

INSPECTION REPORT

KINGS ROAD PRIMARY SCHOOL

CHELMSFORD

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 132165

Headteacher: Mr Peter Terry

Reporting inspector: Mr Dennis Maxwell
8798

Dates of inspection: 03 – 06 March 2003

Inspection number: 248917

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Kings Road Chelmsford Essex
Postcode:	CM1 2BB
Telephone number:	01245 256074
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Jill Smith-Hughes
Date of previous inspection:	N/a

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8798	Dennis Maxwell	Registered inspector	Information and communication technology Music	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9275	Candy Kalms	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?
2866	Bob Battey	Team inspector	English Geography Special educational needs	
8696	Abul Maula	Team inspector	Art and design Design and technology Religious education English as an additional language	
14806	John Stevens	Team inspector	History Mathematics Educational inclusion	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
20063	Gerard Slamon	Team inspector	Physical education Science Foundation stage	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Kings Road is a new community primary school for pupils aged 4 to 11 years, formed from the amalgamation and remodelling of the previous infant and junior schools. It is situated to the north of Chelmsford town centre. Pupils come from a mixture of social and private housing. The socio-economic circumstances of the community serving the school are varied and some are much less favourable than usual. There are 412 pupils on roll, with about equal numbers of boys and girls. The school is much bigger than the average size nationally and many more pupils than usual join or leave the school other than at the usual time. Very few pupils come from ethnic minority heritages and three are at an early stage of English language acquisition. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals, at 27 per cent, is above average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is above the national average, and most of these have moderate learning or communication difficulties. Four pupils have a Statement of Special Education Needs. On average, the children's attainment on entry to the school is well below average. The school has formed an exciting partnership with three neighbouring schools, entitled Kingsford Park, with the multi-disciplinary involvement of external agencies, to provide support for families in the community. External funding has supported the appointment of a family support counsellor. There has been a high turnover of teaching staff during the past three years and this is now reducing.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a successful and rapidly improving school that provides a very good standard of education for the pupils through the outstanding leadership and vision of the headteacher. Standards improved significantly in the national tests at Year 6 from 2001 to 2002. There is a very good ethos for learning and a strong focus on pupils' personal development. The all-round support for all groups of pupils from both within the school and from outside agencies is very effective in preparing pupils to learn. As a result, pupils make good progress. The quality of teaching and learning is good through the school but assessment procedures require further development. The school intends to adjust the curriculum to provide a better balance for all subjects. The senior management team gives excellent leadership and management although their work has yet to achieve its full impact. The school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Children get a good start in the Early Years and Reception classes, with very good teaching and well-chosen activities.
- Pupils achieve better than usual from Reception Year to Year 6. The excellent provision from the support agencies linked to the Kingsford Park initiative is highly significant in promoting achievement.
- Teaching and learning through the school are good, with particular strengths in the Reception Year and Years 3 and 6.
- Relationships are very good, particularly between the teachers or support staff and the pupils. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, and for their personal development is good overall.
- The provision for pupils with learning difficulties is very good, and local agencies give strong support.
- Leadership is excellent, as is the commitment of all staff to improvement. Senior staff and governors are very effective in creating a happy and purposeful working environment.

What could be improved

- Standards are below average in English, mathematics and information and communication technology (ICT) by Years 2 and 6 and below average in science also by Year 2.
- Suitable formal assessment procedures are not yet in place for subjects like design and technology or geography to help track pupils' progress; and information is underused for lesson planning.
- The teaching arrangements and time allocation for history and geography result in pupils making uneven progress through the school. Also, opportunities for using writing, numeracy and ICT skills in other subjects are missed.
- The role and influence of the subject leaders are still at an early stage of development.
- The level of attendance is not good enough and procedures to monitor attendance are not fully effective.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

This section is not applicable since Kings Road is a new school.

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	N/a	E	D	C
Mathematics	N/a	E	D	C
Science	N/a	E	B	A

Key	
Well above average	A
above average	B
Average	C
Below average	D
Well below average	E

Standards in the work seen in English, mathematics and science are below average by the end of Year 2. Standards in current work are below expectations for their age in English and mathematics by Year 6 and similar to those seen in most schools in science. Pupils achieve well in the Reception classes, and this continues through Years 1 - 2 as well as Years 3 - 6 as a result of the good learning opportunities provided for all pupils and the good teaching. The full impact of the good teaching and learning has yet to be seen in much improved standards because the school's remodelling, the appointments of senior staff and general routines were only in place in September. Standards in art and design, design and technology, history, and religious education are average by Years 2 and 6. Standards in geography and ICT are below the expectation by Years 2 and 6. Standards in physical education are below average by Year 2 but meet the expectation by Year 6. Teachers usually give higher-attaining pupils more challenging work so that they reach higher standards. There is evidence of good progress in a range of current work, although pupils' skills of writing, numeracy and ICT are under-developed in other subjects.

The table above shows that standards improved significantly from 2001 to 2002 as good teaching began to have an effect. In relation to similar schools, standards were average in English and mathematics and well above average in science. The local partnership that promotes pupils' self-esteem and personal development is having a major impact on standards. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress. In 2002, standards in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average at Year 2. Very large numbers of pupils leave or join the school other than at the usual time between Year 1 and Year 6, and many of those joining the school have learning, personal and behavioural needs that require positive action and support. As a result, the school did not meet its targets for English and mathematics in 2002, which were over-optimistic. The school is also unlikely to meet the challenging targets set for 2003 because of the large turnover of pupils.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils have good attitudes. Nearly all are enthusiastic, well motivated and interested in their lessons. They listen carefully to their teachers and want to take part, which helps them make good progress.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good overall. This benefits life in the school and supports learning. Most pupils understand the standards of behaviour expected. Most pupils concentrate and work hard. A few pupils present challenging behaviour that is managed well.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between all members of staff and the pupils are very good, creating a happy and busy atmosphere. Pupils' personal development is good.

	Several pupils have difficulty taking responsibility for their learning.
Attendance	The level of attendance is unsatisfactory since around one quarter of pupils attend for only four out of five sessions. This adversely affects their learning. Procedures to monitor and improve attendance are unsatisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching and learning throughout the school is good so that pupils achieve well. A significant proportion of teaching is very good, particularly in the Reception class and Years 3 and 6. The teachers in the Reception classes create a very good learning atmosphere where children are encouraged to become independent. Teachers establish very good relationships with the pupils. They plan carefully, taking full account of pupils' individual, personal and learning needs. This is effective in promoting pupils' achievements. The teaching of English and mathematics is good. The skills of literacy and numeracy are taught effectively, although there is some variation between teachers and these skills are seldom planned for in other subjects. The writing and mental calculation skills of many pupils are poor. The teaching of ICT is developing well as teachers and pupils gain confidence with the facilities of the newly installed computer suite. However, the teaching of basic skills is satisfactory overall since writing, numeracy and ICT are not yet emphasised sufficiently in other subjects. Teachers manage the pupils very well, setting clear expectations. A few teachers are particularly skilled in their questioning that prompts pupils to think and reason. classroom assistants contribute very well to pupils' learning through their sensitive and thoughtful support.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. Teachers provide well-chosen activities that promote good learning by the pupils. The school's planned curriculum meets statutory requirements although for some subjects there are long gaps through the year between topics. School assemblies provide regular opportunities for pupils to sing, often led from the front in a fine baritone by the headteacher. There is a good range of activities outside school such as choir, recorder and sports.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. The school gives very close attention to the learning needs of individual children. There is excellent provision from the support services that combines with the school staff to provide high quality support.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for identified pupils is good during the allocated times. The total time available is insufficient to meet the needs of all pupils at an early stage of English acquisition.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, supported for example by the school council and a residential visit. Provision for spiritual development is good. School assemblies value children's efforts and provide good opportunities for reflection. The school provides satisfactory opportunities for cultural development, through visits and music for example, but multi-cultural understanding has less attention.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The general level of welfare is good. The Kingsford Park partnership provides excellent support through the involvement of external agencies. There are good procedures to give personal help to pupils. Assessment arrangements are satisfactory but information is not used sufficiently yet for further planning.

How well the school works in partnership with parents	Very good. Parents express their complete confidence in the headteacher. They appreciate the open communication now and have a very good opinion of the school that is well justified. Information to parents is good.
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HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides outstanding leadership through his clarity of vision and motivating style. He and the senior staff give excellent direction for the development of the school. The overall leadership and management by the senior staff is very good, combining practical hard work with strategies to reach a shared agreement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Very good. The commitment and care by governors, some over a considerable period of time, has been very influential in shaping the direction of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The senior staff have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses, gained through good formal and informal evaluations. Subject leaders have very good arrangements for planned time to evaluate provision and standards in their subjects, but few have yet observed lessons. There are good procedures for performance management that are helping to set clear expectations and accountability on staff.
The strategic use of resources	Teachers and learning assistants are deployed well in relation to their experience and expertise, with learning and standards in mind. Specific grants are used very well. The school finance secretary gives very good attention, with the governing body, to obtaining best value in financial decisions that promote standards.

The level of staffing is very good. The accommodation has many very good features, and is good overall since space for the Reception classes is currently limited. There is a satisfactory quality and range of resources.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and make good progress; • The behaviour is good; • Teaching is good and pupils are expected to work hard; • The school is managed well. 	<p>Several parents consider that:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework isn't right; • They are not well informed about how their child is getting on; • The school doesn't work closely with them; • There isn't a suitable range of activities outside lessons.

The inspectors agree with the parents positive opinions about the school. The inspectors find that the school is very open to parents and there are usually good arrangements to provide information about a child's progress. Homework is usually given regularly, and of a suitable amount for the ages of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the Early Years and Reception classes with a wide range of attainment which is well below average overall. While some children have average speaking skills and a sound general knowledge, others have very limited skills in communication, language and literacy, and very little experience outside their own home environment. The school is successful in providing them with a rich, varied and relevant curriculum that prepares them well for learning through practical experiences in the well-organised classes. The children make good progress in early literacy and numeracy skills through very good teaching. The strong emphasis on learning a wide range of basic skills enables the children to achieve well, although their attainment is below average in language and mathematical skills and in their general knowledge of the world by the time they enter Year 1.
2. A factor affecting pupils' progress has been the disruption caused to the learning of pupils presently in the school by the recent amalgamation and the resulting staff changes and building works. Inspection findings support the judgement that these factors have affected progress, and recognise how well staff and pupils have coped with these changes and that pupils are now achieving well in relation to their prior attainment. Despite below average standards by Year 2 in English, mathematics and science, pupils make good progress overall as they continue to consolidate their learning from the Reception Year and gain new knowledge through the good teaching. However, pupils have very limited skills in English as they enter Year 1. Many do not have speaking skills to express themselves clearly and they do not form complete sentences. This adversely affects their standard of writing, which is below the national expectation by the end of Year 2. Pupils do not apply a clear structure when organising their writing even though their gains in communication skills are good overall. By Year 2 most pupils have acquired early counting skills, although they do not have the skills to perform mental calculation confidently with small numbers. In science, despite the good progress pupils make in Years 1 and 2, a significant number still find difficulty in explaining their work and in making appropriate observations related to their tasks.
3. The standard of writing is below the national expectation by the end of Year 6. Older pupils write stories and put their work into paragraphs with an appropriate grammatical structure, although they have few opportunities to search for information from books and to write up their findings. They are given many tasks on structured writing to improve their grammar and punctuation, and also have opportunities for free and creative writing when that is the focus of the unit of work. In mathematics, while the higher-attaining pupils choose appropriate mathematical operations, the average and below average attaining pupils do not have the skills to do the calculations confidently when two or three steps are required. Pupils demonstrate average standards in science by Year 6. Most pupils appreciate the feeding relationships between plants and animals in a particular habitat, for example. They know various situations in which changes such as evaporation and condensation will occur; and they have the skills to build circuits to make electrical devices function. Progress is good in Years 1 - 2 and this continues in Years 3 - 6. Pupils are achieving well through the impact of good teaching linked to interesting tasks and the personal care.
4. Standards in the 2002 National Curriculum tests at Year 2 were well below the national average in reading, writing and in mathematics. In comparison with similar schools, standards were below average in reading and mathematics, and well below average in writing. The performance of boys and girls was similarly below the national boys' and girls' averages for reading and writing, reflecting the national picture, although boys were closer to the average in mathematics. Fewer pupils than usual gained the higher level 3 in any of the tests and more attained below the expectation: this pattern matches the information of the pupils' attainment on entry to the school.
5. At the time of the 2001 national tests in Year 6, the school was recovering from lack of direction, and several factors had an adverse effect on standards, which is still evident throughout the school. Standards improved significantly from 2001 to 2002 as a result of the good teaching and positive management. Perhaps the most significant results of all are those showing that in relation to prior attainment when pupils were in Year 2, standards in English and mathematics were above average and in science were well above average. By Year 6, pupils had made better than average progress in English

and mathematics, and well above average progress in science. The merits of this performance are increased by the high turnover of pupils from Year 2 to Year 6, since evidence shows

that the pupils joining the school take considerable time to become ready to learn. The performance of boys and girls was similar in relation to the national boys' and girls' averages, although girls attained a little better.

