

INSPECTION REPORT

Forest Community Primary School
Brandon

LEA area : Suffolk

Unique Reference Number : 124532

Inspection Number : 184140

Headteacher : Mrs E Milner

Reporting inspector : Mrs M Costello

OFSTED Inspector Number : 18482

Dates of inspection : 4 - 7 October 1999

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	First
Type of control :	County
Age range of pupils :	4 - 9
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Market Hill Brandon Suffolk IP27 0AD
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Appropriate authority :	The governing body Address as above
Name of chair of governors :	Mrs S Chichon
Date of previous inspection :	23 - 26 January 1995

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mrs M Costello, Registered Inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management The efficiency of the school
Mr R Kitson, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Equal opportunities
Ms E Taylor	English Design and technology	The curriculum and assessment Special educational needs Under fives
Mr J Fox	Science Religious education Art	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Mrs S Ditchburn	Information technology History Geography	

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The Office for Standards in Education

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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- 92% of teaching was satisfactory and 49% was good in the lessons observed.
- Teachers frequently check children's knowledge and understanding and adapt what they are teaching to suit the children's needs.
- The children have a positive attitude to work, behave well and get on well with each other.
- The support, guidance and care for children's welfare is good.
- The development of information technology is good and standards are good at the end of Year 4.
- The provision for the children's moral and social development is good.
- The school's strategies to deliver the literacy hour are good and have had a positive impact on standards in reading.
- The headteacher provides good, clear leadership and is ably supported by the deputy.
- Learning support staff are deployed effectively and make a good contribution to the children's learning.
- Financial control and school administration are good.

Where the school has weaknesses

There are too few opportunities for children to use their writing skills for a range of purposes.

- I. More able children are not attaining high enough standards in mathematics and science.
- II. The progress children make in history and geography is unsatisfactory. The school's provision for these subjects is unsatisfactory.
- III. The management of the behaviour of a small group of very disruptive children is ineffective.
- IV. The quality of information received by parents is unsatisfactory.
- V. In some lessons time is wasted and suitable resources are not ready nor used.
- VI. The accommodation is poor. It impedes the effective delivery of the curriculum and has a negative impact on learning and the health and safety of children and staff.

The school's strengths outweigh its weaknesses. The Forest is an improving school.

The Governors' action plan will set out how the weaknesses identified during the Inspection are to be tackled. The plan will be sent to all parents or guardians of children at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has improved considerably since the last inspection. Standards have improved in reading, speaking and listening, writing, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, information technology and religious education. Children's writing needs further development. More able children should be achieving higher standards. History and geography have not improved sufficiently. There has been a very significant improvement in the quality of teaching. The behaviour of the children is better overall but there remains a hard-core of very difficult children who are not responding positively to the good behaviour management programme. Attendance has improved and procedures in place have a positive effect. The curriculum now has an effective framework and planning has a whole-school format which is particularly good in English and mathematics. Recording and assessment have improved and this is used well to adapt work to meet the needs of the children. There is a clear, long-term strategic plan for the development of the school. The accommodation has been much improved but it is still poor with many health and safety issues that impede the teaching and learning. Resources are now adequate. Cost effectiveness is clearly considered. The school has successfully implemented the literacy strategy. The school has set its own targets for each year group to raise standards. The school is in a sound position to improve further.

• **Standards in subjects**

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key	
			<i>well above average</i>	A
			<i>above average</i>	B
			<i>average</i>	C
			<i>below average</i>	
			<i>well below average</i>	E
Reading	E	E*		
Writing	E	E		
Mathematics	E	E*		

A significant number of children (60%) in the year group tested have special educational needs and some have serious behaviour problems. This has had a marked effect on the standards achieved. Standards have been rising in reading, writing, mathematics and science since the previous inspection. During the inspection most children, in both key stages, were reading in line with the national expectation and writing was in line but in a limited range. Evidence from the inspection, in lessons, discussions with children and their recorded work, shows that in mathematics most children are attaining the expected level and some more able children are exceeding it. The 1999 teacher assessments show a significant improvement in science, with 98% of children achieving the expected level and inspection evidence confirms that it is being sustained. However, too few children attain the higher level. Standards in information technology are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and good at Year 4. In religious education standards are in line with the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus at Years 2 and 4. Children who are under five meet the expectations for their age in all areas of learning except language and literacy.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 9 years
English	Good	good	satisfactory
Mathematics	Good	good	satisfactory
Science	N / A	good	good
Information technology	N / A	insufficient evidence	insufficient evidence
Religious education	Insufficient evidence	satisfactory	satisfactory
Other subjects	Satisfactory	satisfactory	satisfactory

92% of teaching is satisfactory or better. In 49% of lessons teaching is good or very good. 8% of teaching is unsatisfactory, i.e. in 5 lessons out of 63 observed. Good teaching was seen in every class in the school. Good teaching was seen in all subjects except design and technology and geography.

All teaching observed in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science was satisfactory or better. There is a higher proportion of good teaching in the Early Years and Key Stage 1 classes than in Key Stage 2.

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	Generally good and a big improvement since the last inspection. A small number of boys in Key Stage 2 have serious behaviour problems.
Attendance	Satisfactory.
Ethos*	Overall children have positive attitudes to work and relationships are good.
Leadership and management	Good clear leadership and is ably supported by the deputy. The governors give enthusiastic and committed support.
Curriculum	Satisfactory.
Pupils with special educational needs	Make progress when supported by additional adults.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Moral and social development is good. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good staff. Resources are adequate. Accommodation imposes severe constraints and has a negative impact on the quality of education.
Value for money	Satisfactory.

* *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	What some parents are not happy about
<p>VII. The school encourages parents to play an active part in the life of the school.</p> <p>VIII. It is easy to approach the school with questions or problems.</p> <p>IX. Good standards of work are achieved.</p> <p>X. They agree that behaviour is much better.</p> <p>XI. Their children like school.</p>	<p>XII. They would like more information being in school.</p> <p>XIII. They are unclear about homework.</p> <p>XIV. They are unhappy about some</p> <p>XV. They are concerned that time is short and the hall is too small.</p>

The inspectors confirm the parents' positive views except that at present standards of work rarely reach good levels. The inspectors agree that the school should improve the information it provides for parents and that the behaviour of a small group of children is a cause for concern. Generally homework is satisfactory but the school should provide clear guidelines for parents. The inspectors agreed with the parents' views regarding accommodation.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To raise further the standards of children's attainment and the quality of the school's provision the governors, headteacher and staff should:

i) raise standards in English, particularly writing*, for all children including the high attainers by: (paragraph numbers 7, 12, 119 and 121 refer)

- XVI. planning for compositional writing on a weekly basis;
- XVII. identifying opportunities across the curriculum to use and practise different genres;
- XVIII. developing further opportunities for emergent writing;
- XIX. identifying criteria for progression in writing, including the under fives;
- XX. developing the teachers' understanding and expectations of the National Curriculum levels by moderation between all staff and with other schools.

ii) raise standards in mathematics and science for high attainers by: (paragraph numbers 132, 135, 141 and 146 refer)

- XXI. providing more planned opportunities for problem solving in mathematics*;
- XXII. providing more planned opportunities for investigative/experimental science.

iii) improve progress in history and geography by: (paragraph numbers 163 and 168 refer)

- XXIII. developing teachers' subject knowledge;
- XXIV. planning a coherent and appropriate programme for the children's age and abilities;
- XXV. making better use of existing resources.

iv) improve the use of time and resources for learning by: (paragraph numbers 48 and 100 refer)

- XXVI. reviewing the existing time allocations on timetables to ensure that the high priority given to literacy and numeracy does not exceed the guidelines;
- XXVII. implementing consistently the time agreed on subject policies;
- XXVIII. ensuring that learning resources are readily available for lessons.

v) improve the behaviour management of the small group of disruptive boys by: (paragraph numbers 24, 27, 40, 165, 182 and 183 refer)

- XXIX. consistently implementing the School Behaviour Policy;
- XXX. improving the pace in lessons;
- XXXI. providing clear guidance for teachers and learning support assistants on individual education plans with specific targets in relation to behaviour;
- XXXII. regular monitoring of the progress towards the achievement of the targets.

vi) improve the quality of information to parents by: (paragraph numbers 73, 74, 75 and 78 refer)

- XXXIII. ensuring that the Governors' Annual Report is more detailed and informative;
- XXXIV. ensuring that newsletters are more frequent and that dates of meetings and events are notified sufficiently in advance;
- XXXV. ensuring that pupils' reports provide clear information about individual children's attainment and progress and how they can improve.

vii) The governors and local education authority should urgently address the inadequacy of the accommodation and its negative impact on children's learning. (paragraph number 93 refers)

* (the school has already identified these as areas for development)

Points identified for action in the report have been incorporated into the Key Issues.

· **INTRODUCTION**

· **Characteristics of the school**

1.The Forest Community School is an average size first school serving the small country town of Brandon on the edge of Thetford Forest for children aged four to nine years. There are 190 full-time pupils on roll and 48 part-time pupils. Children who are under five usually attend the Nursery part-time for two terms and join the Reception class full-time in the term they will be five. Many children attend playgroups before joining the Nursery. Most of the children live on two council estates and in some local private housing. About 10% of the children come from American families who work at the local air bases. A significant number of pupils are in one-parent families. There are 65 children on the special educational needs register. There is currently one child who has a statement of special educational needs. Some children have serious behaviour problems which hinder learning. The percentage of children entitled to free school meals is about average. Overall the children's range of attainment on entry to the Nursery is slightly below average.

2.The school's main aims and priorities are :

Overall vision:

- to foster a happy, caring, positive ethos within the school
- to promote high educational standards; encouraging all to fulfil their potential

Priorities:

- to develop the role of the curriculum co-ordinator
- to develop assessment strategies
- to develop writing throughout the school
- to implement the numeracy strategy
- to continue to develop the literacy hour
- to continue to develop positive behaviour throughout the school
- to continue to develop information and communications technology (ICT)
- to implement the Forest School Millennium Project
- to install smoke alarms.

