make good progress and assessment procedures are now very good.

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			
	all schools			similar schools
	2000	2001	2002	2002
English	A	A	A	B
mathematics	A	A	B	C
science	B	A	C	D

<i>Key</i>	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The number of pupils who take the national tests each year fluctuates, but is always small. This means that the results of just one pupil can affect the overall results of the school, making comparisons with similar schools unreliable. However, standards seen during the inspection were well above average overall. Test results over the past few years have improved faster than seen in many other schools.

When they come into school, most of the children have skills and knowledge that are expected for children aged five. They make very good progress during the reception year and, when they join Year 1, many will have exceeded the expected levels for children in the reception year (the Early Learning Goals). Throughout their time in school pupils make very good progress in their work and by the time they are in Year 2 the standards of work seen, overall, are well above average. Pupils do particularly well in English and mathematics, art and design and design technology. Similarly, pupils attain well above average standards, overall, by the time they reach Year 6. Pupils do particularly well in English and, mathematics, art and design and design technology. The school set challenging targets for pupils in the national tests for pupils in Year 6 last year (2002), in both English and mathematics, and these targets were exceeded. Targets for this year (2003) are similarly challenging and the pupils are likely to reach these targets. Results in science were below those found nationally, due, mainly to the small number of pupils who took the test. In work seen during the inspection, standards of work were above average. All pupils in the school achieve very well, whatever their ability.

In subjects other than English and mathematics, standards are above average, except in physical education and information and communication technology, and history for pupils in Years 1 and 2, where standards are in line with what is expected for pupils in Year 2 and Year 6. It was not possible to judge standards in music as too little was seen during the inspection.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Excellent. Pupils come into school enthusiastically, settle to work quickly, and get a lot done. They take a pride in their work and enjoy sharing their achievements with others
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Exemplary. Behaviour is excellent around the school and in lessons. Pupils care for each other and respect the feelings of both adults and

	other pupils.
Aspect	Comment
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Pupils form excellent relationships with each other and with adults in the school. They take on extra responsibilities sensibly and with a mature attitude. They work together very well in lessons and support each other in their learning.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about school, want to come and do not take time off unnecessarily. They arrive at school punctually and ready to learn.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Very good	Very good	Very good

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

Teaching throughout the school is very good. All of the lessons seen during the inspection were good or better. English and mathematics are taught very effectively so that pupils make very good progress during their time in school and achieve very well. Teachers plan lessons very well so that pupils of all abilities are supported very effectively, and pupils do not repeat work unnecessarily in the mixed-age classes. More able pupils have work that is suitably challenging, whilst pupils with special educational needs are very well supported so that they can make very good progress. Literacy and numeracy skills are particularly well taught so that pupils are able to apply their skills to other subjects. Teachers have high expectations of pupils’ learning and consequently pupils work hard and get a lot done. The purpose of each lesson is usually shared with the class, and revisited at the end of the lesson, so that pupils know what they will learn and how well they have done. The use of teaching assistants, resources and time available is excellent. Teaching assistants are very knowledgeable and work very effectively with pupils of all abilities so that all make good progress.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The pupils benefit from a rich and varied curriculum that is enriched well through visits and visitors into the school. The programme for personal, social and health education is very good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in class and they make very good progress during their time in the school.
Provision for pupils’ personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. The provision for pupils’ spiritual development is impressive, with very well planned opportunities for pupils to reflect upon issues and discuss their views with others. Provision for pupils’ social and moral development is outstanding, and this results in a very high standard of behaviour and the very positive attitudes to school. Pupils’

	cultural development is promoted very well and the pupils have a good understanding of cultures other than their own.
--	---

Aspect	Comment
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes very good care of its pupils. Child protection procedures are good and staff have had relevant training. Procedures for monitoring how well the pupils are doing are very good and this means that the staff know what the pupils need to do next to reach higher standards.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good. The headteacher and all of the staff work very well together to ensure that the pupils make very good progress. Work is monitored rigorously, appropriate targets are set and extremely effective action is taken to meet these targets.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. They are very supportive of the school and have a good understanding of where the strengths are, and what areas need to be improved.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school is constantly looking at all aspects of its work to ensure that they are doing all they can for the pupils. They apply the principles of <i>best value</i> very well to make sure that they are doing a good job.
The strategic use of resources	Very good. Financial administration, and the use of specific grants and staff, are very effective and very well focussed on raising standards. The hall, however, is a little small and makes the teaching of physical education indoors difficult.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The school is well led and managed. They feel comfortable about approaching the school with any problems. Teachers expect the children to work hard and do their best so children make good progress. School helps children to become mature and responsible. Children like school. Behaviour is good. Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The number of opportunities they get to discuss the progress their children make. The range of activities outside lessons.

