

INSPECTION REPORT

WILLIAM READ PRIMARY SCHOOL

Canvey Island

LEA area: Essex

Unique reference number: 115062

Headteacher: Heather Tetchner

Lead inspector: Alison M Cartlidge

Dates of inspection: 4th - 6th May 2004

Inspection number: 258434

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
Number on roll:	390
School address:	Long Road Canvey Island Essex
Postcode:	SS8 0JE
Telephone number:	(01268) 683 053
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Sylvia Waymark
Date of previous inspection:	27 th April 1998

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SCHOOL

William Read Primary is a popular school situated on Canvey Island, Essex. Pupils come from a wider range of home backgrounds than at the time of the last inspection, with fewer from socially advantaged homes. Attainment on entry to the school is below average. There are 390 pupils on roll, most being of white British origin, with a few of mixed-race, Chinese, Asian or black heritage. A small proportion has English as an additional language. Children join the Reception classes in the September before their fifth birthday, with younger children attending part-time for the first two terms. Other pupils are taught in 12 single age classes. The proportion of pupils who have been identified as having special educational needs is broadly average, with six pupils having a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils with special educational needs varies considerably from year group to year group and most have learning difficulties. The percentage of pupils taking free school meals is broadly average and, whilst pupil mobility in the area is also average, some year groups have been affected more than others. The school received a Basic Skills Quality Mark and Healthy Schools award in 2003 and Investors in People in 2002. A high turnover of teachers and some long-term absences are a barrier to learning and at the time of the inspection an acting deputy headteacher had been in post for a term.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Members of the inspection team			Subject responsibilities
23609	Alison M Cartlidge	Lead inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music
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23239	Mike Capper	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Information and communication technology Physical education
23658	Stephen Parker	Team inspector	English Religious education Personal, social and health education including citizenship
2229	Doreen Hansen	Team inspector	Mathematics History Geography Special educational needs English as an additional language

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

OVERALL EVALUATION

William Read Primary is a **good** school that supports pupils' personal needs very well. Children achieve well in the Reception Year and teaching and achievement are satisfactory overall in the rest of the school. The headteacher provides good leadership and all members of staff and governors share a clear educational vision, understand the school's strengths and weaknesses well and are committed to developing provision. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

The school's main strengths and weaknesses are:

- Achievement is good in the Reception Year and in reading and information and communication technology (ICT) throughout the school.
- Standards are too low in writing and mathematics.
- The headteacher is a strong and enthusiastic leader and maintains a caring, supportive school.
- Very good links with other schools and the community supports learning.
- A very wide range of additional activities helps to develop pupils' very good attitudes.
- A high turnover of teachers is a barrier to raising attainment and the inconsistent use of assessment information when planning work, slow the rate of achievement in some classes.

Improvement since the last inspection in April 1998 has been satisfactory. Good leadership and satisfactory teaching and achievement have been maintained despite lower attainment when pupils enter the school. The school now provides a broad curriculum and attainment has improved in ICT.

STANDARDS ACHIEVED

Results in National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, compared with:	all schools			similar schools
	2001	2002	2003	2003
English	D	C	D	B
mathematics	C	D	D	B
science	C	B	C	A

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

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall. Children's attainment on entry to the school is below average for their age. Most children in the Reception classes, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve well overall. They achieve well in physical development, and very well in personal, social and emotional development and are on target to meet the nationally expected levels at the end of the Reception Year. In communication, language and literacy, whilst pupils achieve well, attainment remains below the levels expected. Achievement in mathematical development is satisfactory though attainment remains below the expected levels. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development because these aspects were not areas of focus for the inspection.

Results in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics when compared with all schools. In the current Year 2, pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall though attainment, based on work seen, is below the levels expected in writing, mathematics and science. Pupils are achieving well in reading and are reaching the nationally expected levels.

An analysis of test results at the end of Year 2 with results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 shows that pupils have achieved well in their time at the school. However, pupils in the current Year 6, whilst

achieving satisfactorily, are working at levels below those expected in English, mathematics and science, with boys' writing being particularly weak. Test results fluctuate due to differences in the attainment of year groups and the impact of staff changes. Pupils with special educational needs and English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily overall and make good progress when supported by well-trained teaching assistants.

By the end of Year 6, pupils' attainment is in line with the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus in religious education and in line with national expectations in ICT and pupils are making good gains in knowledge and skills in ICT.

Pupils' personal qualities, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, are good. Pupils behave well and develop very good attitudes to learning. Attendance is unsatisfactory because not all parents ensure that their children attend regularly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. There is good teaching in the Reception classes, especially in the promotion of personal, social and emotional development. Throughout the school, teachers are well organised and in Years 3 to 6, have very high expectations for behaviour. Although teaching is mostly satisfactory or better, teachers do not always use assessment information to plan work that meets the needs of all pupils. In addition, expectations for higher attaining pupils are not consistently high enough. The curriculum is satisfactory, with very good experiences being provided outside lessons. Pupils from different backgrounds and with differing needs are welcomed, included in all activities and well supported. There is a good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education, including citizenship. The accommodation is good overall. The school takes very good care of the pupil's personal needs and promotes the pupils' health and welfare very well. Support and guidance for pupils are good overall and the school is very good at taking pupils' views into account. There are very good links with the community and other schools and good links with parents.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The governing body, headteacher and other members of staff work together well and share a clear vision for the school. There is a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and members of staff are good role models. There is a strong commitment to the support and involvement of all pupils. Management is satisfactory, though some co-ordinators are new and have not monitored teaching and learning in their subject. The high turnover of teachers is a barrier to learning. Nevertheless, the school provides good training opportunities and supports new members of staff well. Governance is good and statutory requirements are met in full.

PARENTS' AND PUPILS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Most parents and pupils are pleased with the work of the school. Parents agree that pupils are expected to work hard and that the school is safe and secure and offers good additional activities. Pupils find members of staff to be supportive and approachable. Several parents are unhappy with the progress their children make in mathematics and the frequent staffing changes. Some parents would appreciate an additional formal consultation meeting in the spring term to discuss their children's progress.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

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

- Raise attainment in writing, mathematics and science.
- Improve teaching by raising expectations and making use of assessment information to provide work that consistently meets the needs of all pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY ON THE MAIN INSPECTION FINDINGS

STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS

Standards achieved in areas of learning and subjects

Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, though by the end of Years 2 and 6, attainment is below average in writing, mathematics and science. Boys do not achieve as well as girls in writing but perform better in mathematics and science.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children in the Reception Class achieve well.
- In Years 1 to 6, pupils achieve well in reading and ICT.
- Pupils do not achieve well enough in writing and mathematics.
- Gifted and talented pupils do well in music.

Commentary

Reception Year

1. Children's attainment on starting school is below average for their age, with several children having particularly weak speech. Most children achieve well in physical development, and very well in personal, social and emotional development and are on target to meet the expected levels at the end of the Reception Year. In communication, language and literacy, whilst pupils achieve well, attainment remains below levels expected because of the low starting point of some children. Achievement in mathematical development is satisfactory though attainment remains below the expected levels. There is insufficient evidence to form a judgement about knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development because these aspects were not areas of focus for the inspection.
2. As at the time of the last inspection, all Reception children, including those with English as an additional language and special educational needs, achieve well due to the teachers' high expectations and the very good relationships between members of staff and the children. Clear class routines enable children to work and learn quickly. Children achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development because this area of learning is promoted very successfully throughout the school day.