6. By the end of Years 2 and 6, standards in art and design, design and technology, history and religious education meet the expectation. Standards in geography and ICT are below average. Standards in physical education are below average at Year 2 but meet the expectation at Year 6. The school has set suitably challenging targets for English and mathematics for 2003 relating to projected attainments of pupils by the end of Year 6, although the school is unlikely to meet them because several pupils with learning difficulties have entered the year recently.
7. Pupils achieve well in the Reception classes, and this continues through Years 1 - 2 as well as Years 3 - 6 as a result of the consistently good learning opportunities provided for all pupils and the good teaching. There are no significant variations in attainment among pupils of different ethnic groups or background or in relation to gender. The full impact of the good teaching and learning is not yet shown in pupils' written work and in much improved standards because the school's remodelling is so recent. There is good evidence of pupils achieving well in some aspects. Pupils attain satisfactory standards in reading across the school, and most comprehend well what they have read. The higher-attaining and average readers read fluently with interest and expression. The structure of mathematics lessons is effective in promoting pupils' progress. The mental starter sets a good pace and is used to improve number skills. Teachers have good subject knowledge and set questions matched well to pupils' needs and to challenge them. The setting of pupils in Years 3 to 6 focuses support where it is most effective, for both lower and higher-attaining pupils. The pupils' good attitudes and behaviour is also a significant factor in supporting learning, and as a result, pupils achieve well.
8. There is evidence of good progress in a range of current work, including that in English, mathematics and science, although pupils' skills of writing, numeracy and ICT are under-developed across subjects. The school's good focus on behaviour management and consistent expectations is helping to promote effective learning through the school. These are having a positive impact on pupils' achievement and standards.
9. Pupils with learning difficulties make good progress in relation to their targets through the good support. Pupils receive very good levels of assistance in their classes and by occasional withdrawal from teaching by support staff. There is an appropriate emphasis on improving pupils' reading and literacy skills as well as meeting their emotional, social and behavioural needs. Suitable targets are defined in their individual education plans. All staff and the support assistants know these well. Arising from a recent policy the recognition of pupils who are gifted and talented is starting to be addressed.
10. The progress made by pupils learning English as an additional language is satisfactory overall. They make good progress when supported individually, but progress slows for some pupils, particularly those at early stage of English acquisition in spite of class teachers being supportive. A few pupils are held back owing to their lack of confidence in the use of written English, though they may appear to be coping orally with the everyday classroom situation.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Most pupils come to school with good attitudes to learning and they behave well. Most children have limited social, personal and speaking skills when they enter Reception. During their time in Reception they settle well into the daily routines due to the very good support they receive and the effective classroom organisation. They soon begin to play and work happily with other children, sharing toys and resources and generally becoming more confident.
12. As pupils move through the school, these good attitudes continue and develop. Most pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn. Nearly all are enthusiastic, well motivated and interested in their lessons. They concentrate, listen carefully to their teachers and respond well to the good teaching. This encourages good progress as they take part actively in the tasks. Many pupils are keen to ask and

answer questions and join in discussions as seen in a Year 3 English lesson, when pupils eagerly suggested a number of interesting similes.

13. Behaviour in the school is good overall. This benefits life in the school, creating a pleasant atmosphere that supports learning. Most pupils understand the standards of behaviour expected and are aware of the consequences of inappropriate behaviour. They behave well in lessons, in assemblies and around the school. There is however, a small number of pupils, especially boys in Years 5 and 6, who do not always behave appropriately. Teachers cope well with these pupils so the flow of lessons is not much affected. Whilst the general atmosphere is free of oppressive behaviour and harassment, it is evident from the school's records and the high number of exclusions that incidents of unsatisfactory behaviour do occur both in lessons and around the school in all year groups, though more usually in Years 5 and 6. There were seventeen fixed term exclusions in the past year and four pupils have been excluded in the current year.
14. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and staff are generally very good . The high level of mutual respect between adults and pupils helps pupils develop confidence and contributes to interest and learning. All pupils are fully involved in the life and work of the school. In lessons pupils settle to work quickly and are able to work unsupervised, whether individually, in pairs or in small groups. When working together they co-operate, sharing ideas, equipment and resources sensibly. They show respect for each other's views values and beliefs. They listen carefully to each other in lessons. In religious education lessons pupils showed a high level of interest and respect for different religions including Hinduism, Sikhism and Judaism. Most pupils are aware of the impact their actions can have on others, but a minority do not understand that their attitudes and behaviour affects the learning of others in the class.
15. Pupils' personal development is good. Around the school they are friendly, polite and courteous to visitors. Most pupils become responsible and mature as they move through the school. They conscientiously carry out classroom duties such as returning registers to the office. Older pupils deliver registers and help in assembly but have little other involvement in the day-to-day routines around the school. Pupils speak highly of their school and sensibly express their opinions of school life. As representatives on the school council they are developing an understanding of the role they can play in making decisions about school life. Pupils have shown initiative in organising competitions, for example to raise money for playground activities.
16. Levels of attendance are unsatisfactory. They are below the national average and current data show a further decline. Patterns of attendance are not consistent and vary between year groups and classes within the same year group. Year 6 has the lowest level of attendance, with an overall rate of below 90 per cent. A high number of pupils have attendance below 90 per cent and frequent absences have a detrimental effect on the learning of those pupils who are often away. A variety of factors affects overall attendance figures. These include pupils staying at home for health reasons, family circumstances and pupils taking holidays during term time. Other important factors are the relaxed attitudes of parents to the importance of regular attendance and the lack of systematic procedures to monitor attendance and identify the high number of pupils with poor patterns of attendance.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good throughout the school. It has a positive impact on pupils' learning so that pupils usually make good gains in knowledge, skills and understanding in lessons, notably in Year 3 and Year 6. A significant proportion of teaching is very good, indicating a real strength to the quality and skills. Examples of good or very good teaching were noted in all subjects and year groups, showing that lesson planning and support are effective. Teachers in all classes are strongly committed to the personal care of pupils, attending to their individual needs and personal development, so that they are prepared and ready to learn.
18. The teaching of English and mathematics is good overall, and the strategies for teaching literacy and numeracy are effective. Teachers plan English lessons well, being careful to include the recommended elements of literacy. They conduct their lessons at a good pace and manage the pupils well. They have a realistic expectation of what the pupils should learn, which is supported by good assessment procedures that indicate the levels of attainment of their pupils. In mathematics, teachers' good subject

knowledge results in many lessons having a lively and purposeful introduction. Teachers are skilled at asking questions that both challenge and extend the pupils so that they make rapid progress. In science, teachers also plan their lessons carefully. Learning intentions are shared with pupils and the different needs of all pupils are identified, although higher-attaining pupils are not always challenged sufficiently by well-devised tasks which would allow them to conduct a series of observations independently. Also, there is a weakness in pupils' scientific enquiry skills, partly as a result of the disruption to progressive learning of skills by the school's reorganisation.

19. Teachers' daily assessment in English and other subjects is observant, and teachers respond positively to pupils' efforts, which helps them to overcome difficulties. Teachers pick up well on pupils' knowledge or understanding and use a good range of strategies to check pupils' progress and move them on. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and there is developing practice of adding comments on how pupils may improve, which helps pupils to make further good progress.
20. Teachers apply consistent strategies for behaviour using the House system, with a good emphasis on positive behaviour management. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils are positive influences on promoting pupils' good behaviour. Teachers' very good management of the pupils is effective and maintains a good work focus. Learning support assistants are frequently very perceptive in their handling of pupils, encouraging them through their quiet support to concentrate and take a good part in the tasks. The support assistants provide close support for pupils with special educational needs.
21. Teachers' explanations and discussions help to capture the pupils' interests and promote good learning. They give good attention to the teaching of a wide range of basic learning skills, including reading for meaning, mental calculations and entering commands for ICT programs. In art, factors that contribute to pupils' learning are the inspiration engendered by the work of famous artists such as Henry Moore and Giacometti and a range of different media and techniques, together with attention to proportion and detail. In design and technology, the mostly good teaching was based on effective planning. Carefully chosen resources and good subject knowledge had a positive impact on pupils' learning, enthusiasm and involvement in activities. The focused paired or group-work that follows on from these introductions usually offered worthwhile consolidation and extensions to pupils' learning.
22. In history, the teachers told, for example, the story of the main events of Boudicca's revolt without notes, demonstrating good subject knowledge. They managed pupils well and work was planned well according to pupils' differing needs. Teaching in religious education is good. The teachers' effective questioning promoted purposeful discussion, and resources were used well, in Year 2 for example, to illustrate the life of Guru Nanak.
23. Most teachers use good teaching strategies and many are skilled at ensuring that all pupils are included in discussion. They ask searching questions that reinforce and extend pupils' understanding. The pace of lessons is matched well to the learning needs of the pupils, although in several lessons insufficient opportunities are provided for pupils to produce a good amount of written work. There is slightly varied practice, but in general teachers allocate suitable homework for pupils to consolidate their learning and follow this up in lessons.
24. Teachers, with very good levels of assistance from support staff, appropriately modify teaching methods and resources for pupils with learning difficulties. This input enables them to complete similar work as the pupils in the rest of the class. As a result of this effective support, together with the very good levels of teaching they receive in class, pupils with learning difficulties learn well alongside their fellow pupils and when supported, by withdrawal by support staff, in small groups.
25. Teaching and non-teaching staff are generally aware of the need to provide pupils learning English as an additional language access to the full curriculum by teaching them relevant English skills. Their support relates to classroom activities, though planning does not take these pupils' needs into account consistently. These pupils benefit from classroom strategies such as questioning employed by many of their teachers who explain teaching points in a way that encourages all pupils to participate in activities. Some pupils would benefit from planned opportunities for use of their home language(s) to facilitate their acquisition of English. Overall, the pupils receive good support during planned times, although class teachers find it difficult to give sufficient individual attention on other occasions.

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

26. The school provides a satisfactorily broad curriculum with a good range of learning opportunities, which meet the interests, aptitudes and special needs of all pupils successfully. The curriculum meets statutory requirements to teach all subjects in the National Curriculum and religious education. Appropriate attention is given to sex education and awareness of drug abuse within the good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. There are appropriate, largely nationally-recommended,

schemes of work in place for all subjects which provide good continuity and progression in learning and appropriate guidance to teachers.