Parents have very positive views of the school and support their children very well at home. Inspectors agree with the very positive views that the parents have. The pupils are very enthusiastic about school and make very good progress. Behaviour is exemplary and teaching is very good. The school is very well led and managed. Parents raised concerns about the number of opportunities they have to discuss their children's work formally with teachers in the school. The school agrees that there are not enough opportunities and has taken steps to rectify this. Inspectors found that the range of activities outside

lesson was good, and a better range than is normally seen in a small school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. When children join the school they have skills and knowledge that are what is expected for children aged five. During their time in the reception year they make good progress and many of the children will exceed the early learning goals by the time they join Year 1.
2. The number of pupils who take the national tests in both Years 2 and 6 fluctuates each year, but is always small. This means that the results of just one child can have a significant effect on the overall result of the school. Judgements on standards have been made by looking at current work. Comparing test results for such a small number makes judgements insecure. However, over the last few years the trend in results has been one of improvement faster than that seen nationally.
3. By Year 2 pupils reach standards in English and mathematics that are well above average, with a significant proportion attaining the higher levels. More able pupils are challenged with work that is well matched to their ability and pupils with special educational needs are very well supported so that all make very good progress and achieve very well. Standards in art and design and design technology are well above average. Standards in science, history and geography are above average, and are average in information and communication technology and physical education. Overall this represents very good achievement. All pupils make very good progress and apply the skills they learn in literacy and numeracy lessons well to other subjects.
4. By Year 6, pupils of all abilities have continued to make very good progress and achieve very well. Standards in English and mathematics, art and design and design technology remain well above average, standards in science, history and geography are above average and average in information and communication technology and physical education. It was not possible to judge standards in music as no lessons were seen during the inspection. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and those pupils who are more able have work and activities that are well planned and meet their learning needs appropriately.

Pupil attitudes, values and personal development

5. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes, values and relationships are excellent. The school's Christian ethos permeates all aspects of school life. The pupils are quick to help each other, whether in class or elsewhere, and older children support the younger ones. Pupils enjoy school, work hard, concentrate well and are polite, courteous and respectful to each other and to the adults. They are encouraged to develop lively, enquiring minds and to care for those less fortunate. These excellent attitudes make a very positive contribution to the high standards in the school.
6. Behaviour in the school is excellent. Pupils settle quickly to work, listen carefully and concentrate on their tasks. Rewards and sanctions are fairly and consistently applied, no bullying was seen during the inspection and pupils know that it is unacceptable. There have been no exclusions.
7. Relationships in the school are excellent; adults are very good role models and know the children and their families very well. Respect for each individual, both children and adults is encouraged. Pupils take registers to the office, put out equipment and look after the young children. The school council has two representatives, chosen democratically by their peers, from each year and they collect and discuss ideas. Water fountains and playground equipment have so far been provided as a result of ideas put forward by the school council.

8. The rate of attendance is very good, it is well above the national average, and unauthorised absence is well below the national average. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils arrive punctually to school and to lessons, which start promptly

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

9. The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is very good. There were fifteen lessons seen during the inspection and all were good or better. Seven out of ten lessons were very good or excellent. This very good teaching, and learning is characterised by very good knowledge that enables pupils to learn literacy and numeracy skills very well, and apply these skills to other subjects. For example, pupils write accounts in history using the skills they have learnt during English lessons.
10. Excellent use is made of teaching assistants who support pupils very well. Those pupils with special educational needs make good progress because of the good support they receive in lessons. Resources are used very well and no time is lost during lessons. Teachers are very well organised, share the purpose of the lesson with the class, and revisit this purpose at the end of the lesson to make sure the pupils have learnt what was intended. In an excellent mathematics lesson the teacher made sure the pupils knew what they were going to learn and kept reminding them, so that by the end the pupils were very secure in knowing that multiplication and division are opposite number operations.
11. All staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and learning, consequently pupils work hard and get a lot done in lessons. Homework is used well to reinforce what pupils have learnt in lessons. All lessons are planned very well so that pupils in these mixed-age classes do not repeat work unnecessarily. This, in itself, is a great achievement as the numbers each year fluctuate and class composition does not remain the same each year. This is no barrier to the teachers who plan lessons based on very good assessments, so that each task or activity is well matched to the ability of each child.
12. The overall quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good, especially where they receive additional support from a teaching assistant because the work they are set is clearly explained, by both the teacher and the teaching assistants. Teachers know their pupils very well and this ensures that close attention is paid to their individual needs.