3. Key indicators

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	23	18	41

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	14	14	15
	Girls	12	15	13
	Total	26	29	28
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	63 (62)	71 (68)	68 (78)
	National	82 (77)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	14	17	23
	Girls	15	15	17
	Total	29	32	40
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	71 (70)	78 (74)	98 (80)
	National	N/A (81)	N/A (85)	N/A (85)

Attendance

Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year : 1999

		%
Authorised Absence	School	6.2
	National comparative data	N/A
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.8
	National comparative data	N/A

Exclusions

Number of exclusions of pupils (of statutory school age) during the previous year :1998-99

	Number
Fixed period	9
Permanent	3

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	14.3
Satisfactory or better	92
Less than satisfactory	8

3. PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

3. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

3. Attainment and progress

1. By the time they are five children are likely to achieve the desirable outcomes in mathematics, their creative and physical development and in the knowledge and understanding of the world. In their personal and social development many children are likely to exceed the desirable outcomes. In language and literacy a significant number of children are unlikely to achieve desirable outcomes because writing skills are underdeveloped and vocabulary is limited.

2. Children are confident to offer their ideas during class discussions. They sustain their interest for suitable lengths of time in a range of activities. They co-operate well with adults and each other and share toys and equipment without fussing. They recite numerous nursery rhymes as a group and listen to stories with interest and pleasure. Children in Reception can recognise some keywords and use initial sounds to work out unknown words. Nursery children can count to ten as a group and some children in Reception can count to 15 or 20 accurately. They can order by size. They express their ideas through drawings, paintings, construction kits and role play.

3. Since the previous inspection there has been a considerable improvement in the number of children who achieve the expected levels in English, mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 4.

4. Attainment in English is at the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 for the majority of children and this is an improvement since the last inspection. The school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been effective with positive results on children's attainment in reading. This has not yet had a similar effect on writing as this is the next area of focus. During the inspection most children in both key stages read in line with the national expectation. Writing is in line with the national expectation for some children in a limited range of genre. These standards are not reflected in the previous two years National Curriculum tests because the cohorts of children who have recently been assessed have a significant number of children with special educational needs.

5. Speaking and listening skills are good when teachers' expectations are high. In Key Stage 1 in their speech children sometimes use incorrect grammar, for example 'him writed on there'. Throughout the school children use subject specific language that has been taught but their vocabulary is generally limited. In Key Stage 2 children express their thoughts and ideas confidently. Opportunities for children to develop speaking and listening skills across the curriculum are often missed.

6. By the end of Year 2, children read fluently with expression, are aware of the differences between fiction and non-fiction and locate information effectively. By the end of Year 4, many children are reading texts with complex sentences fluently and accurately. They make inferences and deductions and talk confidently about their preferences in reading and give valid reasons for their points of view. Children use their reading skills satisfactorily in other subjects of the curriculum.

7. By the end of Key Stage 1 children write simple sentences, linking their ideas and use capital letters and full stops correctly. They spell common words correctly and attempt to spell unknown words phonetically. By the end of Year 4 there are limited examples of the children composing their own writing for different purposes, although there are exercises where they have practised the skills. There are some examples of letters of complaint which attempt formal language and some reports use a suitable style and engage the reader's interest. Opportunities for children to use different forms of writing in other areas of the curriculum are not capitalised on.

8. In the children's handwriting books the quality of handwriting is good but this quality is not equalled when children write in other subjects.

9. In lessons, in reading, speaking and listening, children make good progress in Key Stage 1 and satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2. Over time, Key Stage 1 children gradually increase their letter and keyword knowledge which they use to understand the text. The range of strategies increases to include self-correction and context cues. In Key Stage 2 this is developed further to include the skills of inference and deduction. Progress in reading, particularly for the more able, is hampered by the range of fiction being limited to scheme readers. Progress in independent and compositional writing is hindered by the lack of opportunities.

10. In mathematics, the majority of children achieve the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. A few children exceed this and achieve the higher level. In lessons, and in the recorded work that was scrutinised, children were achieving better than the end of key stage National Curriculum results show. These tests are affected by the large number of children (60%) with special educational needs and particularly by the group of boys with serious behaviour difficulties. Despite the improvement since the previous inspection the school's results are well below the average when they are compared to other schools nationally and to similar schools.

11. By the end of Year 2 children have a sound understanding of number and can add and subtract to 20, with some children able to do this mentally. Some children can add larger numbers but are less sure of subtraction. They have a satisfactory knowledge and understanding of shape, length, weight and time. By the end of Year 4 most children are adding and subtracting large numbers and understand multiplication and division. Their skills in applying the number rules in problem solving and investigations are limited. They show a good understanding of data handling. Satisfactory progress is made by the majority of children as they move through the school but high attaining children are not always suitably challenged, particularly in the opportunities provided to solve mathematical problems.

12. Children make satisfactory use of their mathematical skills in other areas of the curriculum such as science and design and technology.

13. In science, by the end of Key Stage 1, children's attainment is in line with the national average. In 1998, attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was below the national average and well below standards attained in similar schools. The 1999 teacher assessments show a significant improvement, with 98% of children attaining the target level 2. Only 2% of children achieved the higher level 3, which is well below the national average. Evidence from the inspection shows that this improvement is being maintained. By the end of Year 4 children's attainment is in line with the national expectation, but higher attaining children do not reach high enough standards especially in investigative work. Children make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 2 children have a satisfactory understanding of the processes of life, materials and their properties and physical processes. They do less well in experimental science. Progress continues to be satisfactory in most aspects of science in Key Stage 2 but there are too few opportunities for children to develop their own ideas into a form which can be investigated or draw conclusion from experiments.

14. In information technology (IT), standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Year 4. At Key Stage 1 progress is satisfactory and at Key Stage 2 progress is good, particularly in word-processing skills and the use of the National Grid for Learning. This is a very significant improvement since the previous inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, children use a keyboard, mouse and printer. They use word-processing skills to write simple sentences and re-draft when appropriate. They use IT to compile data and simple graphics packages. Some children can use LOGO and write instructions to form a square and rectangle. By the end of Year 4, children use a wide variety of word-processing skills and also use 'Encarta' for research. They can enhance their work by using the graphics package and use Excel to compile, for example, pie charts. Some children use e-mail and access the Internet under the direction of the headteacher.

15. In religious education, standards have improved since the last inspection and are broadly in line with the expectations of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 4. Children make satisfactory progress throughout the school. By the end of Key Stage 1 children reflect on personal feelings and link aspects of friendship and caring with Bible stories. They understand the groups to

which they belong and have some knowledge of Christian and Jewish traditions, symbols and artefacts. They know the Christmas and Easter stories. By the end of Year 4, children can describe milestones in their own lives and know about the Christian milestones such as baptism, confirmation and marriage. They describe the customs and stories associated with Hindu and Muslim faith communities.

16. In other subjects of the curriculum, children's attainment at both key stages is in line with what is expected for their age, except in history and geography. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement in physical education and music.

17. In art, the school has improved standards since the previous inspection. Overall children are making satisfactory progress in developing their artistic skills and knowledge and understanding during Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4.

18. In design and technology, standards have improved since the previous inspection. Children make satisfactory progress as they move through the school using an increasing range of materials and joining techniques.

19. In history the progress of children at both Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 is unsatisfactory. Children at Key Stage 1 have difficulty separating fact from fiction. They have not developed a sense of chronology. At Key Stage 2, children have little recall of the Roman period and mix up Tudors and Vikings. In Year 4, there is some good work but many children are underachieving.

20. In geography, progress at both Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4 is unsatisfactory. In discussions with children in Year 2 and Year 4 their recall was limited and inaccurate. Some stereotypical views were in evidence in discussion and in the children's work.

21. Most children on the special educational needs register attain appropriately for their abilities. The exception to this are the children who exhibit behavioural difficulties. During lessons children make good progress when they work in small groups supported by classroom assistants. When children with behaviour difficulties are unsupported they make unsatisfactory progress and sometimes hinder the progress of other children.

24. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

22. Overall children's attitudes and behaviour have improved significantly since the last inspection. Last year there were twelve exclusions which involved five children. At the parents' meeting, all parents agreed that behaviour was now much better in the school. This was confirmed by the inspectors during the inspection. There are, however, still unsatisfactory attitudes and behaviour in a small number of lessons in Key Stage 2.

23. Children in the Nursery and Reception have very good attitudes to learning. They are quickly becoming familiar with class routines, are able to exercise choice and are beginning to develop some independence in their learning. They work and play well together and have positive relationships with each other and with adults. They are very well behaved most of the time. They are confident to offer their ideas during class discussion.

24. In Key Stage 1 the children's attitudes to learning are usually good or very good. They listen well to instructions and generally have a purposeful and enthusiastic approach to their learning. In Key Stage 2 the vast majority of children display satisfactory levels of concentration and motivation. They co-operate well when required and generally complete tasks on time. Children with special educational needs are integrated into classes and work well alongside other children in groups. Teachers are beginning to adopt a structured approach to behaviour management using assertive discipline plans which have positive rewards and clearly defined sanctions. However, despite these efforts, there is a small hard core of boys in Years 3 and 4 who show poor concentration and motivation and persistently disrupt lessons. This is key issue for action. Children with behaviour difficulties, particularly in Key Stage 2, find it difficult to concentrate or apply themselves to tasks and they disrupt the learning of other children. They are slow to settle down and do not always follow instructions. These low level

disruptions have a detrimental effect on some lessons. Some teachers give over long introductions to some lessons, with children sitting too long on the carpet, which results in a lack of pace and some children become excessively fidgety; they lose concentration and are disruptive.

25.Children move around the school in an orderly manner. They enter assemblies quietly and sensibly. They show respect for property and behave responsibly in the dining hall. Behaviour in the playground is good, apart from a few incidents of boisterous or rough behaviour during 'playfights'.

26.Relationships are good between all members of the school community. Children show respect for each other's feelings, values and beliefs. They are very supportive of each other. In lessons they co-operate well together, for example when they share resources.

27.The picture is similarly positive in other aspects of children's personal development. There are opportunities for children to take responsibility in their classes and in the wider school community. For example, children are responsible for many routine organisational tasks such as collecting dinner registers and tidying up at the end of a lesson. Older children act as 'buddies' for new children and Year 4 children do 'paired reading' work with the Nursery children. Children carry out their responsibilities sensibly and conscientiously. Opportunities to collaborate on joint tasks are limited.

30. **Attendance**

28.Overall attendance rates are satisfactory, although they are slightly below the national average for primary schools,. The rate of unauthorised absences is low.