Key Stage 1 (Years 1 and 2)

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 2 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
reading	15.5 (15.3)	15.7 (15.8)
writing	15.0 (14.1)	14.6 (14.4)
mathematics	15.7 (16.1)	16.3 (16.5)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

3. Results in national tests at the end of Year 2 in 2003 were average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics when compared with all schools and average in writing and below average in reading and mathematics compared with similar schools. Standards of work seen during the inspection in the current Year 2 were in line with the nationally expected levels in reading, though below these levels in writing, mathematics and science. Whilst pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, there is some underachievement because the differing

needs of pupils are not being met consistently in lessons. Test results since the last inspection have improved overall, though there is some variation depending on the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group.

Key Stage 2 (Years 3 to 6)

Standards in national tests at the end of Year 6 – average point scores in 2003

Standards in:	School results	National results
English	25.7 (26.9)	26.8 (27.0)
mathematics	26.2 (26.5)	26.8 (26.7)
science	28.6 (29.6)	28.6 (28.3)

There were 59 pupils in the year group. Figures in brackets are for the previous year.

- National test results at the end of Year 6 in 2003 were in line with the national average in science but below national averages in English and mathematics compared with all schools. An analysis of test results at the end of Year 2 with results at the end of Year 6 shows that pupils achieved well in English and mathematics and very well in science during their time in the school. Pupils in the current Year 6 are working at levels below those expected at this age in English, mathematics and science, with boys' writing being particularly weak. Test results have been falling since the last inspection and have not kept pace with the national trend. The school admits pupils from a wider and more mixed catchment area than in the past. In addition, a higher level of pupil mobility in some year groups and a high turnover of teachers and long-term absences are barriers to learning and cause some disruption to pupils' education.
- Throughout Years 1 to 6, the achievement of pupils is good in reading and ICT. Pupils' attainment in religious education meets the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus and attainment is in line with national expectations in ICT by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily overall, though they make better progress towards their individual targets when supported by the effective teaching assistants. The achievement of gifted and talented pupils is satisfactory overall. They are identified though not always challenged enough in lessons. There is good provision for pupils with specific musical talent.
- Whilst most parents are happy with the achievement of their children, several parents at the pre-inspection meeting were right to express some concern about achievement in mathematics.

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities

Pupils' attitudes and values are very good and their behaviour is good. Personal development and the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are also good. Attendance is unsatisfactory but punctuality is satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are very enthusiastic about the school and their learning and are actively involved in the extensive range of extra-curricular activities.
- Behaviour of all pupils is good and for the older pupils it is very good.
- Pupils' spiritual and cultural development is good and moral and social development is very good. Pupils relish the opportunity to take responsibility.
- Attendance is below the national average.

- Relationships throughout the school are good.

Commentary

- Pupils' very good attitudes and values have been maintained since the last inspection. Children in the Reception classes achieve very well in personal, social and emotional development. From the earliest stages, children come to school happy, eager and ready to learn. They are fully prepared to work hard and participate in all activities. They show good levels of independence and persevere well with their tasks. This early enthusiasm grows as pupils progress through the school because the school sets very high expectations and builds their confidence and self-esteem to high levels.
- Many pupils involve themselves in the very wide range of extra-curricular activities. These are very well organised by members of staff and other adults and offer the pupils valuable opportunities to broaden their awareness of the wider world. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative and the pupils respond very well. The school and class councillors are very effective and influential in school activities.
- Behaviour and behaviour management are good. The mix of pupils has changed since the last inspection and the school has worked hard to ensure that the previous high expectations have been maintained. Older pupils rise to the challenge of high standards set by the school and, as a result, their behaviour in lessons is very good. When pupils arrive at school, in assemblies, in the dining hall, on the playground and even in the closely confined cloakroom areas, very good behaviour is consistently achieved. The appointment of a play leader and the use of 'play buddies' coupled with the very good playground facilities all contribute to the positive outcomes for behaviour and the very low incidence of bullying or oppressive behaviour.
- Personal development has been maintained well since the last inspection and is good overall. Spiritual development continues to be well cultivated. Visitors regularly come into school to take assemblies. Themes in assemblies are used well to promote the understanding of human feelings and emotions. Moral development continues to be very good. Even the youngest children learn right from wrong quickly. Social development continues to be very good and cultural development is good. The school provides many opportunities for pupils to participate in drama, art and design, music crafts and sports and other cultural events. The wide range of extra-curricular activities enhances their awareness of living in a community. Older pupils particularly, relate well to each other and work successfully as members of a team.

Attendance in the latest complete reporting year (%)

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
School data	6.4	School data	0.3
National data	5.4	National data	0.4

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

- Attendance has slipped since the last inspection. In the last full year it was below the national median and was unsatisfactory. The school has initiated a number of strategies specifically designed to improve attendance but these do not appear to have had sufficient effect during the current year. The attempts by the school to impress the need for prompt and regular attendance have not been fully accepted and supported by some parents. Almost all pupils arrive at school on time enabling the school to make a prompt and efficient start to the school day.

Exclusions

Ethnic background of pupils

Exclusions in the last school year

Categories used in the Annual School Census	Number of pupils on roll	Number of fixed period exclusions	Number of permanent exclusions
White – British	164	4	3
White – Irish	1	0	0
White – any other white background	2	0	0
Mixed – white and black Caribbean	2	0	0
Mixed – white and black African	1	0	0
Mixed – any other mixed background	3	0	0
Asian or Asian British – Indian	1	0	0
Black or black British – any other black background	1	0	0
Chinese	4	0	0
No ethnic group recorded	220	0	0

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

13. The exclusions last year were in response to unacceptable behaviour by a small number of pupils who no longer attend the school.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED BY THE SCHOOL

The quality of education provided by the school is satisfactory. There is good teaching in the Reception classes and satisfactory teaching overall in Years 1 to 6. Assessment information is not used consistently to plan suitable work for all pupils in all classes. The curriculum is satisfactory overall, with very good provision for additional activities. There are very high levels of health, care and safety provision and very good links with the community and other schools and good links with parents.

Teaching and learning

Teaching is satisfactory overall, although there are variations from class to class in how well pupils learn. Assessment is satisfactory in the Reception classes, but unsatisfactory in Years 1 to 6. Although there are sound assessment procedures, not enough use is made of assessment information to help with planning work.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There is good teaching in the Reception classes, especially in the promotion of personal, social and emotional development.
- Teachers are well organised and have very high expectations for behaviour in Years 3 to 6.
- Although teaching is mostly satisfactory or better, there are inconsistencies in expectations across the school and work does not always meet the needs of all pupils.
- Not enough use is made of marking and target setting to help pupils understand how they can improve their work.
- Homework makes a good contribution towards learning.

Commentary

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection in 48 lessons

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0 (0%)	2 (4%)	19 (40%)	26 (54%)	1 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)

