

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Halifax Primary School**  
Ipswich

LEA area : Suffolk

Unique Reference Number : 124670

OFSTED Inspection Number : 186869

Headteacher : Mr K Tomlin

Reporting inspector : Mr T Dentith  
OFSTED Inspector Number : 15088

Dates of inspection : 8 - 12 November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707810

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school : Infant and Junior School

Type of control : County

Age range of pupils : 4 to 11

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : Prince of Wales Drive  
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Appropriate authority : The governing body  
Address as above

Name of chair of governors : Mrs L Fordham

Date of previous inspection : February 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr T Dentith, Registered Inspector	Mathematics Information technology	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management
Mr R Kitson, Lay Inspector		Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community The efficiency of the school Equal opportunities
Mrs S Boardman	English Physical education	The curriculum and assessment Special educational needs
Mrs T Loose	Science Art Design and technology	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources Provision for under fives
Ms H Pegum	Religious education Geography History Music	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

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## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

The literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced well and are helping to raise standards.

- Children under five get a good start to their education.
- Overall, the teaching is good.
- Provision for children with special educational needs is good, and they make good progress.
- There is high quality provision for children's personal development.
- The children have positive attitudes to their work and their behaviour is good.
- The school is well led by the headteacher and the governing body.
- Information for parents is of a very high quality.
- There are very good relationships between all members of the school community, staff and children.

### Where the school has weaknesses

Attainment is low in information technology in Key Stage 2.

- I. Progress is unsatisfactory in geography and history in Key Stage 1.
- II. There are too few opportunities for children under five to develop their physical skills.
- III. There are occasions when, because of the physical structure of the building, reasonable noise from nearby practical activities detrimentally affects teaching and learning in a few lessons.

**The school's strengths outweigh the weaknesses. The weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which 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 made significant progress since the last inspection.

- IV. The headteachers and governors have a clear focus on the achievement of all children, including those of average and above average ability. The comprehensive planning, informed by analysis of attainment data, is supporting teaching well.
- V. Children in Years 5 and 6 are expected to produce high quality work. Sharing the learning objectives, and the emphasis in the plenary on whether they have been met, is contributing to raising their expectations.
- VI. Setting across the school has been reorganised across two year groups and the work set is better matched to the abilities of the children.
- VII. The last inspection reported that there were shortcomings in teaching in a small proportion of lessons, mainly in Years 5 and 6. Teaching has improved and is good overall. This has a positive impact on children's attainment, particularly in English, mathematics and science.
- VIII. The school has maintained the high quality provision for the children's personal development.

With the structures in place, the school is well placed to make further improvements.

• **Standards in subjects**

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds in 1999 based on the National Curriculum tests:

Performance in	Compared with	Compared with
English	D	D
Mathematics	D	D
Science	C	C

Key	
Average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

In English, mathematics and science, children make sound progress in their work over time. In science children make good progress in aspects of scientific investigation. Last year, results were below average in mathematics and English.

By 7 and 11 years of age, in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science, children's attainment is on track to be in line with national averages by the end of this academic year.

Children's progress in information technology and religious education is satisfactory. Progress is satisfactory in art, music and physical education throughout the school, and geography and history at Key Stage 2. Progress is good in design and technology and swimming. It is unsatisfactory in geography and history at Key Stage 1.

The progress of the current children under five in language and literacy and in mathematics is good, and attainment is above average. Children also make good progress in their personal and social development. Attainment and progress is satisfactory in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development. Progress is unsatisfactory in the development of children's physical skills, through a lack of opportunity.

• **Quality of teaching**

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Satisfactory	Good
Science		none seen	Good
Information technology		Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education		Satisfactory	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

Teaching is at least satisfactory in 96% of lessons. It is good in 49% of lessons and very good in a further 13%. Teaching is unsatisfactory in 4% of lessons. Teaching is better in Key Stage 2 than Key Stage 1, particularly in Years 5 and 6.

*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**

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Behaviour	Good - the consistent approach to discipline makes a positive contribution. The children organise themselves well when given the opportunity.
Attendance	Good. Children are punctual to school and to lessons.
Ethos*	The school has a positive learning culture and is committed to raising attainment. Children have good attitudes to learning, are supportive of each other and work well in groups and pairs. Relationships are very good.
Leadership and management	Good - the headteacher and governing body give purposeful leadership. The school is well managed, with very good support from the administrative staff.
Curriculum	Core subjects of English, mathematics and science are well planned. There is sound planning for the other subjects, but there is some imbalance in Key Stage 1 and for children under five.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision and involvement - leads to good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Spiritual, moral and cultural development is good and social development is very good.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Staffing, teaching and non-teaching, is good. Provision of books and equipment is at least sound and good in several areas. Accommodation is spacious and the open plan nature contributes to children's social development; however, because of the openness, a few lessons are disrupted by reasonable noise from adjacent activities.
Value for money	The school gives sound value for money.

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

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

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
<p>The school:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• achieves high standards of good behaviour;</li> <li>• enables children to achieve a good standard of work</li> <li>• is approachable;</li> <li>• gives a clear picture of what is taught;</li> <li>• keeps parents well informed about their child's progress;</li> <li>• has values and attitudes which have a positive effect;</li> <li>• encourages children and parents to get involved.</li> </ul> <p>Almost all parents agreed their children like school.</p>	<p>A small minority of parents felt that the older and more able children could be expected to do more homework, and a few felt that there was too much for the younger children.</p> <p>However over 80% felt that children are expected to do sufficient work at home.</p>

Inspection judgements support the parents' positive views of the school. The team judged there to be an appropriate amount of work set for children to do at home.

**KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION**



The headteacher, staff and governors should:

- i) raise attainment in information technology in Key Stage 2 by: (paragraph numbers 19, 38, 182 and 188 refer)
  - ensuring more use of information technology across the curriculum;
  - providing greater access for children;
  - continuing to improve teachers' confidence and skills in the subject;
- ii) improve progress in geography and history in Key Stage 1 by: (paragraph numbers 24, 45, 167 and 176 refer)
  - increasing the number of topics that have geography and history as a main focus;
  - ensuring these are more evenly spaced throughout the year;
- iii) increase the physical activities for the under fives by: (paragraph numbers 10, 47 and 110 refer)
  - including more physical education sessions;
  - making more use of the outside play area;
  - providing more large play equipment such as wheeled toys;
- iv) reduce the impact of noise from nearby activities on teaching and learning by: (paragraph number 38, 93 and 150 refer)
  - continuing to improve the building with partitions where appropriate;
  - improving soundproofing and acoustics, where possible, in the school, including the hall;
  - monitoring the areas when practical work takes place and consider which are more suitable for "noisy" activities;
  - reconsidering the use of the dining area as a teaching space.

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- Continue the work within the National Literacy Strategy development plan to improve the writing skills, particularly of older children. (paragraph numbers 14 and 124 refer)
- Ensure teachers implement the marking policy more consistently. (paragraph number 55 refers)
- Ensure all non-teaching staff are aware of the child protection procedures. (paragraph number 71 refers)
- Review the roles of senior managers to ensure a better match with their levels of responsibility. (paragraph number 84 refers)

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1. Halifax Primary School is a larger than average urban primary school for children aged 4 to 11. It is situated in the south of Ipswich and the vast majority of the children come from the area around the school. It is a mix of privately owned housing and some housing association and local authority housing. A smaller proportion of the children come from the privately owned houses and data shows that, in the area, there is a lower than average percentage of adults with higher education qualifications. Nineteen percent of children are entitled to free school meals which is broadly in line with the national average.

2. In September 1999 there were 376 children on roll taught in 13 classes. There is a broadly even distribution of boys and girls. All children are full time. Children are admitted to the Reception class as "rising fives", the term before they are of compulsory school age. Prior to this, the vast majority attend Bridge Nursery that serves the school and another Local Education Authority school nearby. Currently there are 16 children in the Reception class, 7 of whom are still under five.

3. There are 69 children on the register for special educational needs, which is broadly in line with the national average. Almost all children come from homes where English is the first language. Children's attainment is broadly average when they start school. Although there is the full range of abilities in the school, there are fewer higher attainers than would normally be expected.

4. The number of children on roll at the time of the last inspection (February 1996) was 433 compared to the current 376. There are no other significant changes to the characteristics of the school since the last inspection.

5. The development priorities for the school are to foster an achievement culture to improve:

- literacy, especially writing, and numeracy to the national picture;
- the number of children who achieve higher levels in the National Curriculum tests.

1. The major challenges on the school's agenda are:

- continue to build and develop links with parents;
- continue the programme of improvements to internal decor and further enhance the quality of teaching areas to better facilitate class teaching and plenary sessions;
- ensure the enhanced provision of classroom assistants impacts upon our drive to improve attainment;
- review the school's management structure.