29.Most children arrive at school on time and lessons start promptly.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

32. **Teaching**

30.The quality of teaching is satisfactory or better in 92% of lessons. Teaching is good in almost a half of the lessons observed (49%). In 8% of lessons teaching is unsatisfactory and this amounts to 5 lessons out of a total of 63. There has been a very good improvement in the quality of teaching since the previous inspection. Then a significant proportion of the teaching was unsatisfactory and most of the teaching was at a satisfactory level.

31.Good teaching was seen in every class in the school and in each subject, except for design and technology and geography.

32.All the teaching for children who are under five is at least satisfactory in the Nursery and the Reception class. Teaching is most often good or very good. This results in children often making good progress in lessons. In the best lessons the teacher has a very good understanding of how young children learn and activities are well matched to their interest and abilities. When teaching is good children are actively involved throughout the lesson and different abilities are challenged. Good use is made of opportunities to reinforce basic skills and knowledge and effective questioning ascertains children's understanding. Lessons have a structure which enables children to demonstrate good progress when the learning objective is revisited during the plenary. Children's behaviour is managed calmly and effectively with regular praise being given for following instructions. Sometimes the activities in the Nursery are inappropriate for the age of the children and lack a clear focus. Opportunities for children to engage in independent writing are lacking. Interventions to support language development and extend the chosen activities are limited.

33.In Key Stage 1 96% of the teaching is satisfactory or better. Children make good progress in a third of lessons as a result of very good and good teaching. In Key Stage 2 teaching is satisfactory or better in 81% of lessons. There was no very good teaching seen in Key Stage 2.

34.In the core subjects of English, mathematics and science more than half of the teaching is good and

the remainder is satisfactory. In Key Stage 1, the teaching in English has a high proportion of good teaching. This high proportion of good and very good teaching is reflected in the good progress children are making at Key Stage 1 in reading and speaking and listening. In Key Stage 2 teaching in English is mainly satisfactory. All teachers are successfully implementing the literacy hour. This is already having an impact on children's attainment in reading.

35. In mathematics, the majority of teaching is satisfactory. All teachers are satisfactorily implementing the key elements of the National Numeracy Strategy. In science the quality of teaching is mainly good. There is good teaching in both key stages. The rise in the number of children attaining the expected level is a result of good teaching.

36. The strong features in the very good teaching were very good planning with very clear learning objectives, for example in English, mathematics and science, which were shared with the children. Questioning effectively ascertained what children knew and understood and also challenged their thinking. Very good activities were chosen to meet the children's ability level and interests and kept them motivated. There was very good management of children's behaviour. Subject knowledge was secure and explanations and demonstrations were very clear, for example in a mathematics lesson when the teacher wanted children to measure using metre sticks.

37. The commonest features in unsatisfactory teaching were: a lack of subject knowledge in religious education and design and technology; in geography the planning was scant and the learning objective was not specific; the management of children's behaviour was ineffective and affected the pace and progress of the lesson; it became fragmented when the teachers stopped frequently to confront children who were behaving inappropriately; resources were not readily available.

38. Secure subject knowledge was apparent in English, mathematics and science. There was often a good recap on the previous learning. In English and mathematics learning objectives were specific. Teachers used the correct terminology especially in English, mathematics, science and design and technology. There were many instances when teachers, after checking children's knowledge and understanding, adapted what they were teaching to suit the children's needs. The positive management of children's behaviour was a strong feature in many of the good and satisfactory lessons.

39. A common weakness in otherwise satisfactory or good lessons was a lack of opportunity for children to be interactive, or insufficient pace and challenge for high attaining children.

40. The classroom assistants and the additional teacher provide good support for children with special educational needs. Teachers employ positive behaviour management strategies which are effective with the majority of children.

43. The curriculum and assessment

41. The school provides a broad curriculum that includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, with an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. In most subjects it is balanced and relevant to the children.

42. Policy statements for sex and drug education clearly identify what is to be covered in each year group and how this is to be taught within the existing curriculum.

43. The school now has a developing curriculum framework to support teachers to deliver the National Curriculum which is an improvement since the last inspection.

44. The quality of planning throughout the school is satisfactory. The curriculum for under fives is organised into areas of learning and identifies what is to be covered each half term. Relevant recognition has been given to Desirable Outcomes, National Literacy Strategy, National Numeracy Strategy and the National Curriculum. In Key Stages 1 and 2 long-term plans identify broad areas for all subjects each half term. The coverage in history and geography in Key Stage 2 is blocked on a two-year cycle to ensure there is not repetition in mixed year classes. However this results in quite

considerable time lapses between blocks of history and geography and a certain lack of continuity.

45. Medium-term plans for literacy and numeracy are thorough and sufficiently detailed to enable children to make progress, except in writing. Medium-term plans for other subjects lack this detail and the time allocations to subjects does not match the units of work planned. This is a point for action.

46. Short-term plans are mainly good and have a positive effect on teaching and learning. Focused learning objectives and differentiated activities enable most children to make sound or good progress in the majority of lessons. Short-term plans include the identification of relevant activities for lower attaining children and also those children who have special educational needs. Where appropriate these are two separate activities. The targets set in some Individual Educational Plans do not relate specifically to the concerns that have been identified. For example, some identify behaviour as a concern but targets relate to recognition of keywords.

47. Timetables are not efficiently used to allocate appropriate amounts of time to different subjects. Some literacy and numeracy lessons are extended when children need to change and refocus their attention.

48. Appropriate amounts of homework are regularly set for children throughout the school.

49. The school provides adequate extra-curricular activities which include games, environmental and French clubs during the lunchbreaks.

50. During most lessons assessment of children's knowledge, understanding and skills is good. Achievements are verbally recognised and misunderstandings are clarified. Marking of written work often includes positive comments about effort to encourage children. Some marking provides children with positive written feedback and also constructive suggestions about how to improve. The policy for marking clearly states this as a requirement. However, it is not consistently employed by all teachers. Marking of written work often includes positive comments about effort to encourage children.

51. Assessments of literacy and numeracy skills are regularly carried out and the information is used to plan suitable work or to organise children into appropriate groups. Additional support is provided for children who make slow progress, for example with keyword recognition. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. When work is assessed against National Curriculum levels for subject portfolios the results are unreliable and inconsistent. This is a point for action.

52. The school fulfils its statutory requirements in relation to baseline assessment and the testing of children at the end of Key Stage 1.

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

53. The school's spiritual, moral, social and cultural provision has improved since the last inspection. The provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory and for moral and social development it is good. The provision for children who are under five in Nursery and Reception is good.

54. Children's spiritual development is fostered particularly in religious education and incidentally in other curriculum subjects. Spiritual aspects are explored in religious education, when children have opportunities to consider the meaning of stories and discuss personal qualities. These aspects are also evident in assemblies. A good example of this was the Key Stage 2 assembly on the Diwali Festival where some children were able to relate the symbol of light to their own lives. Collective worship meets the statutory requirements. Assemblies usually include an appropriate story, a hymn and a prayer. However, children often have insufficient opportunities to reflect on what has been said and some assemblies lack a sense of occasion. Other subjects make a smaller contribution. Art makes a contribution to children's self-expression. In a Year 2 poetry lesson when learning the poem 'Why?' one child evaluating the experience said she had closed her eyes and seen pictures of "bending rainbows and deep caves" in her head. There are however few planned opportunities in other

subjects to foster children's spiritual development.

55.The school's provision for the children's moral development is good. The school's behaviour policy gives clear guidelines about the school's expectations. The "Golden Rules" are displayed in prominent places around the school. There are very clear guidelines for promoting and rewarding good behaviour. At the weekly commendation assembly children receive rewards for behavioural achievement. There is also a thirty minutes per week earmarked for "Golden Time" when children can choose from a range of activities provided by the teachers. At the Parents' Meeting, parents praised the introduction of "Golden Time". Sanctions are also clearly defined to deal with "unacceptable" behaviour. The youngest children are taught to take responsibility for their actions. Religious education and personal and social education focus on the principles which distinguish right from wrong.

56.The school provides good opportunities for the social development of the children. Children are taught to be polite and to respect each other. There are good relationships between the children and the adults in the school. There are a number of opportunities for children to become monitors and to take on responsibility. For example children in Key Stage 2 read in the Nursery and there is a "buddy system" to induct new children into the school. Children's positive responses are recognised and further encouraged through awards given at the weekly commendation assembly. Co-operative work in lessons promotes sharing and mutual respect. Although there are some examples in lessons where children are required to collaborate, this is relatively uncommon. To help children appreciate the plight of less fortunate people the school has encouraged support for a number of charities such as Aid for Kosovo.

57.The school's provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Some aspects of art, music, geography, religious education and English help develop children's knowledge and experience of their own and other cultures. In geography children compare life in the local area with Chembokali, an Indian village. An unexpected outcome of this study results in some children making stereotypical responses to Indian culture.

58.Children participate in the Pyramid Arts Festivals and in the local community Arts Festival. The school hosts an annual book week. There is a small collection of multicultural artefacts. These are supplemented by items borrowed from the Professional Development Centre.

61. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

59.The school buildings are spread across a large town centre site and are shared with other users. This makes security difficult. However, the staff does its best to provide a safe and caring environment for the children. They are well supervised whilst playing in the school grounds and the mid-day supervisors, who know the children well, carry out their role in a firm but caring way.

60.Class teachers have the responsibility for monitoring academic and personal development. There are appropriate systems in place, which chart the progress of children. The teachers carry out this role effectively and efficiently. Meetings are held when parents can discuss their children's progress with their teachers. Teachers are available at the start and finish of the school day when parents can discuss any concerns they may have about their child's personal or academic development. Parents do find the staff easy to approach and they make full use of these formal and informal contacts.

61.The school gives good support to children with special educational needs. The school is also well supported by the specialist services provided by the local education authority. Children with behaviour difficulties have insufficient adult support in order to allow them to make satisfactory progress themselves and to allow other children to make progress at a better pace.

62.Very good effective procedures are in place for monitoring and promoting attendance. The registration of children is diligently carried out and attendance registers are maintained in accordance with legal requirements. The deputy headteacher and educational welfare officer examine the registers on a regular basis and follow up unexplained absenteeism. Whilst some children do arrive late to school, overall, this is not a problem. The school maintains a late arrival register and letters are sent to

parents if children are persistently late, urging them to take remedial action. The relationship with the educational welfare officer is extremely good. She visits the school on a weekly basis and gives support promoting attendance and with social matters affecting the children and their families.