27. Not all subjects receive the time necessary for the even development of knowledge and skills. The length of the school day is satisfactory for pupils in Reception and Years 1 and 2, but in the Years 3 to 6, the length of the school day is below the recommended length for this age group. Plans are in hand to increase the length of the school day from the autumn term 2003. Most of the morning is used for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. Time is not always used in the most effective way, since one session before lunch is for an hour and a quarter. This only allows for two hours of teaching of all other subjects in the afternoons. The school has rightly concentrated on English and mathematics, however, at this early stage of reorganisation and recognises the need to plan appropriately for all subjects.
28. The school has implemented well the government's recommended National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy Strategy. However, writing skills across the curriculum are under-developed. Some numeracy skills are used in other subjects, for example when pupils in Year 6 used ICT successfully to name and measure angles.
29. The curriculum co-ordinator, together with the curriculum committee, has spent a great deal of time in developing the curriculum map from the two separate schools. All teachers' planning is monitored regularly by the subject co-ordinators, to ensure appropriate subject coverage and progression of knowledge and skills. The school has found it useful to have teams working with the English and mathematics co-ordinators, and these are effective for planning and continuity across the school. All subject policies are in place and have been agreed by the governors, who review them with the subject co-ordinators providing a presentation. This is good practice.
30. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities outside school time. This wide range of activities helps to enrich the curriculum. In music there is time for recorders, violins, guitars and piano with peripatetic music teachers. There is a school choir which sings on special occasions in the local church and to senior citizens and at Dr Barnardo's Christmas Concert. Last year the choir entered a music festival. There is a breakfast club five mornings a week. There are clubs for chess and other board games and on the sporting side there are clubs for football, netball, rugby and athletics.
31. Visits are made to Colchester Zoo and Braintree Museum for pupils studying the Victorians, Ingatestone Hall for the Tudors and Colchester Castle for the Romans. Year 6 pupils now make a residential visit to the Isle of Wight in September. This enables the pupils to work together and the teachers to get to know them better at the beginning of the school year. All this has contributed to the establishment of the Year 6 Learning Zone which focuses on learning and giving more self-esteem to the pupils.
32. The school is very inclusive in its management and approach to providing a wide range of experiences for all groups of pupils. One example of this is the very good Booster class for English and mathematics after school. This is open to all pupils of varying academic ability. During the inspection week, five members of staff helped with this Booster class. The school is fully committed to an all-inclusive policy and sections on equality of access and opportunity are part of all policies.
33. The contribution of the community to pupils' learning is good. There are good family support systems, for social services and behaviour support. A speech therapist visits the school and there has also been a visiting poet. Chelmsford Football Club helps with coaching. People from Sandford Science Mill talk to the pupils and a teacher from the local High School teaches the top set in Year 6 for mathematics.
34. There are very good links with partner institutions. The school is part of a consortium with three other local schools where they support each other in all areas of the curriculum. There is a very good relationship with Rainsford High School to which the majority of pupils go on leaving Year 6. There is a parents' evening at the High School for parents of Year 6 pupils to help provide information on how pupils' studies will continue, and teachers from the school add considerably by visiting the school to work with pupils.
35. The school makes very good provision for pupils with learning difficulties, meeting well its good policy for equality of opportunity. It provides pupils with an appropriate curriculum mainly within their classes. When necessary, pupils are withdrawn for a short while for support. Led by the very good management of the co-ordinator for special educational needs and supported by class teachers and support staff, individual plans suitably express the pupils' special educational needs. These plans are appropriately

and regularly reviewed with very good levels of input from parents, teachers and specialists from agencies outside the school.

36. The school aims to provide pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds access to other activities, including those in out-of-school clubs. However, there is currently little evidence of the pupils receiving any specialist additional support. Six hours of weekly learning assistant support is not sufficient in terms of the nature and extent of the pupils' need. Overall, the pupils learning English as an additional language receive good support from adults during planned times, although on other occasions specific support is insufficient to be fully effective.

Pupils' Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural Development

37. The school makes good provision overall for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
38. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is good. Pupils' spirituality is developed mainly through religious education, collective worship and assemblies. The strong ethos of the school fosters care and self-esteem, enabling pupils from different backgrounds to integrate into the life of the school. Assemblies celebrate their achievement and reflection is encouraged in assemblies and lessons. This was noted in a Year 2 religious education lesson, which involved pupils reflecting on the suitability of a place for meditation. Plants, a lighted candle and music in assemblies provide well for pupils' spiritual development. The cutting and demonstration of a pawpaw in a Year 3 Literacy lesson created a sense of awe and wonder as did three stray ducks taking refuge by the school pond - possibly as a preliminary to the birth of ducklings that occurred last year causing great delight which the teachers exploited to enhance pupils' spiritual and personal development. However, these opportunities are seldom part of a planned approach, and there are few links with multi-faith communities to enrich the spiritual dimension of pupils' experience further.
39. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school has a strong moral code which sets boundaries for acceptable behaviour. Its framework of values enables pupils to distinguish between right and wrong. Classroom activities and assembly themes often raise moral issues such as those concerned with protecting the environment. Good examples of personal conduct are always set by adults. The school's expectations of behaviour are high, and pupils are constantly encouraged to reflect on the consequences of their actions. As a result, the majority of pupils respond positively to school rules and show respect for each other and property. The parents are happy with the values and principles that the school promotes.
40. Provision for pupils' social development is also very good. The school fosters good relationships. Pupils are encouraged to work well together in class and are given many opportunities to enjoy each other's company in out of school activities. A range of activities relating to the comprehensive personal education programme, which includes visits and links with the local community, contributes well to this aspect of pupils' education. The school provides some opportunities for pupils to take initiatives and responsibilities such as those taken by pupils for the school council and those relating to the House system and residential visit. Older pupils look after younger ones at break and lunch times. All of this enables pupils to learn to become good citizens, contributing to the profile of the school in the community.
41. Provision for pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils have opportunities to develop an understanding and appreciation of their own cultural heritage through art, music and literature. The school has strong links with the local church and pupils visit the pantomime and museums, including the one associated with the police. Pupils are also involved in different club activities and learn about festivals and, to some extent, different customs and traditions through history, geography and religious education. The school is committed to raising pupils' awareness of cultural diversity. There is, however, little room for complacency. The present level of provision leaves room for further attention in this respect.
42. The presence of pupils from diverse cultural backgrounds makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Staff representing non-European cultures provide further opportunities for pupils to develop this aspect of their education.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

43. The school successfully achieves its aim of providing a caring supportive learning climate for all pupils. The headteacher and staff know the pupils well and are committed to ensuring their well-being. They offer a high level of care and support that meets the wide variety of personal and educational needs of pupils. Very good use is made of a wide range of outside agencies that include a counsellor and after school activities are organised in conjunction with the Pyramid Trust. These enable valuable support to be available for individual pupils, helping to build their self-esteem. The personal, social and health education programme makes another strong contribution, raising pupils' awareness of issues relating to health, relationships and bullying.
44. Child protection procedures are secure. Teachers and other staff all know they must refer any child protection issues to either the headteacher as designated person or the special needs co-ordinator as his deputy. There is however limited additional information to raise awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and no pattern of regular staff training. First aid arrangements are satisfactory although not enough members of staff are qualified to provide first aid care. Good arrangements ensure that members of staff are aware of pupils with medical conditions. A clear structure for health and safety has been established by the deputy headteacher. Regular informal and formal checks of the site and premises are carried out and any issues and action taken are documented. Equipment is subject to annual safety reviews correctly.
45. The very good systems for supporting pupils' personal development provide a secure foundation that enables them to learn. class teachers and learning support assistants know pupils well. They understand their individual needs and difficulties, and use this knowledge to monitor personal development informally. Any issues that arise are discussed with the headteacher or special needs co-ordinator. When necessary systems are put in place to track any pupils causing concern. A high value is placed on recognising and rewarding pupils' successes both inside and outside school. Achievements and good work are recognised and rewarded in the weekly celebration assembly, in newsletters and on the headteacher's 'good work' notice board.
46. The school's systems to promote good behaviour are good. The headteacher and staff are committed to promoting high standards of behaviour amongst pupils and work hard to meet the wide range of behavioural problems. The emphasis is firmly based on rewarding good behaviour. Teachers apply the strategies for behaviour that relate to the House system consistently, and have individual discretion on managing behaviour in their own class. The high standards observed during the inspection are evidence of successful behaviour management. The strategies to improve behaviour are regularly reviewed. As a result a new reward system has recently been introduced in Years 5 and 6 to help improve behaviour. Any serious issues are recorded by staff on 'incident sheets' and 'time out' books, and these are monitored by the headteacher. Bullying does sometimes occur and any incidents are appropriately dealt with.
47. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are unsatisfactory. The school has not developed a regular systematic approach to monitor attendance and has few systems to improve overall attendance. The high number of pupils with low or irregular patterns of attendance or punctuality are not being routinely identified or monitored. Pupils and parents are not regularly made aware of the importance of regular attendance and punctuality. Registers are however checked each day and parents contacted when pupils are absent without notification. This contributes to the low level of unauthorised absence. Punctuality is not being monitored sufficiently well and parents are not being routinely notified when pupils are frequently late. The school now has regular visits from the education welfare worker but very few of the high number of pupils with serious problems are presently being identified and followed up, although this is improving.
48. Most of the pupils with English as an additional language respond well to their teachers, reflecting their positive attitudes to learning. This, combined with the care that the school takes of them, enables them to integrate well into the life of the school, relating to each other and adults with care and courtesy. These pupils are generally well behaved. Teachers and support staff are committed to the well-being of these pupils. However, many staff have not recently received any specialist training to be able to meet the needs of these pupils.

Assessment

49. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall. There are good procedures for assessing pupils' attainment for English and mathematics and satisfactory procedures for assessing science. For other subjects teachers track the progress of pupils, using tests and checklist from the adopted schemes of work. However, there is some unevenness in the ways these tests and checklists are applied. The assessment co-ordinator and the senior management team of the school are actively addressing the need to adopt a more consistent approach across the school.
50. The school uses a range of tests and assessments in reading, writing and mathematics effectively to track pupils' progress. These provide good well-detailed information for monitoring overall performance and are used well by staff to analyse trends in performance. For example, the achievement of boys and girls is analysed effectively. Targets for pupils to achieve are established and shared with pupils. Teachers' planning for English and mathematics reflect the information that is gained from the assessments and work is usually well matched to the differing needs of pupils where they are taught in ability sets and groups within these sets.
51. In subjects other than English and mathematics, where use is satisfactory, the use of assessment to guide curricular planning is not applied consistently enough. Teachers do not sufficiently evaluate the impact of their lessons on pupils' learning. They do not sufficiently identify the individual skills the pupils have acquired and what they need to do to make further progress. This results in teachers' planning not always being specific enough to meet the discerned needs of pupils thereby hindering their progress. While much of pupils' work is marked conscientiously with added comment on how they may improve, information obtained from marking the pupils' work is not used sufficiently to assess of their needs.
52. Pupils with special educational needs receive good levels of support in classes through the use of the schools' good assessment procedures. It effectively uses test results, target setting and concerns expressed by class teachers, and the good records kept by support staff, to decide where extra support can be introduced. Assessment information is suitably used to group pupils according to their respective abilities. Reviews of individual education plans and statements are supported very well with the very good involvement of outside agencies.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Parents who completed the questionnaire and those who attended the parents' meeting were very supportive of the school. They raised no serious concerns. Inspection evidence supports their positive views. Without exception parents feel the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best. Almost all agree that the school is well led and managed, behaviour is good and staff are approachable. They feel the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible and teaching is good. They agree that their children enjoy school and are making good progress. Most believe the school works closely with them. A small number of parents are unhappy with the information received about progress, whilst others expressed concern about the amounts of homework and do not feel the school provides an interesting range of out of school activities. Inspection evidence found homework to be satisfactory overall and the school to provide a wide range of additional activities, including a residential visit.
54. The school has established very good links with parents. The headteacher is committed to developing close links with parents and values them for the contribution they can make as partners in the education of their children. Parents are welcomed into school. They are invited to assemblies and are encouraged to become involved in all aspects of school life. This has resulted in a significant number of parents regularly helping in lessons. They are also involved in the parent-teacher association, organising events that raise funds to help improve the quality of provision. In addition, the school, together with the family support worker, has arranged courses such as parenting skills, to promote parents' participation and interest further. The headteacher is available to discuss any issues or concerns and, together with staff, is always approachable on an informal basis to meet parents daily when they are bringing or collecting their children from school.
55. Information to parents is good. The school regularly communicates with parents and this helps them become involved in their children's learning and to understand the work of the school. Newsletters every

two weeks keep parents well informed about key dates, forthcoming events and school matters. The prospectus contains useful information on school routines and is supplemented by a 'welcome' booklet for parents of pupils joining Reception. Parents are offered some opportunities to understand the curriculum such as the September meeting and the recent meeting to introduce the new handwriting policy. All year groups provide parents with information on the curriculum and topics being taught in lessons but there is variation in the detail. Two formal parents' evenings each year provide good opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress. In addition they are offered an optional meeting to discuss the annual written reports. The overall quality of these reports is good and they include targets for future learning.