## 7. Key Indicators

### Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	29	36	65

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above	Boys	21	21	23
	Girls	31	31	29
	Total	52	52	52
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	80 (82)	80 (82)	80 (86)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

<b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	20	23	21
	Girls	31	30	30
	Total	51	53	51
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	78 (82)	82 (88)	78 (77)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

---

1

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

## Attainment at Key Stage 2<sup>2</sup>

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	29	40	69

<b>National Curriculum Test Results</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	18	21	26
	Girls	23	24	29
	Total	41	45	55
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	59 (57)	65 (48)	80 (73)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

<b>Teacher Assessments</b>		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	18	20	23
	Girls	24	22	26
	Total	42	42	49
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	61 (44)	61 (45)	71 (64)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

## Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	4.6
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0.2
	National comparative data	0.5

## Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

## Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	13
Satisfactory or better	96
Less than satisfactory	4

## **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

### **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

#### **Attainment and progress**

##### Under fives

1.The progress of the current children under five in language and literacy and in mathematics is good, and attainment is above average. Children also make good progress in their personal and social development. Children make satisfactory progress in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development and attainment is in line with that expected nationally. Progress is unsatisfactory in the development of children's physical skills through a lack of opportunity. Children with special educational needs generally make good progress.

2.Children listen carefully and respond well. They enjoy books and a number are reading well for their age. Many are writing in a well-formed manner, complete elementary sentences using word banks and read accurately what they have written. Children match and sort objects, count and order numbers accurately. They are beginning to use a variety of mathematical language effectively to describe relationships between objects and name shapes.

3.They demonstrate independence in selecting activities and are able to select from resources provided. The children take care of their environment and equipment and are good at working on a task without constant adult support. There is some physical education timetabled but children have insufficient access to a range of play equipment, for example through using large play equipment such as wheeled toys.

4.Children observe and record living things and objects and events in the natural and man-made world. They make things with a purpose using construction kits and paper, paint and materials, cutting and joining appropriately. In their art they use a variety of techniques to create the effect they want. They use a computer in English and mathematics.

##### Attainment in Key Stages 1 and 2

1.By 7 and 11 years of age, in the National Curriculum core subjects of English, mathematics and science, children's attainment is expected to be in line with national averages by the end of the academic year.

2.This is a similar picture to the last inspection when results were in line with national expectation. National Curriculum results for Key Stage 2 from 1996 showed fewer children than average attained the expected levels. Results in 1999 are better than 1996 in relation to the national averages and are in line with those expected for science; they are still below in English and mathematics. With the current attainment of children in Year 2 and Year 6, the inspection team's judgement is they will be in line with national averages by the time they take the National Curriculum tests.

3.Most children listen well to each other and to their teachers, and by the age of 11 follow explanations and read aloud with fluency and expression. Younger children use appropriate clues and initial sounds to help identify new or challenging words. By the age of 11 a large percentage of children read accurately with good comprehension skills. They choose from a limited range of authors and few choose non-fiction, but most know how to find books in a library. Key Stage 1 children write appropriately to communicate meaning with reasonable grammar and punctuation. Older children's composition writing is not as well developed as it should be. They produce some imaginative writing and examples of extended work, for instance in their accounts of World War II.

4. In mathematics, children's mental skills are well developed. Most Year 2 children know addition facts to 10 and use these to find sequences. By Year 6, children handle numbers confidently and use them in a range of situations and problems. They have a sound knowledge of shapes and their properties and draw angles and triangles accurately. They understand probability and draw appropriate charts and graphs.

5. Children generally use their literacy and numeracy skills well in other subjects of the curriculum but they sometimes fail to transfer skills they demonstrate confidently in mathematics to subjects such as science. They do, however, use writing and data handling skills effectively in history and geography.

6. In science, children have a sound knowledge of physical systems and living things. Older children achieve well in aspects of their science investigative work. They measure and control factors with confidence and modify experiments when they realise results are unreliable.

7. Children's attainment in religious education is broadly in line with the expectations set out in the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus. Younger children know some celebrations and understand basic religious terms. Older children explain the meanings of religious stories and recognise that families may have different beliefs.

8. Information technology is in line with national expectations at Key Stage 1 but below at the end of Key Stage 2. Younger children produce text and, with help, alter the layout and style. By Year 6 this has been built upon and older children include pictures in their work. They have not covered sufficient work, for instance they have not produced graphs from data, controlled events or used systems to sense physical events.

### Progress in Key Stages 1 and 2

1. Children are aware of what they have to do in lessons because the learning objectives for the lesson are stated explicitly in the teachers' good quality introductions. The work is usually well matched to their abilities and plenary sessions reinforce what has been learnt. Expectations are generally high and most lessons proceed at a good pace.

2. In English and mathematics children make sound progress in their work over time. In science children make at least sound and often good progress in a topic and, taken over time, progress is sound. Children's progress in information technology and religious education is satisfactory. In the foundation subjects children make satisfactory progress in art, music and physical education across the school and geography and history at Key Stage 2. Progress is good in design and technology and swimming. It is unsatisfactory in geography and history at Key Stage 1.

3. The provision for children who have special educational needs is good and contributes effectively to the good progress they make towards the targets in their individual education plans. Higher attaining children usually make appropriate progress and the setting in English and mathematics ensures their work is sufficiently challenging. However, in geography and history their progress is unsatisfactory because their work is not adequately extended.

4. In art, a few younger children lack adventure in trying out ideas but many produce exciting work. By Year 6 children use a wide range of media, often combined, evaluating helpfully their own work and that of others. In design and technology younger children choose tools and materials which they join in a variety of ways according to their designs. By Year 6, the range of materials is extended to include pneumatics and cams to make models move.

5. Progress in Key Stage 1 in geography and history is limited because of the long gaps between pieces of work. Children find it difficult to recall previous learning so are unable to build on it. By Year 6, children compare and contrast physical and human characteristics of, for example, Ipswich and places in India. They read maps but knowledge of place is limited. In history, most children write well about aspects of life in the past they have studied.

6.Younger children in music select instruments to play their simple sound sequences. This is built upon and older children know the names of instruments and include texture and phrasing in their compositions. In physical education children learn and develop a range of games skills as they move through the school. In dance they practise and improve movements and in swimming they make good progress and achieve good standards.

### **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**

1.Children have a good attitude to work. Their attitude to each other and to staff is very good. Behaviour is good and children are respectful. Exceptions to this are rare. The school has maintained and built on this strength since the previous inspection.

2.Children's responses in lessons are usually at least satisfactory. In 6 out of every 10 lessons observed responses were good and occasionally very good. Children show genuine interest in their work due to well-prepared and focused teaching. They behave well, are motivated to learn and sustain concentration. In most sessions children contribute their ideas readily. They enter into discussion and answer questions. In the best sessions children are confident to express their opinions, take pride in their work and persevere when encountering difficulties.

3.Good relationships and co-operation are strong features of all sessions. Children are quick to organise themselves into groups and collaborate when required. They work hard whether their teacher is with them or not. Equipment, displays and personal property are treated with respect.

4.Children under five have good attitudes to learning. They are confident and work well together and with adults. They are willing to seek support and in the lessons they persevere on an activity. They understand the basic rules of personal hygiene and dress independently, needing very little adult help. They take some responsibility, for instance helping to clear up at the end of sessions. The children have a sense of right and wrong and occasionally show wonder or joy in response to an experience and they respect the culture and rules of the school and classroom.

5.Behaviour in and around the school is good. There is a sense of order and purpose in the way in which children come into the school and enter teaching areas. Children sit and listen well in assemblies. They show the respect due to the occasion, and for the contributions from children, staff and visitors. Children in Year 6 behaved very well during the Service of Remembrance held in Ipswich. Playtimes and lunchtimes are enjoyable social occasions with children having positive contacts with each other and staff.

6.In Key Stages 1 and 2 children tidy their tables but take little responsibility for selecting resources or organising activities. During the inspection no children were seen to take the initiative and set some of their own tasks in negotiation with their teacher. Older children take seriously their school-wide responsibilities, for example preparing the hall for assembly and helping at lunchtime.

### **Attendance**

1.Attendance rates are good and are above the national average. The rates of unauthorised absence are minimal.

2.The majority of children arrive at school on time and lessons start promptly.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

1.Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In 96% of lessons seen teaching was satisfactory or better. In 49% of lessons it was good and in a further 13% it was very good. Teaching in 4% of lessons was



unsatisfactory. There is no poor teaching. The teaching has a positive impact on children's attainment, particularly in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. It is also highly effective in promoting the good attitudes and behaviour of the children.

2.This is an improvement on the last inspection. The proportion of satisfactory or better lessons is similar to last time but the number of lessons with good teaching has improved from "over a third" to over 60%.

3.The teaching of children under five is at least satisfactory and it is good in just over half of lessons. Teaching in one lesson in ten in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory but in six out of every ten it is good or very good. In Key Stage 2, almost all teaching is satisfactory or better. Nearly two thirds is at least good. Teaching is strongest in Years 5 and 6 where most of the shortcomings were last time.

4.Teaching across the school is good in personal and social education lessons and in English and art. The teaching of swimming is very good. Overall, teaching is good in music in Key Stage 1 and in mathematics, science and religious education in Key Stage 2. Within the topic planning cycles, no geography or history in the school, science in Key Stage 1 or design and technology in Key Stage 2 were taught during the inspection.