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

14. The quality of teaching and learning has improved since the last inspection. As at that time, there is good teaching in nearly half the lessons, but the amount of unsatisfactory teaching has decreased significantly, with unsatisfactory teaching being seen in only one lesson during the inspection.
15. In the Reception classes, teaching is good. It builds successfully on children's below average attainment when they start school. They achieve well in most areas of learning, acquiring new skills and knowledge quickly. The classrooms are well organised and there is a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated learning. Teachers have very high expectations for behaviour. This has a very good impact on personal and social skills and children develop positive attitudes towards learning, learn to take responsibility and become independent. Members of staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children, and teachers make very good use of teaching assistants to support learning. This is particularly evident in the way that teaching assistants work alongside children with special educational needs, who are fully integrated into activities and managed very effectively. Work generally meets children's differing needs. However, there are occasions, especially in mathematical development, where there is insufficient challenge for more-able children. This restricts progress.
16. In Years 1 to 6, teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers are well organised and they work hard to make learning fun. Teaching is most successful when teachers plan suitable practical activities. At these times pupils respond well, quickly becoming engrossed in their work. For example, in a very good art and design lesson in Year 4, the teacher very successfully encouraged pupils to explore different media, with the theme of 'feelings' being very well developed. ICT is used appropriately to support learning.
17. Lessons in Years 1 to 6 are well resourced and well-trained teaching assistants give good support. The school has very effective systems for keeping teaching assistants fully informed about what they are expected to do and they give good support, especially when working with pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language. However, teachers do not always have high enough expectations of what pupils should achieve. There is a wide variation in provision, with some teachers not challenging pupils sufficiently. In subjects such as mathematics, science, history and geography, pupils are sometimes given the same work whatever their ability. This affects more-able pupils in particular, although there are also occasions when work is too hard for less-able pupils. In mathematics, praise is used effectively and in Years 3 to 6 questioning is used well to involve pupils and check their understanding. However, in Years 1 and 2 in particular, insufficient account is taken of what pupils already know when planning work. In English, teachers form good relationships with the pupils and provide interesting texts to support reading. However, there is insufficient direct instruction on writing, or opportunities for pupils to improve their writing skills.
18. In Years 3 to 6, teachers are very successful at managing behaviour. They set very high expectations and there are clear routines in place to help pupils understand what is expected of them. As a result, there is a purposeful working atmosphere in most lessons. This is less evident in Years 1 and 2, where pupils are sometimes inattentive, particularly in whole-class sessions at the beginning and end of lessons.

19. Teachers make good use of homework to extend learning in the classroom. This is having a good effect on progress in reading. Homework clubs are well-attended and activities such as the ICT clubs give pupils good opportunities to try out new ideas and develop new skills.
20. Assessment is unsatisfactory overall. There are sound procedures for observing and assessing learning in the Reception Class, involving all members of staff. Teachers use this information well to plan what children need to learn next. Since the last inspection, the school has established appropriate procedures for recording learning over time in Years 1 to 6 in all subjects. However, the use of assessment from lesson to lesson is less effective. Marking varies widely in quality, with very few teachers writing comments to help pupils understand how they can improve. Teachers do not always follow the school's new marking policy in subjects such as English and mathematics. Individual target setting is under-developed. There is some good practice, with teachers involving pupils in identifying what they need to improve, but this is not consistent across the school. The assessment co-ordinator has carried out rigorous monitoring of current provision and is working with staff to improve the quality of marking and target setting. However, the high turnover of staff makes it difficult to achieve overall consistency.

The curriculum

The curriculum is satisfactory and enriched through a very good range of out-of-class activities. Accommodation is good and resources are satisfactory.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils are offered very good experiences outside lessons.
- Pupils with special educational needs are well supported.
- Work set for more-able pupils is not always hard enough.
- Writing skills are not consistently developed through other subjects.
- There is a good programme for pupils' personal, social and health education, including citizenship.
- The timing of the school day is unbalanced.
- Teaching assistants make a good contribution to learning.
- The accommodation is good.

Commentary

21. The school organises many stimulating experiences to make the curriculum appeal to pupils throughout the school. Themed weeks, such as those for arts, mathematics, science and technology, are used well to motivate pupils in their academic work. Special focus days involve visitors from the local community and elsewhere. Within this programme, the citizenship day extends pupils' personal, social and health education, for which there is a good curriculum. Day visits, such as those to historic sites, bring learning to life. There is a very good range of clubs and after-class activities, popular with pupils of all ages. As a sample of the range, there are clubs for homework, art and design, German and country dancing; activities include an orchestra, a band and classes for recorders; sports offered include swimming and athletics, and cricket coaching is offered by the county club. Overall, this rich programme makes a very good contribution to pupils' interest in school life.
22. The curriculum meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the locally-agreed syllabus for religious education. Overall, pupils are soundly prepared to move from one stage to the next of the National Curriculum. All elements of mathematics ICT are now taught, correcting a weakness noted in the previous report. Pupils are taught English and mathematics in sets according to ability rather than in mixed ability classes for one lesson a week. This has the advantage of allowing teachers to focus on a narrower band of needs,

though this single session splits the continuity of the week. There are satisfactory opportunities for pupils to develop their ICT, literacy and mathematics skills in other subjects. However, there are too few links between reading and writing tasks in other subjects and the current targets for literacy lessons, so that pupils' learning is focused and reinforced. This weakness affects standards in writing in particular, with pupils producing too many short pieces of writing of different kinds, whilst not enough attention paid to accuracy, presentation and the development of ideas.

23. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The individual education plans set out specific courses of action to guide progress in small steps towards clear targets. The targets are well focused on their individual needs and adjusted in the light of assessments as their needs change. These pupils are supported well by teaching assistants in lessons and when withdrawn for intensive instruction. For other pupils, though, teachers do not consistently plan different levels of task and instruction for the range of ability in each class. This is a common weakness across the curriculum, but notably in mathematics and science where it most affects the progress of pupils with the potential for higher attainment. Too often they are set the same work as other pupils and underachieve because of the lack of challenge.
24. The timing of the school day has disadvantages, particularly for the youngest pupils. The session until morning playtime is long, at almost two and a half hours. The lunchtime break for Years 1 and 2 is also long. The split site means that teaching time is lost when classes transfer to a hall in the other building for assemblies. It was noted during the inspection that this caused a significant loss of time for mathematics lessons. The final lesson of the day in Reception classes is not always used purposefully.
25. The school is appropriately staffed and resourced. There has been a good improvement in the number of teaching assistants since the previous inspection. They are well trained and play a good supporting role in lessons, particularly with lower attaining groups. Teamwork between assistants and class teachers is strong, and the record book used to outline the daily roles of assistants is a very good feature. The accommodation is good overall, with additional features such as a music room and swimming pool. Members of staff show considerable skill in setting up attractive displays in all areas. There are very good outdoor features, such as the sensory trail, the maths garden and quiet areas. There are weaknesses in that one Reception Class has much less outdoor space than the other. Some classrooms are small and two are in temporary accommodation.

Care, guidance and support

The school takes very good care of the children's personal needs. It promotes the pupils' welfare very effectively in a secure and caring environment. Support and guidance for pupils are good overall. The school is very effective in taking pupils' ideas and opinions into account.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The school makes very effective use of outside agencies to meet pupils' personal needs.
- Induction arrangements are very good.
- The school involves pupils very well in its work.
- The pupils' welfare, health and safety are provided for well.

Commentary

26. The school has maintained the very good support and guidance for pupils found at the time of the last inspection. Members of staff have very good relationships, know the pupils well and are well equipped to offer support as needed. The school has very strong links with outside agencies and provides well-targeted support, advice and guidance to those most in need.

However, information collected on pupils' progress through the school is not always used well enough to set short-term targets and to meet their individual needs in lessons.

27. Processes for taking account of pupils' views are highly effective. There are many mechanisms in place to take account of the ideas and opinions of the pupils. The school council and class councillors are instrumental in providing the opportunity for pupils' views to be considered. Pupils formulate class, playground, hall and whole-school rules. Pupils are confident, articulate and keen to be involved. They take the responsibility seriously and have been instrumental in developing a number of initiatives. They are involved well in supporting charities.
28. The very good induction procedures enable the children to feel comfortable from the moment that they first start school. The school carries out home visits and gives parents good information to prepare children for school life. There are very effective arrangements in place to support pupils who start school later than in the Reception Year.
29. Child protection procedures are effective. All members of staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and understand the need for vigilance. Health and safety are well monitored. Site inspections are conducted regularly to identify potential hazards and prepare actions plans for correction. All members of staff are safety conscious and watch for the security of the children.