56. From Reception, pupils are encouraged to take reading books home regularly. In all year groups additional homework is set. Some parents are involved with their children at home sharing reading and homework. Other pupils are not sufficiently supported and encouraged at home, since for many reasons some parents find it hard to support their children's learning at home. Home-school reading records and homework diaries are provided but are not being used consistently by either parents or teachers.
57. Parents are well informed on the progress of their children with learning difficulties. The targets the pupils are trying to achieve are fully shared with pupils and parents. Evidence suggests that the school enjoys strong links with parents whatever their background.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The headteacher gives outstanding leadership through his clarity of vision, energy and constructive decisions. He and the senior staff give excellent direction for the development of the school, so that there is an excellent sense of shared commitment. The overall leadership and management by the senior staff are very good. The headteacher has given the school a very clear sense of purpose since his appointment in September 2000. His excellent focus on the conditions that support pupils' learning has established a very strong team spirit amongst all the staff. He has particular gifts of interpersonal skills and of understanding how to support staff in making improvements. The partnership with neighbouring schools and multi-disciplinary involvement of external agencies is a highly significant development to provide support for families and hence for their children's learning.
59. The senior staff work together productively so that their influence is evident across all aspects of the school's life and work. They have a very good understanding of the need to establish a productive learning environment, with clear expectations for pupils' behaviour to support improving standards. The procedures and support arrangements introduced by the headteacher and senior staff are encouraging the whole staff to work together and to share a clear vision for the school. They have worked enormously hard to ensure that the fundamental provision and routines are in place and working effectively. They have produced a good outline curriculum that provides for the progressive development of skills through the school. There are aspects that need further consideration, since not all subjects receive the time allocation necessary for the even development of knowledge and skills year by year. Also, the level of co-ordination and influence of subject leaders is still at an early stage. The deputy headteachers have also worked hard to establish the groundwork for assessment that links well with curriculum planning. Procedures for monitoring pupils' progress are good, although the information gained is not always used as effectively as it could be.
60. The headteacher and governors have made very substantial progress in establishing the new school through their very effective management. This is reflected clearly in the school development plan, where very many strategies, systems and procedures have been established for long-term development. The priorities of the school identified by the governors and headteacher are entirely appropriate and match the views of the inspection team. The intended improvements are set out very well within the development plan and reflect the thorough analysis of strengths and weaknesses undertaken by the senior management team and the good understanding of the governors. The school has good evaluation procedures that are effective in helping to identify priorities.
61. The governing body is very influential in shaping the direction of the school and fulfils its responsibilities very well. It is very effective in fulfilling its statutory duties. Governors have good procedures to visit the school to form an independent view of its needs and how it is developing. The governors have a very good commitment to the school and are very active in shaping its direction. The financial planning is very

good in support of the identified priorities, such as employing support staff or investing in learning resources. The headteacher and governors have established good oversight of the finances and budget and apply the principles for obtaining best value when considering improvements and efficiency, with standards and competitive tendering in mind. Money obtained through the standards fund is used effectively. The financial control is very good. Funding for specific grants is used effectively and prudently for their designated purposes. While the planned expenditure per pupil was above average during the last financial year, this is explained by the additional funding made available during the period of reorganisation. The higher than usual carry-forward figure relates to funds earmarked for planned expenditure, such as that needed to meet staff costs during the transition to a two-form entry school.

62. The headteacher and governors have established performance management as a central aspect of school improvement to place clear expectations and accountability on all teachers related to their levels of responsibility. Members of staff feel supported in developments and the performance management targets are intended to improve teaching and learning and to provide help where weaknesses are identified.
63. There is a very good level of teachers and support staff to meet the needs of the pupils and the demands of the curriculum. Teachers have been deployed well to ensure that their expertise is used well. The classroom assistants make a very significant contribution in supporting teaching and learning, particularly of those pupils with learning difficulties. The administrative staff are very efficient and friendly to ensure the school runs smoothly. There are a few routines, such as monitoring attendance, that still require further attention. The school site manager ensures that the school is cleaned and maintained to a high standard, and he contributes to pupils' learning, through food technology, for example. The accommodation is good, and provides an attractive, well-designed environment. Children's work is valued and displayed attractively in classrooms and around the school. The display of pupils' thoughts in the hall is particularly evocative. The playgrounds provide suitable space for the pupils; the outside space for children in the Reception classes is not sufficient and is under review. The level of resources is satisfactory overall, and is good for English and ICT.
64. The management for pupils with learning difficulties is performed very effectively by the special educational needs co-ordinator. There is a very good team approach amongst staff that supports the overall very good levels of provision for identified pupils. Funding for special educational needs is prudently and well used. Relevant training suitably supports staff, who work with these pupils. They are very effectively deployed and perform their roles very well. There are effective procedures for checking on the quality of provision for pupils with learning difficulties. The governing body have reported in the schools' prospectus regarding the implementation of the policy for pupils with special educational needs and access for the disabled but do not yet report on this in their annual report to parents.
65. There is no specialist teacher support available for pupils with English as an additional language. The provision is limited to six hours of in-class support provided by a learning support assistant who has attended some relevant training sessions, but the needs of the pupils have not yet been clearly assessed. There is, therefore, no clear indication of the nature and extent of their needs or their level of proficiency in English. Only two of the fifteen pupils identified as needing additional help are currently receiving support. This leaves another five pupils shown as at Stage 2 of learning English who would benefit from specialist support.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

66. In order to raise standards and improve the quality of learning the governors, headteacher and staff should give attention to the following issues, which link closely with priorities already identified in the school's self-review (indicated by *):
 - (1) Raise standards in English, mathematics, science and ICT by:
 - Providing a wide variety of opportunities for pupils' speaking and listening skills as a basis for the confident use of language, and extending the opportunities for free and creative writing in different styles;*
 - Increase the opportunities for pupils to use their developing writing skills across the curriculum;

- Make better use of non-fiction books and the library to support pupils' research and independent learning skills;*
 - Provide more examples of worthwhile investigational work in mathematics that challenge and extend pupils' understanding;
 - Concentrate on pupils' enquiry skills in science;*
 - Develop strategies for using computers to support learning across the curriculum.*
(Paragraphs 2, 4,6, 59, 84, 88, 93, 100, 101, 102, 109, 130, 132)
- (2) Establish manageable assessment procedures for the foundation subjects that are effective in informing planning for raising standards, and improve the use of assessment by:
- Setting up clear procedures to ensure that the arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' progress in all subjects are manageable and are implemented correctly by all teachers;*
 - Developing the use of assessment to guide curricular planning, teaching and learning for all groups of pupils in all subjects, making appropriate use of the level descriptors of the National Curriculum;*
 - Identifying learning targets for different groups of pupils.*
(Paragraphs 18, 19, 49, 50, 51, 59, 91, 100, 102, 113, 117, 122, 129, 136, 151)
- (3) Review the curriculum structure and balance to ensure even coverage of subjects by:
- Giving attention to an appropriate time allocation for the different subjects;*
 - Ensuring that the overall teaching time meets national guidance and is used creatively; *
 - Improving the planned provision for pupils with EAL;*
 - Reviewing the time allocations for the differing subjects, and opportunities for writing and numeracy across the curriculum.
(Paragraphs 2, 3, 8, 25, 27, 28, 36, 59, 88, 105, 113, 117, 118, 121, 123, 129)
- (4) Improve the level of co-ordination and influence of subject leaders.*
(Paragraphs 59, 109, 113, 117, 122, 129, 151)
- 5) Improve the level of attendance and the procedures for monitoring attendance.*
(Paragraphs 16, 47, 63)

Minor issue

Ensure that the governors' annual report contains all the required information.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	86
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	47

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	13	48	24	0	0	0
Percentage	1	15	56	28	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.

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)	412
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	109

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	4
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	57

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	15

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	44
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	35

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	6.5
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)

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2002	23	34	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	13	14	22
	Girls	25	27	26
	Total	38	41	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (84)	72 (92)	84 (95)
	National	84 (84)	86 (86)	90 (91)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	22	22
	Girls	27	28	29
	Total	42	50	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (86)	88 (92)	89 (92)
	National	85 (85)	89 (89)	89 (89)

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

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	31	29	60

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	21	26
	Girls	23	22	27
	Total	43	44	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	70 (53)	72 (49)	89 (73)
	National	75 (75)	73 (71)	86 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	19	22	22
	Girls	21	21	25
	Total	40	43	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	66 (55)	70 (56)	77 (68)
	National	73 (72)	74 (74)	82 (82)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	No of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	379	15	8
White – Irish	0	0	0
White – any other White background	8	0	0
Mixed – White and Black Caribbean	3	0	0
Mixed – White and Black African	0	0	0
Mixed – White and Asian	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British - Indian	1	1	1
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	2	1	1
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	5	0	0
Asian or Asian British – any other Asian background	0	0	0
Black or Black British – Caribbean	3	0	0
Black or Black British – African	3	0	0
Black or Black British – any other Black background	5	0	0
Chinese	1	0	0
Any other ethnic group	7	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	0	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)	18
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Average class size	28

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	17
Total aggregate hours worked per week	321

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001/02
	£
Total income	1,018,535
Total expenditure	1,017,752
Expenditure per pupil	2395
Balance brought forward from previous year	114,111
Balance carried forward to next year	114,894

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7.8
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	12
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	412
Number of questionnaires returned	85

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	51	44	4	1	1
My child is making good progress in school.	57	46	5	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	39	53	1	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	49	12	5	1
The teaching is good.	48	48	1	1	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	38	47	15	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	27	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	40	0	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	52	41	6	0	1
The school is well led and managed.	66	31	1	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	39	1	1	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	49	19	1	13

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

Personal, social and emotional development

67. Provision for children in the Reception class is good and is a strength of the school. Arrangements for admission are good and include interviews with parents and a carefully managed start for each child. Children settle quickly into a rich learning environment in which they feel secure and valued. At the time of the inspection, one class provided for children who were attending part time ready for their full time learning at the start of the summer term. There were 43 children attending all day.
68. Children enter the Reception class with a wide range of attainments. While some have average speaking skills and a sound general knowledge, others have limited skills in communication, language and literacy, in mathematical development and little experience outside their own home environment. Overall, attainment is well below average on entry.
69. The school works hard to offer these children a rich, varied and relevant curriculum, and it is successful in this. Children are involved in an exciting range of carefully planned, well-structured activities. Learning is promoted through practical experiences in the well-organised and happy learning environment. Early literacy and numeracy is developed through well-structured teaching. There is a strong emphasis on the teaching of basic skills and children have many opportunities to work together and independently.
70. The teaching of all areas of experience is good. The quality of teaching is never less than good and it is often very good. It was excellent in one lesson, very good in two, and good in six. The excellent management of children, through positive, caring relationships, ensures that there is very good behaviour and a purposeful atmosphere in which to learn. The management of teaching and learning in the Reception class is very good. As a result, all adults are fully aware of their responsibilities and there is a consistent approach to teaching. Teachers, learning support staff and volunteers, work very well together and have a good understanding of how children of this age learn. In managing group work, adult interventions give high priority to encouraging language development, to good effect. Both pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, are well supported to achieve as well as other pupils. The support agencies make a valuable contribution that supports the children's learning. Boys and girls of all abilities and backgrounds are fully included in all aspects of school life. There are good systems for keeping track of each child's progress, and the information is well used when planning future work. The high quality of teaching and care children receive in the Reception class, ensure that their early experiences of school are happy ones and prepare them well for the next stage of their education.

