

INSPECTION REPORT

Townley Primary School
Christchurch
Wisbech

LEA area: Cambridgeshire

Unique Reference Number: 110630

Acting headteacher: Mrs Lynda Quince

Reporting inspector: Mrs Frances Forrester
11590

Dates of inspection :1 - 3 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707012

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
Type of control:	County
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr Stephen Tooke
Date of previous inspection:	May 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Frances Forrester Registered Inspector	Areas of learning for children under five English Mathematics Geography Physical education	Characteristics of the school Data and key indicators Attainment and progress Teaching Special educational needs Spiritual, moral, social and cultural education. Leadership and management Efficiency Attendance Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Support, guidance and personal development Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and resources Curriculum and assessment Equal opportunities
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What the school does well

- Leadership and management are very good. The acting headteacher is a very good teacher and she has outstanding vision for the educational direction of the school. The governors have a good knowledge of the school and their leadership actively supports the work of staff and pupils.
- Almost a third of the teaching is very good or outstanding.
- The school provides good moral and social development.
- Pupils throughout the school have good attitudes to their work. Relationships between staff and pupils and between the pupils are good.
- The quality of the information that the school provides for parents is good.
- Parents give their support and encouragement to the school by actively involving themselves with their children's learning.
- The accommodation is very good, particularly for a school this size.

Where the school has weaknesses

- I. The standards of English and mathematics are inconsistent. When pupils write for a range of purposes, they often print and they are often careless about the accuracy of spellings and punctuation. In mathematics at Key Stage 1, there are insufficient opportunities for investigational, practical work and problem solving.
- II. Support staff work hard to support the youngest children who are under five but they do not have specialist qualifications.
- III. There are limited opportunities for the children who are under five to develop an appropriate knowledge of the world they live in. Their physical development is hindered by a lack of structure to outside play and limited equipment.
- IV. The school has a number of important policies that need updating and the legal requirements for teacher appraisal have lapsed.
- V. There are few opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of other races through multi-cultural education.

The weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to parents or carers of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has evaluated its aims and they are now reflected in the school policies. The acting headteacher has successfully implemented procedures for monitoring the standard of teaching, which have had an impact on raising standards. The improvements in teachers' lesson planning means that objectives are now clearly identified. The school development plan now takes into account the school's financial position. The school assemblies were criticised in the last inspection as they lacked spirituality. The assemblies now include time for quiet reflection and have a good atmosphere. All assemblies are planned to include a prayer. Although the standards of writing are still inconsistent throughout the school, the curriculum for English is improved so that pupils are now given opportunities to write regularly. They are encouraged to write for a wide range of purposes. The school has also made many improvements to the curriculum provision and it has raised pupils' standards of attainment in religious education, art and design and technology. The school makes provision within its curriculum for the development of the skills of more able pupils. It has implemented appropriate systems for assessing pupils' work.

• **Standards in subjects**

The children who are under five cover the nationally agreed areas of learning for this age group through conventional lessons and free play. However, because the class support is only available part-time, there are gaps in the provision. By the time they are five, children make good progress and attain suitable standards in social and creative development and in language and literacy. In mathematical development, they make good progress in numeracy but there are limited opportunities to develop problem-solving through their play and consequently their progress is only satisfactory. By the time they are five, children have a good understanding of number and attain suitable standards in other aspects of their mathematical development. However, most children make insufficient progress in physical development and attain below average standards. Children join in with science lessons and those who are more able to learn in this way benefit from this. However, there are very few specially designed activities for very young children to promote a suitable knowledge and understanding of the world. In this aspect, children make poor progress and attain below average standards.

Because of the small number of children in some year groups, the figures for National Curriculum test results are distorted and it is hard to make reliable comparisons with national expectations. At Key Stage 1, with only eight pupils assessed, the percentage attaining the national expectation of Level 2 or above is below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In mathematics, only one pupil attained Level 3. At Key Stage 2, with nine pupils, the percentage who attained the national expectation of Level 4 or above in English, mathematics and science, is much higher than last year. Poor results last year were due to the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. This had an adverse effect on the overall results because of the small numbers.

In the National Curriculum subjects of geography, history, music and physical education, pupils attain the expected standards for their age group. In art and design and technology, the standard is good throughout the school. At Key Stage 2, good standards of games' skills are evident in physical education.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 11 years
English	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Mathematics	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good
Science	N/A	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology	N/A	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education	N/A	Satisfactory	Good
Other subjects	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Good

The standard of teaching for children who are under five is satisfactory and sometimes good. Throughout the school, the standard of teaching was satisfactory or better in 94 per cent of lessons. Almost a third of the teaching was very good and two lessons at Key Stage 2 were outstanding. Only two lessons were unsatisfactory. In one, this was due to lack of specialist supervision for the youngest children in the class. In another, the recorded tape could not be heard. Thirty nine per cent of lessons at Key Stage 2 were very good or outstanding. In these lessons, the teachers had an excellent knowledge of the curriculum and the topic was presented to the class with charisma and sometimes humour, which motivated the pupils to work hard.

In English and in mathematics, there was a significant amount of good teaching. In English, three lessons out of ten were good and four lessons were very good. In mathematics, of six

lessons, two lessons were good and two were very good. Other subjects that benefited from exceptional teaching were religious education and geography.

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

· **Other aspects of the school**

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	The standard of pupils' behaviour is satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, some very good behaviour was observed in lessons. However, behaviour in corridors and in the playground or school dining room is often noisy and boisterous.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and during the inspection there was 100 per cent attendance on one day.
Ethos*	The school's ethos is good, and there is a good atmosphere for learning.
Leadership and management	The school benefits from good leadership. The recently appointed acting headteacher has worked very hard with governors and staff and made significant improvements this term.
Curriculum	The school's curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced and at Key Stage 2 it is good. The curriculum for children who are under five has insufficient activities to meet all the nationally agreed requirements.
Pupils with special educational needs	These pupils are appropriately supported in class by the teachers or class assistants. The school regularly reviews pupils' progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	There are appropriate opportunities for spiritual and cultural development. Good moral and social development is having an impact on pupils' behaviour.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The school has very good accommodation. There are appropriately qualified staff, except in Class 1 where there is limited classroom support for the children who are under five. Resources are satisfactory.
Value for money	The school spends a lot of money on each pupil and it gives satisfactory value for money.

**Ethos is the climate for learning: attitudes to work, relationships and the commitment to high standards.*

· **The parents' views of the school**

What most parents like about the school

- VI. Teachers (including the acting headteacher) now wait outside the school to greet the children.
- VII. There is regular homework.
- VIII. There is a strong sense of community in the school.
- IX. There have recently been more after-school activities.
- X. Teachers are very approachable.

What some parents are not happy about

- XI. The youngest children taking part in
- XII. Parents would like more information an ahead.
- XIII. Parents would like more

The inspection team agrees with parents that the school's curriculum is broad and includes good after-school activities for the older children. Teachers are friendly and approachable and they work very hard for the benefit of the pupils. Of the things that some parents are not happy about, the team agrees that some very young children find it difficult to sit for a long time listening to the teacher. The school provides a good amount of homework at Key Stage 2 and the parents' request for more warning of the work to be covered is being considered. The acting headteacher has only been in post this term, but she welcomes the interest parents have shown in supporting the school by ensuring homework is done on time and she has noted that parents would like more information about the curriculum.

Key issues for action

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

- 1 continue to raise the standards of English and mathematics by:
 - improving the standards of pupils' writing, including handwriting, spelling and punctuation;
 - promoting better attitudes to reading by developing pupils' comprehension skills;
 - providing more opportunities in mathematics for investigational, practical work and problem solving, in order to cover all National Curriculum programmes of study at Key Stage 1;

Paragraphs: 5, 8-9, 33, 50, 58, 60-61, 65, 70-73, 76-77, 80

- 2 improve the provision for pupils who are under five by:
 - providing specialist class support to improve the organisation of activities;
 - reviewing and implementing programmes for promoting children's knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical development;
 - improving the resources for outside play to include equipment for climbing and balancing;

Paragraphs: 4, 6, 22-23, 27-28, 30, 37-39, 41, 52-53, 59-64, 66, 120

- 3 continue to improve the school's management by:
 - implementing arrangements for staff appraisal;
 - developing co-ordinators' roles to include monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum, teaching and the effectiveness of support staff;
 - reviewing and applying the policy for promoting good behaviour to address the boisterous behaviour around the school, in the playground and in the dining room;
 - reviewing the procedures for child protection and promoting pupils' welfare and health and safety;
 - reviewing the policy for multi-cultural development to increase pupils' awareness of other races;
 - reviewing the health and safety policy.

Paragraphs; 6, 16, 18, 39-40, 42-43, 48-49, 53, 58-59, 81, 85

" Introduction

" Characteristics of the school

1. Townley Primary School is situated in the Fenland village of Christchurch and provides full time education for 67 pupils aged from four to eleven years of age. This is a similar figure to the number on roll in the last inspection. At the start of the school year, the school admits full-time the children who are four years old and due to become five during the school year. There are 23 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs which is above average for a school this size. Thirteen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is slightly lower than the national average. There are no pupils from ethnic minority groups. The school employs two part-time teachers to work with the acting head teacher to share the teaching in Class 2. The school is situated in Christchurch but pupils from neighbouring villages also attend. Some families work locally but others suffer from unemployment.
2. The school's headteacher is presently on long-term sick leave. The governors, with financial support from the Local Education Authority, have appointed an acting headteacher to manage the school in his absence. The school sets out its aims and values for pupils, as follows:
 - each individual will have the opportunity to taste success and to develop knowledge, skills, self-confidence, adaptability and initiative;
 - to discover and nurture to the full the skills, aptitudes and abilities of individual pupils, irrespective of age, ability, sex, ethnicity or religion;
 - to promote physical, emotional, spiritual and social maturity in all pupils;
 - to utilise effectively the human and physical resources of the school.
3. The key issues from the previous inspection report were:
 - to review the school's aims to reflect the aims set out in subject policy documents, to provide a basis for monitoring and evaluating performance;
 - to implement the assessment policy, paying particular attention to assessment information informing learning objectives for lessons;
 - to distinguish in teachers' planning between tasks and learning objectives;
 - to take a longer term view of the school's development and financial planning, in order to plan for the change of variables which may challenge the organisation and running of the school.

3. Key indicators

3. Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	6	2	8

3. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	3 (2)	5 (2)	4 (3)
	Girls	1 (1)	0 (1)	0 (1)
	Total	4 (8)	5 (8)	4 (10)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	50 (90)	63 (80)	50 (100)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

3. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	4 (3)	3 (3)	5 (3)
	Girls	1 (1)	0 (7)	0 (6)
	Total	3 (4)	3 (10)	5 (9)
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	38 (80)	38 (100)	63 (90)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

3. Attainment at Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for latest reporting year:

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	4	5	9

3. National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	3 (1)	3 (1)	3 (2)
	Girls	3 (1)	3 (0)	3 (1)
	Total	6 (2)	6 (1)	6 (3)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	66 (20)	66 (10)	66 (30)
	National	70 (65)	69 (58)	78 (69)

3. Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	3 (1)	3 (1)	3 (2)
	Girls	2 (1)	3 (1)	3 (1)
	Total	5 (2)	6 (2)	6 (3)
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	55 (20)	66 (20)	66 (20)
	National	68 (63)	69 (64)	75 (69)

3.