5.Teachers are secure in the subjects they teach, although a minority lack confidence and skills in the use of information technology. Clear introductions and good modelling or demonstration of the work ensure children know what they have to do. In all lessons, the explicit reference to the learning objectives for the lesson, usually written on the board, reinforces this. Effective plenary sessions in many lessons summarise the work covered and help children draw together what they have learnt. There are occasions when quieter plenary sessions, with children feeding back their work, are disrupted by reasonable noise from adjacent practical activities. Care is taken in the planning to minimise this and children are very tolerant, but learning is affected.

6.Teachers generally have high expectations of the children. Many lessons proceed at a good pace and the use of clear deadlines for the next part of the work encourages children to get on. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, it is usually because expectations are mis-matched to the children, usually being too high but occasionally too low.

7.Planning is good. The schemes of work and medium-term plans are used effectively to match the work to the needs of the children and ensure they progress. Lessons are generally well structured and have a good balance of activities. However, with the tight structure and good pace of many lessons, opportunities are missed to promote children's independence.

8.The specialist teaching makes good use of expertise, for instance in music it has a positive impact on children's progress. The setting across two year groups for English and mathematics enables teachers to be more focused on a narrower ability band. This, and the good implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, is contributing to the raising of attainment of all children. The higher attaining children are challenged whilst the lower attainers, including children with special educational needs, consolidate and build on prior work successfully. Additional support is often available for children with special educational needs through the use of classroom assistants and the learning support teacher which ensures both full access to the curriculum and the achievement of the lesson objectives.

9.Where teaching is good, there is effective use of questioning to challenge children's thinking. Teachers assess progress during the lesson and give focused feedback to move children on. They quickly diagnose when children have not fully understood and modify their approach to clarify what is required. Where teaching is unsatisfactory, inappropriate work is not rectified quickly enough.

10.A few parents felt there was too much homework for the younger children and a small number thought there was too little for the older children. The team judged that an appropriate amount of homework is set, mainly in English and mathematics, throughout the school. For the younger children,

this is reading, spellings and some number facts. For older children it extends classwork or provides further challenge.

### 43. The curriculum and assessment

#### Curriculum

1.The school aims to “provide a rich, balanced and broadly-based curriculum that promotes high academic achievement”. Some imbalance, however, in both the under fives and the Key Stage 1 curriculum prevents this aim from being achieved fully. In Key Stage 2 the curriculum meets the requirements of being both broad and balanced. Overall, the school curriculum promotes children’s intellectual, physical and personal development.

2.In Key Stage 1 children have full access to the National Curriculum subjects of English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. In the range of foundation subjects provided, they have full access to design and technology, art, music and physical education. The programmes of work are well organised and prepare the children for the next stages of education within the school. In history and geography the organisation of the two-year rolling programme for the delivery of the subjects, along with the teachers’ interpretations of the planning, results in insufficient opportunities to develop the appropriate knowledge, skills and understanding in the subjects. The required progress and preparation for the next stage of education is, therefore, incomplete.

3.At Key Stage 2 the curriculum meets the statutory requirements and offers adequate provision for the children. Good attention is paid to English, mathematics and science and there is a reasonable allocation of time for other subjects. The Key Stage 2 curriculum is successful in supporting the children for the transfer to the next stage of education.

4.The curriculum for the under fives lacks sufficient opportunities for children to make sound progress in their physical development. It is, however, successful in combining the other areas of learning identified for children under five, into an experience of school which is both meaningful to the children and strong in language development. This enables children to make good progress, regardless of their starting point.

5.Reasonable time is allocated for sex and drugs education within personal and social education. The school has been successful in implementing the National Literacy Strategy and this is having a positive impact on learning. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has also been successful and is having a significant impact on children’s achievements. Emphasis is placed on personal and social education which contributes to the high standards of achievement in personal development. There is a clear policy for this subject, outlining the areas to be covered and how links may be established with other subjects. It supports the spiritual, moral, social and cultural developments within the school and is closely linked to the religious education programme. The planning for personal and social education is a strength of the school.

6.All children have equal access to the curriculum. The organisation of setting children into ability groups for much of their work, ensures that the curriculum provided is closely matched to abilities and at the same time adds appropriate challenge. Within this system higher attaining children are stretched and well provided for. There is also good provision for the children with special educational needs. The code of practice is applied in an efficient manner that does not overburden teachers or parents with excessive paper work but ensures a sharp focus on children’s needs and progress. The range of individual learning needs is in the smaller ability groups which are well supported by both the learning support teacher and classroom assistants.

7.Teachers work hard in the planning, implementation and development of the curriculum in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. In religious education the school implements the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus following the framework of school aims and values. Within this framework there are close links with personal and social education. The broad aims and schemes of work for art are good,

although key features are not always included in teachers' short-term plans. In design and technology, the overall coverage in termly plans contains a basic framework which is further enhanced in the teachers' weekly plans. Planning of information technology and music is sound. In most lessons the short-term plans are clearly structured and ensure that key learning objectives remain the focus of the lesson. When these objectives are shared with the children, teachers are able to evaluate effectively the success of the lesson and use the outcomes to inform further planning.

8.The school provides a reasonable range of extra-curricular activities. Lunchtime activities such as the reading club and after school clubs, including recorders and a range of games activities and swimming, make a positive contribution to the curriculum and to children's personal development. Key Stage 2 children have the opportunity to take part in inter-school tournaments and matches. Almost all Year 5 children take part in a field trip in East Anglia and all Year 6 children have the chance to stay at a residential adventure centre. These make a positive contribution to their social skills as well as supporting aspects of the curriculum. Appropriate experiences are provided for those who do not take part.

### Assessment

1.Procedures for assessing and recording children's attainment are good in the under fives unit and in Key Stage 2. In Key Stage 1 they are satisfactory. Teachers' half-term plans in English, mathematics and science identify a range of assessment opportunities. Progress and attainment records are maintained in order to track children's development and to identify targets for the future. In mathematics and science children are encouraged to be involved in their own assessment and to complete self-evaluation sheets. Within the other subjects of the curriculum, planning for assessment is less comprehensive. In history and geography, assessment records are insufficiently differentiated for the mixed age groups. Teachers share the results of assessment with parents and with the teacher involved in the next stage of the children's education.

2.In lessons, teachers make good use of assessment strategies through the effective questioning of children and listening to their responses. Evaluations of lessons in teaching pairs and working units enable teachers to share and record their assessments and use these in future planning. Accurate and up-to-date records are kept for each child and are used to identify special educational needs and to help set end of year group targets. They are also used to good effect in keeping parents informed of children's efforts and commitment during the autumn and spring terms. Parents are highly appreciative of the "effort grades" which are sent home and support the home/school partnership. The use of the Reading and Homework diaries enables parents to monitor children's progress in reading and mathematics and involves the children in their own evaluation.

3.Subject co-ordinators compile samples of children's work to support the further development of assessment within the subject. The assessment co-ordinator analyses the results from the range of formal tests used within the school and is successfully able to track the progress of individuals and groups. This also assists teachers in identifying the progress that is being made in the areas of the curriculum and supports the setting of realistic targets. The targets set in English and mathematics are shared with parents to encourage further their support in the children's learning.

4.The school's marking policy clearly states the purpose of marking, the importance of providing feedback to children and procedures agreed. The majority of the work seen in the school was marked, but there was a variation in its quality. In good examples such as those in Year 2 and Year 6, the teachers note what has been achieved and offer advice for further improvement. Much of the marking, however, simply consists of ticks with limited comments that offer praise, but does not support the child in making further progress.

5.The progress of children with special educational needs is efficiently monitored. Good use is made of a range of formal and informal assessments to identify learning difficulties.

### **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**

1.The school's provision for spiritual, moral and cultural development is good and for social development it is very good. The school has maintained the high quality provision for children's development since the last inspection.

2.The personal and social development of children under five is generally well provided for and children are confident and work well together and with adults. To develop their independence skills, they are given choice in selecting activities and deciding which resources to use. They are learning the basic rules of personal hygiene and dressing independently and need very little adult help. They are also learning about responsibility through helping clear up at the end of sessions.

3.Spiritual development is fostered in a variety of ways. Children have opportunities to reflect on the big questions in life through their study of different beliefs, teachings and practices in religious education. The school's curriculum for personal and social education makes a significant contribution. Children have opportunities to learn about and explore different values. Teachers encourage children's ideas and opinions. In Year 6, one class reflected on the meanings of stories in the Bible and considered how these influence people's lives, particularly Christians. Later they recognised that respect for other people means accepting their differences.

4.The quality of collective worship is satisfactory. Assemblies are planned to support the moral values of the school, for example respect and working together. During the inspection they made very little contribution to children's spiritual development. Too little time was given for children to reflect on their experiences in a way which developed their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge.