Partnership with parents, other schools and the community

The school has good links with parents. Links with the community and with other schools and colleges are very good.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Links with the community and other schools extend the curriculum very well.
- Parents are supportive of the school and its work.
- The school works hard to involve parents in their children's education.
- Parents are kept well informed with good quality information.

Commentary

30. The school has maintained the high quality links with the community and other schools and colleges. Links with the church are strong. Educational and residential visits are both used regularly and effectively to further extend the range of community support. Led by the headteacher, an impressive range of links has been developed with a very wide list of partners. The link with other local schools in the Canvey Island cluster has been used very constructively and arrangements for pupils to transfer to and from other schools are effective.
31. The school has worked hard since the last inspection to maintain the good partnership with parents, including those with children with special educational needs or English as an additional language. Most parents are pleased with the work of the school, appreciate its many strengths and are glad that their children are happy at school even though they are encouraged to work hard. However, some parents are right to be concerned about achievement in mathematics.
32. The school provides good opportunities for parents to give their views and air their concerns and these are carefully considered and acted upon appropriately. Parents are encouraged to become involved in the life of the school and several respond positively. As well as helping in the classroom and around the school, they also help out on educational visits. Parents have been invited to participate in family learning initiatives to enable them to contribute to their children's learning. Through this programme parents are becoming more confident in their ability to support their children at home.

33. The 'Friends of William Read' are active in the organisation of fund raising and social activities. The school values highly the efforts of parents, visitors and other members of the community for the valuable contributions that they make to the quality of education and the children's learning.
34. The quality of the information for parents about their children's learning has been maintained well and continues to be good. Apart from those for the Reception children, the annual reports give good information about progress, what pupils know, understand and can do, and include targets for improvement. Reports also give pupils the opportunity to add their own observations. The reports for Reception-age children are unsatisfactory. They are too repetitive and do not report on progress made in the nationally recognised areas of learning. The school has identified the need to correct this. Inspection findings confirm that the concern of parents about formal open evenings is valid. Whilst all parents are invited to view their children's work in the spring term they have to make a separate appointment if they wish to discuss their children's progress.

LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Leadership and management are good overall. The leadership of the headteacher and governance are good and management is satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met in full.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- The governing body, headteacher and other members of staff work together well and share a clear vision for the school.
- There is a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
- Members of staff are good role models and there is a strong commitment to the support and involvement of all pupils.
- The high turnover of teachers is a barrier to learning. Nevertheless, the school supports new members of staff well and provides good training opportunities.

Commentary

35. The headteacher provides strong and enthusiastic leadership for the work of the school and involves all members of the school community in deciding what needs to be developed. High levels of consultation and delegation inspire members of staff to take responsibility for their own subjects and to show considerable loyalty towards the school and its pupils. Leadership is not as strong as at the time of the last inspection because the deputy headteacher is on long-term sick leave and as a result there are fewer experienced members of staff to help move the school forward. Nevertheless, as at the time of the last inspection, the school has clear routines and there is a strong sense of purpose. There is particularly good leadership of the curriculum in the Reception Year. The smooth running of the school is ensured despite staff absences and a high turnover of teachers. Provision for special educational needs is being led and managed well by the headteacher during the absence of the co-ordinator.
36. Members of staff, governors and pupils are aware of strengths and weaknesses in provision and the school provides good pastoral support for pupils. However, school improvement has only taken place at a satisfactory rate because of constant changes in teaching staff. Whilst previous school developments are evaluated by subject co-ordinators, these have mostly been in terms of tasks completed and not always on the impact of change on raising standards. The current school improvement plan includes clear action plans for relevant priorities. The school is aware of the need to work on raising attainment in some year groups. Pupils are given good opportunities to become informed about school developments. The school council devises its own simplified version of the development plan and shares this with other pupils during the annual citizenship day.

37. The governing body fulfils its statutory duties appropriately and takes an active part in shaping the educational direction of the school. Governors show good understanding and great interest in the school's work. The premises committee is effective in maintaining the school building and decor to a good standard. Financial planning is thorough, though governors tend to rely on members of staff to provide feedback on monitoring the curriculum, with their own evaluations being informal.
38. Members of staff provide good role models for pupils and there is a great willingness to support the wide range of needs at the school. The headteacher has many worthwhile contacts with agencies outside the school and these links help the school to admit pupils with various difficulties and to support them so that they take a full part in the activities provided.
39. There has been a high turnover of staff since the last inspection. Whilst many members of staff have gained promotion, the impact has reduced the pace of school improvement and made it more difficult to carry out school developments. Nevertheless, the headteacher and governors have made some good appointments and new members of staff have been supported well. There are good opportunities for members of staff to attend training and they are dedicated and hard working. There are regular opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning and some individual strengths and weaknesses are identified.
40. The deputy headteacher is on long-term absence and an acting deputy head works closely with the headteacher. Her recent rigorous appraisal of assessment arrangements in the school has provided a clear starting point for supporting members of staff in improving the quality of marking and its use to raise attainment. The school's work is being monitored satisfactorily overall. A wealth of data is collected and the school uses this appropriately and evaluates its work honestly. However, not all subject co-ordinators have had sufficient opportunity to monitor teaching and learning and there is not always enough follow-up to ensure that newly agreed procedures are being followed by all members of staff.
41. Good financial control has been maintained since the last inspection. Governors and senior members of staff ensure that school priorities are supported financially. The school applies best-value principles to its work appropriately, and provides satisfactory value for money. The large balance carried forward from 2002 has been allocated to improving the outdoor area for one Reception Class and retaining members of support staff.

Financial information for the year April 2002 to March 2003

Income and expenditure (£)	
Total income	899,087
Total expenditure	863,731
Expenditure per pupil	2,081

Balances (£)	
Balance from previous year	75,899
Balance carried forward to the next	111,255

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

AREAS OF LEARNING IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

42. The school has maintained the good quality provision for children in the Reception Year that was found at the time of the last inspection. When they start school, children's attainment is below average but they achieve well, making good progress in most areas of learning.
43. Children with special educational needs and English as an additional language are well-integrated into activities and are given good support. They make good gains in knowledge in relation to their prior attainment. There are a high number of children with statements of special educational need in the current Reception Year. Teachers take very good account of their needs, with teaching assistants giving consistently high quality support.
44. Teaching is good overall, with the needs of children being met effectively. The key features of teaching are:
- Classrooms are well organised and there is a good balance between teacher-led and child-initiated learning.
 - Members of staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children, using a good range of teaching methods.
 - Lessons are well resourced and learning is made fun.
 - Members of staff have very high expectations of behaviour and encourage and engage children with differing needs well.
 - There are occasions, especially in mathematical development, when more-able children could be given greater challenge.
45. Provision is well led by the co-ordinator and improvements over the last year have been carefully planned and monitored. The teachers meet regularly to ensure that there is consistency in planning between the two classes. However, there are significant variations in the quality of accommodation, with the two Reception classes being housed in different buildings. This means that whilst one class has easy access to a well-resourced and secure outdoor area, the other one does not. Although the teacher has worked hard to overcome this problem, the lack of secure outdoor accommodation is an important weakness that has a negative impact on learning, especially for less-mature children who would benefit from more opportunities to work and play outside.
46. There are good links with parents and very effective induction procedures. Members of staff make home visits and children are given good opportunities to experience school before they join the class. This helps to make for a smooth and happy move to the Reception classes.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Members of staff take very good account of children's individual needs.

Commentary

47. Children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, achieve very well in this area of learning and most are on target to reach the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Children are very

kind and sociable. They enjoy talking to visitors and work well in small groups, supporting each other effectively and celebrating each other's success.