¹ Percentages in parentheses refer to the year before the latest reporting year

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year:	Authorised	School	%
	Absence	National comparative data	5.7
	Unauthorised	School	0.2
	Absence	National comparative data	0.5

3.

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year:		Number
	Fixed period	1
	Permanent	0

3.

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is:		%
	Very good or better	29
	Satisfactory or better	94
	Less than satisfactory	6

3. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

3. **Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school**

3. **Attainment and progress**

4. Children who are under five are admitted into the reception class with reception and Years 1 and 2 pupils. On entry to the school, children attain below average standards. Many are immature and some cannot mix sociably with other children. Although the children benefit from this admission policy in a number of ways, there is no specialist under-five support for the class. Consequently, although the nationally agreed areas of learning² are covered through conventional lessons and free play, there are gaps in the provision. Children make good progress in social and creative development and in language and literacy. In mathematical development, they make good progress in numeracy. However, in other aspects of the programme for mathematical development, their progress is only satisfactory. By the time they are five, most children attain the nationally agreed standards in the desirable learning outcomes for these areas of development. However, most children attain below average standards in physical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world, due to the limitations in the programmes of study in these areas. The rate of progress in learning is satisfactory for most children but hindered by the inadequate additional specialist support available.
5. Because of the small number of children, the figures for National Curriculum test results are distorted and it is hard to make reliable comparisons with national expectations. At Key Stage 1 in 1999, with only eight pupils assessed, the percentage attaining the national expectation of Level 2 or above is below the national average in English, mathematics and science. In mathematics, only one pupil attained Level 3. Compared with similar schools this is below average. At Key Stage 2, with nine pupils, the percentage attaining the national expectation of Level 4 or above in English, mathematics and science, is much higher than in 1998. Compared with similar schools this is below average. Poor results then were due to the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. This had an adverse effect on the overall results because of the small numbers. Boys and girls attain according to their individual ability and there is no evidence to suggest any significant differences in their progress or performance in National Curriculum tests and teacher assessments. The school has satisfactorily recognised the opportunities for promoting literacy and numeracy throughout the curriculum. The school's agreed targets for raising the overall standards of attainment are realistic, although yearly results depend very much on the percentage of pupils who are of average ability.

² Desirable learning Outcomes – these are goals for learning for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They mainly refer to literacy [*speaking, listening, reading and writing; e.g. writing their names and recognising UPPER and lower case*], numeracy [*recognising the meaning of numbers, beginning to add and subtract small numbers, sorting and matching objects and recognising common shapes and patterns*] and personal and social skills [*showing confidence, self respect, ability to work with other children and adults, concentrating, offering ideas, taking turns and sharing*].

6. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils make satisfactory progress and they attain standards in speaking and listening which are in line with national averages for half of the pupils in Year 2. Several pupils with special educational needs attain below average standards by the end of the year. The lack of specialist class support for the children who are under five and in Class 1 has an impact on the standards attained by the Year 2 pupils. Often, class discussions are cut short because the teacher has to intervene elsewhere. This is particularly evident when very immature children with poor social skills exhibit attention-seeking behaviour. At Key Stage 2, the standards of speaking and listening are in line with national expectations for most pupils in Year 6 and some will attain above average standards by the end of the key stage. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to take part in class discussions and consequently they make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, where the teachers adjust their questions to encourage those with special educational needs to develop their speech, they make good progress.
7. The standards of reading by the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with the national average, although pupils with special educational needs attain below average standards. The more able pupils recognise their errors and some correct their mistakes. They make satisfactory progress. Less able pupils with special educational needs often wait for help. They are supported appropriately by learning support assistants who hear them read regularly. In this way, they make satisfactory progress. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read a range of books that they regularly take home. They make satisfactory progress. In literacy lessons, pupils are beginning to analyse texts but most find it difficult to make any comparisons between authors and very few read with expression. Although the school gives less able pupils time to read quietly to support staff, there are no procedures in place for checking the effectiveness of this support. Despite this, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Pupils at both key stages use the school library and they know that books are organised alphabetically. However, by the end of Key Stage 2, pupils do not understand the Dewey system and most do not benefit from using the local library van which visits the village during the school day or the public library in the nearby town of March.
8. Writing standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are below average and many have difficulty writing freely because they cannot spell confidently or punctuate accurately. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to extend their ideas in simple narrative but most use very few adjectives to make their writing interesting. The standard of handwriting is variable and often unsatisfactory. Often letters are not well formed nor a consistent size. In writing freely, pupils insert capital letters in the middle of words and often forget to end a sentence with a full stop. By the end of Key Stage 2, most have below average standards in handwriting. Despite regular spelling tests and pupils having a good knowledge of letter sounds, words are often spelled inaccurately.

9. In mathematics, pupils attain the standard expected by the end of Year 2. Most pupils make satisfactory progress and in the best lessons their progress is good. The school has appropriately adopted the National Numeracy Strategy. At Key Stage 2, pupils receive a well-balanced mathematics curriculum that provides coverage of all the required strands of the National Curriculum. However at Key Stage 1, the curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for investigative mathematics and problem-solving. There is an appropriate emphasis on mental work throughout the school. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to recognise numbers and to place them in the correct order. Most count both forwards and backwards. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a sound basic understanding of number and a good recall of addition and subtraction facts but many still lack confidence. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. The school's strategy of including the most able Year 2 pupils in lessons with Years 3 and 4 is having a significant impact on raising their standards of attainment. Pupils benefit from this and make good progress. Most pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2 and, by the time they leave the school, pupils of average ability confidently calculate numbers in their heads. They have a good mathematical vocabulary. They use correct mathematical language and even those with special educational needs make good progress. They have a good understanding of place value and many know their multiplication tables. They understand area and volume. Pupils convert fractions to decimals and add and subtract decimals of a pound. Pupils interpret data in a variety of graphs. Overall, standards in numeracy are improving and are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 2.
10. In science, at Key Stage 1, pupils' attainment is below the national average. Pupils plan and carry out investigations. They use accurate language to label external parts of the body. They make simple predictions and say whether their findings are accurate. Pupils understand the process of growth. For example, they know that eggs hatch into chicks which, in turn, grow into hens. Most understand force. At Key Stage 2, most pupils attain standards that are close to the national average. Pupils understand how to carry out a fair test. In Years 3 and 4, they record their predictions and their findings accurately. They use a suitable range of tables and charts. Pupils use an accurate technical vocabulary when testing soil and sand. They know that air is a gas and correctly classify everyday objects into solids, liquids and gases. By Year 6, pupils use research skills effectively. They understand the meaning of 'air pressure' and 'air resistance' and the principles of aerodynamics. They accurately use an associated vocabulary.
11. The school's standards of attainment in information and control technology meet national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2, the standards are above national expectations. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand how to access computer programs. They use the keyboard and mouse accurately to control movements on the screen. At Key Stage 2, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, show confidence in carrying out basic control operations. Pupils open and name files and confidently change font, colour and style. They use an accurate technical vocabulary. They understand the basic methods of controlling and using equipment. The lack of a printer at Key stage 1 restricts progress for these pupils. Pupils make good progress in using their skills in information and control technology to support work in other subjects such as English and art.

12. The school has successfully improved religious education since the previous inspection. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve standards that are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. No lessons were observed at Key Stage 1. However, discussions with pupils show that they attain in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a sound knowledge of bible stories. They talk confidently about the local church and understand the significance of the cross to Christians. At Key Stage 2, pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and Judaism. They understand the term 'Shabbat' and know that there is a special significance in the preparation of food in the Jewish faith. They have a good understanding and an awareness of religious traditions. Pupils understand similarities and differences between a Christian church and a synagogue. They make good progress. Throughout the school pupils make good progress in increasing their recognition of a 'supreme being'.
13. In the National Curriculum subjects of geography, history, music and physical education, pupils attain the expected standards for their age group. In art and design and technology lessons the standard is good throughout the school. In physical education, some good standards of games' skills are evident at Key Stage 2.
14. Pupils identified as having special needs make satisfactory progress overall in relation to their prior attainment. Teachers give additional support during lessons and most make sure they involve these pupils in class discussions by asking suitable questions that promote successful answers. The work teachers set for them in most lessons is appropriately matched to their needs and provides achievable challenges. When learning support assistants are available for pupils in the class with special educational needs, they give good support. Pupils with difficulties in reading make sound progress when reading with support staff on an individual basis.
14. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
15. Most children who are under five have good attitudes. They enjoy being in school and try hard to please their teacher. They usually behave appropriately. They have good relationships with each other and sometimes they demonstrate a caring approach to those who are still finding it hard to settle to daily routines. For instance, they applauded spontaneously when one less compliant youngster obeyed the teacher. They knew this was particularly difficult for him. Their personal and social development is good.
16. Pupils relate well to each other and to adults. Their behaviour in lessons is good. The behaviour as pupils move around the buildings and in the playground is satisfactory, although boisterous. Pupils have good attitudes to their work. At Key Stage 2, they help and support each other in lessons and show respect for the feelings, values and beliefs of others. Parents are pleased with the positive attitudes and values that the school promotes. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and relationships are good. Children enjoy a smooth entry into school, many having attended the playgroup on site and pupils are ready for their transfer to secondary schools.
17. The school's aims and ethos are reflected in the enthusiastic attitudes pupils display towards their school. The acting headteacher's work ethic is contagious and her infectious enthusiasm to move the school forward has already made a significant impact. From the time they arrive in Class 1, children quickly learn what is expected of them and develop positive attitudes to school and each other. Confidence is encouraged and social skills developed. Pupils are keen to attend school and settle quickly to tasks set for them. They enjoy their lessons and work well together. In Class 3, pupils enjoy lessons; they

have a good sense of humour. In an art lesson, they evaluated their own work and appreciated that of others. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by their peers, and all pupils know how they are achieving through teachers' verbal comments and the stickers awarded. They are motivated and most try to achieve as well as they can.

18. Pupils' behaviour at school is satisfactory overall. In lessons, pupils behave well, particularly when all are appropriately challenged. They work well together in pairs and listen attentively to their teachers. They know what is expected of them and what will happen if they transgress. It is rare that more than two warnings have to be given. Around the school, in the playground and dining hall, behaviour is only satisfactory. This results in boisterous behaviour at times. At these times, the school's positive behaviour management strategies are not so rigorously implemented by staff. Whilst bullying is not an issue at this school and exclusions are very rarely used, the inconsistency in behaviour management has a detrimental effect on the standards of behaviour overall.
19. Relationships between pupils and between teachers and pupils are good. Teachers know their pupils well and provide good role models. They are trusted by all pupils to deal with any concerns effectively and fairly. Although little personal and social education is formally timetabled, pupils' personal development is satisfactory and promoted through assemblies, and through the curriculum and teachers' expectations when pupils are given tasks to carry out. For instance, they enjoy and sensibly take charge of the registers and operate the overhead projector. They offer to help in other ways when they can. A family atmosphere pervades the small school community, with older pupils automatically caring for those who are younger in the playground. All pupils take pride in their school. They quickly learn right from wrong and enjoy collecting for charities such as Action Aid for those less fortunate than themselves.