5.The school successfully promotes children's moral development. It is a close community based on fairness, consideration and personal responsibility. From Reception to Year 6 children are involved in 'circle time' when teachers model tolerance and respect for others. The good behaviour policy is based on the school's values. The children understand it. The teachers' consistent use of assertive discipline supports the policy. The curriculum for personal and social education gives children many opportunities to develop moral values through discussion of issues such as prejudice, racism and rights and responsibilities. Children have fewer opportunities to explore such issues in other subjects. In recent work on The Blitz during World War II, children in Year 6 did not consider similar experiences in Germany.

6.The provision for children's social development is a strength of the school. From Reception onwards children are taught how to relate to their friends, class, year group and school community. Lessons and clubs encourage co-operation and collaboration, including sharing ideas and respect for the views of others. The good example set by staff teaches children to value supportive and caring relationships with one another. There are limited opportunities for children to take responsibility or show initiative. Older children organise the hall for assembly and act as monitors at dinnertime and in the library, and younger children deliver registers. Involvement in raising funds for Red Nose Day and Save the Children encourages a wider sense of social responsibility. The Safety to School project with a local high school and the council has involved a few children. A recent visit by a group of Japanese children and adults gave older children the opportunity to practise their social skills.

7.Studies across the curriculum support children's knowledge and experience of their own and other cultural traditions. The range of clubs, including sport, music and art, extends children's cultural interests. For older children, the assembly that focuses on achievements outside school provides opportunities to learn how to join activities such as dance and drama. The school regularly invites theatre, dance and music groups to perform and takes the older children to museums, exhibitions and concerts.

### **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**

1.The school is successful in providing a safe and caring environment in which children can learn.

2. Class teachers have the prime responsibility for monitoring academic and personal development. They carry out this task effectively and efficiently. Parent consultation evenings, annual reports and the annual identification of targets for improvement help to give additional guidance. To assist them in preparation for the National Curriculum standard assessments tests, parents and children are given useful booklets written by the staff. Good support is given for all children with special educational needs, provided sensitively by all members of staff. At the Registered Inspector's meeting, parents said that the school was always quick to respond to their concerns and dealt with issues discreetly.

3. The children are very well supervised whilst in school and when playing in the school grounds. The open design of the school gives it a sense of close community, which helps to establish a purposeful, orderly atmosphere. This also makes a positive contribution to children's supervision and to their safety and well-being. The mid-day supervisors are organised well and effectively deployed. They know the children well and carry out their responsibilities in a firm but caring manner.

4. The school offers training to the children in cycle safety and proficiency as an extra-curricular activity.

5. Very effective procedures are in place for monitoring and promoting attendance. The registration procedures are correctly carried out and the registers are maintained in accordance with legal requirements. The school administrative staff regularly check the registers. Clear guidance is given in the school brochure to parents about the procedure to be followed if their child cannot attend school. Unexplained absences are promptly followed up. Reminders about the procedure are also given in newsletters to parents from time to time. The relationship with the educational welfare officer, who supports the school well, is very good.

6. The school has a well-founded code of conduct and children are encouraged to look after themselves by behaving sensibly and safely. Parents are given a copy of the code, which is in the form of a booklet entitled "Safe and Happy", when their children join the school. Good, responsible conduct is consistently praised and if a child needs to be punished, he or she loses privileges. If bullying does occur then the school takes immediate action and, if the incident is considered to be serious, parents are contacted to assist in the process. The code of conduct is effective and the behaviour of the children throughout the school is good.

7. Procedures for promoting health and safety are very good. The school has a comprehensive policy, which sets out procedures in order to protect children, staff and visitors. It covers such matters as medical treatment, fire procedures and the control of visitors to the school site. The headteacher, members of the governing body and the school caretaker carry out regular safety inspections of the school. Established first aid arrangements are in place and members of staff are trained in first aid, and all swimming instructors are appropriately qualified. During the inspection members of staff were observed treating children for minor injuries in a competent and caring way. Overall, the security arrangements for children are good. The school has a named doctor and the school nurse carries out regular health interviews and vision and hearing tests on the children.

8. The school has adopted the Local Education Authority policy on child protection and clear procedures are in place. The headteacher is the named person and the teacher responsible for special needs acts in his absence. Both have received appropriate training. All teachers know the child protection procedures. However, a small minority of support staff are not aware.

### **Partnership with parents and the community**

1. The school is successful in developing a strong partnership with parents, governors, local schools, churches and the community in this part of Ipswich. It gets good support from parents and governors.

2. The school actively encourages and is successful in getting parents to help in school. Parents at the Registered Inspector's meeting felt that the school encouraged them to be involved in the life and work of the school. This view was supported by the parents' questionnaire when 98% agreed and none disagreed. They appreciate the tea party held at the end of each year to thank the helpers for

their contribution to the life of the school. The Friends of Halifax actively supports the school by raising a considerable amount of money for school funds. It also provides a social link between staff and parents when they can meet informally.

3. Also, at the inspectors' parents meeting, parents were unanimous in their view that the school keeps them well informed about school events and their children's learning. They were also pleased with the message and homework diaries, which provide an effective communication link between home and school. The school brochure, governors' annual report to parents and the termly newsletters are well prepared and provide very useful information to parents on the life and work of the school. Children's end of year reports are of a good quality. Meetings on the curriculum and children's individual target setting are appreciated and supported well by the parents. The school has introduced a home school agreement scheme. The information the school provides to parents is a strength.

4. The headteacher and staff are available at the start and end of each day and many parents of the younger children in school take the opportunity to discuss informally any concerns they may have. Other parents contact the school office and appointments are made for them to see the teachers at mutually convenient times. In the questionnaire for parents, the vast majority (93%) said that they find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with their children.

5. Parents of children with special educational needs are kept well informed of the support provided. The school makes every effort to involve parents in formal reviews and supporting children in achieving their targets. Liaison with local advisory specialists and services is good.

6. An information evening for parents is held in the term before a child starts school and a series of visits is arranged for the children during that term. This provides an opportunity for them to become familiar with school surroundings. The school has well-established links with the local nurseries and playgroups in the area. Parents help in the Reception class on a regular basis. Students from local colleges and high schools also help in the class as part of their studies.

7. Children raise money for local and overseas charities; they also sing carols to elderly people in the local community and take part in local church services. During the inspection a large group of the older children took part in a Civic Memorial Day Service in the Ipswich Field of Remembrance in a most dignified and respectful way. The school has very good relationships with the local high school and other primary schools in the local pyramid of schools. The transfer arrangements for when children go to the high school are well established, including those for children with special educational needs. These enable children quickly to integrate into their new school.

8. These links with the community make a positive contribution to children's attainment and learning and personal development.

## **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

### **Leadership and management**

1. Leadership and management are good overall. The headteacher gives a clear direction to the work of the school with a positive focus on children's attainment and progress. He is well supported by the deputy who has overall responsibility for the development of the curriculum and assessment. The headteacher's effective leadership, through a listening style he describes as "consultative", has enabled staff and governors to take a significant role in school improvement.

2. The governors make a good contribution to the work of the school. The governing body fulfils its responsibility well and ensures that the school complies with statutory requirements. Most governors visit the school when children are present, some on a regular basis. To extend their knowledge of the school and curriculum, governors observe lessons. They follow clear ground-rules and use a common observation schedule for their findings, produced and agreed with staff. The two working parties of the governing body cover most aspects of school development and all governors are involved in at least one. Governors have a good grasp of the long-term needs and priorities of the school through their visits and work on the School Development Plan.

3.The systems put in place for continued development and improvement are good. All the issues identified in the last inspection have been addressed with significant success. The achievement of all children is improving, particularly in the core subjects of English and mathematics. There is a clear emphasis on raising children's expectations, particularly in Years 5 and 6. Ability grouping has been reorganised and work set now gives sufficient challenge to children of all abilities. Teaching is better, particularly Years 5 and 6, and is supported by good curriculum planning.

4.The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are firmly in place. The school is supported by the Local Education Authority literacy co-ordinators and mathematics advisory teachers to provide valuable support and analysis. The strategies are having a positive impact on the attainment of children across the school.

5.The school's roll has declined by about a quarter over the last 10 years. This has resulted in a larger management team and more tiers than is the norm and there is some imbalance in the levels of responsibility. However, generally the team works well and the governors feel the additional cost has benefits in the quality of experience in the school. There are occasions when functions overlap, for example the role of co-ordinators and unit managers in planning, but these are minor.

6.Curriculum co-ordinators are central to the development of their subjects. They lead planning and support teachers in their subject. Co-ordinators monitor progress by looking at teachers' planning and comparing with whole-school plans, and by discussion. Their scrutiny of children's work in English and mathematics informs consistency, continuity and progression. Time given to co-ordinators of core subjects to visit classrooms to ensure practice matches planning has led to development priorities that have been addressed. Analysis of data by the deputy and co-ordinators contributes to the challenging target set by the governors. This all has a positive impact on the curriculum for the children.

7.The school has clear aims set out in the information for parents booklet and the School Development Plan. The aim to help children "develop self-confidence and to equip them for life by enabling them to become independent learners" is successfully met, in terms of children's confidence, but there is a need for them to have more opportunities to be independent learners. The school has a positive learning culture and provides equality of opportunity for all children .