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

13. The curriculum overall is very good and enriched by visits out of school and visitors into classes. The school works hard to make sure that learning is fun. Literacy and numeracy are taught well and the skills learnt applied to other subjects.
14. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good with a wider range on offer than is often seen in a small school. Pupils have the opportunity to learn French, First Aid and a range of sporting activities, including in-line skating. All pupils are welcome to join and many enjoy these activities. The provision for pupils' personal, health and social education is very good. The school has a very good scheme that helps children to develop personally. This involves pupils learning how to deal with a range of issues, including how to be assertive and resolve situations where they may face conflict. Pupils learn about the dangers of drugs and alcohol, including smoking, and in Years 5 and 6 have sex education lessons. A particularly good aspect of this provision is the "Feelings Book". Pupils who are unhappy about something are encouraged to write their feeling

- into a book and share this with an adult in school. This develops a very caring sensitive approach and the pupils respond by showing great sensitivity when someone is sad or upset.
15. The school has forged good links with other schools, especially the local secondary school to which most of the Year 6 pupils transfer. Teachers from that school come into St. Mary's and take some lessons. The pupils are then given work to do to take with them on transfer. Pupils also visit the new school and become accustomed to the layout. Pupils with special educational needs have extra provision so that they can feel settled when they arrive at the new school. This results in a smooth transfer and settled pupils.
 16. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is excellent. Assemblies are used very well to develop pupils' spiritual development. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on the needs of others and think about how they can make a difference. In lessons pupils think about their actions and how they can act sensitively. In a very good lesson pupils were asked to consider why people made pilgrimages. Many of the pupils came up with very thoughtful answers and demonstrated a very good understanding of the importance of pilgrimages. This resulted in pupils understanding why people of all faiths make religious journeys, and pupils respect these reasons.
 17. The provision for pupils' social and moral development is excellent. Older pupils look after the younger ones and all get on very well in the mixed age classes. Provision for pupils' cultural development is very good. Pupils learn about other faiths during religious education lessons and other activities enables pupils to try out Indian dance, for example. Pupils join in enthusiastically and show a mature attitude when trying out something new.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

18. The school provides very good care for its pupils within a firm, consistent atmosphere where all children are valued and respected and can feel happy and secure. Staff know children and their families very well. Children are encouraged to become independent learners, to do their best, to develop good relationships and to take a pride in their work, and they do. They are supervised by a sufficient number of adults at play and at lunchtimes. Outside agencies, for example, the education welfare officer and the school nurse give good support to the school. This very good care enhances the opportunities for children to achieve high standards in their work.
19. The procedures for child protection are good. The head teacher is the named person, every member of the school has had very recent training and all are aware of the procedures. The school liaises with the area child protection committee if necessary.
20. The school successfully promotes excellent behaviour. Pupils are aware of the expectations and respond appropriately. The procedures to prevent bullying are in place and respect and tolerance to others, their beliefs and cultures are promoted. A 'bullying awareness week' has been held for pupils. The pupils play and work together very well and no pupil is left out. Pupils said that if anyone is feeling unhappy they can sit on the 'sad' bench and someone will go to help them.
21. There is a very strong commitment to the health and safety of the whole school community. There is a health and safety governor and a risk assessment is carried out and recorded, as are any incidents. Substances are stored safely. There is no evidence of litter or graffiti and the pupils' work is carefully prepared for the very good displays around the school.
22. A significant proportion of members of staff have first aid training and there is first aid equipment strategically placed around the school. There is no medical room but children are carefully looked after and parents called in if their child is unwell. One girl said that *'if you don't feel well you can go the office and sit in the magic chair!* An accident book is kept well, and

- parents notified in case of head injury. Random fire drills take place each half term, fire, physical education and electrical equipment is checked regularly to ensure pupils' safety.
23. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and the school pays due regard to the Code of Practice. Pupils are identified carefully and good use is made of assessment data to identify those pupils in need of additional support.
 24. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is monitored well and reviews are carried out correctly. Individual education plans are carefully written and shared with all those involved with each pupil so that those involved receive appropriate support in all areas of the curriculum where they are likely to need it. Pupils with a statement of special educational needs are very well supported by effective learning support assistants. There are very good systems to support statement reviews, which take place as required and for which parental views are taken into account.
 25. Assessment procedures in the school are very good. The teachers know the pupils very well and keep detailed records to show how much progress each child makes. These detailed assessments are used very well to plan work. This results in activities and tasks that are well matched to the abilities of each child, and ensures that pupils do not repeat work unnecessarily. Each child has targets in English and mathematics and these are drawn up based on the assessments, and shared with the pupils.
 26. Assessment and record keeping for pupils with statements are very good. The headteacher, with the assistance of a part-time teacher of special needs, carefully monitors the achievement of children with individual education plans, while analysis of their achievement is used to inform planning. There are effective systems to ensure that annual reviews take place at the appropriate times.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