19. **Attendance**

20. The percentage of pupils' attendance is satisfactory overall and was very good during the week of the inspection, reaching 100 per cent one day. Pupils like coming to school and almost all arrive early in the mornings and wait in the playground to be collected by their teachers when the school bell rings. The very few regular latecomers are known to the school and parents are contacted when this is persistent. Their late arrival does not disrupt the teaching time.
21. Registers are called twice a day and completed according to local authority guidelines. Pupils respond politely when their names are called, some even replying in French in Class 1. Punctuality is satisfactory throughout the school day.

21.

21. **Quality of education provided**

21. **Teaching**

22. The standard of teaching for the children who are under five is satisfactory and sometimes good. The teacher plans her work to include activities for pupils in Years 1 and 2, who are also in the class. In the mornings, there is additional learning support that makes this easier to manage. In the afternoons, the support is not consistent and voluntary helpers compensate for the gaps in the support. The teacher plans the curriculum around the nationally agreed areas of learning for the children who are under five. When it is possible to do so, she teaches these children as a group. For instance in a good numeracy lesson that followed the structure of the National Numeracy Strategy, she gave the children counting activities. Her questioning developed counting skills and the effective use of a die encouraged the children to recognise numbers and to add on and make comparisons. The follow-up group work was well planned and learning support assistants and voluntary helpers supervised each group. When the teacher works with older pupils on the National Curriculum, the youngest children often play freely. Although this means they cover a variety of activities, there is no structure to the organisation. Support staff supervise the children's behaviour but they are not involved in the assessment of pupils' progress through daily activities. The range of free-choice activities covers language and literacy and creative and social development but opportunities for promoting mathematical development through play or physical development, are limited. Unless the class teacher plans a class topic that covers history, geography, science or information technology, there are very limited opportunities to promote children's knowledge and understanding of the world. The school suitably assesses children's progress through the nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes. However, there are no procedures to track the activities covered each day, nor on-going assessment to inform daily planning.
23. The standards of teaching throughout the school were satisfactory or better in 94 per cent of lessons. Almost a third of the teaching was very good, and two lessons at Key Stage 2 were outstanding. There were two lessons at Key Stage 1 that were unsatisfactory. In one of these there was a lack of specialist supervision for the younger children in the class. Consequently, a geography lesson was rushed and the teacher was unable to reinforce the mapping skills she had planned to develop. In another lesson, the recorded tape for a physical education lesson could not be heard and the youngest children found it difficult to concentrate on the activity. The school's strategy of placing the more able Year 2 pupils in Class 2 is proving very successful. In this way, pupils benefit in literacy and numeracy lessons from more experienced and mature Years 3 and 4 pupils. In the afternoons when they return to Class 1, they act as good role models for the younger children. However, their progress is often hindered by the demands of less sociable children who are under five and needing attention from the teacher. In Classes 2 and 3, the quality of the teaching is always satisfactory and in 80 per cent of lessons it was good. Thirty nine per cent of lessons at Key Stage 2 were very good or outstanding. In these lessons, the teacher had an excellent knowledge of the curriculum and the topic was presented to the class with charisma and sometimes humour, which captured the attention of pupils and motivated them to work hard.
24. In English and in mathematics, there was a significant amount of good teaching. In English, three lessons out of ten were satisfactory, three were good and four were very

good. In mathematics, two lessons were very good, two were good and a further two were satisfactory. Other subjects that benefited from exceptional teaching at Key Stage 2 were religious education and geography.

25. At Key Stage 1, the teacher organises the lessons so that she can focus on one year group whilst other pupils work on activities they have covered previously. She plans her work so that she teaches one subject at a time. This is successful when there is additional adult support from, for instance, voluntary helpers. At Key stage 2, the teachers' organisation and teaching methods are successful. Teachers usually cover the same subject with the whole class and activities are planned to meet the range of abilities in the class, including extension work for the more able pupils. At Key Stage 1, pupils have appropriate levels of homework and at Key Stage 2 homework is of good quality and has a positive impact on pupils' attainment.
26. Pupils with special educational needs are supported appropriately by teachers in lessons. The teacher often helps them during the group work, for instance in the literacy hour by explaining further the work they are covering. Learning support staff give additional support during lessons by working with individual pupils. In addition, they often withdraw pupils to read quietly and individually. However, in the shared text activity of the literacy lesson and the mental work at the start of the numeracy lesson, the support staff often just sit close to the group and watch. The lesson plans are made by the class teacher and support staff have little involvement in agreeing the activities for pupils. They take no part in assessing pupils' progress. Although the school meets the Code of Practice³ for special educational needs, the individual education plans are not sufficiently used to inform the teachers' daily planning. Support staff are not involved in checking pupils' progress through their identified targets for improvement.
27. The school ensures that teachers provide equal opportunities for all pupils. Curriculum schemes of work, policy documents and the school's aims contain statements about equality of opportunity. The school provides a suitable and effective level of challenge for pupils of all abilities at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, the provision is less effective due to lack of specialist support for children under five. Teachers ensure that all pupils take part in group and class discussions. They vary their use of language to meet the differing needs of pupils. Teachers have suitably high expectations of achievement and behaviour. They make these expectations clear to pupils. Teachers encourage all pupils to participate equally in the full curriculum. For example, no distinction is made between girls and boys in sporting activities and football training. All pupils have full and equal access to the resources within the school.

³ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

27. **The curriculum and assessment**

28. The previous inspection identified, as a key issue, the need to develop a more consistent use of assessment information to set learning objectives for all lessons. The lack of provision of large outdoor equipment and apparatus for children under five was also criticised. The school has effectively addressed the first key issue. The current assessment procedures are effective and accurate in assessing pupils' attainment. The school analyses results and trends and uses these findings to plan the curriculum. All members of staff keep careful and thorough records of progress and look for patterns in different ability groups. They use the results of assessment to define specific learning objectives for their lessons that meet the needs of groups and individuals. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. The school is less effective in addressing the issue of the provision of large outdoor equipment for children under five. There is a pleasant and secure courtyard and the class has regular physical education lessons but no opportunities are provided for balancing and climbing. The organisation of activities is unstructured and there is insufficient support to ensure a planned programme to promote the physical development of children who are under five. This restricts their rate of progress in physical development. Although the school has acted on the key issue, it needs to improve the provision further.
29. The school makes sound provision for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, through its curriculum. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum and teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum. Work in religious education follows the locally agreed syllabus. The curriculum is relevant to pupils' needs and abilities. The school correctly places emphasis on English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. The school uses information technology to support all areas of the curriculum. The school allocates sufficient time to the foundation subjects. There is satisfactory provision for personal, health and social education. The school provides suitable opportunities for pupils to develop intellectually, physically and socially. There is close liaison with the receiving secondary school. The school's curriculum successfully prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.
30. The nationally agreed Desirable Learning Outcomes for children who are under five form the basis of their curriculum although there are some minor weaknesses in the programmes. Although the curriculum for these young children is satisfactory, there are weaknesses in the provision for the development of children's knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical development. The school makes effective use of its own base-line assessment to identify the needs of individual children. However, the daily assessment of children's progress is informal and there are no procedures for checking their rate of progress through the range of activities which are provided. The school suitably prepares them for the National Curriculum.
31. The school meets statutory requirements to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The provision for sex education is in line with the governors' policy. Sex education and drugs awareness fit naturally in science work and religious education, where there can be discussions on moral issues. There are sound opportunities for pupils to develop intellectually, physically and socially.
32. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have equal access to, and equality of opportunity in, the curriculum. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is effective. The school meets the legal requirements of the Code of Practice for pupils with special educational needs. It maintains an up-to-date register of pupils and all

members of staff understand the Code of Practice. The records of registered pupils provide accurate profiles of their needs. There is systematic monitoring of pupils' progress although support staff are not involved in the daily assessment of their success rate. The arrangements for annual reviews are suitably in place. Pupils have realistic and achievable targets in their individual education plans.

33. The school makes provision within its curriculum for the development of the skills of more able pupils. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Planning of the school curriculum is effective. The school identifies what pupils are to learn in each lesson. Schemes of work give a solid framework for building on pupils' knowledge and skills, which is having a positive impact on the quality of education pupils receive. The impact of the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is also raising standards, particularly in English. Although numeracy lessons are having a positive impact on raising standards, at Key Stage 1 there is insufficient emphasis on the investigative element of mathematics. There is close co-operation and sharing of expertise amongst teachers in their planning. This is effective in ensuring consistency in work between year groups and key stages. Opportunities for investigation at Key Stage 2 feature in planning, particularly in science, design and technology and art. Most teachers make full use of these opportunities to develop independent learning.
34. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum the school provides. Extra-curricular activities are open to all pupils, regardless of gender, ethnicity or home circumstances. The school complies with all legal requirements in the inspection framework. No formal monitoring system is in place to assess the effect of the current provision for equality of opportunity and any possible effect it has on the perceptions and prejudices of staff and pupils. The school is, however, aware of the need to address equality of opportunity. The school makes satisfactory provision to promote respect for the values and ideas of others. The school offers a good range of extra-curricular activities, including dance, netball, drama, football and board games.
35. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are satisfactory. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The school has a whole-school assessment policy and tracks pupils' progress as they move through the school from reception to Year 6. This is successful in addressing the key issue concerning assessment in the previous report. The school meets statutory requirements for assessing and recording. There are appropriate assessment procedures for all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. There is regular target setting and marking of work. The school makes pupils aware of their targets and their progress towards achieving them. It identifies targets in the annual reports to parents.
36. The school makes suitable use of assessment to identify pupils who may need additional help because they are experiencing difficulties. It makes satisfactory use of assessment to plan work for more able pupils who need more difficult work, although its effectiveness is inconsistent. The school analyses the results of standardised tests in English and mathematics to identify trends in attainment. They take any necessary steps to address these trends. This is evident in the improvement in standards. The use of assessment to inform curriculum planning is satisfactory.

36. Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

37. The school makes satisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual development. The children who are under five have similar opportunities as other pupils in the school. They participate in school special assemblies and celebrations. The daily collective act of worship includes time for reflection and in the best assemblies the topic captures the interest of the pupils and they show respect. For instance, in an assembly the acting headteacher described the process of researching for information about Charles Townley. Pupils were fascinated and continued to refer to the topic throughout the day. Teachers plan their lessons to encourage pupils to consider their own feelings and those of others. However, there are missed opportunities to promote spiritual development through listening to music, art or poetry. This has not been improved since the last inspection.
38. The school prioritises the development of pupils' moral and social skills and this is a strength of its provision. Right from the start in Class 1, children who are under five are taught right from wrong and they are encouraged to relate positively to each another. As they mature they are encouraged to consider other people's feelings and the effects of their behaviour on others. At registration each morning, they are taught to respond politely and to wish each other a good morning. In some lessons at Key Stage 2, the mixed ages are used to good effect, for instance in a geography lesson, where pupils of Years 3 and 4 were searching together through the atlas to identify climatic regions. In Years 5 and 6 in a mathematics lesson, pupils sat back to back to describe the shape of polyhedra and cuboids. The school provides frequent opportunities for pupils to work together co-operatively and to take responsibility. The wide range of clubs that the school offers, including dance and other sporting activities, further encourages social development. School teams compete against neighbouring schools, which successfully encourages a sense of teamwork and fair play.
39. The school provides satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Children who are under five enjoy poetry with their older class mates in the literacy lesson and they study the work of famous painters in art lessons. Work in geography and religious education develops their knowledge and understanding of other cultures. For instance, a religious education lesson on the Jewish religion also promoted an awareness of Israel. Attractive displays reinforce this work and act as a reminder of other traditions and celebrations. The school's location makes it difficult to provide a range of cultural opportunities for its pupils. However, there are residential visits. At the time of the last inspection, there were only limited opportunities for promoting multi-cultural awareness and this position has not changed. In art lessons, the teachers enable pupils to develop a good awareness of a wide range and variety of art from many cultures. However, no regular opportunities are provided for pupils to appreciate music from other countries.

39. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

40. The school seeks to provide for pupils' health, safety and well-being whilst they are in school and it has maintained the high quality of social care and development mentioned in the last inspection report. However, the behaviour and health and safety policies have not been reviewed for some years. No appendix addressing bullying has been added, although this was identified as an omission in the previous inspection. Relationships between pupils and between teachers and pupils are good. Risk assessments are carried out and security is under regular review.
41. Teachers know their pupils well and use their knowledge to plan for their progress in

lessons. Pupils know how they are achieving by verbal comment as well as by teachers' marking of their work. However, in the shared text activity of the literacy lesson and the mental work at the start of the numeracy lesson, the support staff often just sit close to the group and watch. They are not involved with the assessment of pupils' progress. The children who are under five enjoy a smooth integration into school. Pupils with special educational or other needs are well supported by class assistants or voluntary helpers. The school's satisfactory procedures for promoting and monitoring pupils' personal development are implicit within the curriculum rather than formally planned, for instance 'circle time' is only timetabled once a month at Key Stage 1. Assemblies raise pupils' awareness of moral and social values and teachers have high expectations of behaviour. Teachers provide good role models and they deal with any problems that arise.

42. Procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour are satisfactory. Within the behaviour policy there are clear expectations for pupils' behaviour and sanctions to be followed if they transgress. All staff and pupils know and understand these. However the school's policy does not include the management of pupils moving around the school, in the dining room and playground. In these areas of the building, support staff do not manage pupils' behaviour as rigorously and as a result it is less good. Bullying and racism are not issues at this school.
43. The school has effective measures to promote and monitor pupils' attendance. Registers are carefully completed and a list of latecomers and absentees is maintained and monitored. Visits are made by the Educational Welfare Officer. Whilst the school follows the local education authority guidelines for child protection, no member of staff has had recent training and child protection is not regularly included as an item for discussion at staff meetings. Consequently, the school's procedures are unsatisfactory. First aid practice at the school is satisfactory but further training is needed to ensure qualifications are updated. The school has a number of health and safety concerns. The school has no emergency procedures in place for dealing with the potential risks. The back entrance to the school grounds has no gate and there are no systems in place to answer the school telephone when the office is not manned.
43. **Partnership with parents and the community**
44. The school's partnership with parents and the local community is satisfactory. The acting headteacher is committed to developing the school's partnership with parents and to maintaining the good links reported at the time of the last inspection. Parents recognise improvements to the school's communications and they are optimistic this will continue. They value the newly introduced newsletter and now feel better informed about their children's lives at school. Although the quality of the reports is satisfactory and parents are satisfied with them, the school plans to review these to make them more 'user friendly'. As a result of the home/school agreement survey, many more parents have volunteered to help in school.
45. Parents support the school's aims and they are ambitious for their children. They help with any homework set, although some parents are not satisfied with the school's homework arrangements. The inspection team are agreed that homework is adequate and, at Key Stage 2, good. Parents attend consultation evenings and they are offered a second appointment if they are unable to keep the first one. Teachers are readily available at other times. Currently, very few parents help in classes, although some accompany their children on school visits. They provide transport when necessary, such as on the Class 2 visit to Stonea. Those who assist with the swimming lessons have all

obtained their life-saving certificates. All are well aware of the dangers of the Fens and the necessity of all children learning to swim. The Friends Association is enjoying a new lease of life and fund-raising events are now again planned. Fire-proofed curtains have been provided for the school hall.

46. The school is a focal point for the local community and local children use the basketball facilities out of school hours. There are regular visitors to the school, such as the vicar and a local resident who shared with the pupils his experiences of World War 2. The church is used as a resource. The harvest festival was recently celebrated there. Educational visits are made by all classes to the locality and beyond. The residential visit to the Isle of Wight was much enjoyed by the older pupils. The school has been successful in obtaining funds from a local firm to provide a 'Trim Trail'. The school's partnership with parents and the community makes a positive contribution to pupils' academic achievements and their personal development.

46.

46. **The management and efficiency of the school**

46. **Leadership and management**

47. The acting headteacher has outstanding leadership skills and, in a short time, has already established very good relationships with staff, parents and governors. She has worked hard to raise the standards of attainment, improve the quality of teaching, promote better pupil attitudes and maintain a calm atmosphere for learning. She has reviewed the use of the school building and implemented significant improvements to its appearance and efficient usage. The acting head is a very good teacher and she has a clear understanding of the National Curriculum, which is already influencing the school's work. The school has appropriately acted on the key issues from the last inspection and governors are actively involved in the school development planning. Governors are well aware of the requirements of the National Strategies for literacy and numeracy, which have been appropriately implemented. The school was successful in gaining 'Investors in People' status. Parents support the school's aims and values and these are successfully met.
48. Although this is a small school and teachers have to cover a wide range of responsibilities, there are regular meetings to discuss the curriculum and to review the standards of work and the procedures for marking pupils' work. The school management recognises that many of the school's policies are brief statements, out of date and needing review. In particular, the policy for multi-cultural development is only a brief statement. The behaviour policy does not address the management of pupil movement around the school, in the dining room and playground. The procedures for child protection are out of date and not fully understood by all staff. The health and safety policy does not take into account the potential dangers of being situated in an isolated village.
49. At the time of the last inspection, teachers had no job descriptions or specific curriculum responsibilities. Teachers now have suitable job descriptions and they have been allocated curriculum co-ordination responsibilities, although these roles are not fully developed. The school's new procedures for monitoring teaching and curriculum development are good. The acting headteacher monitors the standards of lessons and teachers' planning is reviewed to check National Curriculum coverage. However, subject

co-ordinators have had no experience of monitoring classroom practice and the role of support staff in order to raise standards.

50. The governors were actively involved with the life of the school at the time of the last inspection and they have continued to show a very positive interest in the school's development. Their management is good and they effectively work together as a team. The governors are proud of their school and they have a good knowledge of the locality. There are effective committee structures in place with clear terms of reference. Governors have been identified for key roles. Regular reports from the acting headteacher and regular visits to the school keep governors well informed. The governing body fulfils its legal obligations and meets most statutory requirements. The school's procedures for teacher appraisal have lapsed and the legal requirements for mathematics at Key Stage 1 are not fully met. A governor with responsibility for overseeing special educational needs has been appropriately appointed. The school's policy for special educational need embraces the Code of Practice and governors satisfactorily oversee the school's provision.
51. The school has an appropriate development plan and suitably high targets for raising standards, which it is well placed to meet. The small numbers of pupils at the ends of each key stage mean, however, that the results each year are distorted. For instance in 1998 when results were very low, there was a high percentage of pupils in Year 6 who had special needs. Governors are very aware of these difficulties. The school has recently introduced new strategies for improvement. The school has a good ethos which has been maintained and recently effectively moved forward by the work of the acting head teacher. This will have a beneficial impact on the standards of pupils' attainment.

51. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

52. Although there were no key issues about this aspect in the previous inspection report, the workloads and expectations of teachers and the lack of job descriptions were criticised. So too were the cramped accommodation and limited storage facilities. The school has introduced clear and specific job descriptions and it now has satisfactory organisation and storage of resources. It has improved the accommodation and developed a good space for outside play for children under five. Because of the size of the school, it is not possible to lighten the curriculum responsibility load for teachers. The school identifies training priorities and links them properly to the school development plan. This represents a satisfactory level of improvement since the previous inspection.
53. The school has a suitable number of well-qualified and suitably experienced teachers. It manages very well the difficulties of three teachers sharing the responsibility for teaching Class 2. Teachers' knowledge and expertise meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The support staff and voluntary helpers give effective classroom support. All staff, teaching and non-teaching, have clearly-defined job descriptions. There is no specific specialist support for children under five. This restricts the progress of these young children and places a heavy workload on the Key Stage 1 teacher. Procedures for staff appraisal have lapsed. The school's arrangements for the professional development of staff are good. There is a clear commitment from the school to improving staff confidence and expertise. The school keeps careful records of staff training. It maintains records of the impact this training has on the quality of education within the school. All members of staff pass on the knowledge they acquire on courses to their colleagues at staff meetings and on staff training days. There is a suitable policy for the induction of teachers new to the school and the acting headteacher acts as a mentor. New staff

receive a good level of support.

54. The school accommodation has been extended and improved since the last inspection and is now very good. There are sufficient rooms for the number of classes and additional space for group activities and the library area. Very good use is made of the available space. Wheelchair access is possible throughout the school. Standards of cleaning are very good. The site manager takes much pride in his work. Pupils have access to good-sized hard play areas and a grassed area. The school grounds provide good facilities for sporting activities and a wild life and woodland area.
55. Learning resources, including books, are sufficient in range and quantity to support the teaching of the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. They are of good quality and readily accessible. The school is continuing to extend all subject resources. The resources for the National Numeracy Strategy are satisfactory. The school library is well organised. Resources for English, science, art, music and design and technology are good in quality, quantity and range. There are an adequate number of computers but Class 1 has no printer. The provision of resources for all other subjects is satisfactory. This includes resources for children who are under five. It represents satisfactory improvement since the previous inspection. The school makes effective use of resources such as museums and other places of interest to enrich pupils' learning. This makes a positive impact on pupils' learning.
55. **The efficiency of the school**
56. The school's efficiency is satisfactory. In the last inspection, the school was managing its budget efficiently but decisions were made on a single year basis. The school still plans its budget for one year at a time. It has not improved from this position, due to the unexpected need to appoint an acting headteacher for one year only. The budget is closely monitored by the school governors who hope to work towards retaining a contingency for emergencies in the future. The amount the school spends per pupil is high compared with national figures. However, compared with schools of a similar size in the county, the amount is average. The school makes appropriate use of teachers and support staff but there are no procedures in place to evaluate the cost effectiveness of classroom support. In some classes this support is not efficiently used. For instance in some lessons, class assistants sit watching the teacher for almost half of the lesson. Although support staff supervise individual pupils with special educational needs, they have not been involved with lesson planning and sometimes are not clear about learning intentions. When this happens, they have little impact on the raising of standards. Staff make appropriate use of resources and the accommodation is well used.
57. The school has sound administration and systems for financial control are satisfactory. The governors' finance committee has a good knowledge of the school's budget and the systems in place for financial control. The school makes appropriate use of allocated funds for supporting pupils with special educational needs. The standards grant is suitably used.
58. The school achieves satisfactory standards. When pupils start school, most of them attain below average standards and many are immature with poor speech. Standards of attainment in the National Curriculum at Key Stage 1 are below the national expectation of Level 2. At Key Stage 2, the results have been improved since 1998 but are still below average in English and science. In mathematics, they were broadly in line with the national average. The inspection findings indicate that the results are difficult to sustain

because of the different abilities in each year group and the numbers of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils have good attitudes to their work and they try hard in their lessons, particularly at Key Stage 2. The quality of the teaching varies but a high percentage is very good and very few lessons were unsatisfactory. Moral and social development are good. Spiritual and cultural development are satisfactory, although there are few opportunities for promoting multi-cultural education. Taking all this into account, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