8.The priorities of the school are identified in a good development plan. Staff and governors are closely involved in its production. They monitor and evaluate previous plans, audit the work of the school to decide the next steps to take and meet to put together the next plan. The criteria to judge the success of the targets are linked to improvement and children's achievement. Each target has staff responsible and the budget implications attached. Staff training implications are also identified.

9.Provision for children with special educational needs is good, and contributes to the good progress they make. Statutory requirements are met in respect of children who have statements, and individual education plans are in place and used effectively for those children at Stage 2 and above of the school's special educational needs register. The special needs co-ordinator manages the organisation of the administration and provision for children well. The learning support teacher delivers and monitors the progress children make in achieving their targets. An effective working partnership has been established which ensures that class teachers are consulted and kept well informed of outcomes and future plans. The nominated governor monitors developments in special educational needs by working closely with the co-ordinator and feeding back information to the whole governing body.

### **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**

1.The school is staffed by an appropriate number of suitably qualified and experienced teachers to competently meet the needs of all children and the demands of the National Curriculum and religious education. The hours for non-teaching staff provide an average amount of good quality support for each class. Valuable additional support is given by a few parents and other volunteers. The school is well served by its administrative, care-taking and canteen staff. All members of the staff work very well together and find their colleagues supportive.



2. Individual responsibilities are clearly set out in job descriptions and staff work hard to meet these requirements. Arrangements for teachers' professional development and support staff training are good. Staff have taken up a wide range of in-service training opportunities and in some subjects they share their expertise especially well. The benefits of this can be seen in their planning and teaching, for example in science, design and technology and art, where there is a very close match in the experiences and opportunities of the children of similar ability in parallel classes. In some cases personal enthusiasms have greatly benefited the development of a subject. In some foundation subjects there has been little school based in-service during the time the school has focused on the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies.

3. Teachers, classroom assistants and mid-day supervisors have had similar behaviour management training which helps support a consistent team approach. Suitable informal induction arrangements exist and relatively new staff and students report on a strongly supportive atmosphere where teachers are happy to give guidance and help. Appraisal was up to date in July 1999 and will be reintroduced when the new guidance is received. Outcomes of appraisal are used to help focus staff development. Staff are involved in developing an approach to the evaluation of teaching, learning and the effectiveness of the curriculum which helps to inform decisions on subject and staff development.

4. The school is accommodated in a large, open plan multi-level building. The accommodation provides ample space and good facilities such as a large domed hall leading to an integrated swimming pool. There is a small open plan library, book areas, a dining area, an information technology room, an enclosed Reception classroom and smaller rooms used for various purposes such as music tuition, group activities and storage. There is also an administration area with a suitable space for children who are unwell. The building is very clean, well maintained and in good decorative order.

5. The design creates a number of challenges for a modern curriculum. These challenges are generally met extremely well through careful planning, co-operation and consideration, both by teachers and children. The minor modifications to the original building have enhanced its quality and flexibility. Two mixed Year 1 and 2 classes have rather restricted, overlapping base areas but the skills and management of the teachers overcome any major problems. One mixed Year 3 and 4 class is based in the dual purpose dining area and class space. When engaged in a quiet activity, the children are, on occasions, disturbed by the reasonable noise coming from activities and discussions related to practical work of nearby classes. The teacher is mindful of the difficulties when planning and carrying out her work. This area is also disturbed by noise from the adjacent kitchen. This area and occasionally others, such as the large hall during full school assemblies, is unsuitable for people with temporary or permanent hearing disabilities. Movement of whole classes or groups from one work area to another is very quiet and does not disturb the work in open areas. The exception is in the hall where children sometimes pass through to swimming. The amount of display area is limited because of the open plan nature of the school. The quality of displays is good; they support the pupils' learning and add an attractive dimension to the building.

6. The site is large and on various levels, making it unsuitable for people with physical disabilities. There are numerous attractive and stimulating amenities which were developed by the school after consultation with the children. This outside accommodation includes quiet and shady areas, landscaped features, a fenced pond, hard and grassed play space, adventure play area, young and mature trees in wooded areas, a greenhouse and children's gardening area. These amenities are used well to support children's learning. The school has made some improvements to the internal accommodation and significant improvements to the rest of the site since the last inspection.

7. The school is at least adequately resourced overall. Learning resources are of good quality and range in more than half the subjects. History, however, does not have a sufficient range of materials and this affects the opportunities for enquiry. The library is reasonably well stocked and supplemented by a substantial number of reference and fiction books in other shared and class areas. Some books are becoming too old and in geography, for instance, the range of books has become unsatisfactory. The school stock is very well supplemented by loans from the Schools' Library Service. The library was

under utilised during the inspection. The school uses a range of places outside the school for visits which enhance the curriculum and provide a rich practical experience for the children. There are sufficient numbers of very good quality computers in a network, printers and a scanner which are accessible for whole-class teaching. As yet, these are not fully exploited. Resources are reasonably accessible and well stored with each classroom having access to a wide range of the most frequently used items. Children select and use them efficiently.

### **The efficiency of the school**

1.The resources made available to the school are efficiently managed.

2.Financial management is sound and although the carry forward in the budget from the last financial year was high it was considered necessary by the governing body. This was because of falling pupil numbers and the need to provide additional classroom support. It also enabled the school to maintain teaching staffing levels and to sustain reasonable class sizes. This was for one year only and the carry forward this year is reduced to an acceptable figure. The decision by the governing body is reasonable and prudent.

3.Costs and resource implications support the school's development plans. The budget is well thought out and reflects the school's current priorities. The auditors' report of 1999 found the school's operation of systems of control to be sound and the budgetary control as excellent. The recommendations suggested by the auditors have all been addressed.

4.School administrative arrangements are very good yet unobtrusive. The administrative staff gives valuable support to the teaching staff, thereby enabling them to focus on their main role of teaching the children. Teachers are deployed effectively and classroom assistants and mid-day supervisors give valuable support to the children. Accommodation and learning resources are also used well.

5.The cost of educating a child is broadly in line with the national average for the size and type of school. In the light of the sound progress the children make between entry to the school and the time they leave, the good teaching, and the good provision for children's personal development and welfare, the school gives sound value for money.

## **PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER-FIVE**

1.The under fives are in a small Reception class where all attend full time. Of the 17 children in the class, 7 are not yet five and one child is of statutory school age. The baseline assessment of this term's intake show these children were, on entry, close to the Local Education Authority average in English and mathematics.

2.By five years of age, children's attainment is above average in language and literacy and in mathematics. Progress in these aspects and their personal and social development is good. Children make satisfactory progress in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development and attainment is in line with that expected nationally. Progress is unsatisfactory in the development of children's physical skills through a lack of opportunity.

#### Personal and social development

1.The personal and social development of children of non-statutory age is generally provided for well and children are confident and work well together and with adults. They are willing to seek support and, in the lessons, they persevere on tasks and make good progress. The children are particularly good at working on a task without constant adult support. They demonstrate independence in selecting activities and choosing from resources provided. They understand basic rules of personal hygiene and dress independently with very little adult help. They clear up at the end of sessions sensibly. These children have a sense of right and wrong and take care of their environment and equipment. Occasionally they show wonder or joy in response to an experience and they respect the culture and rules of the school and classroom.

#### Language and literacy

2.On entering school the children make good progress in language and literacy and their attainment is above average by the time they reach the age for compulsory education. In one-to-one, small group and large group sessions opportunities for children to extend their language are good and they increase their ability to communicate. They listen with understanding, respond positively and with anticipation. In both formal and less formal situations they listen well to each other and respond very well to verbal requests and instructions. The children are beginning to associate sounds with patterns in rhyme. They all recognise the names of children in their class and know many letters by shape and sound. A number read well for their age and half the children can recognise 50 key words. The staff support children in letter formation and many write in a well-formed manner and complete elementary sentences using simple word banks. They all distinguish between print and pictures in their own work and in books. They enjoy books, handle them well and understand how they are organised. They retell parts of a story from memory. Well before they reach compulsory school age children's appreciation of books and stories is evident. There is time for them to make personal choices as to the activities they will be involved in and currently most enjoy the writing bench and read accurately what they have written to anyone who will listen.

3.During whole-class teaching sessions comprising speaking and listening, demonstration, instructions, story and discussion the teacher is effective in holding the attention of all the children for long periods and learning progresses at a good pace. They retain their new learning over days and successfully consolidate it in new contexts.

#### Mathematics

1.Children make good progress and their attainment is above average by the time they reach the age for compulsory education. During mental mathematics sessions their attainment is high. Children develop their mathematical awareness through a wide range of activities and count in a range of contexts. The children match and sort objects and have a basic grasp of number through counting and

ordering numbers accurately. Some record their work in diagrams. The children are beginning to use a variety of mathematical language effectively, for example they understand some of the language of position and size. They describe relationships between objects and name mathematical shapes. They solve practical problems with the occasional ingenious suggestion being made by a child.