27. The school's partnership with parents is very good. The school works hard to ensure that parents feel welcome in school and many parents respond well to the opportunities that are provided for them to become actively involved in their children's learning. This has a significant effect on the standards that pupils achieve. This is similar to the time of the previous inspection when links with parents were also judged to be very good. Parents think that the school is very good.
28. A few parents work in school on a regular basis, and are a valuable asset to teachers and pupils in lessons because they are told clearly what their tasks will be and provide very good help where needed. The large number of working parents help in other ways, such as on visits and support events of the very successful parent teacher association. This group raises substantial funds, which make a valuable contribution to the children's additional opportunities for learning, through ongoing projects, such as maintaining the swimming pool. Parents have helped to fund the very good resources in the playground as well as computer equipment.
29. There is very good information presented in an easily readable format in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents. Parents see teachers formally at two parents' meetings each year. They would like an extra meeting, and the school has already responded to this suggestion. It plans to hold an open day when parents will be able to see the work of their children, and of the school. New parents can stay with their child to ensure that the children settle well and are happy. There are useful newsletters each week. Parents are satisfied that teachers set appropriate levels of homework and they support their children well at home to ensure that these tasks are completed on time.

30. Annual reports on pupils' progress at the end of the year, are detailed and of high quality. They show clearly how even the best pupils can improve and parents are appreciative of the helpful comments on their child's development. Parents of pupils with special educational needs have regular opportunities to meet with their child's teacher and/or the headteacher to discuss their child's progress and the school's provision for them.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

31. The leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides clear strategic direction and is well supported in her aims by staff and governors. She consults with other staff and leads gently but firmly. Her participative leadership includes consultation with school council as appropriate. There is a clear vision statement published to parents, which affirms the school's commitment to helping each child fulfil their potential, within a Christian context. These values underpin the school and are reflected in all aspects of its work and in the excellent relationships that are such a strong feature of the school. The clear strategic direction contributes to the formulation of school's development plan, involving all staff and governors so that everyone is committed to further development. There is a strong focus on raising standards and this has led to a developing culture of continuous improvement.
32. The school's development plan is set out in a more effective way than at the time of the previous inspection. The curriculum targets are appropriately costed and time related but many of the other targets are maintenance rather than developmental and need not be included, while a number are not sufficiently linked to planned costs and times.
33. The headteacher monitors teaching and learning in an informal way and the outcomes lead to improvements and the development of teaching. Although there is not yet a formal programme of monitoring, this is planned for September. Staff meetings are used effectively for monitoring pupils' work for consistency and cross checking of attainment levels. This contributes to the overall focus on standards.
34. Although there are only a few teachers, the headteacher's delegation is effective; each teacher has a curriculum role and plays an active part in the management of the school. When teachers undertake training there are good systems to ensure that outcomes are shared among all staff so that it has an impact on teaching across the school. There are also good systems in place for the performance management of staff and a programme of careful induction of new staff has developed from preparatory work for the Investors in People assessment. There is a good match of teaching and support staff skills to the needs of the curriculum.
35. Provision for special educational needs is well managed. The governing body satisfactorily monitors the school's arrangements through the governor with that responsibility. The headteacher provides very efficient management of the systems for special needs support; she meets with teachers to review individual education plans, liaises with parents and external agencies and is actively engaged in monitoring pupils' progress.
36. The teaching assistants work closely in partnership with teachers and form a dedicated, hard working team whose commitment plays a major role in the effective support of pupils with special educational needs. They make a strong contribution to the school's very good provision for special needs.
37. There is good financial planning with spending priorities carefully worked out. The anticipated costs of the previous headteacher returning from sick leave left the school with an unusually large surplus. However this has allowed the school to reorganise from September so that there are no classes with split Key Stages. The headteacher and other staff work together very

effectively to ensure that the curriculum is well planned and resourced. Value for money and best value criteria are stringently applied.

38. The governors fulfil their statutory duties in the strategic management of the school. Although a high percentage of the governing body are recent appointments most governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. They are proud of their school and work hard to support it.

39. The school is housed in bright, well-maintained buildings and, although the classroom and hall accommodation is rather cramped, good use is made of the available space so that the environment is stimulating and attractive. The beautiful school grounds are a positive feature and are well used to support the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

There are no key issues from this inspection, only a few minor points that the school have already identified and have plans to tackle.