58. **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

58. **Areas of learning for children under five**

58. **Personal and social education**

59. The school promotes pupils' personal and social skills at all times. Most children are likely to attain the nationally expected standards for five year olds. Some children settle quickly into the routines of their class as a result of the good relationships that have been established with parents. Other, less mature children have difficulty adjusting to the daily demands of school life. The class is tightly managed. When children have difficulty playing with each other, they are suitably and sensitively helped by support staff and by voluntary helpers in the morning sessions. There is less support in the afternoon sessions. This means the few very immature children either monopolise the teacher's time or else they flit from one play activity to another without benefiting from the activity. Children willingly talk to visitors and ask simple questions. Most play well, sharing the activities and taking turns appropriately. In the outside courtyard, they choose their activities and some imaginatively devise their own games. Most children have made good progress in developing appropriate social skills by the time they reach the age of five. Their behaviour is satisfactory and often good, particularly when the teacher is working with them. Most know right from wrong. They are becoming more confident and many have a reasonable self-esteem. By joining in with school activities such as playtimes, children benefit from mixing with older pupils. For instance in a class circle time, the teacher discussed friendship and the Year 2 pupils in the class gave good examples of friendly behaviour. In this way, children start to develop responsible attitudes although in class they rarely help to clear up equipment at the end of a session. Children's spiritual, moral and social development are enhanced by joining in school assemblies, and special events such as the harvest festival and Christmas celebrations. However, there are limited opportunities for promoting multi-cultural development.

59. Language and literacy

60. The programme for language and literacy promotes the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Children have developed good attitudes to books and they enjoy listening to stories when they stay in class whilst older pupils join in with school assemblies. Children are encouraged to share a book with support staff and to take their books home. However, although a few will make good progress in learning to read by the time they are five, most will only make satisfactory progress. Good progress is often dependent on parents taking an active part in hearing children read. In most cases, children attain below average standards in reading and writing. Most children listen to stories and rhymes with interest. They recognise that print and pictures convey meaning. They trace the letters of their name and recognise their name when they see it. In an activity on colours, they organised groups of knives, forks and spoons and attempted to spell and write the labels for a display. However, there is no writing corner for children to make marks or play at writing. Structured activities are provided to develop letter recognition and writing skills but the limited specialist support means that children only cover these activities when the teacher plans work to develop language skills. When the amount of adult supervision allows time for support staff to talk with the children, for instance when using puppets, the children's language development is promoted. However, the way the activities are organised means that some children spend too long playing. Consequently, they do not have the time to learn the writing skills they will need to become confident writers. The teacher plans activities to promote discussion and she regularly asks questions in large group discussions. However, some children continue to use short sentences and they have a poor vocabulary. Children listen appropriately in lessons and usually manage to follow simple instructions. They recognise the sounds of the first letters of words. They practise handwriting but some children do not hold their pencil properly. By the time they are five, some will copy the teacher's writing but few have developed the pencil control they need for a consistent size of letters.

60. Mathematical development

61. The programme for mathematical development is satisfactory. Although it generally promotes the Desirable Learning Outcomes, it has minor weaknesses, for example opportunities are missed to develop mathematics through problem-solving in children's play. By the time they are five, most children make good progress in numeracy. They make sound progress in other aspects of the mathematical programme and attain the national expectations for their age group. Children make good progress when they participate in their own numeracy lesson whilst other class members are kept occupied with other activities. Regular counting in fives to fifteen and simple number recognition activities, develop their knowledge of numbers to ten and beyond. Number rhymes and songs are a normal part of the class routines. Children readily join in these and have a developing confidence and knowledge of number. They know the names of shapes and they can sort and match and organise shapes into sets. Children know the names of colours and they can identify a matching sequence. The play activities outside include construction activities but support tends to be supervisory and there are missed opportunities for promoting mathematical development. There is little evidence of support staff asking children questions to encourage mathematical understanding or problem-solving.

61. Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. There are weaknesses in the school's programme for promoting a knowledge and understanding of the world. The lesson plans do not cover this area of learning. Children make poor progress and, by the time they are five, they are unlikely to attain the nationally agreed standards. Children have access to a computer but the level of adult intervention provided is inconsistent. Although the science lessons take place with Years 1 and 2, the younger children who are under five play freely and often outside the class. Consequently, they have no opportunity to discuss the things they see or to develop an understanding of scientific facts. There is no evidence that, for example, children have opportunities to observe natural objects or to make drawings of them. Although they use scissors and regularly paste and stick together a variety of materials, generally the activities are planned to promote creativity rather than making skills. Although children build models with construction kits, they do not use simple tools with developing confidence. Discussions in class allow children to talk about family events but limited opportunities are given to them to talk about the past.

62. Physical development

63. The school's programme for promoting physical development has minor weaknesses. By the time they are five, children make sound progress in their ability to move confidently and imaginatively with increasing control. They make good progress in using construction materials and in managing malleable materials such as clay. However they have insufficient opportunities to climb and balance or to steer trucks and co-operatively controlled vehicles. In this aspect of the school's provision, they make unsatisfactory progress. By the time they are five, many are unlikely to attain all the nationally agreed expectations for physical development. For instance, in a class physical education lesson in the hall, children had little control and bumped into each other as they ran around.

63. Creative development

64. The programme for creative development promotes the Desirable Learning Outcomes. Most children make good progress and by the age of five they are likely to attain nationally agreed standards. Children regularly cut and stick and make collage pictures with coloured paper. They play percussion instruments to make music and they construct pictures on the computer. Children confidently draw and paint and colour pictures. They make up their own games and stories and in their free play enjoy dressing up. They learn songs by heart and in circle time they have the opportunity to express their feelings. They enjoy playing with glove puppets and make up their own imaginative stories. At dinner time in the school playground, children play imaginative games with older brothers and sisters. They enjoy participating in playground games.

64.

64. English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education

64. English

65. Pupils' standards of attainment in the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 1 were below the national average and no pupils attained Level 3. At Key Stage 2, the 1999 teacher assessments remained below average but the test results were slightly above, with seven children out of nine attaining Level 4. No pupils attained Level 5. The poor results in 1998 are explained by the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs in Year 6. In comparison with similar schools, the results are below the national average at both key stages. With so few children taking the tests, it is hard to draw reliable conclusions from the data but over the three years 1997 to 1999 the statistics show that reading and writing standards remain below average. The inspection findings show that standards are improving and at Key Stage 2 they are likely to further improve this year. Since the previous inspection in 1995, the standards have fluctuated but this can be explained by the differences in groups and the different numbers of pupils each year who have special educational needs. This distorts the percentages. The school is reviewing the quality of teachers' marking and examining examples of pupils' work to agree a systematic approach to raising the standards of writing. The good teaching in Key Stage 2 means that the school is well placed to achieve the local education authority targets at the end of Year 6 in 2000.

66. By the end of Key Stage 1, the standards attained in speaking and listening are in line with national averages for half of the pupils in Year 2. There are several pupils with special educational needs in this group and they are likely to remain below average in speaking and listening by the end of the year. These pupils are unable to listen well and become restless and occasionally distract others in large group discussions. When they answer the teacher's questions, their sentences are often immature or answers are one word only. The most able Year 2 pupils, who work with Class 2, listen attentively to their teachers' instructions and to stories and poems. They speak confidently and communicate successfully to a range of listeners. They enjoy discussing matters of interest to them. They are confident when they speak to a large group, particularly in the class discussion about the shared text in the literacy hour. The lack of specialist class support for the children who are under five and in Class 1 has an impact on the standards attained by the Year 2 pupils. Often, the time they are given in class discussions is reduced because the class teacher has to intervene elsewhere to manage the freely playing younger children. Although opportunities are provided for dressing up and free role-play, there is no structure to these activities. Limited opportunities are available for pupils to extend their ideas and understanding through talk in imaginative situations. Consequently all pupils make only satisfactory progress in this key stage in speaking and listening.

67. At Key Stage 2, the standards of speaking and listening are in line with national expectations for most pupils in Year 6 and some will attain above average standards by the end of the key stage. Pupils eagerly contribute to class discussions; they talk about a range of subjects and most have a sufficiently wide vocabulary to be able to express their ideas effectively and to answer questions. For example, Class 2 pupils made thoughtful suggestions for a 'Rainy Day' poem. Similarly in Class 3, Year 6 pupils gave their

opinions in a science lesson, when they discussed air resistance and the force of air pressure on aerodynamics. Although recent initiatives and good teaching are promoting Key Stage 2 pupils' confidence in speaking aloud, the opportunities for drama are limited.

They rely for instance on attending an after school club. Throughout the school, pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to take part in class discussions. Pupils make good progress in speaking and listening at this key stage.

68. The standards of reading by the end of Key Stage 1 are broadly in line with the national average for several pupils but the pupils with special educational needs attain below average standards. The more able pupils recognise their errors and some correct their mistakes. They make satisfactory progress. Less able pupils with special educational needs often wait for help. They are supported appropriately by learning support assistants who hear them read regularly. In this way, they make satisfactory progress. Most can predict what will happen next in a story, and they recall their favourite characters. The most able readers read confidently and with expression. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils read a range of books that they regularly take home. They make satisfactory progress but most barely attain the expected standards for their age group. Very few pupils enjoy reading and only the exceptional pupil is aware of, or able to read, children's classics such as 'Tom Sawyer' or 'Oliver Twist'. In literacy lessons, pupils are beginning to analyse texts to identify, for instance, powerful adjectives and compound words. A few discuss their favourite author, and many prefer Enid Blyton. Even the oldest pupils in Year 6 find it difficult to make any comparisons between authors and very few read with expression. Although the school gives less able pupils the time to read quietly to the support staff, there are no procedures in place for checking the effectiveness of this support. Despite this, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
69. Pupils at both key stages use the school library and they know that books are organised alphabetically. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils know the difference between a fiction and non-fiction book. However at Key Stage 2, pupils do not understand the Dewey system and most do not benefit from using the local library van or the public library in March. The standards of reading are noted in a home/school reading record that includes useful comments from pupils' families. However, there is no guidance about strategies pupils need to practise to improve their reading. Parents make a valuable contribution to their children's learning by hearing them read regularly at home and some collect additional books from the library van.
70. Writing standards by the end of Key Stage 1 are below average, and many pupils have difficulty writing freely without support from their teacher. Very few pupils spell confidently or write simple sentences with accurate punctuation unaided. The higher attaining pupils are beginning to extend their ideas in simple narrative but they use very few adjectives to make their writing interesting. Standards of handwriting are variable and often unsatisfactory. Handwriting lessons take place and, when they occur, the letter formation is a consistent size and joined. However, often letters are not well formed nor of a uniform size. In writing freely, pupils insert capital letters in the middle of words and often they forget to end a sentence with a full stop.
71. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have below average standards in writing. Although they are encouraged to record their work in writing in other subjects such as science, geography and history, they usually print. Despite regular spelling tests and pupils having a good knowledge of letter sounds, words are often spelled inaccurately. Some drafting of writing is helping to raise the standards of pupils' completed work.