2.The formal work is very carefully planned to meet the levels of understanding of individual children. This usually consists of rather long structured and closely monitored learning sessions. There is insufficient less structured or free play time for children to experiment, for example using water, sand or other materials to explore capacity or weight. These materials are, however, used in their creative work, described below.

### Knowledge and understanding of the world

1.Children make satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world and attainment is in line with that expected nationally by the time they reach the age for compulsory education. Children study living things and objects and events in the natural and made world. Through observation they explore a variety of moving things and record some of their findings. They sort toys into categories, for instance according to movement. Some recall past work on movement of vehicles and use this knowledge in their play. They cut and join materials and make things with a purpose in mind, for example animal models. Using a range of construction toys, they learn about balance, linking things together and moving parts. In these and other activities they explore paper, paint, materials and equipment and what they can do with them. They use a computer in a structured manner to further their understanding in English and mathematics. The children have a discovery bench with such things as spinners, magnifying glasses, shells and school photographs from which to choose. They frequently do so and use them in their play; for example a group selected the shells, made imprints of the shapes and made little creatures to inhabit them, without suggestions from an adult.

2.There are opportunities for children to develop knowledge and understanding of the world during talking and listening sessions. They are encouraged to consider using books to help them in their activities such as deciding on the colours and patterns needed on their models of animals. Planning shows they study aspects of their lives, including health, past and present events and their families.

### Physical development

1.There is insufficient planning for this aspect of the requirements for under fives and little taking place. In the one dance lesson seen, children responded enthusiastically, made satisfactory progress and displayed average attainment. They had no lesson time on apparatus and therefore it cannot be judged as to whether they can successfully perform different movements, including jumping from a height and landing with balance.

2.In their work in art and design and technology, they handle a variety of tools, objects and materials with appropriate levels of skill and care. Children experiment with sand, water and dough and develop appropriate fine motor skills. They clear up these activities well. There are missed opportunities to set suitable tasks for scientific, technical and mathematical discovery in this play.

3.There is a good enclosed outside area which is under-used in developing children's physical development. There are few outdoor toys and no wheeled vehicles for children to play with. They have a lunchtime turn on the adventure playground and sometimes have an afternoon playtime when the staff encourage them to play on the painted activities on the playground.

### Creative development

1.Children make satisfactory progress in their creative development and attainment is in line with that expected nationally by the time they reach the age for compulsory education. They use materials, colour, texture, shape and form to create their own designs relating to the ongoing themes. In their two-dimensional pictures of bonfires they successfully finger paint, print, cut and stick and use splatter

painting to considerable artistic effect. Children explore the building properties of sand to make roads, hills and tunnels and use malleable materials in conjunction with commercial kits to create insects and imaginative flowers and gardens. Children use their imagination and memory when painting on a larger scale, as demonstrated in a classroom display of moving things. There is no evidence of children modelling with recycled materials. They play freely and experiment with unpitched musical instruments.

During formal music sessions with children in Years 1 and 2, they join in with the singing and use of instruments. Occasionally singing is used to support other lessons such as mathematics and, although they enjoy it, they are not very tuneful in unaccompanied singing.

### Other aspects

2. Teaching is at least satisfactory and, in just over half of lessons, it is good. Children's response is almost always good. The teacher's strong emphasis on children developing good work habits and the fostering of a desire to achieve in formal situations is effective. The excellent relationships of adults and children positively enhance children's early experiences of school life. The teaching methods and organisation are good. Homework is methodically organised and recorded in a book for each child and this acts as a very informative and supportive dialogue between the family and the school. The full-time classroom assistant provides good support for the teacher. Good planning, team work and a calm and loving environment are important features of the provision.

3. The planning for adult-led and directed learning is of good quality. The formal aspects of the programme are good for introducing the children of non-statutory school age to the rigours of later learning. They are beginning to work on many of the aspects of the National Curriculum and Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Some adjustments need to be made to accommodate the children's physical development without taking time from their creative play and experiences which are developing their knowledge and understanding of the world.

## **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

### **English**

1. In Year 2 and Year 6, children's attainment in English matches expectations at this stage of the year and children are on course to meet national expectations by the end of the academic year. Over time, children make sound progress in both key stages.

2. The last inspection judged standards to be in line with national expectation. National Curriculum results at Key Stage 1 support this for the number of children who attain the expected level 2. However, fewer children achieve higher levels. At Key Stage 2, attainment since the last inspection has been below the national averages but has shown a gradual increase over the last 3 years. Spelling at Key Stage 1 and writing at Key Stage 2 were the weakest elements of children's attainment. The inspection findings shows that the majority of Key Stage 2 children are now working in line with the expected standards in English.

### Speaking and Listening

1. Children make sound progress in speaking and listening and reach expected levels of attainment. By the time they are seven, most children listen well to each other and their teachers. They pay careful attention to instructions and guidance and make quick and appropriate responses. They maintain an interest in discussions and are often keen to answer the teachers' questions. In their responses they offer use full sentences and give meaningful explanations. They read with their group with confidence and expression and read clearly and confidently to the class.

2. By the time they are 11 years old children listen carefully and follow teachers' explanations and questions well. Although, on occasions, some children are slow to respond they give considered and thoughtful answers and are confident to offer opinions. They read aloud both fluently and with expression.

## Reading

1. From early on in Key Stage 1, children use clues from the pictures to assist in their reading. They develop good word recognition skills and use initial sounds to help identify new or challenging words. The majority make sound progress and, by Year 2, most children read books appropriate for their age and ability, with accuracy. The children talk about the story and characters. The most able children will discuss why the book was of interest to them and the reason they selected it. They are clearly looking beyond the pictures at this stage. The majority of children have an understanding about the role of the author and illustrator and are developing early skills in understanding and using both a content and index page.

2. In Year 6, many children attain the expected level in reading. Overall, progress is sound. For the higher attaining children, progress in lessons is often good as they meet the challenges of the National Literacy Strategy, in reading the works of authors from the past such as Dickens and Shakespeare, and analyse how words and expressions have changed over time. They are developing skills in summarising play scripts and comparing and evaluating these against a film version in order to identify the differences in the two forms.

3. A large percentage of children in Year 6 read fluently and accurately with good comprehension skills. Few children were observed reading non-fiction texts. The range of authors children prefer to read is limited, with Roald Dahl being identified as the most popular writer. The children, however, show an interest in the books selected and there is a keen interest in the reading of poetry. Most children know how to access information from non-fiction books and explain the workings of the subject index in the library. They also show an awareness of libraries outside the school. Progress in reading for children with special educational needs is good. These children are developing skills and strategies in predicting what comes next, and meeting the challenges of new words through the scanning of illustrations. They confidently discuss their opinions and evaluations of the effectiveness of instructional text and formulate interesting and practical ideas for the presentation and format of the Highway Code, in order to make it clearer to the reader.

## Writing

1. Overall the children make sound progress in writing composition in Key Stage 1. The higher attaining children write clearly with basic punctuation. Many children use their word recognition skills and apply their phonic knowledge to produce accurate guesses in spelling. Their writing communicates meaning and the higher attaining children use interesting vocabulary, demonstrating an awareness of the reader. During the inspection writing activities were closely structured, limiting the opportunities for children to write about their own experiences or for them to read their own writing for sense and punctuation. The majority of the work focused on sentence work and grammatical punctuation and in this the children make steady progress.

2. Children in Key Stage 2 make satisfactory progress in their writing skills in comparison with their reading skills. The school has targeted writing as an area for development and evidence in the children's work shows that they benefit from this. Children in Year 4 are clearly motivated to write poems based on personal or imagined experiences and produce imaginative ideas about, for example, "Holding the Baby". The majority of teaching observed in Key Stage 2, however, focused on text and reading comprehension activities. There was a limited amount of guided writing and the development of writing composition, being taught in group activities. Examples of extended writing were seen in the Year 5 and 6 accounts in history, illustrating that writing skills are being applied across the curriculum. The higher attaining children in Year 6 are using extended vocabulary in their writing, with accuracy, and use clear and fluent handwriting applicable to a range of tasks. They use a variety of writing frames to support letter writing and to plan an autobiography written in the first person. They quickly draft and write small group summaries of play scripts using complex sentences.

## 124. Other aspects

1. Across both key stages children's responses in lessons are positive. They take an interest in their work and settle quickly to tasks. In shared text activities they listen and follow text well and make considered and thoughtful responses. In group work they work well on an individual basis but also co-operate and work effectively in pairs and small groups. In the majority of lessons, behaviour is good and children take care to produce the required results. Children in Key Stage 2 are developing self-evaluation skills through the checking of their own work and that of their peers. They go about this in a thoughtful and considerate manner.