The following minor issues could be included, in an action plan:

- Make teacher comments easier to read and understand for pupils who are less able
(paragraph 59).
- Ensure that pupils complete the corrections identified by the teacher
(paragraph 59).
- Provide parents with more opportunities to formally discuss the work of their children
(paragraph 29).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	15
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	3	7	5	0	0	0	0
Percentage	20	47	33	0	0	0	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 more than six percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	74
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	15

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	4

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.1
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
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)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2002	4	4	8

The number of pupils in Year 2 who took the national tests is below 10 and therefore is not reported separately.

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2002	9	7	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	14	14	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	88 (94)	88 (88)	94 (100)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	12	15	14
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	75 (94)	94 (94)	88 (94)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

The number of pupils who took the national tests 2002 is above 10, but when separated into boys and girls, numbers are below 10, and, therefore, not reported separately.

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
69	0	0
0	0	0
2	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
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
0	0	0
2	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)	3.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22:1
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	93

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2002/03
	£
Total income	281089
Total expenditure	262432
Expenditure per pupil	3749
Balance brought forward from previous year	40071
Balance carried forward to next year	58728

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1.7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.8
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

74%

Number of questionnaires sent out

74

Number of questionnaires returned

55

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	35	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	55	40	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	37	0	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	43	10	0	2
The teaching is good.	60	30	2	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	38	17	3	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	28	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	65	30	3	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	45	38	12	2	3
The school is well led and managed.	78	20	2	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	35	2	0	5

The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

28	43	22	3	3
----	----	----	---	---

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

40. The children join the school during the year in which they become five years old and attend on a part-time basis until they are ready to begin full time. When they come into school the children have a mixed range of experiences, and, overall, the skills and knowledge that they bring are broadly as expected for children aged five. During their time in the reception year the children make very good progress and by the time they enter Year 1 many of the children will exceed the Early Learning Goals.
41. Teaching in the reception year is very good in all areas of learning. The teacher and the teaching assistant work very well together, are very knowledgeable about how young children learn, and make sure that each child is very well supported so that they can make very good progress. Planning is very good and based on the national guidance for young children. Those who are more able have work that is suitably challenging and a good proportion of the children in the reception year are working with pupils in Year 1. Those children who are less confident, or who have special educational needs, are supported very well so that they make very good progress and achieve very well. Assessments are clear and used very effectively to plan the work and activities that the children will experience.
42. The leadership and management of the reception year are very good. There are clear roles and responsibilities for each member of staff, and all work very well together to make sure that the children in the reception year have appropriate and stimulating provision.

Personal, social and emotional development

43. Provision for children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. Children behave very well and rapidly learn to take turns and share. They all get on well with each other and settle quickly and enthusiastically to work. The classroom has personal targets on the wall so that all children are reminded about the need to think about other people's feelings. During free choice time the children choose their own activities and work together well.

Communication, language and literacy

44. The provision for children's communication, language and literacy is very good. Children are encouraged to sit and listen attentively and to speak clearly. They always respond positively. The children are beginning to read from a wide variety of books and all of them can write their name neatly. There are many opportunities for the children to act out their experiences in the role-play areas and many are beginning to write stories about their experiences. The children know about traditional fairy stories and can sequence pictures to tell the story.

Mathematical development

45. The provision for children's mathematical development is very good. The children count confidently to ten and beyond, and recognise the numbers. They learn about shapes and can describe simple ones using appropriate vocabulary. The children compare sizes and talk about

more or less than. In this way they learn simple addition and subtraction and sing songs to support their learning. The children learn about patterns and can thread beads to make a repeating pattern on a necklace.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

46. The children develop a widening knowledge of their growing world. The outside area is used excellently so that the children grow their own flowers and plants and learn to take care of these. Children look for insects and other wildlife in the outside area and this extends their knowledge further. When using the computer the children are confident and can access appropriate programs and use the mouse and the keyboard correctly. Children learn about the local area and have looked at photographs of houses to see where they are in the locality. The children have access to a wide range of construction resources and use these well to make models to share with the class.

Physical development

47. There is very good provision for developing children's physical skills. Children hold pencils and pens correctly and use scissors safely. The outside area is used very well so that children have the opportunity to climb and balance, run and play. This results in the children being well co-ordinated and physically active.

Creative development

48. The provision for children's creative development is very good. The role play areas provide many opportunities for the children to make up their own stories and act out their experiences. The sand and water activities are used enthusiastically by the children and there are many opportunities to paint and make pictures.