However, pupils' lack of confidence makes extended writing difficult and pupils' knowledge of developing plots and characters is limited. The school recognises the need to increase the amount of time devoted to developing writing skills in both key stages. Computers are used appropriately by pupils to word-process their finished work and there are some interesting examples on display around the school. Throughout both key stages, the school places an appropriate emphasis on consolidating skills in spelling and punctuation.

72. Pupils are enthusiastic about their work. Despite their lack of confidence in writing, they willingly attempt to write freely and for a range of purposes. Throughout the school, they work well in the group activities of the literacy hour. They concentrate hard and behaviour is often good. At Key Stage 2, particularly when there are three age groups taking part in the lesson, pupils listen attentively to the teacher and show respect for each other's contributions when they suggest ideas in a large group. In this way, English lessons make a positive contribution to social and cultural development.
73. Only two lessons were observed at Key Stage 1. The standard of teaching was satisfactory in one lesson and good in the other. At Key Stage 2, teaching is always satisfactory and often good, with three lessons being very good. In the best lessons, the teachers have high expectations of the class. They plan the lesson well and include activities that challenge and interest the wide range of ability in the class. Lessons have a good pace, and the teachers use praise to motivate pupils. They make good use of questioning to develop ideas and stimulate thought. For instance in the shared text work in a literacy lesson, pupils studying the imagery in a poem were expected to write an alternative version. The teacher developed each line in a stanza by taking suggestions from the class. Even those pupils with special educational needs contributed ideas. The class agreed the final collective poem and then photocopied it so that pupils could correct and amend the words. Pupils made good progress and the final results would be the basis of further work at a later date. Throughout the school, teachers have a sound subject knowledge and, in the best lessons, their curriculum knowledge is good. They use appropriate teaching strategies for managing the whole-class, small-group activities or individual work. Teachers' marking is satisfactory but inconsistent, with few constructive comments. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for assessing pupils' work in reading, spelling and writing and standardised tests are also used. The National Literacy Strategy has been suitably implemented and teachers are enthusiastic about their lessons. This is having a positive impact on pupils' progress and the raising of standards, by increasing pupils' awareness of a wider range of literature.

73. **Mathematics**

74. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that 50 per cent of pupils attained the national expectation of Level 2, which was below the national average. Thirteen per cent attained Level 3, which was an improvement on the previous year. An analysis of the results over a three-year period reveals that the results fluctuate year on year. This can be explained by the very small numbers concerned. If there are several pupils with special needs in this age group, they distort the school's overall percentages.
75. By the end of Key Stage 2, the standards in 1999 were much improved from the previous year, when only ten per cent attained the national expectation of Level 4 which was very low. In 1999, 67 per cent attained Level 4, which is only just below the national average. However, compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, this is below

average. The inspection evidence confirms that, by the time they leave the school, many pupils attain the standard expected for their age group, though each year the cohort of pupils varies, with a varying number having special needs. This is a similar position to the standards of the last inspection although in that report the standards of learning were criticised in about half of the lessons. The lesson observations in this inspection show that pupils make satisfactory progress and in the best lessons their progress is good. In the last inspection, the school was criticised for its classroom organisation and for using a published scheme of work. There are no criticisms of the same nature this time. The school has taken appropriate steps to address these shortcomings and it has appropriately adopted the National Numeracy Strategy.

76. At Key Stage 2, pupils receive a well-balanced mathematics curriculum that provides coverage of all the required strands of the National Curriculum. At Key Stage 1 however, the curriculum does not provide sufficient opportunities for investigative mathematics and problem-solving. There is an appropriate emphasis on mental work throughout the school and, at Key Stage 2, opportunities are provided in other subjects for pupils to utilise their mathematical skills by, for instance, recording data in science lessons.
77. Pupils enter the school with below average mathematical abilities. At Key Stage 1, pupils learn to recognise numbers and to place them in the correct order. Most pupils can count both forwards and backwards in fives. They recognise repeating patterns and they add simple numbers together. By the end of the key stage, most pupils have a sound basic understanding of number and a good recall of addition and subtraction facts but many still lack confidence. Pupils name common two- and three-dimensional shapes, but only the few higher attainers can describe their properties using correct mathematical terminology. Year 2 pupils present data accurately in the form of a block graph and younger pupils in the reception and Year 1 groups tally the numbers in the class who walk or travel by car to school. Pupils of all abilities make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. Those who have special educational needs are well supported by class assistants or volunteer helpers, who are deployed to work with specific pupils. The teacher plans the mathematics lessons to take place in the morning when this help is available. The school's strategy of including the most able Year 2 pupils in lessons with Years 3 and 4 is having a significant impact on raising their standards of attainment. Pupils benefit from this and make good progress.
78. Pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2 and, by the time they leave the school, pupils of average ability can confidently calculate numbers in their head. They have a good mathematical vocabulary, which they use well to describe their work. For instance in a Class 3 lesson, pupils sat back to back describing different cuboids and polyhedra. They had to calculate the number of cubes they needed to add to a polyhedron to make a cuboid. They used the correct language and even those with special educational needs made good progress. They have a good understanding of place value and many know their multiplication tables up to twelve by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. They understand area and volume and most can calculate these accurately. Pupils convert fractions to decimals and they add and subtract decimals of a pound. Pupils interpret data in a variety of graphs. Overall, standards in numeracy are improving and are satisfactory by the end of Key Stage 2. Teachers encourage pupils to know number facts 'by heart' and older pupils of high ability are able to calculate mentally confidently and to employ a range of appropriate strategies to solve problems. These skills are appropriately developed and reinforced in other subjects. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. Pupils are supported in class and teachers take care to ask appropriate questions and to prepare their work at a suitable level. They

attain standards in line with their abilities.

79. Pupils' attitudes to learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Key Stage 2. In lessons where Year 2 pupils join in with Key Stage 2, their attitudes are good. At Key Stage 1, the very young children often distract older pupils, particularly when they have to abandon their play outside due to inclement weather. Throughout the school, most pupils seem to enjoy the numeracy lessons and they work with enthusiasm. They concentrate well and older pupils work very hard and form very good relationships. They work well co-operatively and collaboratively in groups or in pairs. Pupils treat equipment with care and share resources sensibly. However, standards of presentation are variable and some pupils take insufficient care with the appearance of their work.
80. The quality of teaching of mathematics at Key stage 1 is satisfactory. At Key Stage 2, the teaching is good and in two lessons it was very good. Teachers have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of both the subject and the requirements of the National Curriculum. They explain clearly, question pupils effectively and, when the lesson is good, set a brisk pace and encourage efficient thinking. For instance at Key Stage 1, the teacher introduced the numeracy lesson with quick fire questioning and counting in fives. Using hand actions and repetition, she reinforced pupils' mental recall. At Key Stage 2, teachers are skilful in their reinforcement of mathematical vocabulary. For instance in a numeracy lesson at Key Stage 2, the teacher recognised that the measurement work the class were covering was not fully understood by some pupils. She sensitively recapped the previous day's work. Using good blackboard examples and careful questioning, she prompted the pupils, giving them clear explanations. Teachers' expectations are high and sufficiently challenging to motivate the wide range of ages and abilities in the class. All lessons contain time for good direct teaching and a appropriate balance between teacher input and pupil activity. Lesson plans are detailed and the lessons have a clear purpose and objective. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly and they make good use of resources.
80. **Science**
81. At the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999, the teacher assessment indicates that most pupils attain standards that are below the national expectation of Level 2. Pupils attain low standards in physical science and very low standards in using and applying science. However, in the teacher assessments this year, 13 per cent attained the higher Level 3. The current inspection findings reflect the 1999 teacher assessments. About half of the pupils reach the expected levels in their ability to use and apply science and in their knowledge and understanding of physical processes. The school's results fluctuate each year, depending on the numbers in each group and the percentage with special educational needs. The school is taking positive steps to provide a suitable balance in the science curriculum at Key Stage 1. This, along with the implementation of an effective behaviour policy, is having a positive impact on raising standards.
82. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was 67 per cent, which was below the national average. However, this is an improvement on the results of the previous year, when very few attained Level 4. The clear improvement in standards is due to improved teachers' planning, the quality of their teaching and the effective use of the school's assessment procedures. The school analyses results and looks carefully at the teaching of science. The well-structured scheme of work is constantly under review to ensure pupils understand the need to enquire and investigate. This is leading to an improvement in achievement by

pupils throughout the school. These steps make an effective contribution to the improvement in pupils' attainment and progress. They have a positive impact on the standards of pupils' work. The school has made satisfactory improvements since the last inspection.

83. At Key Stage 1, a number of pupils attain standards that are close to the national average. The scrutiny of work shows that pupils can plan and carry out investigations. Pupils use accurate language to label external parts of the body. They communicate their findings through simple charts and drawings. Pupils describe what they expect to happen and say whether their findings are accurate. Pupils understand the process of growth. For example, they know that eggs hatch into chicks which, in turn, grow into hens. Most pupils understand that a force is either a push or a pull. They identify the force they use on a range of materials and know that squeezing is a push.
84. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attainment is close to the national average. All pupils understand how to plan and carry out a fair test. In Years 3 and 4, pupils predict, test their predictions and record their findings accurately. They use a suitable range of tables and charts. Pupils use an accurate technical vocabulary when testing soil and sand. They establish fair tests for measuring the rate at which soil passes through a sieve. Pupils know that air is a gas and correctly classify everyday objects into solids, liquids and gases. By Year 6, pupils use research skills effectively. For example, pupils carry out research into the friction air exerts on objects. They make autogyros to test their predictions. They apply their knowledge to work in other subjects. For example, they use their knowledge of design to plan working models. Pupils understand the meaning of 'air pressure' and 'air resistance'. They understand the principles of aerodynamics and use an accurate associated vocabulary such as upward and downward thrust. The scrutiny of work shows that pupils understand the effects of the earth's gravity. They know that the earth rotates on its axis around the sun. Pupils devise and carry out fair tests, discuss findings and record observations accurately using a suitable range of tables and graphs.
85. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress. Those pupils with special educational needs are supported well by their teachers and learning support staff and their progress is comparable to their classmates and satisfactory. They acquire a sound level of scientific knowledge and understanding. Most pupils, regardless of ability, carry out the same tasks. The more able pupils move on to develop and extend their ability to make scientific observations and recordings. The restless behaviour of a small number of very young pupils restricts the quality of learning and pupils' progress. Pupils at Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. They build on their knowledge and skills from Key Stage 1 and deepen their understanding of scientific concepts. Pupils' attainment in lessons, and in their work over time, reflects this. They gain a sound understanding of scientific skills and concepts as they move through the school. They show suitable gains in their ability to plan, organise and carry out scientific investigations. Pupils apply their knowledge to other areas of the curriculum, for example when using the computer to present graphs, charts and tables and analyse information. They apply their knowledge of science to work in design and technology when they discuss how to make autogyros. Pupils make sound progress in their understanding and use of appropriate scientific vocabulary. An example of this is their ability to recognise the specific scientific meaning of some everyday words such as 'force' and 'pressure'. Pupils make satisfactory progress in their ability to read instructions, take careful notes and write up experiments clearly. This makes a positive contribution to their literacy skills. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in developing scientific skills and concepts. In all classes they work in mixed ability groups. This gives

them mutual support and helps raise their self-esteem.