63.The school has recently revised its policy on behaviour, copies of which have been given to all parents. The policy sets out well-founded aims and objectives and details procedures for rewarding good behaviour as well as sanctions that can be taken to reduce or minimise poor behaviour. If a child persistently misbehaves parents are informed and the problem is discussed with them. Class teachers also send letters to parents advising them when children have achieved merit marks or a high standard of work or have behaved very well. The last session in the week is referred to as 'Golden Time' when children can chose from a range of activities as a reward for good behaviour. If children misbehave they lose some of this recreational time. Parents feel that this time makes a positive contribution to improving attitudes and behaviour and is valued by the children. At lunchtime the supervisory staff award good behaviour slips and special invitations to those children who behave well, entitling them to sit on a special table with the headteacher.

64.The school has a comprehensive health and safety policy, which sets out procedures to be followed in order to protect children, staff and visitors. It covers such matters as supervision of pupils, fire and emergency procedures. Established first-aid arrangements are in place and a number of staff are trained in first aid and shallow water swimming instruction. Training has also been given to the staff on personal safety in school. Teachers have intruder alarms in their classrooms and most rooms have access to a buzzer or nearby telephone access. This provision is necessary because of the isolated position of some of the classrooms and the need to summon assistance in an emergency. Visitors to the school must sign the visitors' book went entering and leaving the school and all external doors to the various classrooms and buildings are kept locked during school hours. Overall, the school's security arrangements are satisfactory, taking into account that public access is fairly easy and the wide spread nature of the building and the site.

65.The headteacher and caretaker carry out a formal health and safety inspection of the school each month and the governors' working group also carries out similar inspections at regular intervals.

66.There is a written policy on child protection that is well known by all members of the staff. The headteacher is the named person and a second member of staff is designated to deputise in her absence.

67.The school gives good support to the children, which is acknowledged by the parents.

70. **Partnership with parents and the community**

68.The school is reasonably successful in promoting a meaningful partnership with parents, governors and the local community.

69.The school encourages and is successful in getting parents to help in school and a number assist in class and on school visits on a regular basis. Helpful written advice is given to parents and other helpers who assist in the school. Parents also take an interest in their children's learning and attend formal progress meetings, which are held twice a year. Teachers are also available to parents before and after school and many take the opportunity to discuss informally any concerns they have. However, the school is less successful in getting parents to attend evening meetings when curriculum and matters of general interest are discussed. To remedy this the headteacher arranges curriculum-briefing meetings for parents at the start and towards the end of the school day that are much better supported.

70.Parents have complained that whilst they receive newsletters from the school the information arrives late and sometimes there are different meetings in the same week. The school acknowledges these shortcomings and is now making arrangements for weekly newsletters to be sent and for more notice to be given about meetings and events. Parents have also expressed concern about the quality of their children's annual reports in that they are not specific enough and are not personalised. A number of

reports were examined during the inspection. The parents' criticisms are justified, as the reports are too general in nature and do not indicate ways children can improve on their academic progress. This is a point for action.

71.The school prospectus provides useful information to parents about the practices and procedures in the school; however, details of authorised and unauthorised absences should be included. The governors' annual report is very brief and therefore does not help parents to understand the life and work of the school. It does not contain details of authorised absences which is a legal requirement. These are points for action.

72.The school does not have clear guidelines for setting homework and parents feel it would be helpful to them and the children if the school did have a consistent policy. This is a point for action.

73.Good links have been established with the local community and local places of interest are used for visits in support of the curriculum. Children raise money for national and overseas charities; they also entertain old people in the town and sing carols at Christmas in the Market Place. Celebratory services are also held in the local church.

74.Very good links are maintained with other schools in the Mildenhall pyramid of schools. The transfer arrangements of children to the local middle school are well established which assist them to quickly integrate into their new school.

75.All these links with parents and the community make a positive contribution to children's attainment and personal development. However, improving the quality of information which the school provides to parents is a key issue.

78. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

76.Overall, leadership is satisfactory and the leadership of the headteacher is good. She provides clear, effective leadership about raising standards in the school, improving the quality of teaching and improving the children's behaviour and attitudes to learning. She has worked very hard since the previous inspection to develop a team of teachers and governors who are committed to raising standards. The significant improvement since the previous inspection reflects her determination and the commitment of the staff and governors.

77.Overall, the school has made a satisfactory response to the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. The action plan set out clearly what had to be done and how success would be measured. Subsequent school development plans picked up the priorities in the Action Plan. Since the previous inspection the school has been successful in tackling most of the issues. Standards have been raised in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, information technology and religious education but not in history or geography. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on music and physical education. There has been a very significant improvement in the quality of teaching with almost half of it good. Unsatisfactory teaching is now a very small proportion of teaching overall. Agreeing criteria for the quality of teaching and subsequent monitoring by the headteacher, the local education authority and some teachers have all led to this improvement. The school now has a developing curriculum framework to support teachers to deliver the National Curriculum which is an improvement since the previous inspection. The quality of planning throughout the school is satisfactory. Assessment and record keeping have improved. Overall, children's attitudes and behaviour have improved significantly since the last inspection.

78.The efficiency of financial planning and management has improved since the previous inspection. The school has an effective structure for evaluating cost effectiveness. The school now fully meets the legal requirements regarding the daily act of collective worship.

79.There have been some ongoing concerns about the senior management of the school and the long-

term absence of a member of staff. The school has done all it can in difficult circumstances. The headteacher, governors and staff have worked hard to maintain stability and good relations with parents and to allay their concerns. A new deputy was appointed in November 1998 and she has already made a valuable contribution to the leadership and management of the school. She works very well in partnership with the headteacher.

80. A significant number of governors have been recently appointed. They are parents of children in the school and are very keen to offer their support. They are knowledgeable about the community and have clear ideas about the needs of the school. The chair of governors knows the school very well. She visits every week, meeting with the headteacher and she visits classrooms. She is well informed about staffing, finance and pupils and is clear about the school's priorities. The chair and headteacher work very well together. The governing body has an appropriate range of committees and working groups to manage their roles and responsibilities. Some governors regularly visit the school. There is an effective reporting system for governors to report back to the whole governing body. Governors are also linked to specific curriculum teams for English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. Individual governors take responsibility for special educational needs, literacy and numeracy and have attended the relevant training. The headteacher provides regular reports for governors. The chair of governors has been directly involved in the professional dialogue when the school sets targets for the end of Year 2 and Year 1 for English and mathematics.

81. All staff have clear up-to-date job descriptions which also identify the responsibility of the subject leader in each curriculum team. They assist colleagues through leading the development of the subject policies and schemes of work and are responsible for monitoring consistency and progress across the year groups and key stages. The headteacher monitors regularly through classroom observations and scrutinising teachers' planning. There have been two local education authority reviews in 1996 and 1998 to evaluate the school's progress. The school has systematically addressed the issues raised. Recently the subject leaders for English and mathematics have monitored through classroom observations, checking teachers' planning and scrutinising children's work. The English co-ordinator identified writing as the area for focus and has drawn up an action plan. The mathematics co-ordinator identified specific areas such as problem solving and open investigations that needed to be worked on. These coincide with the findings of this inspection. The school has a monitoring policy and release time has been given to all staff to monitor through classroom observations. Some staff are still insecure about tackling this and observations and scrutiny of work are not yet securely established.

82. The ethos of the school is good. The aims, values and policies are seen clearly in the school's daily life. The school is well aware of the needs of different pupils and groups and gives all pupils equal access to the curriculum. Relationships are good.

83. The school has a very detailed development plan for 1999/2000 which identifies clearly priorities that coincide with the national initiatives of literacy and numeracy. Action plans set out clearly how each priority will be carried out and identifies the tasks, key people and timescale. The success criteria are often linked to raising standards and outcomes for pupils. There is an effective three-year plan which includes the development of the curriculum, teaching, management, buildings and the environment, communication, community links and special educational needs. The three-year financial plan shows specifically the budgeting and funding related to the School Development Plan. Together they provide an effective strategic plan for the school's future development.

84. The policy for special educational needs is thorough and comprehensive. It has recently been reviewed to include specific criteria for the identification of children for the register. These criteria relate to literacy, numeracy and behaviour. Relevant use is made of both formative and summative assessments made of all children. The special educational needs co-ordinator is employed part-time to fulfil the role and is supported well by the headteacher.

85. The school's strategy for literacy is good and already there is a positive impact on the standards in reading. The school's strategy for numeracy is satisfactory.

86. Statutory requirements are met fully.

89. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

87.The school is adequately staffed. All teachers are suitably qualified for the age range of children and for the delivery of the curriculum. There is a wide range in both experience and age on the staff. The Nursery has a teacher and two part-time nursery nurses and they work as support staff in the school. A special needs assistant supports the special needs co-ordinator.

88.The support staff are deployed well and are effective in their work. They are briefed well and make a significant contribution to children's learning. The mid-day supervisors carry out their duties in a responsible manner and know the children well.

89.Appropriate arrangements for staff appraisal are in place. Staff participate in a range of professional development courses and these are linked to the priorities set out in the School Development Plan. Good provision has been made for the induction of the three newly-qualified teachers who are settling in well and are already making a valuable contribution to the life and work of the school.

90.The school consists of a collection of different buildings spread over a very large site. The main part is an old and listed building and so this restricts what alterations can be made. Since the last inspection a great deal of effort has been put into the refurbishment of the school but the accommodation still imposes a number of constraints on the delivery of the curriculum. It takes children considerable time to move around the site getting from one building to another. This particularly applies to whole-school assemblies, lessons in information technology, physical education, drama and going to lunch especially in inclement weather. There are a number of health and safety issues concerning uneven and dangerous surfaces in the outside play areas which have been brought to the attention of the headteacher. Overall, the accommodation places severe constraints on the organisation and effective delivery of the curriculum. It also has a negative impact on learning and on the safety of staff and children. Improving the accommodation is a key issue.

91.The buildings are in reasonable decorative order and are kept clean. Ramps are being established throughout the school to facilitate access by disabled children. There are limited displays of children's work around the school. This is an area for development in order to celebrate their work and achievement.

92.The school is adequately resourced with books, equipment and learning resources for most areas of the curriculum. The resources are accessible to staff and children and are of appropriate quality.

93.Overall, the staffing and resources for learning have a positive impact on the education provided and the educational standards achieved but the accommodation does place severe constraints on the effective delivery of the curriculum.