ENGLISH

49. In the 2002 national tests for seven year olds, standards of reading were above and those for writing were in line with the national average. Compared with similar schools they were in line with and below average respectively. However, since only eight pupils sat the tests, such comparisons are unreliable. Over time, standards in reading have remained more or less constant in Key Stage 1, while those for writing have risen.
50. In the 2002 national tests for eleven year olds the school's results for English were well above the national average and in line with the average for similar schools. In comparison with how pupils achieved when they were seven, the results were well above the average for similar schools. The trend over time is one of steady improvement. There is no difference in the achievements of boys and girls.
51. Pupils achieve well. Standards of work seen in both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 were well above the national expectations, especially in pupils' own writing. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. These standards indicate that Year 6 pupils are likely to meet or exceed the challenging targets set for them.
52. Pupils with special educational needs achieve very well because of the very good support that the school provides for them in teachers' careful planning and the excellent help they receive from teaching assistants.
53. The school provides very good opportunities for speaking and listening in and outside lessons so that even the younger pupils listen to each other's points of view and respect them while all pupils express themselves confidently and articulately. They are keen to contribute to their lessons and, because their teachers encourage them to be reflective, some of their contributions are remarkably mature and thoughtful; such as the Year 4 pupil who asked, in a lesson whether

- hunting whales hurt God. These very good speaking and listening skills help pupils to develop their reading and to extend their vocabulary as writers.
54. When pupils read they do so confidently, with developing intonation. Younger pupils read with increasing fluency and even those who find reading more difficult are enthusiastic and want to do their best. These very good attitudes to reading contribute to books being valued in the school so that pupils are able to discuss and compare authors they have read. The group reading sessions in which pupils share the same story are well resourced and the sessions are structured effectively so that pupils are helped to develop positive reading habits. Phonics is well taught throughout the school so that all pupils confidently use a wide range of strategies for reading unfamiliar words.
 55. Pupils' writing is of a very high standard throughout the school. Even in Key Stage 1, the most able pupils produce work of a good length, with accurate full stops, capital letters and speech marks. In a Year 1 lesson pupils used adjectives appropriately and wrote a class poem. Some of their writing makes very good use of connectives, as with the Year 2 pupil who wrote, "At playtime he (a monster) ate the football and put the sandpit up his nose until no sand was left." Key Stage 1 pupils use complex words with confidence and make very good attempts at spelling them. This provides a very good foundation for further development in Key Stage 2.
 56. Key Stage 2 pupils are given many well-planned opportunities for extended writing and they build up their skills well so that, by Year 3, many write stories of up to 300 words with accurate punctuation of complex sentences, as in the pupil who wrote "I'm sorry," he called down the dark hallway, but no-one answered except the whistles of the wind blowing through the shuttered windows."
 57. Pupils write in a very wide range of styles and their work shows considerable depth and thoughtfulness. They recognise different authors' styles and can comment maturely, as in the very good work comparing the "Tyger" poem of William Blake with the style of Ted Hughes or the analysis of the character of Lady Macbeth in a study of Shakespeare's play, where one pupil wrote that "she had no second thoughts about murdering the king".
 58. English is extremely well taught. The text-based work that pupils are set is well matched to their needs so that the most able are challenged and the lower attaining pupils are well supported. Good use is made of lesson time so that pupils are always busy, respond positively and get a lot of work done. Teachers have high expectations of presentation and this means that pupils take a pride in their handwriting and in the layout of their work.
 59. There are good systems for assessing pupils' progress. The progress data that the school maintains are used to identify those pupils making too little or unexpectedly good progress so that teachers can plan accordingly. The reading record books, however, are a simple record of pages read and do not have any diagnostic assessment that shows pupils how to develop their skills and informs their teachers about what they can and cannot do. Similarly, teachers' marking, although encouraging and positive, sometimes lacks focus and does not show the pupil how they can improve. Comments are often written in words too difficult for the pupil to understand, for example the observation, made to a low attaining pupil, that "speech marks are a little confused." Too often comments are written in handwriting that some pupils will not be able to read and corrections are neither enforced, not followed up, for example "siad" (said) corrected in November 2002 but still appearing in the same pupil's work in May 2003.

60. There are good learning opportunities for English in other subjects, especially history where pupils write diaries, letters and have opportunities for research. Good opportunities for speaking and listening are provided across the curriculum.
61. The leadership and management of English are very good; teachers' planning and their teaching are monitored and spending is carefully targeted to ensure that the subject is well resourced.