86. Pupils in all classes show much interest and enthusiasm for science. They have positive attitudes to their work. This makes a positive contribution to their level of attainment. Pupils are well motivated, show high levels of concentration and take a pride in their work. A small number of pupils at Key Stage 1 become easily distracted and lose interest in their work. Most pupils work well together, discuss and use a suitably mature level of reasoning to work out ideas. Pupils are excited by the investigative work they undertake, but they listen carefully, follow instructions and behave in a responsible and sensible manner. Pupils listen carefully to each other and share ideas sympathetically. Their relationships with each other and with adults are good. Pupils show a great deal of respect for their teachers. They take good care of equipment and materials. By Year 6, most pupils work independently and respond well to the challenging and interesting work. Pupils share tasks fairly and give a suitable level of attention to safety issues as they work.
87. The quality of teaching in science is at least satisfactory. Half of the teaching at Key Stage 2 is good. In all lessons, teachers' planning has relevant learning objectives and the teachers clearly identify extension activities. High levels of intervention, questioning, discussion and challenge of pupils' thinking are the hallmarks of the good teaching. All pupils have opportunities to discuss their findings. The pace of lessons is good, with no wastage of time. The quality of relationships between teachers and pupils ensures a satisfactory level of commitment by pupils. Teachers provide opportunities for pupils to engage in research and to plan and carry out their own investigations. The structure of lessons is clear and expectations are realistically high. Teachers expect pupils to complete their work within lessons and make clear the criteria for work. There is firm but subtle management of class routines, control and discipline. Individual lesson planning is satisfactory in quality and content. Teachers match activities well to the needs and abilities of pupils, with extension work provided for higher attaining pupils. All teachers have secure subject knowledge and understanding and are enthusiastic about their teaching. Teachers make effective links to other subjects, for example producing graphs, charts and artwork from observations of autumn leaves.
87. **Information technology**
88. The school has made satisfactory improvements in this subject since the previous inspection. Standards of attainment in information and control technology meet national expectations at Key Stage 1. They are above national expectations at Key Stage 2. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make at least satisfactory progress.
89. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand how to access programs. They use the keyboard and mouse accurately to control movements on the screen. An example of this is when pupils sequence events to 'dress Teddy' and use 'Tizzy's Toy Box' to support work in number. Pupils know how to change programs and how to close down the computer. All pupils at Key Stage 2, including those with special educational needs, show confidence in carrying out basic control operations, such as using the keyboard and mouse. They use the mouse carefully to draw, select the paintbrush to fill in, and know how to change colour. Pupils use block graphs to present and analyse collected data. They save, store and retrieve their work and print it independently. They know how to log-on, open and name a file and confidently change font, colour and style. Pupils use an accurate technical vocabulary, such as 'click', 'drag', 'font' and 'highlight'. They translate the theory of

perspective onto the computer and use the mouse accurately to control their line drawing. Pupils look at their finished work and discuss how to improve the presentation and layout. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, understand the basic methods of controlling and using information and control technology equipment. The use of information technology makes a positive contribution to pupils' literacy and numeracy skills.

90. The lack of a printer at Key Stage 1 restricts progress for these pupils. Pupils make good progress from Key Stage 1 to Key Stage 2. They make significant gains in developing their ability to control and use computers. Word processing, control and data handling skills develop well across Key Stage 2. Pupils make good progress in using their skills in information and control technology to support work in other subjects such as English and art. Pupils with special educational needs make sound progress in developing their skills such as changing and selecting fonts and scrolling down a menu.
91. Pupils are enthusiastic, interested and positive towards their work in information technology. They clearly enjoy working with computers and are eager to have a go. Pupils concentrate well on their work and have positive attitudes to their learning in information and control technology. There is a good level of co-operation between pupils and between teachers and pupils.
92. Because no lessons were observed during the inspection, it is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching at Key Stage 1. Planning for Key Stage 1 indicates that each pupil receives equal access to the curriculum that the school provides for information technology. The teachers keep records of pupils' achievements in the subject. This indicates at least satisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 is also at least satisfactory. Fifty per cent of teaching is good. Teachers place suitable emphasis on the development of pupils' skills and show a good level of confidence and expertise. Planning is careful and thorough and gives pupils an effective level of challenge. Teachers have high expectations of achievement and use questions skilfully to establish understanding before moving on to new learning.
92. **Religious education**
93. Improvement since the previous inspection is good. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils achieve standards that are above the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Discussions with pupils form the basis for judgements about attainment at Key Stage 1, as it is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching during lessons. Pupils' attainment in religious education at the end of Key Stage 1 meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. Pupils learn about special books and special places. They know that the Bible is a special book for Christians and that stories about Jesus are in the New Testament. Pupils talk confidently about the local church and recognise the significance of the cross to Christians.
94. Key Stage 2 pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and Judaism. They understand that Jesus was a Jew. In Years 3 and 4, pupils have a sound understanding of the purposes and uses of a Christian church. They recognise the main artefacts in a church, such as the font, pulpit and cross and know their functions. In Years 5 and 6, most pupils have a good knowledge of Jewish traditions. They recognise that Friday is a day of preparation for Jewish people. They understand the term 'Shabbat' and that there is a special significance in the preparation of food. All pupils know that Shabbat is a family event and is very special to Jews. They attain well in learning from the Jewish

faith. They have sound understanding of the history of Jewish leaders such as Abraham and Moses and understand their significance in the history of the Jewish people. Pupils know that the Jewish place of worship is a synagogue and relate the role of the Rabbi to that of an Anglican priest. They know that Christian churches have a special book and special artefacts. Pupils understand the significance of these to Christians. All pupils know the name for the Jews' special book, the Torah, and understand the significance of the Ark and the Tabernacle. They know the importance of the Tabernacle to the Jews during their wanderings in the wilderness. Most pupils know and identify the internal features of a synagogue. They carry out independent research to discover facts such as women having a separate place from men. They have a sound understanding of the importance of men covering their heads in the synagogue and they identify similarities and differences between a Christian church and a synagogue.

95. Pupils make good progress in developing an understanding and awareness of the similarities between religions. For example, they make significant gains in developing their understanding that all religions have special books and artefacts. They develop well their ability to understand that all religions celebrate similar events. The pupils who have special educational needs make sound progress in developing an understanding of religion. They have difficulties recording their knowledge but teachers often provide suitable work sheets for them to complete. Pupils make a significant increase in their ability to recognise the need to believe in a supreme being. Pupils increasingly understand the need to care for others as well as themselves.
96. Pupils' response to work in religious education is good. They show respect for the ideas and opinions of others and are confident in sharing their ideas. By age 11, pupils are enthusiastic and eager to put forward their own ideas. They concentrate well and ask sensible questions. Most pupils discuss feelings and emotions at a suitably mature level and co-operate well together. Pupils listen attentively and behave well in class. They relate well to teachers and to each other.
97. The teaching of religious education at Key Stage 2 is good. One lesson of the two observed was outstanding. Teachers are confident in the subject and prepare their lessons thoroughly. They give careful thought to providing a suitable atmosphere in the classroom for the teaching of religious education. Planning follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and gives suitable attention to the areas of learning in that syllabus. A suitable range of opportunities is provided for pupils to enable them to become aware of the religious element in life. Teachers encourage pupils to reflect on their own experiences and to relate them to those of other people. They are sensitive to sacred religious artefacts and insist on pupils treating them with respect and care. The school's scheme of work gives teachers clear guidance and suggestions to assist their teaching. Teachers keep sound records of the pupils' work and their attitudes towards religious education. Religious education lessons do not contribute to literacy and numeracy but speaking and listening skills are suitable promoted in lessons.

97.

97. **Other subjects or courses**

97. **Art**

98. Pupils at both key stages attain standards in art that are above expectations for their age. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils are confident in their use of art materials and, from an early age, have opportunities to appraise and improve their work. Pupils use a range of media and materials confidently. They experiment with colour to achieve different shades and tones. Pupils use natural and man-made objects as a stimulus for their work. This is evident in the pastel still life drawings they do in the Impressionist style.
99. At Key Stage 1, pupils know what primary colours are and how they form the basis of all other colours. They link their drawings with work in science. An example of this is when pupils collect and paint autumn leaves. Pupils know how to mix and apply powder paint to good effect. They experiment with different techniques and use the work of famous artists as a stimulus. Pupils observe natural objects and show a suitably high level of skill in the paintings they make.
100. At Key Stage 2, pupils correctly identify the horizon as they learn how to draw accurately in perspective. They understand the use of the vanishing point. Pupils confidently use the computer to support their work. They evaluate and change their own work in progress and discuss and evaluate each other's work. Pupils use a correct art vocabulary, such as 'horizon' and 'vanishing point'. They use work from famous artists to develop their skill. For example, pupils produce still-life drawings in the Impressionist style. Pupils use equipment and materials confidently. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of the works of famous artists and their ability to experiment with a range of media have improved significantly since the previous inspection.
101. Progress and the consolidation of skills, knowledge and understanding for most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are good. Pupils use and apply their knowledge of techniques, such as using pencils, pastels and fine brushwork, to good effect. They make good progress in developing their understanding of the properties of a range of media and materials. They show increased control when sketching and in their ability to experiment with shade. Pupils make gains in their ability to critically appraise, change and improve their work. This level of progress is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
102. Pupils' response in art is good. They show much interest in the activities and find their work in art stimulating. Pupils are enthusiastic, active and productive. They enjoy the creative element in their work and have positive attitudes to learning. Behaviour is good and pupils co-operate well together. At Key Stage 2, they demonstrate suitably mature levels of discussion and reasoning and work collaboratively when required. They take considerable pride in their own work, show interest in and respect for, that of others and enjoy talking about the practical activities. Pupils have opportunities to take responsibility and show initiative in developing and using their own ideas within the subject. They respect and value their own and each other's work.
103. The quality of teaching in art is at least satisfactory, and two thirds is good. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and are confident in their teaching.

Planning is thorough, with clear learning objectives and outcomes. Expectations of achievement are realistically high. Teachers make effective use of questions and discussion to move pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding forward. The teaching of skills is systematic and ensures pupils develop them well. The teaching about artists and their art is good. It enables pupils to develop a good awareness of a wide range and variety of art from many cultures. Teachers provide an effective balance between direct teaching of facts and opportunities for pupils to discuss and reflect on art and artists.