48. Teaching is very good because of the very high expectations of all members of staff. There is consistent practice from class to class, with a very strong emphasis placed on teaching children to develop independence and good attitudes towards learning. Members of staff have a very good knowledge of both the social and educational needs of individual children; children with special educational needs are given very good support in this area of learning. Very clear strategies are established so that immature behaviour does not often disturb the learning of other children.
49. Children are given many opportunities to talk together and to appreciate the wonders of the world around them. These times are used effectively to encourage children to think about things that affect them and to talk about the needs of others. Good quality displays help children to learn that everyone is different. Children are beginning to understand that there are different beliefs and they enjoy looking at artefacts from different countries.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Provision for communication, language and literacy is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Children achieve well.
- The quality of teaching is good. An exciting range of activities making learning purposeful.

Commentary

50. Good teaching in this area of learning means that children, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, make good progress. Children achieve well for their ability, although there are many children who are not on target to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year.
51. Reading skills are taught effectively and children are given good opportunities to read to an adult in a small group. This helps members of staff to meet individual needs well. A good range of strategies is used to teach children letter sounds. There is a very strong emphasis on learning being fun and children enjoy joining in with the teacher when learning how to 'sound out' new words.
52. Children develop very positive attitudes towards writing and are given many opportunities to improve their skills. They are successfully encouraged to write for a range of purposes. As a result, they become willing writers. Children are very enthusiastic and are always happy to record their ideas on paper, with some using recognisable words or letters. This was seen to good effect in a very good lesson where the teacher successfully encouraged the children to write lists of the things Noah would need to take with him on the Ark. This lesson was effective because the writing was purposeful and was placed in a context that the children understood. Members of staff had high expectations by encouraging children to attempt to write words for themselves and they gave very good support to less-able children, enabling them to take a full part in the activity.
53. Children improve their speaking and listening skills quickly. They are given many opportunities to take part in discussions and talk about what they are doing, so they become confident in speaking to large or small groups as well as to individuals. They are pleased to explain what they are doing when speaking to visitors.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for mathematical development is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Learning is made fun, but there are missed opportunities to extend the learning of more able children.

Commentary

54. Children's achievement, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall but few children are on target to achieve the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Counting skills improve at a good rate because children are given good opportunities to count in a range of situations. They do so confidently, for example, counting up to 25 during registration. There are only a small number of higher-attaining children in the class, but they are given too few opportunities to extend their learning beyond that of other children, with too many occasions when they work on the same activity as less-able children. This occurs most frequently during whole-class lessons at the start and end of lessons.
55. Teaching is satisfactory. A strength is that learning is made fun with mathematical concepts taught in a practical way that involves the children and ensures that they are well motivated and interested. Good use is made of rhymes and songs to develop number skills. However, children are sometimes expected to sit for too long at the start of lessons. When this happens, they lose concentration and the pace of learning slows.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

56. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision. Good displays around the classrooms encourage children to think about where they live and how things have changed over time. Children have a good understanding of the need to care for living things. For example, teachers expect children to help to look after goldfish, to grow plants and make careful observations of how changes occur.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Provision for physical development is **good**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Good teaching in physical education lessons introduces children to a range of skills.
- Differences in accommodation mean that children in the two Reception classes do not get the same opportunities to develop skills.

Commentary

57. Observations of children at work at different times during the school day show that they all achieve well and most are on target to reach the expectations of the early learning goals by the end of the Reception Year. Children have appropriate physical skills for their age. When playing independently outside, children kick accurately and ride tricycles with good control. Teaching is good in physical education lessons and children improve their catching and throwing skills quickly. In these lessons, there is a good pace to learning and all members of staff have high expectations of what children should achieve.

58. There is a satisfactory curriculum, with children's learning being enhanced by regularly time-tabled physical education lessons. However, there is inequality of opportunity between the two Reception classes. Whilst one class has ready access to a secure and attractive outdoor area, the other does not. This means children get more opportunity to explore physical activities in one class than the other. Inspection observations show that this disparity in provision results in physical skills not developing at an equal rate. The school has identified this as an area that requires urgent attention and has plans in hand to extend outdoor provision as a matter of urgency.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

59. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on the quality of provision. Good quality displays show that there is a good curriculum, with children using a wide range of techniques to produce interesting and attractive artwork. Children have good attitudes towards learning and talk confidently about things that they have made in the class. In the one lesson seen, children showed good musical skills. The quality of teaching was good, with children given good opportunities to explore and use different musical instruments. Children had a good sense of rhythm as they performed pieces of music that retold the story of Noah's Ark. They sang confidently and used their imagination well as they made different sounds to accompany the music.

SUBJECTS IN KEY STAGES 1 AND 2

ENGLISH

Provision for English is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards in writing are too low in English and in other subjects.
- Pupils make good progress in reading.
- Pupils with special educational needs achieve well.
- Some boys do not do as well as they should.

Commentary

60. Results in the Year 2 national tests in reading and writing have improved significantly since the last inspection, from well below average in 1999 to average in 2003. In the present Year 2, pupils continue to do well in reading and standards are average. However, standards in writing have fallen back to below average. Too many pupils are not achieving as well as they should because tasks are not well matched to their needs. Standards in speaking and listening are below average, but pupils' achievement is satisfactory compared with their below average standards on entry to the school.
61. Results in the Year 6 national tests have been below the national average overall since the last inspection, though rising to average in some years. The 2003 results were below the national average. Pupils' performance was very much weaker in writing than in reading. Fewer than half reached the expected level in writing compared with more than three-quarters in reading. Nevertheless, pupils in that year achieved well compared with their weak results in the Year 2 tests. Standards in the present Year 6 are below average overall. They are average in reading and listening but below average in speaking and writing. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory overall, with good achievement in reading. Pupils in the current Year 6 have had a disrupted education due to the long-term absences of teachers. In addition, some potentially higher-attaining pupils emigrated and other pupils joined the school in the past year.

62. Standards in writing are weak throughout the school because:
- Pupils do not use what they have learned in handwriting, spelling and grammar exercises when writing for wider purposes.
 - The focus of instruction moves too quickly from one kind of writing to another, before pupils have gained confidence through sustained practice.
 - Teachers' expectations for accurate and tidy work are not consistently high enough.
 - Not enough use is made of marking to identify individual weaknesses and set following work.
63. By Year 2, most pupils write complete sentences, spelling some common words accurately. Handwriting is correctly formed, and most pupils achieve a joined style by Year 3. However, standards fall sharply when pupils write at length independently, and few Year 2 pupils reach the higher level expected for their age. Spelling is particularly weak throughout the school. Older pupils with higher attainment write interesting stories with dramatic scenes, vivid settings and moments of tension. However, pupils in Year 6 make too many careless mistakes because they have not learned to check their own work thoroughly. By contrast, there are examples of good achievement in most years where work has been carefully planned, developed and corrected over a series of lessons for display, a competition or class anthology.
64. The school has taken effective action to improve reading standards. Officially recommended programmes of instruction have been adopted so that basic skills are taught regularly, rigorously and consistently. Pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language or low attainment achieve well because their needs are identified early so they can be given well-focused help, in which teaching assistants play a valuable part. Pupils are very keen to win the awards for regular reading at home, and this scheme is proving highly successful through to Year 6. By Year 2, most pupils sound out unfamiliar words confidently and read aloud with expression. Increasingly through the school, pupils choose their own books from good quality class collections that boost their interest. By Year 6, most pupils have established preferences and a good profile in reading fiction and poetry. They have sound skills in finding information in reference books.
65. By Year 2, most pupils take part willingly in informal class discussions and listen attentively. Their range of vocabulary and sentence patterns is generally below average, affecting the quality of their writing. Most speak quietly and briefly. Teachers tend to ask questions that require only short factual answers, and they do not coach clear speech firmly enough. As a result, confidence in speaking formally does not develop well enough through the school. Year 6 pupils speak in standard English, but some mumble and very few speak at length without prompts. There is no scheme of work or assessment procedure to guide progress through the school. Insufficient use is made of the final review sessions in English and other lessons to develop formal speaking skills.
66. A few boys in all years underachieve. Weaknesses include lack of concentration during instruction, reluctance to volunteer answers and carelessness over the accuracy and presentation of work. Successful actions taken by some teachers include:
- Inserting brief practical tasks into periods of instruction to ensure active involvement.
 - Building boys' confidence through partner talk before whole-class discussions.
 - Increasing motivation through games and challenges.
67. However, best practice is not identified and shared amongst staff.
68. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It is never less than satisfactory and half the lessons seen were good. Teachers and assistants have good relationships with their classes and pupils want to do well as a result. Lessons have clear targets and use interesting texts to focus on language features. However, older pupils need more intensive instruction on the features of different kinds of writing, more opportunities to work with the teacher in composing