MATHEMATICS

62. Standards of work seen in Year 2 are well above average. Pupils are very confident mathematically and most are working at a higher-than-expected level. For example, pupils in Year 2 show a good understanding of the properties of 2 and 3 dimensional shapes and talk confidently about these. They use a wide range of strategies for adding up and can explain these clearly and confidently. Pupils achieve very well.
63. By Year 6 pupils reach well above average standards in all aspects of their mathematics work. They are confident when adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing and can use these operations when solving everyday problems. Pupils use information and communication technology well so that they can prepare a spreadsheet for a party and confidently plan what food they will need and how much it will cost. Pupils achieve very well and make very good progress.
64. Teaching of mathematics is very good. Teachers have high expectations of both learning and behaviour and pupils respond well and get a lot done in lessons. Teachers have very good subject knowledge. Lessons are very well paced and no time is lost. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported in lessons so that they are able to make very good progress. Work is well marked so that pupils know what to do to improve their work and targets are set so that it is clear what the pupils are aiming for. Work is very well planned so that activities are suitably challenging for the more able pupils and this contributes significantly to the high standards that are achieved.
65. Mathematics is very well led and managed in the school. Care is taken to ensure that planning covers all aspects of maths and that work is well matched to the abilities of all of the pupils in the class. This is especially noticeable when all of the classes contain several age groups and all, within the class, achieve very well.

SCIENCE

66. There are no national tests for pupils in Year 2 and the number that were assessed by teachers was very low. In terms of work seen, pupils in Year 2 reach standards in science that are above those expected nationally. Skills of investigation are taught systematically and effectively so that pupils learn how to test their ideas and how to make sure their tests are fair. They learn a range of scientific vocabulary and use this appropriately when drawing diagrams and recording their work. Activities on electricity, for example, enable the pupils to use this vocabulary when labelling circuits and pupils are confident when carrying out this work.
67. National test results (2002) for pupils in Year 6 were below those expected nationally. However, there were a small number of pupils who took the tests and, when considering the work seen during the inspection, standards are above average and pupils achieve well. All aspects of science are covered well and pupils use their literacy and numeracy skills effectively. When recording experiments they write accurately their findings and explain their methods systematically and scientifically. Pupils look at their work carefully and draw conclusions from

their findings. In an experiment to test the “stretchability” of elastic bands, pupils can correctly identify the factors which make a band stretch the furthest. Work in books is neat and well presented.

68. There were no lessons seen during the inspection, due to timetable constraints, and so it is not possible to judge the overall quality of teaching. However, work in books is well marked and shows pupils what they need to do to improve their work. Science is systematically taught, with work dated accurately to show that pupils generally get a lot done in a session.
69. Science is well led and managed in the school. Effective assessment procedures have been developed so that teachers can test the pupils at the end of each unit of work and plan work effectively, based on these assessments. The whole curriculum is well planned so that pupils in these mixed-age classes do not repeat work unnecessarily.

ART AND DESIGN

70. Standards in art- work seen across both Key Stages were well above national expectations. Pupils of all ages are well taught; they learn about the work of famous artists and have many opportunities to emulate their style as well as develop their own. Sketch books are well used to experiment with designs or techniques and support the finished works, which are of a consistently high standard.
71. Pupils learn to use a wide range of media and techniques such as watercolour, pastels, pen and paint, printing and collage. They select their materials carefully and plan their work thoroughly, as for example, the pupil who wrote “I drew a picture of our Wendy house because it looked simple enough for the ordinary artist. I used a wide range of colours in the style of Cézanne.” This depth of study is very good improvement since the last inspection.
72. The superb ceramic tile work, mounted in the entrance hall and commemorating the Royal Jubilee is a very good example of excellent art- work involving the whole school community and is a source of pride to all.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

73. Standards in the work seen indicate that pupils are working well above national expectations by the end of both Key Stages. Pupils have opportunities to use a wide range of materials, from cardboard and paper to wood and other materials. Some very good work was seen in food technology, such as the design for soup in Key Stage 1 and bread in Key Stage 2.
74. Pupils understand how to generate their own ideas and to turn them into a design. They can select their own materials and tools, make their design and evaluate it. Planning for design technology ensures that pupils undertake an impressive range of activities, some of which are related to practical applications, such as making costumes for a play or creating a sculpture to enhance the pond area. This is very good improvement since the last inspection.
75. No lessons were seen during the inspection and therefore no judgement can be made on teaching. However, pupils learn to use simple hand tools correctly with good health and safety awareness. Sketchbooks are used to trial designs and make preliminary drafting sketches. Some pupils have carried out personal research and sketched statues they have discovered, in preparation for the class project. This represents good learning.
76. The school has a good range of design technology resources.