Personal and social development

71. The development of children's personal and social development is given high priority and underpins all of the work in the Reception class. As a result, most children will have reached the expected levels in this area of their development by the time they enter Year 1. Their personal, social and emotional skills cover a wide range when they first enter the Reception class. Whilst some have had experience of nursery or playgroups, a high number come straight from home. Children settle quickly into a caring and safe environment where basic routines and high expectations are fostered. They are encouraged to listen to others, to share, and take turns and to relate positively to adults. The very good working relationships between all members of staff and parents who help, are effective in showing children how to relate to each other and to adults.
72. During the inspection, children were observed changing independently for physical education lessons. Many of them do this very slowly at first but older children show good progress in changing quickly. This is because of the emphasis placed on the development of children's self-esteem, confidence and independence. As a result, children respond positively to new challenges, displaying enthusiasm, and enjoyment in their work and play. They are taught the importance of working as part of a group and to understand the difference between right and wrong. At the end of a lesson in the outdoor play area the teacher was heard to say to the children, 'You are all responsible for tidying toys away', showing the

importance the staff place on developing a sense of social responsibility. Children are fully included in the life of the school, as seen in assemblies, for example, which helps to broaden their social understanding. The planned curriculum gives strong support to children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. They are taught to understand that people have different views, cultures and beliefs and that they need to be treated with respect.

Communication, language and literacy

73. Children's learning in all areas of language development is good because of the high quality teaching they receive. However, a significant number will not reach the nationally described early learning goals in this area of learning by the end of the Reception Year because their starting point was well below what is usual. Rich opportunities are provided for children to improve their speaking and listening and reading skills through stories, poems and rhymes. Teachers and support staff use a wide range of teaching strategies to engage children's interest and to consolidate their learning through meaningful discussions throughout the school day. In a very good literacy lesson linked to their experience of planting mustard seeds, children were fully absorbed when describing plants, using related vocabulary such as *healthy* and *unhealthy*. Teachers recognise the need to make links between the different areas of learning and they do this very effectively to ensure that all areas are taught to sufficient depth.
74. Children are taught to recognise letters and sounds in early reading development. During the inspection, they were observed grouping objects which begin with the letter 'W' and those which do not. They worked well independently discussing their choices with each other. Their work showed how well basic reading skills are being taught. Children enjoy listening to stories and they enjoy regular opportunities to read with teachers and other adults. Most can name their favourite stories and recognise familiar words. Stories such as 'Mrs Wishy Washy' are well used by teachers to get children to identify words beginning with W, for example, as well as full stops and capital letters. All children recognise their own names from an early age because the system used for registration requires them to do this. They are encouraged to think of themselves as readers and writers whatever their stage of development. A good range of reading and writing materials is always available and children readily use them. Children were observed writing simple sentences with support, applying known words and sounds, writing from left to right.
75. Expectations of children are high and challenging short and long term targets are set such as using punctuation when reading and writing. Reading at home is strongly encouraged and children take their books home every night. Parents and carers are given good advice on how to help their children with their reading and other areas of their learning.

Mathematical development

76. Children's learning in all aspects of mathematics is good because of the above average teaching they receive. They learn to count with increasing confidence and work well when investigating numbers. Teachers and support staff use an interesting range of teaching strategies and resources so that children develop a practical understanding of all aspects of mathematics. In one lesson, for example, the teacher was observed using a very good range of questions to develop mathematical vocabulary such as *more than*, *less than*, *close to* when teaching pupils to compare numbers. By the end of the lesson higher-attaining children could see that 20 was 6 more than 14, which they worked out using appropriate vocabulary, while those of average ability could work comfortably to 10. Lower attaining children and those with special educational needs were fully included through high quality support, and went on to work with numbers to 5. The high expectations teachers have of children are reflected in the challenging targets they set for individual children, as, for example: to recognise digits to 20 and to name and describe 2-D and 3-D shapes.
77. As a result of well-focused teaching, children quickly become familiar with the early concepts of addition and subtraction, and experience a good range of practical activities, rhymes, songs and stories, to further their understanding of number, shape and measures. Many activities, such as when using building materials, encourage children to identify shapes such as triangles, circles, squares and rectangles. There is a good emphasis on developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems, through shopping activities involving money. Displays show that simple data handling skills are developed when, for example, children compare their height to that of others in the class. Although

children make good progress in mathematical development and a significant number attain the levels of attainment expected by the time they enter Year 1, many are hampered by weak communication skills.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

78. Good teaching ensures that children make good progress in their understanding and knowledge of the world, and most attain the expected levels of attainment by the time they enter Year 1. Well planned activities, such as growing plants from seeds, which gives children an early understanding of the requirements for growth, visits by mothers with babies, use of construction kits, maps and working in the 'King's Café' are used successfully to develop children's understanding of the world outside of their own home environment. In one of the lessons observed, children were being very effectively questioned to describe features they like or dislike about the environment. Their answers showed that they were thinking deeply because of the probing questions. This was demonstrated when one child suggested putting the factory outside the town.
79. Information and communication technology skills are effectively taught and children learn how to operate simple equipment. Most, for example, use the mouse to control images on the screen and to design their own pictures using a colour magic paint box program. They are given opportunities to carry out simple experiments, as when they test a range of materials using their senses, describing them in simple terms such as *soft, hard, sweet, bendy*. They test how these can be changed, through an interesting range of activities, including mixing ingredients and baking. The very good links with other subjects already mentioned are evident in this aspect of children's learning. When children work on the topic 'All About Me' teachers and support staff ensure that they gain a good understanding of the importance of diet and exercise in healthy living. The co-ordinator has appropriate plans to increase opportunities for children to further develop their understanding of the wider world through a range of well planned visits out of school.

Physical development

80. Children make sound progress in developing their physical control, mobility and awareness of space. Physical education lessons in the school hall provide good opportunities for children to move in space, to improve their balance and develop physical skills. The quality of teaching seen during the week was good and children made good progress in confidence and in moving in a variety of ways, such as running, hopping and skipping. Learning in an outdoor session was also good because the teacher focused well on developing skills of aiming and throwing accurately. The very high level of control in lessons, results in children working together safely with a good awareness of others. They are made aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies during warm-up sessions and of the importance of keeping fit.
81. The space for frequent and free physical outdoor play with a range of large toys and climbing apparatus is inadequate, and children do not have easy access to these activities at all times of the school year. Despite the good teaching they receive, a significant number of children do not achieve the early learning goal in physical development by the time they enter Year 1 because of this lack of opportunities. Physical skills are being well developed through a wide range of cross-curricular activities. Children are provided with frequent opportunities to use small tools and instruments, including paintbrushes, pencils, scissors and crayons. They learn to use their hands and fingers accurately, and most develop co-ordination of these fine movements. Management of children is very good, which ensures that they are safe when using apparatus and simple tools. There is a wide range of well-organised construction kits to support this area of children's learning. They are given regular opportunities to use these independently, with increasing skill and control.

Creative development

82. Children have good opportunities through art, music and daily activities to develop their creative skills, and most are on course to attain the expected levels by the time they enter Year 1. There is a very good balance between guided activities in which there is an appropriate emphasis on the skills to be taught, and opportunities for children to explore freely. As a result, children explore what happens when they mix colours, choose particular colours for a purpose, and make constructions, collages and paintings. Children are provided with a good range of resources and materials from which to choose. Their completed work is highly prized by staff. It is very carefully displayed and photographed to celebrate what children achieve and to raise their self-esteem. Opportunities for imaginative play are stimulating. Good use is made of role-play activities both in lessons and when they play together in the 'Den'. These opportunities are successful in helping children to play co-operatively, to develop their imagination and

add to their enjoyment in learning. The children play a full part in Book Week and enjoy dressing up as characters from books with which they are familiar.

83. Children are taught well to recognise and explore how sounds can be changed, to sing simple songs from memory, both in music lessons and to support learning in other areas, and to match movements to music. In a lesson observed, children were challenged to copy simple rhythmic patterns. The class teacher made very effective use of the song 'How Do You Do?' to motivate all children, including those with special educational needs, to listen and to participate. By the end of the lesson most could clap out a simple rhythm for others to copy. All efforts were appreciated and children readily applauded each other's contributions. As in all other aspects of the curriculum, language development is given high priority in all aspects of creative development.

ENGLISH

84. At the end of Years 2 and 6 standards are below national expectations. National test results in 2002 for pupils in Year 2 show that standards were below the national average in reading and writing. Standards were below the average for similar schools in reading and well below the average in writing. In the 2002 national tests in English at Year 6 pupils attained below average standards. Compared with similar schools standards were at average levels. Compared with the pupils' prior attainment at Year 2, by Year 6 pupils attained above average levels. Since 2001 standards have fallen at Year 2 in reading and writing but have improved in English at Year 6. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys.
85. In speaking and listening, pupils listen carefully and attain satisfactorily. Older pupils show increased levels of confidence in discussion and in making their reasoned responses. This was seen in a Year 6 geography lesson where the teacher gave them a very good range of opportunities to discuss what changes they had seen in their locality and their benefits or otherwise. Here the pupils gave a range of well-reasoned answers arising from their thoughtfully developed ideas and opinions.
86. Pupils have very limited skills on entry to the school and they do well to attain satisfactory standards across the school in reading. The school gives them many relevant opportunities to read to teachers, support staff and helpers in school, and the support agencies provide valuable support. For example, in a Year 2 lesson pupils were well supported to read poems with expression. They were given texts with different styles of print and were asked to make a different kind of verbal response to the differing styles of print. In making an analysis of a poem by underlining the words according to how they would read the poems out loud they showed a good interpretation of how to read with expression. Through the use of reading diaries, that are sent home, parents are suitably involved. These diaries and teachers' records do not sufficiently record the skills the pupils are attaining or what they need to do to make further progress. Pupils have a satisfactory grasp of letter sounds and successfully build up unfamiliar words. Most self-correct when reading and comprehend well what they have read. The higher-attaining and average readers read fluently with interest and expression. Older pupils are developing a good use of inference and deduction and show an understanding of the significant ideas, events and characters in a story.
87. The school has a good supply of 'Big Books' for class teaching and a good variety of well-organised reading schemes. In each class, there are fiction books suitably matched to the pupils' levels of attainment. The recently developed library has a good range of fiction and non-fiction books to meet the interests of all pupils and to widen their reading. The non-fiction books are insufficiently used to support pupils' research and independent learning skills across the curriculum. Pupils are insufficiently encouraged to use the library, as they get older, for guided and independent research and study. When asked many show an under-developed awareness of how a library is arranged and used.
88. The standard of writing is below the national expectation by the end of Years 2 and 6. This is because there are not enough opportunities for pupils to use their developing writing skills across the curriculum. For example, samples of work in geography and history show lost opportunities for pupils to write. Younger pupils are too frequently asked to order pictures and already printed sentences instead of trying to write their own simple sentences. Older pupils are given insufficient opportunities to research their findings, to get information from books and other sources and for note taking and then writing up their findings in detail, drafting and re-drafting their work as they proceed. In English lessons, younger pupils

write simple sentences conveying meaning. Older pupils write stories organising their work into paragraphs with an appropriate grammatical structure. In lessons, too much time is sometimes taken up with the teachers giving detailed explanations of grammatical structure with the pupils not having sufficient time to write. There is too frequently structured writing to develop the pupils' use of grammar and punctuation with limited opportunities for free and creative writing in different styles. When these opportunities do occur, for example when pupils wrote poems to enter for poetry competition, standards rise with some pupils attaining average or above average levels. The opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology for word processing and developing their work are satisfactory.