96. The efficiency of the school

94.Overall, financial planning is managed well. The school uses the money allocated to it wisely to support educational developments. The finance committee has a good grasp of the school's financial position. The drop in the number of pupils and the long-term absence of a member of staff has put serious constraints on the budget. To help alleviate this the headteacher took on a considerable teaching commitment in the last school year. Careful consideration was given to the staffing ratio and the costs. The governors acknowledged the need to reduce staffing and increase class sizes. After taking advice from the local education authority the school accepted a loan from them. When some staff obtained posts in other schools the headteacher and governors took the strategic decision to appoint three newly-qualified teachers to reduce staffing costs.

95.The school has a three-year financial plan which structures clearly what needs to be considered in relation to the priorities in the School Development Plan, ongoing commitments and restraints that

might occur regarding staffing and pupil numbers. There is a planned programme for purchases, special projects, building and special needs support. This is an effective framework for long-term financial planning and a good improvement since the previous inspection. There are negotiated budgets for each curriculum area and these are linked to priorities on the School Development Plan. The finance committee draws up a draft budget for governing body's approval. The school bursar provides regular updates so that governors can monitor the budget. They systematically track actual spending compared to planned costings. Governors ensure that the funds received for the education of children with special educational needs are spent correctly. The school allocates additional funding but this is still insufficient to meet the needs of all the children.

96.The deployment of teaching and support staff is good. Teachers are currently grouped in curriculum teams which is an effective way of supporting newly-qualified staff and using teachers' expertise and experience. The support staff are briefed well and make a significant contribution to the children's learning.

97.Lessons start promptly but time is wasted when children have to travel from one building to another for physical education, music, assembly, the library or the computers. In some lessons time is not used effectively because the pace is too slow or time is lost through the disruptive behaviour of a few children especially in Key Stage 2. In most lessons resources are used well but in a number of lessons resources were not readily available, and staff do not always make use of the resources to enhance the children's learning.

98.Day-to-day financial controls and administration are good and contribute to the smooth running of the school. The recent audit report stated that the principles of control are sound and that the operation of controls is satisfactory. The minor recommendations have been followed up by the school. Extra income is used wisely to improve standards and the quality of education, such as the money for literacy and the National Grid for Learning.

99.Taking into account the children's background, the attainment on entry, the improvement since the previous inspection, the good quality teaching and attitudes to learning, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

102. **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

102. **Under fives**

100. At the time of the inspection younger children who are under five attend the Nursery part time. Fifteen older children who are under five attend the Reception class full time.

101. Overall, attainment on entry to the Nursery is slightly below average. Children enjoy books and know about rhyme but letter knowledge and writing skills are less well developed. Children sort objects but lack understanding of mathematical language. Personal and social development is appropriate for their age.

102. On entry to compulsory schooling children are likely to achieve the desirable outcomes in the mathematical, creative, physical and knowledge and understanding of the world areas of learning. In personal and social development many children are likely to exceed the desirable outcomes. In language and literacy a significant number of children are unlikely to achieve desirable outcomes because writing skills are underdeveloped and vocabulary is limited.

103. Children are motivated and keen to point themselves out in the class book 'All About Me' which is completed at home. The child for the day shares his or her contribution to this book with pride. Children are so enthused by the props used by the dental nurse that faces have big smiles and bright eyes. Interest is sustained for appropriate amounts of time in both chosen and directed activities. Sometimes children lack opportunities to make choices, for example when making models of a mouth with teeth. Children are confident to offer their ideas during class discussions. They ask and answer questions when sharing books with adults or older children. Children seek help when they cannot work the computer or do up their clothes. Children are very well behaved most of the time. They move about the classroom and school sensibly. Resources are used safely and with respect. Children co-operate well with each other and adults. They share toys and equipment sensibly.

104. Younger children confidently take part in role play with each other. They recite a range of nursery rhymes as a group and talk confidently about what they are doing, although their vocabulary is limited. Children know how books work and many use picture context cues. They listen to stories with interest and pleasure. Older children, in the Reception class, can read some keywords and use some initial letter sounds to work out unknown words. Opportunities for children to write independently are limited in both classes.

105. Children in the Nursery count the "giants" teeth to ten and sing counting songs as a whole group. Older children, in the Reception class, count accurately to 15 or 20. They demonstrate awareness of larger numbers when guessing the number of children in the other building and working out that a six with two zeroes is six hundred. They can order by size and show a good knowledge and understanding of heaviest and lightest using the correct terminology. For example, "goes down when it is heavier" and "straight when it balances the same".

106. Younger children know that milk is good for their teeth and can tell the dental nurse the purposes for a range of brushes she produces from her bag. Older children ask relevant geographical questions to find out about their school and identify a range of buildings on a simple map.

107. Children in the Nursery quickly learn new words about brushing their teeth and sing clearly together using a familiar tune. Children draw and paint insects and spiders in response to plastic insects on display. One child uses her imagination to make a pair of rabbit ears using a sorting ring and jumps around like a rabbit. Children in the Reception class use a plastic knife with increasing control to score teeth marks in a piece of plasticene. They draw recognisable pictures of a mouth with teeth and some children even vary the size and shape of the teeth according to where they are in the mouth.

108. In the Nursery children demonstrate awareness of space and others. They are beginning to pass balls, quoits and beanbags to each other with increasing accuracy. Their hand and eye co-ordination is developing. In the Reception class children try hard to improve their performance. Many children move about the hall controlling speed and avoiding contact with others. Most children can make a wide or narrow shape and hold it with good control.

109. During sessions or lessons children make sound progress. They practise speaking and listening skills whilst developing social skills. They gain greater knowledge of letter names and sounds in the Nursery and consolidate recognition of keywords in the Reception. They increase their control over movement during physical education. Some children show good improvement in their drawing by adding more detail following the teacher's exemplification of another child's work. Good progress is sometimes evident when teaching and activities are well focused. For example, children make significant gains in their use of geographical and mathematical language in the Reception and children recall the actions to brush their teeth at the end of a very good lesson in the Nursery. Over time children make insufficient progress in their independent writing due to a lack of opportunities. In the Nursery children's progress in their communication skills is limited by adults spending insufficient time engaging children in spontaneous conversations about their activities and joining in with their role play.

110. Teaching for the under fives is always at least satisfactory and mostly good. There was good and very good teaching in both the Nursery and Reception classes. Children's behaviour is managed calmly and effectively with regular praise being given for following instructions. This enables children to behave well. Children's work is used well to illustrate the need for more detail in drawings by others. When teaching is good children observe good models of reading aloud with expression and actions. Children are actively involved throughout the lesson and different abilities are challenged. Good use is made of opportunities to reinforce basic skills and knowledge. Effective use is made of questioning to assess children's understanding and the correct terminology is used. In the best lessons the teacher has a very good understanding of how children learn and activities are well matched to their interest and ability. Lessons have a structure which enable children to demonstrate good progress when the learning objective is revisited during the plenary. Sometimes the activities in the Nursery are inappropriate for the age of the children and lack a clear focus. Opportunities for children to engage in independent writing are lacking. Interventions to support language development and extend the chosen activities are limited.

111. The curriculum plans for under fives are good. They are organised into areas of learning and appropriate recognition is given to Desirable Outcomes, the National Literacy Strategy, the National Numeracy Strategy and the National Curriculum. The plans clearly identify how children will make progress. Short-term plans in the Reception class are consistently good with clear objectives and differentiated activities which enable most children to practise, consolidate and extend their knowledge, understanding and skills. In the Nursery outdoor play is not planned for on a regular basis. Homework tasks which can be selected from a range of cards are appreciated by parents. However, some activities and the books provided are inappropriate for the needs of the children.

112. The layout of the buildings has a negative impact on children's access to the curriculum. Significant amounts of time are lost when walking to the hall and during bad weather even more time is lost when children need to wear additional clothes. The outside area for the Nursery is dull and unstimulating but the school has development plans following the removal of unsafe equipment.

115. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

115. **English**

113. The school's implementation of the National Literacy Strategy has been effective with positive results on children's attainment in reading. This has not yet had a similar effect on writing as this is the next area of focus. During the inspection, most children in both key stages were reading in line with

national expectations. Writing is in line with national expectations for some children in a limited range of genre. These standards are not reflected in the previous two years' National Curriculum tests because the cohorts of children who have recently been assessed have a significant number of special needs children. However, the trend prior to this shows significant improvement in reading and limited improvement in writing.

114. When expectations are high speaking and listening skills are good. In Key Stage 1 younger children remember the words to recite a poem as a class and are developing their confidence to recite individually. Older children recite poems with good diction and obvious enjoyment. In their speech children still over-generalise grammatical rules. For example, "him writed on there...". In Key Stage 2 children express their thoughts and ideas confidently. Throughout the school children use subject specific language that has been taught but their vocabularies are generally limited. The content of the literacy strategy has a positive impact when children use a range of synonyms for 'said'. During lessons and in social contexts children willingly engage in conversation with adults.

115. In Key Stage 1 younger children use initial letter sounds, picture and context cues to help them decode unknown words. They are beginning to use punctuation to add expression. Children talk confidently about what they have read and relate it to their own experiences. Older children are already reading fluently with expression at the beginning of the school year. They are aware of the difference between fiction and non-fiction. They use the organisational features of simple non-fiction texts to locate information effectively. In Key Stage 2 younger children use a range of reading strategies but are less confident readers. This is reflected in national test results for this year group. Many of the older children read texts with complex sentences fluently and accurately. They are able to make inferences and deductions. Children talk confidently about their preferences in reading and provide valid reasons for their point of view.

116. By the end of Key Stage 1 children write simple sentences with linked ideas to communicate their news. Capital letters and full stops are used to punctuate sentences correctly. Common words are spelt correctly and phonetic attempts are made to spell unknown words. In Key Stage 2 children write letters of complaint and attempt to use formal language, which is not always sustained. A few examples of reports use appropriate style with good pace to keep the interest of the reader. Children practise skills required for different genre but limited evidence is available of children composing their own writing for different purposes. This is a key issue.

117. Throughout the school the quality of handwriting in practice books is good. However, these skills are not transferred to other contexts for writing where presentation of work is often unsatisfactory.