GEOGRAPHY

77. There were no geography lessons seen during the inspection and judgements have been made by looking at pupils' work and discussing this with the pupils. It was not possible to judge the quality of teaching. By the end of Year 2 pupils express their likes and dislikes about the local areas and write confidently about these. They have investigated how to travel to school safely and looked at local issues such as pollution and waste. They learn relevant geographical vocabulary and have used an aerial photograph to look at the landmarks around the school. Standards are above those normally seen and pupils achieve well.
78. By Year 6 skills and knowledge have been developed appropriately and standards remain above average, with pupils achieving well. The local borough engineer has worked closely with the pupils so that they understand the issues surrounding road safety and the problems of parking in the narrow streets. Pupils also understand about traffic pollution and the issues surrounding large lorries in narrow roads. Pupils use the internet to look for aerial photographs of the local area and, for homework, have worked out the route from Chelmsford to Scarborough. Pupils learn to use maps, including how to locate a site using grid references and symbols. Pupils research other localities and, for example, study the climate in Australia.
79. Geography is well led and managed in the school. There are many opportunities for the pupils to learn about the local and contrasting areas. Visitors come into school and help the pupils to understand what the area used to be like, and this links well with history.

HISTORY

80. The work seen indicates that, by Years 2 and 6 standards are above national expectations. This is good improvement since the last inspection. Key Stage 1 pupils develop a good understanding of chronology; they learn how they have developed over their lifetime and how this relates to things that are older than them. They understand some factual knowledge about historical artefacts, for example, in the work done on toys, and they know that people in the past acted differently from them.
81. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they have a clear understanding of primary and secondary sources of information and they are able to carry out their own original investigations, such as photographing Victorian buildings they have identified. Pupils have a very good understanding of the passage of time and are able to understand how their own world has been shaped by the past, as in the very good work done on World War II.
82. History is well-planned so that pupils do not repeat work, even though they may remain in the same class for more than a year. The curriculum is well supported by visits to places of historical interest, such as the Museum of Childhood at Bethnel Green. Teachers ensure that, as well as having opportunities for research, pupils apply to history the same high standards of presentation and expression that they learn in English.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

83. By the time they are in Years 2 and 6 pupils reach standards in information and communication technology that are in line with what is expected nationally. Although no lessons were seen during the inspection, judgements on standards have been made by looking at pupils' work and talking to them about what they have learnt.
84. By the time they are in Year 2, pupils write about their pets and insert pictures into the text to make it more interesting. They use the internet to research topics such as children in the Second World War, and can programme a model so that it moves around to given commands. Pupils use

- their information and communication technology skills well in other subjects. For example, in science they have drawn a picture of a butterfly and labelled it using the computer.
85. By the time pupils reach Year 6 they create virtual models using a relevant program and have used these skills to create their ideal school. They use a multi-media program to create a presentation on their favourite hobby, or a book they have enjoyed. Pupils are confident using the internet to research ideas and can email correctly. Pupils talk confidently about their skills in information and communication technology and demonstrate a good knowledge of how to create a program that will control a set of traffic lights.
86. There were no information and communication technology lessons seen during the inspection, but pupils' work shows that skills and knowledge are systematically taught. Over the last few years the standards in information and communication technology have risen at a fast pace, and this means that all pupils achieve well as they begin from a low starting point.
87. Information and communication technology is well led and managed in the school. Good use is made of teaching assistants to support pupils using information and communication technology and this has contributed significantly to the raised standards. The areas set aside for the computers is very small and the school overcomes this very well by teaching pupils in small groups with expert tuition. This, too, has contributed to the raised standards and good understanding that the pupils have.

MUSIC

88. There were no music lessons seen during the inspection, consequently no judgements can be made on the overall standards that pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach, nor has it been possible to judge the quality of teaching and learning. However, during assemblies the pupils sing enthusiastically and identify music from a variety of composers, including Mozart. When listening to the music pupils are encouraged to think about such things as peace and joy, and, in this way, music makes a significant contribution of the spiritual development of the pupils. Overall the subject is satisfactorily led and managed.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

89. In the three lessons observed, standards in PE were in line with national expectations at the end of both Key Stages. Teachers have good knowledge and this helps them plan appropriate work for their pupils. Pupils respond well and most work hard, although the small size of the school's hall limits the effectiveness of some indoor games lessons. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress when they are given skilled support from a teaching assistant.
90. The school has a very good swimming pool and all children go swimming in the summer term when a specialist teacher visits. These lessons were seen during the inspection. All pupils are enthusiastic and the teaching they receive is of a very good standard. This helps them to develop good confidence in the water.
91. The school takes part in a range of local sports tournaments and the PE curriculum is enriched by a good number of after school clubs that enable pupils to develop their individual sporting interests.
92. PE is well managed, the teachers have all received some specialist training and there is an appropriate stock of good quality equipment that supports their teaching.