examples, and more sustained practice. Pupils in all classes are quick to settle to work and behave well. Teachers and assistants give good guidance to individuals and groups as they work. However, tasks are not always adjusted finely enough for different groups. Lower-attaining groups underachieve when the work is too difficult for them and some others underachieve when expectations for the pace and quality of their work are not firm enough.

69. Leadership and management are satisfactory. The subject leaders show strong commitment to raising standards and give well-informed guidance to colleagues. However, their role in monitoring teaching and learning is under-developed. As a result, inconsistent practices across the school, for instance in the use of marking, limit pupils' progress. Pupils' best work is displayed well to motivate them and celebrate their achievements.

Language and literacy across the curriculum

70. Pupils have many opportunities to read and write in other subjects. However, there are too few links with current literacy targets to reinforce and extend learning. Word processing is used well to improve selected pieces of writing in all years. Year 6 pupils structure longer factual accounts using paragraphs, but they often misspell key terms and some write so carelessly that the work is illegible. They have sound skills in finding information in reference books, though access to the library is difficult during the school day, and this limits their opportunities for independent study.

MATHEMATICS

Provision for mathematics is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- There are elements of good teaching in Years 3-6.
- Setting in Year 6 helps to meet the wide range of pupils' needs although teachers do not always provide work matched to the different needs of the pupils within each set.
- Pupils with special educational needs are given good support.
- Lesson planning is inconsistent and assessment is not used to inform planning.
- Boys outperform girls by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils' ability to use and apply their knowledge is weaker in Years 1 and 2.
- The school is aware of the need to raise attainment.

Commentary

71. Pupils' attainment is below nationally expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6. Achievement is satisfactory overall but varies from satisfactory to unsatisfactory. There is a difference between the attainment of boys and girls, with boys outperforming girls. The school is aware of this issue and is trying to encourage girls to become more confident. There is no significant difference between pupils from different backgrounds. Pupils with special educational needs or English as an additional language achieve satisfactorily overall and achieve well when individually supported or taught in small groups. Test results at the end of Years 2 and 6 are similar to those found at the time of the last inspection. When compared with schools in a similar context, results by the end of Year 2 are below average and this may be explained, in part, by the changing needs of the school intake in recent years. Pupils in the current Year 6 have had a disrupted education due to the long-term absences of teachers. In addition, some potentially higher-attaining pupils emigrated and other pupils joined the school in the past year. In 2003, pupils in Year 6 achieved well from the low starting point at the end of Year 2. At the time of the last inspection attainment was below the national average at the end of Year 2 and average at the end of Year 6.

72. In Year 2, pupils count backwards and forwards in steps of 2, 5, 10, to 100, using different starting points. They recognise number patterns and relationships between groups of numbers. Higher-attaining pupils can mentally double numbers such as 35 knowing it equals 70 and explain their calculation. Most pupils can accurately predict which tumblers hold less than a litre when compared with a litre container. Pupils in Year 6 make good use of conversion tables in order to convert pints to litres. They respond enthusiastically to the challenge of using mental calculations in order to match a series of smaller numbers to a larger one using the four basic rules of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. Pupils understand the need to check calculations and are aware of the importance of accuracy. Pupils of all ages and abilities try their best and most concentrate well.
73. Teaching is satisfactory throughout the school with better teaching in Years 3 to 6. Teaching is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. Pupils are grouped according to prior attainment and taught in sets for one lesson a week. In the best lessons in Years 3 to 6, teachers provide different work for three or four levels of attainment within their class. This ensures that all pupils are working at a suitable level and being appropriately challenged. Teachers make good use of questioning to involve pupils and to check their understanding. In these lessons, pupils' achievement is satisfactory or better as they are motivated to try their best and attempt new work. However, in some lessons, including those taught in sets, work is at the same level for all pupils, resulting in limited achievement. This is especially evident in Years 1 and 2, where pupils' errors are not always checked during the lesson to ensure that they understand the work. There is limited evidence of teachers using ICT to support learning.
74. Assessment systems are in place but insufficiently used by some teachers to check what pupils already know in order to plan suitable work. In contrast, during the inspection, a teacher in Year 6 made good use of the assessment of pupils' work on the previous day to identify and revisit work which had not been completely understood by the pupils.
75. New subject co-ordinators have had insufficient time to raise attainment. They are working together well to support their colleagues and are starting to develop a clear view of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. However, opportunities for them to monitor teaching and learning are very limited. They are aware of the need to raise attainment across the school, particularly in using and applying mathematics. A satisfactory start has been made in following the action plan for the subject.

Mathematics across the curriculum

76. Pupils are given suitable opportunities for using and applying their mathematical skills across the curriculum. In particular, graphs and charts are used to show findings of data analysis in personal, social and health investigations and geography. In a Year 4 class, history and art and design were linked successfully to mathematics when co-ordinates were used to inform the design of shields.
77. A recently developed mathematics garden is a special feature designed to raise pupils' awareness and enjoyment of mathematics. Members of staff and pupils worked in collaboration with a local sculptress to design and use shape and space in innovative ways to appeal to and inspire pupils' interest in mathematics.

SCIENCE

Provision for science is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Attainment is below the nationally expected levels by the end of Years 2 and 6.
- Pupils have good attitudes to learning.

- Teachers do not use assessment information enough to plan work that consistently meets the needs of all pupils.