103. Design and technology

104. Pupils throughout the school attain standards in design and technology that are above the standards expected for their age. This is an improvement in design and technology since the previous inspection. At Key Stage 1, pupils understand the need to plan their work and apply their findings from earlier work in the planning. They discuss how to cut fruit and vegetables to make an attractive presentation. They use their previously acquired knowledge of fruit and vegetables to generate and develop their ideas. Pupils use a suitably accurate vocabulary and know how to use tools and equipment safely. At Key Stage 2, pupils build on their skills when designing and making products. An example of this is when they make an iron man to link with their work in literacy. Pupils design and make postcards, greetings cards and Indian style bags. They give clear instructions for making them. Pupils select suitable materials to make models. All pupils have suitably well-developed skills in their ability to cut, bend and glue materials. They evaluate their work as it develops and apply an effective range of problem-solving techniques. Pupils modify their designs to improve the quality of the finished product and use and handle tools correctly.
105. Pupils throughout the school, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress in their skills of designing and making. This is evident from the increasing quality of work on display around the school. Pupils make good gains in their ability to select and use materials suitable for the task. They make good progress in their ability to develop an accurate technical vocabulary. Pupils show a significant increase in their ability to use and handle tools and equipment safely and accurately.
106. Pupils take pride in their work and persevere to make quality products. They are interested in the subject, well motivated and show enthusiasm for their work. Pupils help and support each other as they work and behave well in class. They have responsible attitudes to their work. This makes a positive contribution to the good standards pupils achieve.
107. The quality of teaching in design and technology is never less than good. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection. Teachers have clear expectations of achievement and progress. They have a good knowledge and understanding of design and technology skills. Teachers plan to give all pupils, including those with special educational needs, equal access to the design and technology curriculum. They use questions skilfully to explore understanding and move learning forward. The work provides challenge that meets the needs of all abilities. It promotes effective and systematic development of skills. The planning of designs develops numeracy skills but as yet the subject does not contribute to literacy. Pupils' work reflects the good quality of the teaching.

107. **Geography**

108. Pupils' work shows that, by the end of Key Stage 1, they have a sound understanding of mapping skills. They recognise important features in Christchurch, for instance the old school. They contrast this locality with Thetford Forest. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand climatic regions. They study rainfall and have a good knowledge of the effects of rain on tidal rivers. They have a good understanding of flotation loads and experiments with river water have taught them that where the river flows slowly there is the least soil. Pupils recognise corrosion and in their studies, use their knowledge of science to discover the rate of evaporation. They use appropriate vocabulary and make good, sound progress in developing geographical skills. The work that pupils cover in geography, particularly at Key Stage 2, makes a positive contribution to numeracy. Pupils record their findings as graphs and analyse their results. Throughout the school, pupils observe weather conditions and draw simple maps. The school has sustained similar standards since the last inspection.
109. Only two lessons were observed during the three-day inspection. One at Key Stage 1 was unsatisfactory and the other at Key Stage 2 was excellent. In the unsatisfactory lesson, the teacher used good resources and tried hard to ask appropriate questions to develop the understanding of Year 1 and 2 pupils. However, the disruption from younger children who had been playing unsupervised prevented the teacher from taking time to reinforce pupils' understanding. It was clear from their responses that some had very little idea of maps and needed more explanation. In the excellent lesson at Key Stage 2, the teacher effectively managed the disruption caused by pupils arriving late to her lesson by organising mixed age groups. The older pupils in these groups recapped the work the others had missed. In this way, they quickly joined in the activity and benefited from the experience of older pupils in the class. No assessment procedures are used in this subject but annual reports include comments on topics covered.

109. **History**

110. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching. There is evidence in the lesson at Key Stage 2, displays of pupils' work, pupils' workbooks and in planning documents that work in history is of a good quality. This evidence indicates that pupils at both key stages make good progress. This reflects the findings of the previous inspection.
111. At Key Stage 1, pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of simple vocabulary related to time. They sequence events in their own lives and have a sound understanding of their place in their family time line. At Key Stage 2, pupils understand how life was different in the past and compare past events with those in their own lives, for example the life of people in ancient Greece. They join in discussions with confidence and know what constitutes a primary source of information. Pupils know about Greek myths and legends and understand their significance to ancient Greeks. They know that decoration on artefacts such as pottery gives valuable information about life in the past. Pupils use information from pottery designs to suggest the activities and pursuits people followed, and link these to present day life. For example, they look at the similarities between boxing and two men fighting with their hands.
112. Pupils' work in history makes a positive contribution to the development of their literacy skills. They use reference books confidently and accurately and know how to use the index and glossary. Pupils make good progress in developing awareness of time; place;

and of their relationship to past and current events in history. They show an increasing ability to recall and use previous knowledge and apply this to new learning. Pupils make good progress in developing their ability to carry out effective research. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in developing their understanding of life in ancient Greece.

113. Pupils show a good level of motivation to learn. They show respect and value for the ideas and opinions of others. Most pupils show a suitably mature level of thought during discussion and question sessions. They clearly enjoy their work in history and carry out independent research with confidence. Behaviour is good and pupils listen attentively with high levels of concentration. Pupils relate well to each other and the class teacher. They talk enthusiastically about their work in history.

114. The quality of teachers' planning is sound. Lessons follow the school's policy and programme of work. Planning follows the National Curriculum programmes of study. The history curriculum meets statutory requirements.

114. **Music**

115. It is not possible to make a secure judgement on the quality of music and music teaching in the school. During the course of the inspection, the only music teaching was in the whole school singing session. In singing, pupils achieve standards similar to those expected of pupils of this age. This represents maintenance of standards since the previous inspection. The school teaches the full curriculum in music. The school covers all elements of the National Curriculum and provides satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' progress in music. It places importance on all pupils joining in singing and pupils sing with clear diction.

116. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their singing skills. This begins in the reception class and continues as pupils move through Key Stage 2. They build on their skills of performing, particularly their singing skills and work hard to improve their diction. There is, however, no evidence of progress in pupils' ability to listen to and appraise music.

117. Pupils enjoy singing. They show respect for the efforts of others and respond well to their teachers. Pupils are eager and enthusiastic. They concentrate well and persevere to improve their performance. Pupils co-operate well together, listen attentively and follow instructions accurately. Pupils of all abilities have opportunities to consolidate their skills in, and understanding of, music.

118. There is insufficient evidence to make a secure judgement on the quality of teaching in music. Teachers' planning indicates coverage of all strands of the music curriculum. This meets the requirements of the National Curriculum for music. There is equality of opportunity and access to the whole music curriculum for all pupils including those with special educational needs.

118. **Physical education**

119. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils have good body control and use the available space well. Most work safely and sensibly, although a few boys get over-excited on occasions. Most pupils respond well in movement and when linking movements. By the end of Key Stage 1, they have made satisfactory progress and even those with special educational needs attain in line with the expectations for the end of Year 2. At Key Stage 2, pupils make very good progress in developing games skills that are practised and perfected in after-school clubs. They develop skilful throwing and catching, and apply these in games of five-a-side football, netball and rounders. In Years 3 and 4, pupils develop and refine their gymnastic skills. They practise sequences of movements, varying in pace, height and direction. They attain in line with the expectations for the end of year 6 and the most athletic attain standards which are above average.
120. The quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 2. At Key Stage 1, only one lesson was seen which was unsatisfactory partly due to the echo in the hall which prevented pupils from hearing the taped movement lesson. In this lesson, pupils made little progress and there was no specific support for the youngest children who are under five. At Key Stage 2, the teaching of games' skills is good. Teachers have a good knowledge and they are enthusiastic. They voluntarily give up their time after school to provide football coaching. At this key stage there is a good standard of teaching in dance and gymnastics and these are also practised in after-school clubs. Progress in these areas is good. Throughout the school, teachers are well aware of placing correct emphasis on safety, and pupils are encouraged to dress appropriately for their lessons. Some teachers make effective use of demonstration to influence the quality of performance. All teachers recognise the importance of appropriate warm-up activities.
121. The range of additional opportunities to play sports against other schools is a strength. The enthusiasm of the teaching staff in supporting and helping with these activities greatly benefits the pupils and helps to raise the profile of the school within the local community.

121. **Swimming**

122. The school considers it to be most important for its pupils to be able to cope in an accidental fall into deep water. As part of the physical education programme and, depending on weather conditions, all pupils regularly use the on-site school swimming pool during the summer term. By the end of Year 6, most attain the required standard and swim 25 metres.
123. There are appropriate facilities for pupils to change their clothes. Boys' and girls' changing huts are arranged as single sex communal buildings. The pool is an appropriate depth at 0.75 of a metre and the school provides suitable supervision. The school's swimming pool was funded by parents some years ago and they see it as an asset. Maintenance costs are met by the school's budget. Parents assist with swimming lessons and they and the teaching staff who supervise the pupils have undertaken appropriate life-saving courses.
124. Pupils have regular swimming sessions and even those children who are still under five benefit from this opportunity. The school's year groups vary in size making it difficult to compare year groups. In 1998, only 65 per cent of school leavers in Year 6 could swim the 25 metre requirement. This year group included several pupils with behavioural difficulties that meant they were excluded from lessons and this may be the reason that

few met the requirements. In 1999, the results were better with 88 per cent attaining 25 metres. By the end of this academic year, the school expects most Year 6 pupils to be reasonably confident in water and to swim 25 metres.

124. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

124. **Summary of inspection evidence**

125. The inspection was carried out by two inspectors for three days; they were joined by the lay inspector who was in school for two days. Thirty five lessons or parts of lessons were observed, amounting to almost 19 hours of observation. A further 15 hours were spent attending school assemblies, holding discussions with the chair and other members of the governing body, the acting headteacher, curriculum co-ordinators and parents. The written work of a representative sample of pupils was scrutinised during the week and three pupils from each year group were heard to read. Ten parents attended a meeting to discuss the work of the school, and 15 responses were received and collated from the questionnaire sent to all parents. A range of school documentation was scrutinised before the inspection.

125. DATA AND INDICATORS

125. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR - Y6	67	3	23	9

125. Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher:	22

125. Education support staff (YR - Y6)

Total number of education support staff:	5
Total aggregate hours worked each week:	64

125.

Average class size:	22
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125.

Financial data

Financial year:	1999
Total Income	166,927
Total Expenditure	163,851
Expenditure per pupil	2,643
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,076
Balance carried forward to next year	11,091

125. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 60

Number of questionnaires returned: 15

125. Responses (percentage of answers in each category):

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I feel the school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school	13	73	14	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	40	53	0	7	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	7	40	46	7	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	7	40	33	20	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	7	40	26	27	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	20	53	27	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	27	67	6	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	20	33	27	20	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	27	47	20	6	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	20	60	20	0	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	47	47	6	0	0

125. Other issues raised by parents

- Recent improvements have been noted and parents feel optimistic that standards are being raised.
- Parents welcome the after-school activities which have been recently extended.
- Parents are pleased that the teachers (including the acting headteacher) wait outside the school to greet pupils.