118. During lessons, children in Key Stage 1 make good progress in reading, speaking and listening. Children in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in the same areas. In Key Stage 1 children gradually increase their letter and keyword knowledge which they use to gain more meaning from texts. The range of strategies increases to include self-correction and context cues. This is further developed in Key Stage 2 to include inference and deduction skills. Over time progress in reading is hampered, especially for more able children, by the range of fiction texts being limited to reading schemes and the lack of recognition of non-fiction in children's individual reading. During the inspection no lessons with a compositional writing focus were observed. Progress in independent and compositional writing is hindered by lack of opportunities. Most children respond well in lessons. They are keen to interact and look closely at the text features during the shared reading. They are interested in and often enthusiastic about their work. During the activities children apply themselves well and most listen with respect during the plenary. Many children lack pride in the presentation of their work.

119. All teaching in English is satisfactory or better. In Key Stage 1 it is mainly good and sometimes very good. In Key Stage 2 it is satisfactory. When teaching is satisfactory lessons are well planned with clear objectives that are shared with the children. Teachers provide clear explanations. Children are required to interact with the text which enables teachers to assess knowledge and understanding. Clear feedback is provided and children's contributions are valued. Strategies for independent spelling are encouraged. When teaching is good activities are well chosen and the work is matched to extend the more able. Teachers use the correct terminology and expect the children to use it too. Behaviour

is managed effectively. Learning objectives are reinforced during the plenary and good links are made to other curriculum subjects. When teaching is very good the pace of lessons is sustained and teachers have a very secure knowledge and understanding of the subject. Weaknesses in satisfactory teaching include a lack of recognition for children's early attempts at independent writing and insufficient challenge for more able children in some lessons.

120.The planning for literacy is satisfactory but the timetables are not always adhered to. Teachers sometimes extend the time, which has a detrimental effect, as children need to refocus their attention. The format for medium-term planning is based on that suggested in the National Literacy Strategy and has been adapted to include a section for speaking and listening. The range of texts for each term is planned for and objectives for each of the sentence, word, grammar, punctuation and comprehension are itemised weekly. These support teachers to produce consistently good short-term plans that have a positive impact on teaching and learning. However, the sections for writing composition do not identify the text level objectives relating to composition. This is reflected in the lack of evidence of composed writing for a range of purposes and audiences. The literacy hour is complemented by an additional 20 minutes each day for reading. These sessions are well organised with children working in groups and experiencing a range of text types. Reading is a regular homework task which is recorded in a home school diary. Individual reading is limited to fiction and the reading scheme for all children except the most able in Year 4. Opportunities to develop speaking and listening skills across the curriculum are often missed.

121.Children's books provide some very good examples of marking where children are informed about how well they have achieved an objective and are given constructive advice about how they could improve. During one lesson the teacher actively spent time following up marking comments with individual children. This quality of marking is not consistent in all classes.

122.Ongoing records are kept of children's phonic and keyword knowledge and each year group has targets to meet. Suffolk Reading Tests in Year 2 and 4 enable the school to measure its value-added progress, and to compare it's performance with other schools in the County.

123.The school is already preparing to set up writing tasks so that all staff can agree assessments against National Curriculum level descriptors. The consistency of existing teacher assessments are currently unreliable.

124.The co-ordinator has focused on planning and supporting the implementation of the literacy hour. She has already identified the improvement of writing as a priority. Monitoring of teaching in English is in the School Development Plan.

125.The range of texts are well organised and clearly labelled in classrooms for use during the literacy hour and in group reading times. Access to the library is limited due to the distance between buildings. Children's library skills are not developed to an appropriate level.

128. **Mathematics**

126.Since the previous inspection there has been a considerable improvement in the number of children who achieve the expected level in mathematics. Evidence from the inspection shows that now the majority of children achieve the expected level at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. A few children exceed this and achieve the higher level. Despite this improvement the National Curriculum test results over the last three years show that the school's results in mathematics are well below the average compared to all schools and to similar schools. There is a fall this year in the percentage of children attaining the expected level in the National Curriculum tests. This is related to this specific cohort of children which has a significant number of children with special educational needs (60%) and a group of boys with serious behaviour difficulties.

127.By the end of Key Stage 1, most children recognise, count and write numbers to 100. They understand the place value of digits in three-figure numbers and some children are confident with numbers up to 1000. They identify correctly odd and even numbers. They add and subtract numbers

accurately to 20 and some can do this mentally. Many children can add larger numbers but have some difficulty with subtraction when the decomposition method is used. Most children count in 2s, 3s, 4s, 5s and 10s and show the patterns on a 100 square. They show an understanding of multiplication as 'sets of' and work with 2, 3, 5 and 10 times tables. There is little evidence of children using division. Many use their knowledge and understanding of addition and subtraction when working with amounts of money up to £1. Most pupils identify halves and quarters correctly in a variety of shapes. The majority of children know the names of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and correctly identify the number of faces, edges and corners. Many can identify right angles and the line of symmetry. They use standard measures, for example measuring parts of the body and the sides of shapes in centimetres. They correctly tell the time in half and quarter hours on a clock face and digitally. Many can read a thermometer and record the temperature accurately. Many children interpret a range of graphs and charts. They record the information they have collected, such as how they travel to school, and sometimes use the computer to generate bar graphs and pie charts.

128. By the end of Year 4, many children add and subtract very large numbers in thousands correctly and do simple multiplication and division sums and some children are confident with remainders. Many are rounding numbers to 10, 100, and some to 1000. Many children understand and use decimal notation, for example when working with money. Many children have started to develop mental strategies for adding and subtracting numbers to 100 and are able to explain how they worked out the answer. Children are able to use fractions, for example in money and length. When working with two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes many children classify them correctly according to geometrical properties. Many pupils recognise reflective and rotational symmetry. Most children work out the perimeter and area of complex shapes accurately. Many children tell the time correctly using both digital and analogue forms. They collect, represent and interpret data using a range of charts, graphs and diagrams and use the computer when needed. Many children are beginning to understand probability.

129. Satisfactory progress is made by the majority of pupils as they move through the school. Higher attaining children have not always been suitably challenged or had their skills extended appropriately through sufficient opportunities to apply their knowledge and mathematical skills to solving problems. This is a key issue and has already been identified as an area for development by the school. In Key Stage 1 progress was satisfactory in two lessons and good and very good in the other two lessons observed. In Key Stage 2 progress was satisfactory in three lessons and good in one lesson. Children are developing a sound understanding of numbers and suitable skills in number rules. They progress from being able to add and subtract to 10 in Year 1, extending this to 20 in Year 2 with some children being able to do it mentally. By Year 4 most children are adding and subtracting large numbers in the thousands. Satisfactory progress is made in their knowledge and understanding of shape. Year 1 children recognise and name simple two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and by Year 2 they correctly identify the number of faces, edges and vertices. By Year 4 children progress to being able to construct a three-dimensional shape and can use the computer to assist them. Children are making satisfactory progress in using measures in weight, length, capacity and time. In Year 1, children use non-standard measures and by Year 2 they are using rulers and metre sticks carefully. By Year 4 children select the appropriate unit of measure and show reasonable accuracy using, for example, grams and millimetres. Children progress from identifying o'clock and half-past in Year 1 to recording the time accurately in hours and minutes in both an analogue form and digitally in Year 4. Satisfactory progress is made in handling data. Children sort and classify using colour and size in Year 1 and collect information such as how they travel to school in Year 2. They record it in a pictogram and then a bar chart by using the computer. By Year 4, children can use the database to compare populations.

130. Most children show a positive attitude to mathematics. They listened attentively, are well motivated and keen to answer. They settle quickly to the tasks and concentration is sustained. Children work sensibly in small groups. In Key Stage 2 the response of a number of children is sometimes unsatisfactory. They lack motivation and disrupt the teaching and learning for other children.

131. Teaching is mainly satisfactory with some very good teaching in Key Stage 1. The key features in the very good teaching are: the good planning that identifies explicit learning objectives and these are

shared clearly with the children; the activities are pitched to match the children's abilities and there are high expectations of both attitudes to work and behaviour; the management of children's behaviour is good and explanations are clear. Weaknesses seen in some lessons are mainly to do with the pace being affected either by the teacher stopping to manage behaviour or not setting sharp enough time targets for the activities or allowing the session to run over.

132.Planning for mathematics is based on the National Numeracy Strategy. Medium-term plans are thorough and detailed. Short-term plans are good. There are focused learning objectives and activities are differentiated to match the needs of children with varying abilities. An appropriate emphasis is given to mathematics on class timetables but sometimes the amount of time is too long. For example, after a numeracy lesson of 45 - 50 minutes some children are then expected to follow this with 'maths games' when they actually need a change of focus to maintain their attention. This is a point for action.

133.The school uses a good range of assessments including Baseline, standardised tests at 6+, 7+ and 8+ and there are also agreed targets for each year group. They use the information about the standardised tests from the local education authority to track the 'value-added' from 6+ to 8+. Currently the school's standardised score is in line with the County at 6+ and above at 8+. Girls did better than boys at both 6+ and 8+ this year.

134.The deputy headteacher has very recently taken on responsibility for leading mathematics. She has attended the numeracy training and has led training for the staff. She has carried out a numeracy audit and has identified areas to develop, such as problem solving in Key Stage 2 and multiplication in Key Stage 1, as well as resource implications. She has monitored through classroom observations and scrutinised children's work. The 'Linked Governor' has also attended numeracy training.

135.Resources for mathematics are adequate overall but some are quite old. There is a range of basic resources in each classroom and specific resources are stored centrally. There are limited resources for weight, three-dimensional shapes and games.

138. **Science**

136.Overall attainment in science has improved since the last inspection.

137.By the end of Key Stage 1 children's attainment in science is in line with the national average. In 1998 attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 was below the national average and well below standards attained in similar schools. The 1999 teacher assessments show a significant improvement with 98% of children achieving the target level 2. Only 2% of children achieved the higher level 3 which is well below the national average. Evidence from the scrutiny of children's work and from lesson observations shows that this improvement is being sustained.

138.By the end of Year 4 children's attainment is in line with the national expectation, but higher attaining children do not reach high enough standards especially in investigative work.

139.In Key Stage 1 children make satisfactory progress. The younger children in Year 1 make satisfactory progress in acquiring knowledge about themselves, their bodies and the need for healthy food. They know the five senses and correctly use the sense of touch to describe the properties of some materials, and are beginning to use the appropriate vocabulary.

140.In Year 2 they can distinguish a range of natural and man-made materials. They understand how processes like heating and cooling can alter the state of materials. By the end of Year 2 they are able to draw a diagram of an electric circuit and some children have built circuits which will light a bulb and sound a buzzer. Scrutiny of children's work shows an over reliance on worksheets.