Commentary

78. Inspection findings are that pupils' attainment is below average for their ages by the end of Years 2 and 6. National tests at the end of Year 6 in 2003 showed that attainment was broadly in line with the national average and pupils had achieved very well from the time they were assessed at the end of Year 2. In the current Year 6, there are several lower-attaining pupils and very few pupils working at the higher level (Level 5). Pupils in this year group have had a disrupted education due to the long-term absences of teachers. In addition, some potentially higher-attaining pupils emigrated and other pupils joined the school in the past year. Pupils have gained a good understanding of scientific concepts taught in the last term, though they are weak at explaining findings from investigations. Pupils' achievement, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall, though the rate of progress is inconsistent through the school. Pupils' achievement is similar to that found at the time of the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils are more knowledgeable when taking part in discussion than is evident from their written work.
79. As at the time of the last inspection, most pupils are keen to learn about science and participate particularly well in practical activities such as making different electrical circuits with a partner in Year 4 and comparing hand-spans in Year 2. Behaviour is managed well, especially in Years 4 to 6, enabling pupils to concentrate hard and listen well during lessons. Their good attitudes have a positive impact on their learning and many are keen to ask questions. In the classes for older pupils, boys are more confident in answering questions than the girls, though teachers take care to encourage girls to participate equally in discussions. However, as at the time of the last inspection, the quality of written work is variable and some teachers do not have high enough expectations for the presentation or content of work.
80. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with examples of good teaching in Years 4 and 6. Teachers provide clear explanations and ask some good questions at the start of lessons to encourage pupils to discuss what they already know. For example, in the good lesson in Year 6 the teacher used a series of diagrams to support learning and aid the pupils' revision. However, as at the time of the last inspection, the low expectations for recorded work are a weakness in some classes, as is the fact that pupils of differing prior attainment often complete the same simple written task so that higher-attaining pupils in particular are not sufficiently challenged. In addition, pupils are not expected to consider for themselves what findings from investigations show, or to use ICT and graphs enough to present their results. Whilst attainment is often assessed at the end of topics, teachers do not use information to help them plan suitable work for all pupils or consistently use marking to help pupils see what they need to do to improve, and this is unsatisfactory.
81. Science has not been a recent focus on the school development plan and satisfactory provision has been maintained since the time of the last inspection. The new subject co-ordinator is a good leader, has a clear understanding of how provision in the subject needs to be improved, and sets a good example with his own teaching. Management is satisfactory. Test results are analysed appropriately but there have been no recent opportunities for monitoring teaching and learning and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to gain a greater understanding of provision across the school and not only at the end of national tests. The curriculum is satisfactory, with suitable opportunities for pupils to take part in investigations and to use their literacy and numeracy skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 take careful measurements when comparing variation in humans.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Pupils achieve well in lessons.
- Good leadership means that there has been good improvement since the last inspection.
- There are missed opportunities to apply skills in lessons taught outside the ICT suite.

Commentary

82. The school has made good progress since the last inspection. Under the good leadership and management of the subject co-ordinator, there have been many improvements. Teachers have benefited from training and are now confident about teaching the subject. Resources have improved significantly and a well-resourced ICT suite is used well to meet pupils' needs.
83. As a result of these recent improvements, pupils' attainment has risen to be in line with national expectations by the end of Years 2 and 6. In Year 2, pupils have good levels of confidence and apply basic skills well to a range of activities. For example, they use an art program well and make use of a range of techniques to produce attractive pictures in the style of Mondrian. In Year 6, pupils have a good understanding of the many applications of ICT, with teachers acting as good role models by making good use of ICT as a teaching aid. Pupils show good skills when using a computer to control a device and their basic keyboard skills are improving although some are still quite slow at finding their way around the keyboard.
84. Good quality teaching means that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, are achieving well throughout the school. They have good attitudes towards learning and work hard in lessons. In lessons in the ICT suite, teachers show good subject knowledge and introduce new skills effectively. In these lessons, learning is made purposeful and clear links are made between ICT and other subjects. Teaching is most effective when skills are broken down into small parts to help pupils understand what they need to do. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory. However, there are occasions when there is a lack of challenge for more-able pupils, with insufficient account being taken of the differing levels of skills within a class.
85. The school is fortunate to benefit from good quality accommodation, so that all aspects of the subject can be taught and a good curriculum provided. The well-equipped ICT suite is used effectively to teach specific skills and lessons are well organised, with a recently appointed ICT technician giving good support. The co-ordinator is a good role model. He has a clear understanding of where further improvement is needed and runs well-attended ICT clubs which give pupils good opportunities to try out different ideas and to practise skills introduced in lessons.

Information and communication technology across the curriculum

86. Good links are made between different subjects when pupils are working in the ICT suite. However, although every classroom has one or two computers, these were rarely used during the inspection. As a result, there are missed opportunities to practise and consolidate ICT skills by using them across the curriculum.

HUMANITIES

History

87. This was not an area of focus for the inspection. No lessons were observed during the inspection and no judgement can be made about standards by the end of Year 2. By the end of Year 6, most pupils reach national expectations and achievement is satisfactory.
88. A good programme of visits and visitors supports the curriculum well and pupils often learn through first-hand experiences and role-play. For example, recent visits have included the Canvey Island Dutch cottage, local Heritage Museum, and the Colne Valley railway focus day 'studying the Victorians'. Specialist visitors have led exciting Viking and Roman workshops, and occasionally people with specialist knowledge of local history share their knowledge with the pupils. These activities help to make learning exciting and meaningful.
89. The work sample and displays are evidence that teachers use a variety of interesting methods to develop pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills. Teachers have made some good links with other subjects. Year 6 pupils have studied life in Tudor times and there is some carefully presented written work and drawings in their file. When studying the Egyptians the teacher links the geographical study of Egypt and the River Nile to enhance pupils' learning. Art skills are used effectively to produce portraits of the Tudors and pictures of Romans and Vikings. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to monitor progress and plan next steps in learning for the different groups of pupils, particularly in Years 1 and 2.
90. Research skills are developed well in Years 3 to 6. Pupils use a variety of sources including research packs, reference books, and the Internet. Good quality artefacts bring history to life for pupils. Time lines are used to help pupils develop a sense of chronology. Pupils often choose to continue their research out of school and use the information well.
91. Subject coverage in Years 1 and 2 includes local history supported by good use of resources such as a flat iron, clothes, and photographs. However, teachers do not consistently use assessment information to help plan suitable tasks for pupils of differing ability.
92. Subject leadership is satisfactory overall. The co-ordinator has made a good start to leading the subject. The two-year curriculum has not been reviewed recently to ensure breadth. Pupils sometimes work in their books from one year to the next, and it is not always clear when work has been completed.

Geography

Provision for geography is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- A good programme of visits supports learning well.
- Teachers in Years 3 to 6 make good links with other areas of the curriculum.
- Insufficient use is made of assessment information to monitor progress and plan next steps in learning for the different groups of pupils.
- There is insufficient recording of work in Years 1 and 2.
- No time is allocated for lesson monitoring by the co-ordinator.

Commentary

93. It was not possible to observe lessons in Years 1 and 2 and two lessons were observed in Years 3 to 6. Pupils' work was sampled together with wall displays and photographic evidence. As at the time of the last inspection, the attainment of most pupils is in line with

national expectations by the end of Year 6 and achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory. There is insufficient evidence to form judgements about standards by the end of Year 2. Good use is made of visits to places of interest. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 benefit greatly from environmental work during residential visits to Gaveston Hall and Burwell House.

94. As at the time of the last inspection, teaching is satisfactory in Years 3 to 6. Teachers ensure that pupils are well motivated and make progress in their knowledge and understanding. Links with other subjects are developing well. For example, pupils in Year 4 collected packaging from their lunches and sorted it according to type. Working sensibly they discussed the effects on the environment of disposing of various kinds of packaging. Genuine surprise and concern was shown when they realised how much refuse they had amassed, and most pupils showed understanding of an individual's social and moral responsibility for choices and actions regarding waste disposal. In a weather forecasting lesson in Year 5, pupils' speaking and listening skills, geographical vocabulary, and self-esteem were extended well. However, throughout the school, limited use is made of assessment information to help teachers plan work that meets pupils' differing needs.
95. Pupils use a variety of sources including resource packs, maps, photographs and the Internet to extend their interest and further their study. Maps are used to help pupils develop a sense of place both in the locality and further afield.
96. In Years 1 and 2, art skills are used effectively to produce displays featuring imaginary mountains and volcanoes, and maps of routes to school from where pupils live. However, there is limited evidence of recorded work.
97. Leadership is satisfactory. The subject content is planned on a two-year rolling programme, and is taught in blocks of time during the year. However, the curriculum has not been reviewed recently to ensure that the curriculum offered is as broad as possible.

Religious education

Provision for religious education is **satisfactory**.

Main strengths and weaknesses

- Standards meet the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus.
- The depth and range of coverage varies considerably through the school.
- Contact with the local church makes an inspiring contribution to learning.