89. Standards of handwriting are satisfactory across the school. Younger pupils regularly practise forming their letters correctly and older pupils develop their own personal style. Pupils have spellings to learn but many have not yet acquired a satisfactory standard for their age. Pupils are insufficiently encouraged to use dictionaries to aid their spelling. When work is marked, spellings mistakes are indicated by the teachers but pupils are insufficiently encouraged to correct and learn the correct spellings. When the pupils have learnt their spellings they are insufficiently encouraged to use them in their writing.
90. Pupils enter the school with very low levels of achievement. Due to a good and consistent quality of teaching across the school they achieve well. There is a very good focus on pupils' personal development which is effective in encouraging them to learn. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and learn well supported by suitably detailed individual action plans. These are carefully followed, and supported by the very good levels of help in class and by occasional withdrawal by support staff. The progress made by pupils across the school that have English as an additional language is satisfactory. The school is just starting to recognise gifted and talented pupils.
91. The quality of teaching is good overall. Teachers plan effectively and conduct their lessons at a good pace, managed well. They have a realistic expectation of what their pupils should learn, informed by good assessment procedures that indicate the levels of attainment of their pupils. Pupils show good attitudes towards their tasks, working at a good rate with good levels of motivation and enthusiasm. There is a satisfactory use of assessment to put pupils into sets and groups within classes with tasks matched to their needs. As lessons proceed teachers do not sufficiently record the growing skills of their pupils and use this information sufficiently to guide their planning for future lessons. When this information is used to modify the tasks to meet the pupils' needs they learn very effectively. A very good example was seen in a Year 2 poetry lesson where the teacher showed a very good applied awareness of the progress the pupils had made with their reading skills: in word recognition, fluency, comprehension skills for example. Here she very effectively modified the tasks to provide individuals with appropriate levels of support and challenge. Marking is unevenly developed across the school. It always rewards effort but does not always indicate what the pupils should do to improve. Pupils rarely follow up by correcting their mistakes and by re-drafting to a high degree of accuracy. The co-ordinator, aware of this need, has an excellent example of the effective use of marking which she hopes to introduce across the school.
92. A subject co-ordinator and four other teachers, representing different year groups, perform the management role for English. This is a most dynamic team and the leadership and management of the subject is very good. Their management and effective monitoring and evaluation of the subject, target setting, shared with the pupils, and forward planning is doing much to support the good achievements of the pupils and their improving standards. The subject often promotes pupils' personal development, such as their social and moral understanding, through the choice of tasks, expectations for behaviour and pupil groupings. The accommodation and provision of resources is good. There is an excellent after school extra-curricular activity where pupils can attend for further help with their English. Despite this being called a 'Booster class', a large number of pupils are invited to attend. During the week of inspection twenty-seven pupils attended, working with excellent attitudes supported in an exemplary manner by the five staff involved. This provided an outstanding example of the school's efforts to provide equal opportunities for all pupils.

MATHEMATICS

93. In the national tests for pupils in Year 2 in 2002, the school's performance was well below average when compared with schools nationally and below average when compared with the performance of schools

that have pupils from similar social backgrounds. In the 2002 national tests for pupils in Year 6, standards were below average when compared nationally but were broadly in line when compared with the performance of schools that have pupils from similar social backgrounds. Targets for Year 6 pupils for 2003 are slightly lower than 2002 and inspection evidence indicates that standards are below average for pupils in Years 2 and 6. Pupils enter the school with well below average attainment but over time they achieve well and make good progress. This is because of the good teaching seen

throughout the school and the attitudes of the pupils. Also, the very good attention that all adults give to pupils' personal development is effective in encouraging them to learn. The work of the support agencies is a significant factor in promoting pupils' achievement.

94. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys. Pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress whilst those pupils with special educational needs are supported very well and make good progress.
95. The school has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. The mental starter at the beginning of the lesson sets a good pace before the main part of the lesson is introduced. Towards the end of each lesson an effective review session takes place in which the teachers find out how much pupils have learnt and understood. Teaching and learning varies from satisfactory to very good throughout the school but is mainly good. Teachers are becoming more secure and competent in the subject, and their confidence has developed, although there are few examples of worthwhile investigational work that challenge and extend pupils' understanding. In the majority of lessons teachers set a good pace. They know their pupils well and set questions both orally and in writing to suit their needs. What is to be learnt in a lesson is shared with pupils when the lesson begins. Another reason for the good progress is that the pupils are placed in sets in Years 3 to 6 according to their ability and pupils in the lower attaining sets receive good support from classroom assistants and are able to work at a slower pace. As a result, pupils achieve well and make progress. The attitude and behaviour of pupils was very good and the teachers managed the pupils very well.
96. Pupils in Year 1 recognise odd and even numbers and the majority add single figures together, including for simple money sums. In two lessons observed, most pupils were able to solve number pattern problems up to ten using practical counting apparatus. Most pupils in Year 2 count correctly in fives and tens and the lower attaining pupils add single digits to make ten. The higher-attaining pupils are beginning to multiply by 2, 3, 4 and 5. In two good lessons, most pupils developed their understanding of number patterns by adding on in twos and threes on a 10X10 grid.
97. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 are placed together in four sets according to their ability. The higher-attaining pupils begin to learn all the tables to times ten. They understand place value and find basic fractions of a number. The average attaining pupils add and subtract to 100 and know shapes with right angles. The lower attaining pupils tell the time and add and subtract to 10. Three lessons were observed with these sets on multiplication using the grid method. The very good lesson was well-structured and built effectively on previous learning with many opportunities given to practise.
98. There are three mathematical sets in Year 5. Here the higher-attaining pupils turn fractions into decimals and percentages and investigate and solve word problems. The lower attaining pupils know equivalent fractions and properties of shapes. In the lesson observed, pupils were solving word problems using the four operations. The higher-attaining pupils could choose the appropriate mathematical operations but others found difficulty when there were two or three steps to the answer.
99. Pupils in Year 6 are placed in two sets and have covered most of the required topics including probability, co-ordinates in four quadrants and area and perimeter of shapes. In two good lessons, pupils had to describe and measure acute, right and obtuse angles. The facilities of ICT were used to help the pupils in the lessons. From observation of previous work, pupils have used ICT to solve problems using spreadsheets and formulae. Computers were used in the classrooms during the inspection and this is still an area for further development with teachers providing more opportunities. Pupils use mathematics to help learning in other subjects such as drawing graphs in science.
100. The subject co-ordinator, with a team of four, leads the department well. The team, which includes one of the deputy heads, meets regularly and monitors and reviews the subject on a continual basis.

Teachers within the year groups and sets plan their lessons together, to ensure that pupils receive similar experiences. The subject promotes pupils' personal development well through the clear expectations for behaviour and pupil groupings. An external consultant has also given a great deal of help, especially with assessment, which takes place on a day-to-day basis in lessons. In addition, there is assessment at the end of each unit and more formal tests using a national scheme once a year. This is a developing school. Systems, including the curriculum planning and assessment, are now in place for the school to improve standards and meet its targets.

SCIENCE

101. Inspection evidence shows that pupils currently in Year 2 attain standards that are below those expected for their age. This judgement reflects the results of teacher assessments of pupils' attainment in 2002. Pupils enter the Reception class with well below average attainment in communication skills. Despite the good progress they make in the Reception class and in Years 1 and 2, a significant number still experiences problems when explaining their work and in making task related observations. Pupils currently in Year 6 attain standards that match those expected for their age. Results of the national tests in summer 2002 show that standards were above the national average and well above average when compared to similar schools. The school explains that there was a higher number of higher-attaining pupils in last year's Year 6. Another factor to be considered is the disruption caused to the learning of pupils presently in the school by the recent amalgamation and the resulting staff changes and building works. Inspection findings support these judgements and recognises how well staff and pupils have coped with these changes and that pupils are now achieving well in relation to their prior attainment.
102. Inspection evidence shows that there is a weakness in scientific enquiry because the skills required in this area of pupils' learning have not been progressively developed during the unstable period in the school's history. Since the amalgamation two years ago, the school has made great strides in improving standards in science because of strong leadership of the school, which has resulted in an outstanding commitment to improvement. There is an increased emphasis on teaching the important skills of scientific enquiry, which are central to learning in the subject. The subject co-ordinator has a very good understanding of how these skills are developed and has a clear understanding of the need for well understood assessment procedures which will help teachers to build on what pupils know, understand and can do year-on-year. This is intended to help improve standards so that by the end of Year 6, pupils will be able to conduct the whole process of independently planning and carrying out experiments to their conclusions. Another issue depressing standards, particularly in the area of scientific enquiry, is the significant number of pupils who join the school other than at the normal time of entry.
103. Boys did not achieve as well as girls in the most recent tests for pupils at Year 6. There was no significant evidence during the inspection of a difference in the attainment of boys and girls. In all lessons, teachers ensure that groups are mixed, with girls and boys working together at all levels of attainment. In very good lessons, teachers are careful to encourage all pupils to answer questions. However, this is not common practice, and teachers do not always have high expectations in this respect, as a significant number of pupils find it difficult to devise answers. Teachers do not always give pupils sufficient time to consider their answers, and tend to accept answers from those who are first to raise their hands.
104. The quality of teaching and learning seen in lessons was good overall. Of the nine lessons seen, teaching was very good in two, good in four and satisfactory in three. There was no significant difference between the teaching of different age groups. Teachers plan their lessons carefully in year group teams and prepare resources well, so that no time is wasted. Learning intentions, although, although not always closely enough focused on what is to be learnt, are shared with pupils so that they are aware of what they are to do. The different needs of all pupils are identified in teachers' planning, but expectations of what groups of pupils are to achieve often refer to the recording of work or the use of vocabulary. Higher-attaining pupils are not challenged sufficiently to conduct their own experiments by making their own choices. In many lessons, and where teachers are more secure in teaching the subject, the year group plan is well adapted to suit the particular needs of pupils in the class and individual teaching styles.
105. Pupils are taught to use correct scientific vocabulary, such as nectar, pollination, fertilisation and germination, in their work on life processes and living things. In this respect, and when teachers expect pupils to write good written reports of the work they have carried out, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Although there is a good emphasis on well presented work in Years 3 to 6, teachers in Years 1 and 2 do not set high enough expectations in this respect. Much of the work is recorded on sheets of paper rather than in books. As a result, pupils cannot refer back to what they have already done or see the progress they are making in science or in writing. All teachers regularly mark pupils' work, but marking does not always set targets for improvement. Throughout the school, pupils are given an understanding of the need for fair tests. They are taught the importance of making predictions before carrying out experiments in groups, as, for example, when Year 4 pupils predict which parts of the room are warmer or colder before testing their predictions with thermometers.

106. Teachers manage their pupils very well through the strong relationships which they have established in their classrooms. Teachers give very good attention to pupils' personal development which encourages them to learn. Pupils enjoy science and for many it is their favourite subject. As a result, they work hard and with concentration within a calm learning atmosphere which supports their spiritual, moral and social development. Pupils' moral and social development is further supported by the science curriculum which teaches them about the importance of healthy living and care of the environment. A common feature of the very good lessons is the effective balance between direct teaching and pupils' independent learning and thinking for themselves. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 3 lesson, where pupils were sorting materials by degree of transparency, opaqueness, flexibility and rigidity. The quality and pace of learning were very good in this lesson because the teacher continued to challenge pupils' thinking as they worked. In consequence, by the end of the lesson, all pupils were able to describe materials using appropriate scientific vocabulary. In lessons, which are otherwise satisfactory, teachers tend to continue to talk to the whole class as pupils work on group tasks, rather than quietly moving from table to table, challenging pupils' thinking at a level appropriate to their abilities.
107. Teaching assistants and volunteer helpers are well used to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs, so that they make similar progress to that of other pupils in lessons. The support agencies provide valuable support for pupils with learning difficulties that support effective learning. A measure of the success of support for these pupils is the number of pupils achieving the national expectation at the end of Year 6. A good example of the effective use of additional adults was seen in a Year 2 lesson, where all pupils were making good progress in learning to group different foods using different senses. Their good learning was the direct result of the good teaching and the highly focused support they were receiving. Pupils' mathematical skills were well supported in this lesson as pupils were required to represent their findings graphically. Use of graphs to represent findings is a common feature through the school, and mathematical development is further supported as pupils measure temperature, mass and capacity. There is an increasing use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning, but this is not yet consistent through the school.
108. Analysis of pupils' work shows that all aspects of the subject are given due attention. Pupils generally have a sound understanding of life processes and living things because this aspect is well taught. By the end of Year 6, most pupils appreciate the feeding relationships between plants and animals in a habitat, describing them in scientific terms such as food chains, predator and prey. In their work on materials and their properties, pupils are taught to identify various situations in which changes such as evaporation and condensation will occur. In work on physical processes, pupils are taught to build circuits using batteries and other power supply and switches to make electrical devices function. By the end of Year 6, pupils have been taught to describe and explain physical phenomena such as the apparent motion of the sun, while higher-attaining pupils use abstract ideas in describing known phenomena such as stationary objects revealing a balance of forces.
109. The co-ordinator has a very clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She monitors teachers' plans and pupils' work to ensure coverage. The school has plans to involve the co-ordinator in monitoring of teaching to help ensure that pupils are receiving the consistently good teaching they need to achieve as well as they can in all year groups. The subject promotes pupils' personal development effectively, such as their social and moral understanding, through the choice of tasks and opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively. Resources are well managed and are adequate for present needs but will need to be increased as standards continue to rise. The curriculum and pupils' social development are enhanced through visits to the local environment and to places such as Colchester Zoo, Waterworld, Sandford Mill, and the Year 6 annual residential trip to the Isle of Wight.