2. Overall, the teaching observed during the inspection was good in both key stages. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed in this subject but only one very good lesson was recorded. Lessons are well planned and have a clear focus, making good use of the Literacy Strategy Framework for teaching. Clear guidance, instructions and explanations are provided and good use is made of questioning in order to help children recap on previous lessons, to develop teaching points and ideas and to check understanding. In the majority of lessons the learning objective for the week or session is shared with the children. Expectations are high. Good use is made of time and in the best lessons children are given clear indicators of the time available and what they are expected to achieve. In many of the lessons the independent work in groups was completed as children work hard to meet expectations. The use of praise and feedback is good. In the marking of the children's work, however, there are inconsistencies in the approaches used across the different sets and year groups. In many lessons effective use is made of the plenary in which the objective is revisited and children are questioned in order to assess understanding, and to support the development of self-evaluation skills.

3. The organisation for the teaching of English in sets in both key stages is having a positive impact. With this approach teachers are able to focus on a narrower ability range and ensure that children are working at an appropriate level. The higher attaining children are challenged while the lower ability groups are able to work at their own level and consolidate and reinforce their learning on a regular basis. The system also ensures that children with special educational needs are included within the teaching programmes and, at the same time, have the targets identified in their individual educational plans met. The good use of classroom assistants supports the children's learning.

4. The recently designated co-ordinator is supportive of staff and has worked in close partnership with a Local Education Authority consultant to produce a clear literacy plan to address the areas the school has identified for development. Resources for English are adequate. In Key Stage 2 there is a good supply of dictionaries and thesauruses for the children to use. Around the school there is a wide range of coded reading books from which children select. There is, however, a limited range of non-fiction books made available to children in Key Stage 1 and the school's library is uninteresting and under-used. A recent audit has identified the gaps in provision of non-fiction books in the library. The emphasis on developing a high profile book culture within the school is limited.

### **Mathematics**

1. Attainment in mathematics at the end of both key stages is expected to be in line with national averages by the end of the academic year. Over time, children make sound progress in both key stages.

2. The last inspection judged standards to be in line with national expectation. National Curriculum results for Key Stage 2 from 1996 showed fewer children than average attained the expected levels with a similar picture in 1997. Since 1997, the proportion of children who attained level 4 has risen dramatically but is still below average. With the current attainment of Year 2 and Year 6 children in the school, the inspection team's judgement is they will be in line with national averages by the time they take the National Curriculum tests.

3. In Year 2 most children know addition facts to 10, find sequences, for example by adding or subtracting 5 or 10, often mentally. They write numbers to 100 in order and split numbers into the component tens and units. They understand simple fractions. Using their knowledge, they solve problems involving money. Most know simple shapes and some of their properties, including symmetries. All sort by criteria, collect data and record it in tables. Higher attaining children are confident with larger numbers, find more interesting sequences and have a wider range of strategies to add and subtract mentally.

4. Children make sound progress through the school. By Year 4 most children know tables to 5, and many use their knowledge of, for example, using  $10 \times 63$  to find 9 or  $11 \times 63$ . Their understanding of number has developed and they apply it to a greater range of problems involving length, money and everyday situations.

5. By Year 6, children handle numbers confidently. Most know the tables to 10, with lower attaining children able to find them reasonably quickly. They use these in a range of calculations, both on paper and mentally, including fractions, decimals and negative numbers. Higher attaining children also use ratio. Children's knowledge of shapes has extended to classifying quadrilaterals and other polygons by properties and they draw and measure angle and lengths accurately. They plot co-ordinates and draw graphs to, for example, convert metric to Imperial measure. They understand probability and calculate measures of average. When collecting data, they understand fair questioning and draw appropriate charts.

6. Progress in lessons is usually sound in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4. In Years 5 and 6 it is usually good. In the small minority of lessons where progress is unsatisfactory, the work set is too difficult. It is taken from the National Numeracy Strategy without the teacher modifying it to match the children's needs. Where the tasks are appropriate, as in most lessons, children work well and make gains in knowledge and understanding. They consolidate prior work and gain in confidence. When the pace is good and the work is challenging, children make good progress.

7. Children's response to mathematics is usually satisfactory and sometimes good in Key Stage 1 and good in Key Stage 2. It is best in Years 5 and 6. Across the school, children show interest in their work and concentrate on the task. A few children lose concentration when the work is difficult but most persevere, with success. Almost all children behave well but in a minority of classes there are a small number of children who are disruptive. They are largely ignored by the rest and effectively dealt with by the teacher. Children listen to others and are prepared to have a go at answering, even if it is wrong or they are not sure. All show respect for other children's answers. There are few opportunities for children to work collaboratively but they do so when required. When working in groups or pairs, they co-operate well and share resources sensibly.

8. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is variable. It is satisfactory on average but ranges from good to unsatisfactory. In Key Stage 2 teaching is good overall and ranges from satisfactory to very good. Lessons are planned well and usually the work is matched to the abilities of the children. The learning objectives of the lesson are made explicit to the children so that they understand what they have to do. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of mathematics, evident in the emphasis on correct vocabulary and good quality questioning and feedback to children. Introductions and plenary sessions are usually clear and help children learn and consolidate their work. In better lessons, the pace is good, often with clear deadlines set. Teachers manage children well and the small number of disruptive children are generally dealt with effectively. In most lessons, teachers diagnose children's strengths and areas of weakness in the lesson and modify the work to match. Children are set homework and take it seriously. Classroom assistants give effective support to teachers.

9. Mathematics schemes of work are thorough. They are based on the National Numeracy Strategy. They inform good medium-term plans which include helpful assessment grids, filled in by teacher to keep track of individuals against learning objectives. The school uses an effective range of assessments, formal standardised tests and internal tasks to track children's progress. Each child has end of year targets to achieve, shared with parents to encourage their involvement.



10. Mathematics is led well. The co-ordinator is supported by the deputy who has a management responsibility for the development of numeracy. The co-ordinator gives support to teachers through in-service training and informal discussion. He monitors the work in mathematics through looking at planning, scrutiny of children's work and classroom observations. Issues raised from the scrutiny and analysis of test results have informed the development plan and led to improvements in, for example, sharing learning objectives with children and an increase in mental arithmetic. Some of this work is supported by Local Education Authority advisory teachers.

## **Science**

1. No science lessons were observed at Key Stage 1 because of the topic cycle. Evidence of attainment and progress in Key Stage 1 is based on scrutiny of children's work, discussions with children and teachers' plans.

2. In Year 2 and Year 6, children's attainment matches expectations at this stage of the year and children are on course to meet national expectations by the end of both key stages. In Key Stage 2, the children's achievement is above average in some aspects of their work in science investigations. In both key stages, children make at least sound and often good progress in a topic and over time their progress is sound.

3. In National Curriculum teacher assessments in Key Stage 1, fewer children than average have achieved the expected level or beyond in the last two years. At the end of Key Stage 2 for the last two years, attainment has been in line with national averages in the National Curriculum tests.

4. In Key Stage 1 children describe their observations and talk about what they see and understand in their work on electrical circuits, movement, growing plants, health and growth, light and dark. Their knowledge in the areas studied is sound and higher attaining children have a good recall of work undertaken. The children use simple equipment to collect data, make comparisons and record their findings in a mixture of pictorial, simple chart and written forms. They explain why a test is fair and which variables they had changed in their experiments in order to make comparisons. Higher attaining children understand how to design a simple fair test.

5. Children make sound progress through the school. By Year 4, children determine desirable properties in materials used to make a range of objects. They plan fair tests using suitable guidance material and predict what they think will happen. They make satisfactory progress and build effectively on the sound start in Key Stage 1. They have some difficulty with recording their views when these are complex ideas and have more success verbalising them.

6. By Year 6, most children have developed good observational skills, and are experienced at asking and answering questions, making predictions and hypothesising. They measure and control factors reasonably accurately, for example using a force meter, and are good at recording their results and drawing conclusions from these. They suggest reasons for observed occurrences such as different measurements recorded on a force meter when suspending the same object in the air and in water. Many children use scientific terminology with ease, though a few have difficulties in talking about the more complex features of the work. Children's scientific knowledge has increased to include movement of the earth. They have a deeper understanding of the processes of life in plants and animals and physical processes such as electricity, magnetism and light.

7. Children make at least satisfactory progress in lessons with good progress being seen in the investigative aspects of the class work across the whole of Key Stage 2. They build on prior learning and, by the end of the topic, have made good progress over the series of lessons concentrated into a short timescale. They retain much of this knowledge and understanding, particularly in scientific investigations, during the gap between topics.

8. Most children use numeracy skills appropriately in science but a few older children confuse grams and centimetres in their recording and use rulers less effectively to draw lines in science than they do in mathematics. Many use their literacy skills to good effect when recording their findings or their hypotheses. The quality of presentation in the majority of children's books is of a high standard. No use was seen of children using information technology to support science.

9. Children's response and attitudes while discussing their past work and during lessons is almost always good and never less than satisfactory. They have an interest in science, willingly talk about their work and enthusiastically accept help and advice. As the children become older they become more independent and need less guidance or frameworks to help them carry out their investigations.