Commentary

98. Three lessons were seen and pupils' work was sampled. Standards in Years 2 and 6 meet the expectations of the locally-agreed syllabus, as they did at the previous inspection. The subject makes a good contribution to pupils' personal development and the achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language, is satisfactory overall.
99. Pupils in Year 2 show sound understanding of selected Old Testament stories. Higher-attaining pupils retell the story of Moses in detail. All pupils achieve well in explaining how the theme of 'Good deeds' relates to their own experience.
100. By Year 6, pupils have a sound knowledge and understanding of Christianity and some of the main features of Judaism and Hinduism. They correctly identify significant similarities and differences between the customs and beliefs of these faiths. Their factual records are accurate and often show insight into the spiritual significance of religious practices. Pupils with

higher attainment make perceptive comparisons of the Gospels, though the responses of other pupils are often too brief.

101. Teaching is satisfactory overall, and one good lesson was seen. Lessons are clearly focused and resources are used well to illustrate main points. Teachers give a clear lead in instruction and pupils show positive attitudes during discussions. In the Year 6 lesson seen, the teacher's good subject knowledge meant that the topic was explored in depth and detail, and pupils made good progress as a result. In the satisfactory lessons, pupils were less firmly led in exploring ideas and building on what they already knew.
102. The co-ordinator is well informed and offers good leadership to members of staff. The scheme of work follows the new locally agreed syllabus, and a member of staff is a valuable resource in having been closely associated with its development. Coverage is satisfactory overall but inconsistent through the school. It is good in some classes, but others complete much less work. Too often all pupils are given the same worksheet when higher attaining pupils would benefit from more demanding reading and writing tasks. The vicar of the nearby Anglican church makes an inspiring contribution in leading collective worship and hosting church visits.

CREATIVE, AESTHETIC, PRACTICAL AND PHYSICAL SUBJECTS

This was not an area of focus for the inspection and there is insufficient evidence to form overall judgements on standards and provision in these subjects.

Art and design

103. A satisfactory lesson in Year 2 and a very good lesson in Year 4 were observed during the inspection. In the very good lesson, challenging questions and a good range of resources enabled pupils to produce good quality sketches showing reflections.
104. There are other examples of good quality work on display around the school such as the colourful portraits in the style of Picasso in Year 2 and interesting clay figures of 'people in action' in Year 6. Throughout the school, sketchbooks provide pupils with appropriate opportunities to try out their ideas and plan work.
105. Pupils are enthusiastic about the practical work in art and design. They are keen to take part in the very good additional activities such as competitions for designing and making murals in the school and workshops with pupils at the senior school to make hanging leaf collages.
106. The subject is not a current area for improvement in the school development plan but is led well by an enthusiastic co-ordinator. The curriculum is enriched very well through workshops provided by a local art college and with special arts weeks when a good range of new skills are taught. For example, a forthcoming week is planned around a Japanese theme and in the past African art provided inspiration for pupils' own artwork. These activities improve knowledge and skills and increase the pupils' understanding of other cultures. Digital cameras are used well to provide a record of previous work and pupils use ICT in some of their designs. The school was successful in winning a recent local competition and prize money is used well to provide additional resources.

Design and technology

107. A good lesson in Year 5 was observed during the inspection. In this lesson, the teacher's enthusiasm and good subject knowledge was shared with the pupils and they were motivated to work hard, designing and constructing moving toys.
108. Displays of work in the school reflect pupils' interest in the subject, such as the colourful chairs from reclaimed materials designed by pupils in Year 4.

109. A temporary co-ordinator is managing the subject appropriately and has maintained a helpful file that includes samples of work and photographs. There are very effective links with the local community and a sculptress worked with groups of pupils as they designed and made a mathematics garden in the school grounds. This included some designs made from attractive mosaics.

Music

110. Two satisfactory lessons and one good lesson were observed along with some additional activities sampled from the very wide selection provided by the school. In the good lesson in Year 2, clear instructions and firm expectations of behaviour enabled pupils to learn a new song quickly and add simple accompaniment and actions in the same lesson.
111. The school choir performs to a very high standard and throughout the school pupils learn songs quickly, sing tunefully and observe conductors well. There is a great enthusiasm for music at the school and members of staff and large numbers of pupils give up lunchtimes to take part in clubs, choirs and bands. Older pupils in the advanced recorder group and those in the school band read musical notation well and perform significant parts with a good awareness of how they contribute to the overall performance.
112. In all lessons a good scheme of work supports teachers well in their lesson planning and provides a clear structure to help pupils develop skills and knowledge. Gifted and talented pupils are supported well through the provision of additional activities.
113. The subject is led and managed well by the headteacher and another member of staff. Together they support colleagues who are not musicians effectively and provide the very rich opportunities for pupils to make and enjoy music. There is a clear understanding of how the subject can be developed further through the use of ICT. The subject makes a very good contribution towards the pupils' social and cultural development. Parents are very appreciative of the provision made in music and the school takes part in many concerts and music festivals on the island. Visiting musicians such as an Indian music group run workshops to provide further interest. There are several links with a local secondary school, where pupils can learn to play the guitar and keyboard. A music room is used well by classes and music groups.

Physical education

114. In lessons seen, pupils showed sound skills and teaching was largely satisfactory, with an example of good teaching in a games lesson in Year 1. In this lesson the good coaching of the teacher enabled pupils to make good progress in improving their skills at striking a moving ball.
115. There is a very good curriculum, with pupils benefiting from a very wide range of sporting opportunities. Very good use is made of sports coaches from outside the school and pupils get good opportunities to take part in competitions. They have been especially successful in swimming galas, with pupils showing the benefits of access to the school's swimming pool.

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND HEALTH EDUCATION AND CITIZENSHIP

116. This curriculum area was sampled and no judgement is made on standards or the overall quality of provision. The good scheme of work covers all required elements, taught in separate lessons or within other subjects, notably science and religious education. Commercial materials give teachers clear guidance in planning appropriate activities. Sex and relationships education is included for older pupils, who also benefit from a substantial course in drug awareness. The programme also includes citizenship education, and the citizenship day this year involved all pupils in drafting rules for various aspects of school life. There are good links with the themes of assemblies and its programme of visitors. Overall, pupils are offered a good curriculum.

117. Members of staff create good opportunities for pupils to take initiatives in the wider life of the school. The targets of the school development plan are shared with all classes in simple language so they are fully involved in the priorities of their community. Pupils learn about the democratic process when they speak in their class council and vote for school council members through whom they can make their views known. Pupils in Years 4 and 5 write formal letters applying to be playground leaders and some are trained to help resolve pupil disputes. Such opportunities make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development and attitudes towards school.

PART D: SUMMARY OF THE MAIN INSPECTION JUDGEMENTS

Inspection judgement

Grade

The overall effectiveness of the school	3
How inclusive the school is	3
How the school's effectiveness has changed since its last inspection	4
Value for money provided by the school	4

Overall standards achieved	4
Pupils' achievement	4

Pupils' attitudes, values and other personal qualities	3
Attendance	5
Attitudes	2
Behaviour, including the extent of exclusions	3
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

The quality of education provided by the school	4
The quality of teaching	4
How well pupils learn	4
The quality of assessment	5
How well the curriculum meets pupils' needs	4
Enrichment of the curriculum, including out-of-school activities	2
Accommodation and resources	4
Pupils' care, welfare, health and safety	2
Support, advice and guidance for pupils	3
How well the school seeks and acts on pupils' views	2
The effectiveness of the school's links with parents	3
The quality of the school's links with the community	2
The school's links with other schools and colleges	2

The leadership and management of the school	3
The governance of the school	3
The leadership of the headteacher	3
The leadership of other key staff	4
The effectiveness of management	4

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