ART AND DESIGN

110. Judgements are based on limited evidence. Only two lessons were observed, and none at the end of Year 2 or Year 6. However, the evidence includes an analysis of pupils' previous work - particularly that on display, teachers' planning and discussion with staff, pupils and other members of the inspection team.
111. Evidence indicates that standards of most pupils are at least in line with expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6. Work on display represents a range of skills and techniques relating to drawing and painting. Year 2 pupils have made Mendi and Rangoli patterns, sometimes using mathematical shapes.

Higher-attaining pupils show fairly well developed colour mixing skills. Younger pupils experiment with tie-dye skills in fabric painting, with some making patterns by splattering and using different brush strokes. Other pupils blend colours by dropping paint from a height. Evidence from an 'Action Art' project indicates that Year 6 pupils use different media and materials, such as 'tin man' technique to draw people in action representing various images. This process has involved pupils posing in action for photographs which were then used for observation. This work has been inspired by famous artists such as Henry Moore and Giacometti and reflects the use of appropriate material, colour, texture, and attention to proportion and detail.

112. The teaching observed was satisfactory overall, and sometimes good where teachers' good subject knowledge, planning, provision of resources and sensitive management of pupils promoted good learning. Effective questioning and clear explanation ensured pupils' understanding of their task and how they were expected to complete it. All of this had a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress. For example, Year 1 pupils consolidated their colour mixing skills while pupils in Year 5 were observed developing cut paper techniques, including twisting and curling strips of paper to decorate containers. The majority of pupils work well together, showing fairly well developed collaborative skills. This reflects pupils' enthusiasm and motivation. They are eager to make their own selection of methods and materials. There is no significant gender difference in pupils' learning and progress. Most pupils with learning difficulties make the same progress in art as their peers, as do those with English as an additional language.
113. Planning for the subject indicates that the school meets statutory requirement for art and design. The adoption of national guidance ensures that subject coverage is broad, if not fully balanced. The fact that the subject alternates with design and technology and is block time-tabled leads to problems over the progressive development of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. This reflects the concern expressed by some parents about the provision of art. However, the opportunity for pupils to study some famous artists like Claude Monet, Vincent van Gogh and Leonardo da Vinci enriches the art curriculum. The subject has also some cross-curricular links, for example, through the use of ICT, and makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The display of pupils' work around the school enhances the learning environment and has an impact on pupils' attainment and progress. The subject is sufficiently resourced and satisfactorily managed. There is no whole school art portfolio and opportunities for visits to art galleries are limited. Assessment procedures are yet to develop. The co-ordinator has already identified the need for further development of observational skills of younger pupils and monitoring of teaching and learning throughout the school.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

114. Judgements are based on limited evidence, in that only three lessons were observed - none in Year 6. However, the other evidence includes an analysis of pupils' previous work on display, teachers' planning and discussion with pupils, staff and other colleagues within the inspection team. All of this indicates that standards in design and technology are at least in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 6.
115. Work seen demonstrates that the majority of Year 2 pupils, particularly higher-attaining pupils, understand what vehicles such as trolleys, fire engines and lorries are used for and how many axles and wheels they have. They were also observed exploring winding up mechanisms involving cogs, wheels and pulleys and demonstrating how these work. Year 6 pupils have been involved in designing and making slippers with emphasis on planning and testing and evaluating their work. Slippers on display reflect the use of a wide variety of materials and techniques. Year 3 pupils show a developing understanding of what makes a structure stable in their work on picture frames. Moving parts books made by pupils in Year 4 show how devices such as levers, sliders and turners work, while pupils in Year 5 demonstrate an understanding of the process involved in designing and making musical instruments. Some junior pupils were observed making pizza in the newly established suite for food technology.
116. The teaching observed was satisfactory, and sometimes good, particularly in the junior years, reflecting effective planning, provision of resources, organisation and management rooted in secure, and sometimes good, knowledge. This had a positive impact on pupils' learning, and pupils demonstrated high levels of enthusiasm and involvement in activities. Most pupils work together well sharing materials and equipment. The oral and practical focus of the lesson enabled all pupils including those on the

special educational needs register and those learning English as an additional language to

make good progress. The school has very good links with support agencies, which give valuable support for pupils with learning difficulties to encourage effective learning. No significant gender difference was noted in pupils' learning.

117. The planned curriculum for design and technology meets statutory requirements. National guidance has been adopted, and resources are sufficient. There are links with science and art and design, although ICT facilities are seldom used. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' multi-cultural awareness and personal development. However, the subject alternates with art, and the fact that design and technology was not time-tabled for some year groups during the week of inspection raises issues about time allocation for the subject and progression in pupils' learning. The subject is otherwise well-managed, and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop resources for older pupils, a systematic approach to assessment and monitoring of teaching and learning.

GEOGRAPHY

118. Attainment by the end of Years 2 and 6 is below expectations. Samples of previous work show the range of work is limited. During the period of inspection the subject was being given a higher priority and there were occasions, supported by good teaching, where pupils attained broadly average levels. Due to the way the subject is time-tabled, with teachers choosing to teach either history or geography, there are many occasions where the breadth and balance of the subject is unsatisfactory. This has an adverse impact on pupils' standards as they are not given enough opportunities to study the subject in depth.
119. Teachers across the school appear uncertain about the progression and continuity of the subject. Samples of work show younger and older pupils completing some satisfactory studies of the local area and investigating contrasting localities. Very good teaching in a Year 6 lesson supported the pupils' very good learning where they successfully identified the physical and human features of their locality, developing a good awareness of how environments change. A similar lesson was taught in Year 4. Here the pupils learnt satisfactorily, supported by satisfactory teaching, regarding the reasons for changes in their locality and its impact on local businesses. The pupils successfully justified their observations and judgements, showing an appreciation that different places may contain similar and different characteristics.
120. Samples of work produced evidence of Year 6 pupils building very successfully on their visit to the Isle of Wight. There was a good analysis of the human and physical features of the island, supported with the drawing of maps and use of map keys. Pupils in Year 3 have written about the differences experienced in living in hot and cold countries across the world, naming the places on world maps. Year 4 have investigated places in India and investigated a typical day in the life of an Indian person.
121. In all, six lessons were seen during the period of inspection from Years 1 to 6. Overall, supported by the adopted commercial scheme of work, the planning and the quality of teaching was satisfactory. The pupils' learning was satisfactory, and they made satisfactory gains in skills, knowledge and understanding. They show satisfactory attitudes towards their tasks and self-knowledge of their learning. There are lost opportunities for pupils to apply their writing and numeracy skills in the subject. Many lessons spend too long on the teacher introduction and exposition, with the teacher asking the pupils' questions as it proceeds. Pupils have very few opportunities to research their own findings with the use of books and access to the Internet. In Year 2, pupils had written a letter to Katie Morag living on the Isle of Struay in the Western Isles of Scotland. When opportunities to write up their investigations in detail were made, their understanding of the physical and human features of the island were well supported. They showed excitement when they were given a copy of a letter to read from Katie describing the island.
122. The subject co-ordinator, who took over the co-ordination of geography last September, is starting to develop a satisfactory awareness of its developmental needs. She has not yet had time to monitor and evaluate the delivery of geography across the school but has monitored some planning, seen samples of work and displays. During the period of inspection there were few displays across the school supporting geography. The application of literacy, numeracy and ICT has not yet been addressed and there is no

agreed procedure for assessing the subject and for the use of assessment to inform curriculum planning. Teachers are left to assess in their own way. A small budget has been used well to purchase a limited but suitable range of resources.

HISTORY

123. It was only possible to observe two complete lessons in history during the inspection, and none in Years 1 and 2. This is because the subject is taught in blocks of time and alternates with geography. As a result there was very little teaching time-tabled during the week of inspection. Judgements are based on these lessons, scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with staff and pupils. This evidence indicates that standards are in line with national expectations, although aspects of writing within history are not as well set out as expected and there are missed opportunities for pupils to write at length.
124. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress. Pupils learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.
125. In discussion with Year 2 pupils, they were able to relate the basic facts about the Great Fire of London and explain how and why it spread so rapidly. They also know that it followed the Great Plague where rats had carried the disease and much of the information had come from the diary of Samuel Pepys. They had also learnt about Louis Braille, how he became blind and how braille is used for blind people. Finally they had learnt how Florence Nightingale had helped soldiers in a war by nursing them in 'dirty conditions'.
126. Pupils in Year 4 have gained knowledge and understanding of Ancient Egypt. In particular they know about their tombs, burials and beliefs about life after death and how bodies were mummified. Pupils in Year 5 have made a study of Victorian times, in particular the differences between the rich and poor. They know that Lord Shaftesbury tried to make conditions better for the poor, and that Dr Barnardo opened children's homes.
127. In discussion with Year 6 pupils, they remembered what they had been taught the previous year about the Victorians. However, they were also able to relate about Henry VIII and the Tudors, whom they had studied the previous term, developing their skills to research historical questions. They could retell how all Henry's six wives met their death or died, and why Henry had broken away from the Roman Catholic Church. They were also able to relate the story of the Spanish Armada.
128. Two good lessons were observed with both the Year 3 classes. The teachers had good subject knowledge and told the story of the main events of Boudicca's revolt, without notes. They held the pupils' attention and there was a good pace to the lessons. The pupils were well managed and had a good attitude to the subject. Work was matched to pupils' different learning needs with the high attaining pupils writing a story about the revolt, whilst the lower attaining pupils, with help from the teacher, were able to write three sentences correctly.
129. Although literacy skills are at a low level, this does not inhibit the pupils' learning. They learn and remember mainly through good teaching, although insufficient attention is given to pupils' writing in some lessons. The subject is satisfactorily led by the co-ordinator. The school has adopted a national scheme of work. The teachers, within each year group, plan their lessons together. An area for development is assessment, which is not fully implemented at present. Year 3 pupils visit Colchester Castle when studying the Romans, Year 5 pupils visit Braintree Museum for the Victorians and Year 6 pupils visit Ingatestone Hall for their study of the Tudors, all of which enhance pupils' learning and personal development.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

130. Attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) is below average by Years 2 and 6. Teachers are beginning to gain confidence and familiarity with the facilities of the very, newly opened ICT suite, and to benefit from the expertise and management of the subject leader. There is much catching up to do, however, since the constant changes of the past two years during re-modelling have resulted in

fragmented experiences for the pupils. The picture is now an optimistic one and there is evidence of good achievement during the planned lessons. Pupils are very keen to be in the suite. They are getting over their initial excitement and are learning the expectations and routines. The teachers' close attention to pupils' personal development is effective in encouraging them to learn. At present the teachers do not plan sufficiently for pupils to have opportunities in other lessons for the worthwhile use of ICT.