141.Children in Key Stage 2 continue to make satisfactory progress in most aspects of science. They have some understanding of a fair test when carrying out simple experiments. However, these are often too teacher directed and as a result children have too few opportunities to develop their own ideas into a form which can be investigated or to draw conclusions from experiments. In Year 4 they

can name a wide variety of materials and sort them into groups. Children in both Years 3 and 4 are developing the use of scientific terms such as flexible, waterproof, transparent and opaque. They can explain why some materials are particularly suitable for specific purposes. Most have a good knowledge of the function of teeth and the importance of dental care. They know that plaque causes decay and how the right type of food helps to keep teeth healthy.

142.Children usually respond well in lessons. Apart from a few notable exceptions they behave well and pay attention to the teacher and complete their tasks. In the best lessons children show enthusiasm for science and co-operate well when required. However, where the teaching lacks pace children become restless and inattentive.

143.Overall the quality of teaching is mainly good. Of the six lessons observed, four were good and two were satisfactory. The best lessons are well planned with clear objectives which are shared with the children. Resources are generally well organised and to hand. Teachers make good use of questions and generally have sound subject knowledge. In a few lessons a pedestrian pace results in some children being disruptive. In these lessons the work is pitched at too low a level, particularly for higher attaining children and there are too few opportunities for them to show initiative.

144.The curriculum offered to children provides a mainly balanced coverage of the National Curriculum in science. The school has adopted the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's (QCA) scheme of work which denotes the kinds and levels of work to be tackled in each year group. However, the planned work for experimental and investigative science is too narrow and misses opportunities to build on the children's skills in mathematics and information technology, in creating graphs and tables to analyse results.

145.The recently appointed co-ordinator, supported by a newly-qualified teacher, plans to develop the use of systematic monitoring to indicate where improvements in curriculum and teaching should be made. Resources are just adequate with a need to improve the provision for investigative science.

148. **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

148. **Art**

146.During the inspection only two art lessons were observed. The inspection judgements are based mainly on the scrutiny of children's work and on analysis of the subject plans. The school has improved upon the standards observed during the previous inspection.

147.Overall, children are making satisfactory progress in developing their artistic skills, knowledge and understanding during Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4.

148.At Key Stage 1 the youngest children successfully experiment with colour mixing. Year 1 children are able to mix primary colours together to make new colours and use them to paint attractive abstract patterns. The older children in Year 2 improve these skills, through looking closely at a selection of Monet prints, discussing their colour and then mixing and blending their own colours to make seasonal pictures. They increase their confidence by making tissue collage to create similar effects. They are also developing and refining their observation and drawing skills, for example a Year 2 class looked closely at a selection of portraits from other artists and were able to sketch portraits of each other with reasonably accurate positioning and size of features. They are also beginning to evaluate and modify their work. There are relatively few opportunities for three-dimensional work or developing printing beyond the basic press-print techniques.

149.Building on the skills and knowledge developed at Key Stage 1, children at Key Stage 2 continue to make satisfactory progress. In Years 3 and 4 they explore and experiment with the visual elements from other artists such as Van Gogh and Picasso. Most noticeably is the large impressive interpretation of Van Gogh's "Starlight Over the Rhone", painted by a group of children. There is an emphasis on observation work and there are some good examples of drawings of the natural and man-

made environment, for example drawing of shells, starfish and the school building. Children have some opportunities to experiment with clay to create simple figures representing their ideas on shape form and space. However, as in Key Stage 1, three-dimensional work is limited. Children co-operate well and are confident to express their ideas.

150. In the better of the two lessons the teacher kept a good balance between the teaching of skills and techniques and opportunities for children to explore and refine their ideas. Classroom management and organisation is good.

151. The art policy and scheme of work provide appropriate guidance for teachers. Currently there is no subject co-ordinator. There is a basic range of resources for two-dimensional work and limited resources for three-dimensional work. Some classrooms have limited space for practical work.

154. **Design and technology**

152. The following judgements are based on limited examples of children's work presented in a portfolio of assessed work, scrutiny of curriculum plans, three lesson observations and talking to children.

153. Children make appropriate progress as they move through the school using an increasing range of materials and joining techniques. Evidence indicates that satisfactory improvement has been made since the previous inspection.

154. Younger children in Key Stage 1 draw clear pictures of a piece of playground equipment which they label. They choose appropriate materials for the purpose but are unable to explain their choices. Children use construction kits to make a rigid structure for a slide that the class teddy can use. Children use split pins to join card when making a body with moving limbs. They adapt mechanisms and materials in order to make models work. For example, they change the thickness of string in a design to make a spider climb up and down a drainpipe for a nursery rhyme display. In Key Stage 2 children record their designs with more detail.

155. Children are interested and motivated to complete both practical and recorded designs. Most children work well together in a group. They listen attentively to the teacher's demonstration and instructions. During the task they know what they are trying to achieve and all children are on task.

156. Only two lessons were observed in Key Stage 1, where teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are planned well and build on designs drawn the previous week. Opportunities are provided for children to make choices about materials and during the discussion the teacher expects children to use the names of the materials. In one lesson the teacher clearly demonstrates how to join parts of a construction kit together using a nut and bolt. Time is given to reinforce the teaching point and evaluate products before children move to the next activity. Allowing the children to do more of the talking and demonstrating is an area for development. In Key Stage 2, during the inspection, there was insufficient teaching observed to make an overall judgement.

157. The classroom assistant provides good support for an individual child by allowing him to carry out the task independently but reminding him of the criteria that the product needs to fulfil. For example, the teddy needs to be able to use the slide.

158. The long-term plan identifies a balance of structures and mechanisms but food and textiles are not included in some year groups. The school has adopted the Qualification and Curriculum Authority's guidance which has yet to be developed into a scheme of work. The units of work currently allocated to terms do not match the times allocated to the subject. The evidence available indicates that children develop designing and making skills alongside each other.

161. **Geography**

159. During the inspection only two lessons were observed, one at each key stage. Judgements have also been made on the evidence of the scrutiny of children's work and discussion with the children

themselves. At both key stages the work presented for scrutiny and in the assessed work file was limited.

160.The progress at both key stages is unsatisfactory and the children are underachieving.

161.In discussion with a representative group of Year 2 and Year 4 children their recall of geographical facts and understanding was limited and often inaccurate. Stereotypical views were in evidence in the children's work and also in discussion. For example, the children believe that there are no toilets or baths in India, all Indian people bathe in the river and all Indian women carry tea and fuel on their heads. This view is to be found in the children's written work. The children in Year 4 had no recall of the water cycle which they had learned about in Year 3. Some Year 3 children do not know their own address. There is an over reliance on worksheets.

162.The quality of teaching in the two lessons observed was varied. At Key Stage 1 the lesson was satisfactory, although the learning objective was broad and too much had been planned for one lesson. This had a negative effect on the pace of the lesson. However, the teacher had high expectations of behaviour and the children enjoyed their walk around the school. Learning opportunities were seized and the children were given the opportunity to feel and observe a number of different materials such as flint, metal and brick. At Key Stage 2, the lesson observed was poor. The planning was scant and the learning objectives were not specific. Instructions given were not clear and there was a lack of direct teaching which resulted in the children being off task. The behaviour management was poor and this resulted in a lack of pace and minimal learning.

163.There has been some development of the resources which are now adequate and these are centrally stored. The teaching of geography is in blocked periods alternating with history each half term in Key Stage 1. At Key Stage 2 geography is taught in half termly units on a 2 year cycle and care has been taken to ensure there is no repetition. However, there are considerable lapses of time between units which results in a lack of continuity. The school is following the recent Qualification and Curriculum Authority's guidance. The subject leader has had some opportunity to monitor the quality of work across the key stages but lacks confidence when carrying out classroom observations.

166. **History**

164.During the inspection no history lessons were observed. Judgements have been made based on the scrutiny of pupils' work and discussions with children and analysis of teachers' planning.

165.The progress of the children at both Key Stages is unsatisfactory. The work presented for scrutiny at both key stages was limited. Some of the work seen did not match the needs of individual children. For example, children who had difficulty in recording were given the same work, although they were unable to complete it. There was no evidence to demonstrate that history is being taught regularly at the times it appears on the timetable, especially at Key Stage 1.

166.The children at Key Stage 1 have difficulty in separating fact from fiction. They have been introduced to the lives of famous people but have little understanding of their lives or the place in history. The children remembered that they had learned about Nelson but believed that he was the first man to sail the sea and that 'the column in Trafalgar Square is magic.' They also felt they had learned about all the queens - "the Elizabeths - 1st, 2nd 4th and 6th". They are not developing a sense of chronology. The emphasis on historical facts for children in Key Stage 1 is not appropriate for their age.

167.At Key Stage 2 the children have covered work on the Romans but have very little recall of the aspects of this period other than mosaics. They remembered producing their own mosaic in class. They have also been introduced to the Tudor period. The children remembered they had completed a painting of the Tudor period but confused this work with that which they had done on Vikings. As in

Key Stage 1 the children's sense of chronology is insecure. In the main many children are underachieving. There is an over reliance on worksheets.

168. There has been an improvement in the resources and now many are of a high quality. The teaching of history is in blocked periods alternating with geography in Key Stage 1. The long-term plan for history at Key Stage 2 ensures periods of history are not repeated especially where classes are vertically grouped. However, there are considerable lapses of time between units which results in a certain lack of continuity. The school is following the recent guidance from the Qualification and Curriculum Authority. The history co-ordinator has had some opportunity to monitor the quality of work throughout the school but is insecure when carrying out classroom observations.

171. Information technology

169. During the inspection only one lesson was observed. Evidence for the judgements is based on the scrutiny of children's work and discussion with children from each key stage.

170. Standards are satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 and good at the end of Year 4. This a considerable improvement since the previous inspection.

171. By the end of Key Stage 1 the children are able to use a keyboard, mouse and printer. They can follow on-screen instructions, alter inputs using 'delete' and 'backspace' as well as 'save' and print their work. They can use word-processing skills to write simple sentences and re-draft them when appropriate. They use the information technology resources to compile data, for example to interrogate the number of children with a particular hair colour or how they come to school or their favourite animals. This work reinforces data collection techniques such as tallying learned in mathematics. The children are also able to use a simple graphics package making choices regarding colour of background, thickness of drawing line and individual colours. Some children are able to use LOGO and write the instructions to form a square or rectangle.