131. The school has adopted national guidance to provide for coverage and progression in the subject. In this way, pupils are given tasks that enable them to gain the skills and knowledge appropriate to their ages. Pupils in the Reception classes have many on-going activities to help them become familiar with how programs work and to learn to control the mouse. The pupils enjoyed and understood the basic steps during a focused activity on entering simple commands to make a programmable toy move. They learnt to move the toy forward or to make it turn. By Year 1, most pupils have adequate skills to enter text using the keyboard, although few pupils know the layout of the letters. They know that the colour and size of letters may be changed and a few are confident with these skills. The teachers' explanations, for example on how to use the tool bars, lead to improved skills. In a geography lesson in Year 2, the teacher used ICT appropriately to illustrate a map, dragging and dropping images to show how to fit parts of a map. Pupils then used the mouse successfully to drag parts of the map to make it up and to add names, showing developing skill although still below average.
132. In Year 3 pupils were introduced to the benefits, and some disadvantages, of sorting data using a computer. The very good exercise of making up a card system illustrated very well how data may be collected and arranged, the teachers giving a good emphasis to the technical terms such as record and field. While the practicalities of making up cards for features of teddies, such as glasses or not glasses, were tricky the process and operation were broadly understood by the pupils and they cut out the correct sections. Pupils in Year 4 are developing keyboard and mouse skills well, although standards are below average. A paint program enabled pupils to experiment with a range of brush types, colours and sizes to produce a 'painting' in the style of Monet. After a clear introduction by the teachers, with good use of the projector screen, pupils demonstrated good progress in selecting style of brush etc. and control of the mouse. Pupils' good interest and behaviour were evident as they designed and refined their pictures. A few pupils produced attractive designs with a good likeness of water lilies.
133. Pupils in Year 5 were presented with a simulation of a police search of data about suspects who may have committed a crime, such as having a French accent. The good introduction by the class teachers, very good by one, prepared pupils well to make a controlled search. Most pupils understood how to combine categories using 'and' and learnt to recognise the difference between 'the same as' and 'includes'. Most pupils were motivated well, thus helping their learning, which for most pupils was good. A few pupils present challenging behaviour; the learning support assistant provides very good, thoughtful encouragement to identified pupils that helps them to keep on task. Most pupils eliminated incorrect suspects and identified the criminal, gradually learning to make more efficient searches. Overall pupils' skills and understanding are below average but the good learning opportunities enable the majority to make good progress in lessons. There were no subject-specific lessons for ICT during the days of the inspection in Year 6, although a session to reinforce ideas of angle in mathematics provided pupils with good opportunities to estimate and measure angle. Pupils used the simple commands with satisfactory skill, adjusting the angle size using the mouse neatly. They were motivated well, maintaining their interest and trying hard to get the estimates correct.
134. All areas of the curriculum are now planned for, including use of the Internet and use of the computer to control devices. Year 6 pupils have some understanding of how the Internet can be used for researching information. There is little inspection evidence that pupils use computers to support learning in other subjects.
135. Overall pupils' skills are limited. Keyboard entry is slow, although the use of the mouse to work with text and images on the screen is developing. Pupils are learning to log-on and log-off for themselves. Many have the skills to save and print work when allowed. Several know how to scroll up and down the screen but few are familiar with the process of 'cut and paste' from the evidence of work seen. The gaps in skills relate directly to lack of opportunities to use computers while the school was being re-modelled.
136. The teaching is good in the specific ICT lessons, although clearly teachers are still becoming familiar with the suite and its facilities. Some good use is made of the screen projector. Teachers plan well, drawing on the good experience of the subject leader. The school has not yet developed sufficient

strategies for using computers to support learning across the curriculum. Pupils have good attitudes and behaviour overall, which supports their good progress. The work of the support agencies is highly valued and provides valuable support for pupils with learning difficulties. The planned curriculum meets the expectations and requirements of the National Curriculum, although there are not yet formal procedures to assess pupils' progress. The subject often promotes pupils' personal development, such as their social and moral understanding, through the choice of tasks, and expectations for behaviour

and co-operation at the computers. There are no formal arrangements to track pupils' experiences or progress. The new subject leader has made good progress in putting a well-structured curriculum in place. So far there has been little opportunity for her to monitor provision, but this is planned.

MUSIC

137. It is not possible to make overall judgements on the quality of teaching and learning, and of standards across the school because so few lessons were taking place during the days of the inspection. However the evidence available indicates that teaching and learning are at least satisfactory. There is also a good sense of enjoyment in music by the pupils and several out of school activities are popular. Also, the very good attention teachers and other adults give to pupils' personal development is effective in encouraging them to learn.
138. Pupils in the Reception classes take part very well in musical activities. The very good teaching for one lesson enabled all pupils to take part and to copy a simple rhythmic pattern. The teacher's very good strategy, of having individual pupils to clap the pattern of beats suggested by a picture: such as 'cup of tea' while the others were challenged to identify the picture, promoted good learning. The pupils' confidence and understanding increased as the lesson progressed so that their all-round learning was very good.
139. In a well-planned lesson in Year 4, the pupils enjoyed the blacksmith's song 'Migaldi Magaldi'. With practice the children sang tunefully, following the melody well, and many sang with a pleasant singing voice. Their sense of rhythm was satisfactory, as shown by their skills at beating out the time of the song and in using percussion instruments. The class teacher provided helpful support to reinforce the timing they needed. The good relationships encouraged pupils to try hard, and they were keen to play the instruments. A lesson in Year 5 demonstrated that pupils' skills and understanding improve as they move on through the school. The pupils applied themselves well to play the melody for 'Ode to Joy' using glockenspiels and xylophones. Several pupils knew the note names and wrote them above the individual notes correctly, using these to pick out the melody. Overall, the pupils' interest and application led them to produce a satisfactory performance, making satisfactory progress and just a few slips as they practised.
140. The school assemblies provide regular opportunities for pupils to sing, often led from the front in a fine baritone by the headteacher. The hymns chosen for the week of the inspection held amusing yet thought-provoking messages at times - for example that the elephant thought the rabbit was hardly there at all from his perspective, so what does that mean for our own viewpoints as we think of other people? Within assemblies, the overall quality of singing is good, as the great majority of children sing out with enjoyment. There are good opportunities for pupils to play the recorder and both a beginners' group and an advanced group were seen. The pupils are keen to take part, and the advanced group demonstrated good musical playing skills and appreciation for their age. The group was considerably enhanced by the deep tones of a base recorder, whose mouthpiece had only recently been rediscovered.
141. The planned curriculum covers all aspects of the subject as expected. The subject leader has a good understanding of the role, gives a good lead, and provides support to colleagues. She is helping music to have a good profile in the school, and the school choir for example is active in giving concerts in the community. There is a small budget for resources. There is a good selection of keyboards, which contribute relevant experiences in aspects of ICT such as controlling the production of sounds, and a satisfactory range of other instruments, some representing well the cultures from other parts of the world.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

142. Standards of attainment are below those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and in line with expectations for pupils at the end of Year 6. Teachers give very good attention to pupils' personal development which is effective in encouraging them to learn. Many pupils enter the Early Years class with below average levels of ability in physical development and since they do not have regular access to a well designed outdoor area at all times of the year, a significant number enter Year 1 without achieving the recommended level. Another factor depressing standards in Years 1 and 2 is the high number of pupils who miss lessons because they do not bring their kits to school. Procedures to ensure that pupils have the correct kits so as not to be deprived of healthy exercise are not fully in place, and are to be agreed with parents' co-operation.
143. Lessons in games, dance and gymnastics were observed during the inspection, two of which were very good, five were good, and one satisfactory. Particular strengths of all lessons are the quality of warm-up sessions, which prepare pupils well, and the way teachers are appropriately changed, setting good example to pupils. All pupils having swimming lessons in the school's own pool and they make good progress because of the high quality specialist teaching they receive. Most pupils achieve standards in swimming above those expected for by the time they leave the school. The school makes very good use of a visiting dance teacher who takes lessons with pupils in Year 6. Not only do the pupils benefit from her expert knowledge, but class teachers also observe lessons to increase their own understanding of this aspect of the subject.
144. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour and pupils work safely and sensibly together. By the end of Year 2, guided by good teaching, pupils have increased their confidence in physical control and mobility. They perform a range of movements involving running and balancing, and are gaining an appropriate awareness of space. They plan and perform simple skills, and show sound control in linking actions together in a sequence. In games' lessons, teachers help pupils develop elements of play that include throwing, catching, and control using hands and feet. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils were being taught the skills of aiming and hitting a ball well, and to develop tactics when using these skills in small-sided games. This emphasis on skill development is a common feature in lessons, with pupils being given enough time to practise and refine the skills they have been taught. Good use is made of pupil demonstration so that they can learn from watching each other's performances. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils readily volunteered to perform the sequences they had devised and, as a result, all pupils had a better understanding of how to link balances together with movements of improving quality. The very good relationships established by teachers means that pupils are willing to display their work to others, knowing that their contributions are going to be respected.
145. Pupils enter Year 3 with a sound basis for further development and learn well in lessons through the good teaching in Years 3 - 6. Teachers continue to teach ball skills well in competitive striking and passing games such as volleyball and football, and challenge pupils to employ developing attacking and defending tactics. Although teachers ensure that pupils enjoy the lessons, behave well and work hard, there is not yet a common understanding of how to adapt lesson plans to provide challenging tasks for more able pupils. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 6 games' lesson, where boys and girls of different abilities were provided for through appropriately challenging tasks and, as a result, all made very good progress in applying skills and techniques in small-sided games of volleyball. Most teachers realise the importance of encouraging boys and girls to work together at all levels of ability. This expectation, to which pupils respond very well, gives strong support to pupils' learning and to their social development. Pupils co-operate with each other in organising and keeping games going, because teachers place a good emphasis on the need for fair play. Pupils make very good progress in dance lessons taken by the teacher from the local secondary school. The respect pupils show to visitors to their school gives very good support to their learning. In this lesson, boys and girls all worked hard to improve their dance sequences because they were highly motivated by a wide range of stimulating teaching methods. The support agencies are very effective in providing valuable support for pupils with learning difficulties so that they are enabled to learn. Teachers are aware of the importance of providing equal opportunities for all pupils to take part, and encourage boys and girls of all backgrounds and abilities, including those with learning difficulties, to play a full part in lessons and other learning opportunities.
146. A good range of extra-curricular sports, such as football, netball and cricket, taken by teachers and members of local clubs, enhances the curriculum and pupils' self-esteem. Taking part in competitive games with other schools further supports their social development. The three teachers, who manage

this area of the school's curriculum, have good knowledge of the subject and provide enthusiastic leadership. They have a clear action plan for future development and are aware of the need to establish a more formal assessment procedure. There is not evidence of the use of ICT facilities at present to promote learning. The accommodation, both indoor and outdoor, is very good and resources are sufficient to support teaching and learning.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

147. Pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus at the end of both Year 2 and Year 6.
148. Many Year 2 pupils, representing all abilities, demonstrate some awareness of Sikhism, particularly Guru Nanak as its leader. Their drawing reflects an understanding of a suitable place for prayer and meditation. Younger pupils have some understanding of why a newborn baby is special and how some Christian families have their babies christened. Year 6 pupils explore issues around racism and prejudice in studying the life of Martin Luther King, with particular reference to the Civil Rights movement in America. Year 3 pupils develop their knowledge of Hinduism by learning about the childhood of Krishna. Year 4 pupils know the significance of the festival of Passover for Jewish people while those in Year 5 show an understanding of a Hindu Creation Myth and some of the religious symbols in Hinduism – the use of lotus flower to represent purity, for example.
149. Teaching observed was satisfactory, and sometimes good, in Years 1 and 2, and good in Years 3 to 6. Teachers' plans reflect good subject knowledge in the majority of cases. Effective questioning promotes purposeful discussion, and lessons are, generally, well resourced. The use of posters and video to illustrate the life of Guru Nanak enhanced Year 2 pupils' involvement in the lesson. Similarly careful explanation of the different types of food on the Seder Plate raised Year 4 pupils' awareness of why Israelites had to leave Egypt in a hurry. Also, the use of role-play consolidated Year 5 pupils' overall knowledge and understanding of some similarities and differences between the Hindu Creation Myth and Judeo-Christian Creation Myths. Weak features of some lessons observed include insufficient focus on pupils' literacy skills in written work, and on the use of ICT to promote learning.
150. Teaching is good and has a positive impact on learning, so that many pupils make good progress overall, both in lesson and over time. The very good attention to pupils' personal development is effective in encouraging them to learn. This is a clear indication of pupils' enthusiasm with which they approach their religious education activities. They contribute to discussion, showing respect for faiths other than their own and the opinions of others. They are well behaved and co-operative, although some have difficulty with concentration and limited collaborative skills. There is no significant gender difference in pupils' learning. Pupils having learning difficulties make satisfactory progress in developing their awareness of family and community celebrations, as do those learning English as an additional language. The support agencies provide valuable support for pupils with learning difficulties that support effective learning.
151. The planned religious education provision is consistent with the Agreed Syllabus, although the school uses a commercial scheme in Years 1 and 2. It incorporates long and short-term planning. The provision is enriched by a programme of Personal, Health and Social Education and makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Resources are adequate, and the subject is well managed. However, the role of the co-ordinator does not yet include support for suitable assessment procedures, checking on subject provision and establishing links with multi-faith communities and their places of worship.