172. By the end of Year 4 the children are able to use a wide variety of word-processing skills such as 'cut and paste', spell check, changing the font size and character. They are also able to use "Encarta" for research and import a graphic to include in their own writing. The children can enhance their work by changing the colour of the font as well as incorporating 'clip art'. They are adept at using the graphics package 'paint' and are aware of how to improve their initial designs by using techniques such as 'flood fill' and 'pattern repeater.' The children can compile pie charts in Excel to compare populations. Most children can devise the instructions for simple shapes such as square, rectangle and cube using LOGO. They understand the use of right angle turn. A small group of children are able to use e-mail and access the Internet. This is under the direction of the headteacher.

173. At Key Stage 1 the progress is satisfactory. At Key Stage 2 the progress is good particularly in word- processing skills and the use of the National Grid for Learning. The higher attaining children are not confined to those who have computers at home. The children are very enthusiastic especially at Key Stage 2 where they see information technology as an exciting integral part of their learning.

174. The children use computers regularly and lessons are detailed on a weekly timetable. This relatively recent timetabling has had a positive impact on the children's learning. There is a computer in each classroom as well as two banks of computers in the central area of the main building. Some classes have to walk to this building for their lessons. The two banks of computers are a short distance apart. Maintaining supervision of the whole class has been well considered. In the lesson observed at Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching was good and the children were very well supported by the learning support assistant who had been well briefed and was working alongside a small group of children. At times groups are sent out from their class to work unsupervised at the computer banks. When a group experiences difficulties and is working alone the pace of learning can be impeded. Teachers however try hard to support and monitor the work of the children at the computer banks whilst maintaining supervision of the children remaining in their own classroom. The children observed in these circumstances behaved well and were responsible. The children learn specific IT skills in their weekly lesson and these are reinforced within other areas of the curriculum by using such software as "My Body" in science and "Invaders" in history.

175.The process of gradual introduction of how to access the Internet is planned well. The headteacher is providing training for staff as well as teaching small groups of children. There is a wide range of software readily available. There is evidence to show that work is regularly monitored and assessed and judgements are made as to the National Curriculum levels being reached. Teachers keep individual records of the skills which are being gained. Since the last inspection there has been a significant improvement in the delivery of information technology throughout the school. There is a revised policy document and the school is following the recent Qualification and Curriculum Authority guidance. The headteacher as subject leader has provided good clear leadership for this subject. The school is well placed to continue developing this information technology throughout the school.

Music

176.During the inspection, only three music lessons were observed. Two of these were in Key Stage 1 and one in Key Stage 2. Other aspects of music seen were children singing at a Key Stage 2 hymn practice, a whole-school Harvest Festival in church and at assemblies. Teachers' plans were examined and a limited sample of children's work was scrutinised. This evidence is insufficient to make overall judgements about progress, quality of teaching and children's response to music.

177.At assemblies and hymn practice children had some difficulty keeping together when singing and were unable at times to start at the right time and children sometimes were singing off-key. Music was an area for development in the previous inspection report.

178.In lessons observed in Key Stage 1 most children can clap or tap accurately the number of syllables in their name or favourite food and also the rhythms of well-known nursery rhymes. Some children are confident enough to tap a rhythm in front of a group and maintain the pattern. Many can follow a simple song and exchange the words. In Key Stage 2 some children can recognise a nursery rhyme from the rhythm and can play in time with a partner.

179.In the lessons observed in Key Stage1 the children responded positively to the teacher and each other and were well motivated and showed enjoyment, with just a few becoming fidgety towards the end of the session. In Key Stage 2, although most children had a positive attitude, there was low level disruption from a significant number of children and some displayed inappropriate behaviour.

180.In Key Stage 1 the teaching was good in one lesson and satisfactory in the other. Good features in the Key Stage 1 lessons were the secure subject knowledge, the successful management of children through humour, positive relationships and good use of voice. In the Key Stage 2 lesson the teaching was unsatisfactory. Planning for the lesson was minimal. The teacher had difficulty managing the children's behaviour which resulted in a lesson fragmented with interruptions as the teacher frequently corrected children. The pace was slow and there was a lack of progress.

181.The policy has been recently updated. The scheme of work provides useful guidance from Nursery to Year 4 with units of work for each term. These cover rhythm and pitch, body percussion and listening and appraising and show progression and continuity as well as coverage of the National Curriculum requirements. Currently there is no subject co-ordinator.

182.Overall resources for music are satisfactory. There is an adequate range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments and good quality software. The instruments are stored centrally in an area designated as the music room in one building and classes usually come here for their music lesson.

185. Physical education

183.During the inspection only three lessons in physical education (PE) were observed. These comprised a gymnastics lesson in Key Stage 1 and two games lessons in Key Stage 2. Consequently, it is not possible to make judgements overall about progress, the quality of teaching and children's response in PE.

184. In the gymnastics lesson in Key Stage 1 the quality of teaching was good. The teacher provided clear explanations about the key points to consider when performing a forward roll correctly. She had individual children demonstrate the techniques and made specific reference to the ways children might improve. She gave the children suitable time to practise and to evaluate their progress. Children responded enthusiastically, watched and listened intently when other children demonstrated and were keen to practise and improve. Children remained motivated throughout and made good progress. This resulted in many children beginning from a correct starting position, tucking in their head so that their shoulders were the first point of contact.

185. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching was good in one lesson and just satisfactory in the other. In the lesson where the teaching was good, the teacher demonstrated explicitly how she wanted children to throw and catch the ball, gave children the opportunity to practise and evaluate the skills. She used children to show clearly how to play the game and kept the pace brisk which resulted in children being well motivated. Children co-operated and worked well in small teams, showed obvious enjoyment and enthusiasm and worked purposefully throughout the session. They improved their throwing and catching skills and showed greater ingenuity in dodging and receiving and passing the ball. Where the teaching was just satisfactory there were some weaknesses which stemmed from some lack of subject knowledge and unclear explanations and organisation at the beginning of the lesson. This resulted in some children not paying attention, some inappropriate behaviour and some children not making enough progression through a lack of co-operation when playing the game.

186. Examination of the school's policy for PE and the teachers' planning, which is based on the guidelines from the local education authority, indicate that the requirements of the National Curriculum are met and that all areas of activity are covered. Currently there is no subject co-ordinator. Boys and girls have equal access to the curriculum.

187. Overall the resources for PE are adequate but the hall is small and places a constraint on indoor PE. The distance that some classes have to travel to the hall erodes the time children are actually active during a PE session and adversely affects the delivery of the curriculum.

190. **Religious education**

188. Standards have improved since the last inspection and are now broadly in line with the expectations set out in the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4. Children make satisfactory progress throughout the school in acquiring and consolidating their knowledge and understanding of the four general objectives of the religious programme.

189. The younger children in Key Stage 1 are able to identify groups to which they belong, describe their families and give reasons why they are special. They recognise the positive contributions they make to these groups and ways in which they value and care for each other. In Year 2 they reflect on personal feelings and link aspects such as friendship and caring with Bible stories, for example the Good Samaritan. They are also developing a deeper understanding of groups to which they belong and some knowledge of faith communities. They know the Christmas and Easter stories and the significance of some Christian and Jewish traditions, symbols and artefacts.

190. In Key Stage 2, children in Years 3 and 4 begin to explore some of the beliefs and practices of Hindu and Muslim faith communities and make some comparisons with Christians. They can describe some customs and stories associated with important religious events such as Christmas, Easter, Diwali and Shabbat. By the end of Year 4 they are beginning to suggest possible meanings behind a range of stories from religious traditions. They can describe some personal milestones in their own lives and know about religious milestones in the Christian faith, such as Baptism, Confirmation and Marriage. Standards in the quality of written work are satisfactory, but the range is limited.

191. Children's response in the four lessons observed ranged from good to unsatisfactory. Where the teaching is good children show a high level of interest, listen attentively and are willing to share their

feelings and thoughts with each other. Where teaching is unsatisfactory children display poor concentration, some misbehave and are unfocused on the tasks.

192. In the lessons observed the quality of teaching ranged from good to unsatisfactory. Good teaching is based on secure subject knowledge, clear objectives with well-planned activities to sustain pace and the interest levels of the children. Where teaching is unsatisfactory teachers' knowledge is insecure and there are limited opportunities in these lessons to explore the more fundamental relevant issues which give religious education its integrity as a subject. Some teachers do not have a secure enough understanding of how to teach the spiritual elements which are an integral part of the subject.

193. The co-ordinator has held the post for a relatively short time. Building on the work of her predecessor, she is providing support to staff when required and is beginning to develop the monitoring role by observing teaching and learning. Long- and medium-term plans provide useful guidance to teachers. There are good links with the nearby St Peter's Church. There is a sufficient range of resources which are supplemented by artefacts borrowed from West Suffolk Professional Development Centre.

196. PART C: INSPECTION DATA

196. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

194. The school was inspected by a team of five inspectors who spent a total of 16 days in school. Discussions took place with very many children. Their work was evaluated and samples of children's work from all classes were scrutinised. Interviews and discussions were held with staff, governors and parents. The school's documentation, including its planning, policies and records were analysed. A meeting was held to hear the views of parents and 16 attended. The responses were analysed from the 25 questionnaires that were returned.

195. DATA AND INDICATORS

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
Reception – Year 4	190	1	62	40
Nursery Class	24	0	3	N/A

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Reception – Year 4)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	8.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22.09 : 1

Education support staff (Reception – Year 4)

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked each week	39

Qualified teachers (Nursery class)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24

Education support staff (Nursery class)

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked each week	25

Average class size:	27.1
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Financial data

Financial year:

1998-99

	£
Total Income	390,509
Total Expenditure	405,188
Expenditure per pupil	1,621
Balance brought forward from previous year	22,999
Balance carried forward to next year	8,320

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

200

Number of questionnaires returned:

25

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	4.2	62.5	12.5	16.7	4.2
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	20.0	56.0	12.0	0.0	12.0
The school handles complaints from parents well	12.5	37.5	29.2	8.3	12.5
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	16.7	50.0	8.3	16.7	8.3
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	8.0	44.0	16.0	24.0	8.0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	4.2	62.5	16.7	12.5	4.2
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	8.0	44.0	28.0	16.0	4.0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	8.0	44.0	20.0	24.0	4.0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	16.7	50.0	16.7	12.5	4.2
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	20.0	36.0	16.0	24.0	4.0
My child(ren) like(s) school	32.0	52.0	8.0	4.0	4.0