10. The quality of teaching in Key Stage 2 is usually good and never less than satisfactory. Lessons are carefully planned and contain a balance of listening, discussion and activities within whole class, pair and group work. The teachers' knowledge and understanding, in the subject are good and many are skilful at drawing out the children's understanding, especially in some of the more complex concepts in upper Key Stage 2. Lesson objectives are always clear and shared with the children. The careful structure and organisation of the lessons ensure that the objectives are fully addressed. There is a considerable amount of assessment of individual understanding and there is always careful whole-class reflection on scientific ideas during and at the close of the lesson. There are clear examples of teachers' assessment influencing future work and planning. Teachers effectively use resources to develop experimental skills and accurate measurement.

11. The planning is of very high quality and is informed by assessment tests at the end of each topic and teachers' ongoing assessments. As part of each topic the concentration on a narrow aspect of scientific investigation is having a positive impact on standards. The cyclical nature of science topics is not having a detrimental effect on their learning, as demonstrated by children's recall and ability to discuss scientific processes. To maintain continuity, selected scientific skills and knowledge are regularly used in design and technology and in art in the interim period.

12. Science is managed well; the co-ordinator is aware of current initiatives and ensures they are considered and used within the programme of scientific units. Suitable, highly supportive documentation and support materials are in place and there is some useful monitoring of the subject. During the past year research was conducted by the school to determine whether it would be advantageous to set Years 5 and 6 for science and the results acted upon. Noise beyond the classroom base of one group of children made progress more difficult for those at the back as they had difficulty hearing the contribution of other children. The range, quality and quantity of resources for science are good. They are organised well within classes and central areas and are accessible to all.

## **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### **Art**

1. Children in both key stages make good progress in many lessons and satisfactory progress over time.

2. Children in Year 2 reach a good standard in their work exploring the visual elements of pattern and experimenting with a variety of techniques for placing and overlapping simple flat shapes to produce interesting and thought provoking designs. Although given good encouragement, a few children show a lack of adventure in colour and position but some exciting work results from those who are less inhibited.

3. In Years 3 and 4, children build upon the sound grounding at Key Stage 1 to reach a good standard in creating two-dimensional models using different textures, colours and densities. They use techniques learnt in design and technology to support the work. Children in Years 5 and 6 create collages, for example of a view through a window, with a range of materials. Many are inspired by the initial discussion and visual aids to produce a good standard of work. They evaluate helpfully the work

of others at the end of the session. They make very successful sketch studies of body positions and work on shades to help enhance their painting and drawing.

4.Children's sketch books show that they are observing and recording from experience and drawing from imagination. Planning and some of the past work shows that they have a wide range of media with which to experiment. Much of the work requires the children to combine different mediums to get maximum effect. Some of the results show they are being successful in this respect. They experience the work of different artists and this influences some of their work. However, failure to provide the name of the artists being used for demonstration is a missed opportunity. The children use their artistic skills in other subjects and their work in drawing is one of the most well-developed aspects in art. There is little evidence of three-dimensional work using a range of materials, and very little use is made of computer programmes to support art.

5.The response of children in art is good and many express a love of the subject. They are well behaved, diligent and very co-operative in their work. They are highly productive, confident of success and quite intense about their work. Difficulties in the work are readily identified and they tackle them with vigour. They talk about their work and discuss ways of improving it. They are very complimentary about each other's work. Equipment is used sensibly and they take a pride in their work.

6.Teaching in both key stages is good and occasionally very good in Key Stage 2. Lesson planning is good with clear learning objectives that take account of the age of the children and their stage of development. In all lessons the discussion at the start and end is very good. The adults relate positively to children, give praise and encourage them. Resources are prepared well and teachers provide good guidance relating to managing the materials and tools, and help children evaluate the work.

7.The co-ordinator for art has prepared detailed guidance and this has more impact on the quality of teaching than at the last inspection. Work is closely related to the topic and helps to keep the children's learning in, for example, science and design and technology fresh in their minds. The wealth of knowledge and technical understanding of the co-ordinator is not yet fully exploited, although staff get help with individual lesson plans if they ask. There is a club for Year 6 children and the work from this is of good quality. It explores a further range of techniques such as batik and combining techniques for impact. The subject is well resourced.

## **Design and technology**

1.Three design and technology lessons were seen at Key Stage 1 and none at Key Stage 2, as it is not taught when the topic is focused on science. Evidence of progress is based on lessons seen, scrutiny of children's work, discussions with children and teachers' plans.

2.The children made satisfactory or good progress in the lessons with very good progress being made in relation to designing. Progress over time is good in both key stages.

3.There are opportunities for the children to design, plan and evaluate for themselves. Years 1 and 2 children design features for their puppets and produce more than one design to select the best features for a finished product. They talk very competently about their reasoning and why they have made certain choices and what they think the outcome will be. By the time they reach the end of Key Stage 1 the children have experienced a range of design problems and are, for example, competent at designing load bearing structures with construction kits, designing and building bridges to a specification and making moving axles for their vehicles. They chose from a range of materials, use tools safely and join materials in a variety of ways. Work is recorded well.

4.In art lessons Years 3 and 4 children use their designing and joining skills effectively to create a piece of flat sculpture as part of a whole class three-dimensional model. They use tools effectively and select appropriate materials for what they hope to achieve. Photographic evidence shows that Years 5 and 6 produce models into which they incorporate pneumatic mechanisms. The planning for this work shows

that an appropriate range of learning objectives for the age group is being addressed. Further development of their work requires them to use a cam mechanism to bring about movement in a model made with corrugated plastic which requires a different range of joining techniques. Other work involved models using electrical circuits. The results of these topics are shared with the public in exhibitions and the children also take part in industry generated competitions.

5.Children enjoy the subject and like the challenge of designing and making. They work sensibly with resources, use equipment safely and co-operate in the sharing of tools and materials. Children are willing to share ideas and stay on task well even staying motivated when the task becomes difficult.

6.In the three lessons seen, teaching ranged from satisfactory to very good. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and lessons are planned well. The team teaching sections of lessons are very good and give children considerable confidence about the task ahead. The teachers support the children throughout, ensuring challenges are put to them and activities progress at a fast pace. A range of objectives relating to skills and design criteria is set and teachers take care to see that these objectives are realised in the children's work. Sometimes weaker management and organisation make a lesson less effective. At its best, assessment is very good and helps influence the progress children make within a lesson.

7.Some of the work is supported by parent helpers which helps keep the lessons to a good pace and children are appropriately supported to develop the necessary skills for the task in hand. Suitable whole year group assessments take place in relation to some of the work. The subject is well managed, well resourced and has basic supporting documentation in place. Although most elements of design and technology are present in the planning, children have very little opportunity to work with food at either key stage and, when they do, there is rarely any design element to it.

## **Geography**

1.Geography was not taught during the inspection so it is not possible to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching. Judgements about progress are based mainly on a scrutiny of children's work, discussions with children and teachers' plans.

2.Progress of most children in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory. Children in Years 1 and 2 know and can do the same things. In Year 2 children's development in map making is too slow. They add information to a simple map drawn by an adult but do not use a key. Their own maps are limited to a treasure island based on a worksheet. They do not use their knowledge of the school or other localities to make a comparison with features in the local park. They use a computer to record their enquiry into play equipment in the park but do not comment on their results.

3.Children in Year 2 find it difficult to recall their previous learning. The gap of a year between their two pieces of geographical work is too long. The work they do is not planned to build on their knowledge and skills.

4.Progress at Key Stage 2 is satisfactory for most children in all year groups. Progress for more able children is unsatisfactory. In Years 3 and 4 children record and evaluate local amenities and suggest when shops in a local shopping centre will be busy. On their plans for a play area they use a key to explain the colours and symbols used to record the features. Children in Year 3 make rapid progress in their fieldwork skills and understanding of places during this unit of work.

5.By Year 6 children explain some of the physical and human characteristics of Felixstowe and Ipswich, and compare them with places in India. They read maps of different scales and use atlases. They are unsure of the location of key places in the United Kingdom and the World. Children were unable to locate London, Wales and the south west of England on a map of the British Isles when describing the evacuation of children during World War II.

6.Most children in Key Stage 2 make good progress during a unit of work but this momentum is lost

because of the long gaps between units, often a year. More able children are not challenged by the enquiry questions and tasks in the teachers' plans. By Year 6, children find it difficult to recall the places they have studied in order to make comparisons, and explain patterns of physical and human features.

7.Children enjoy talking about other places, particularly those they visit, and their recorded work is usually well presented. Attractive displays in Years 3 and 4 celebrate children's careful work and contribute to their knowledge of the local area.

8.Teachers in Key Stage 2 plan carefully to the school's guidelines. Their children make the best progress. Teachers acknowledge children's work and comment on effort and presentation. They rarely identify successful geographical thinking or tell children how to improve. The recently introduced assessment sheets identify similar attainment in children of different ages and abilities. They are of limited use.

9.The subject leader has identified the need to improve the quality of planning. She is effective within the time and opportunities available to carry out her responsibilities.

## **History**

1.History was not taught during the inspection so it is not possible to make overall judgements about the quality of teaching. Judgements about progress are based mainly on a scrutiny of children's work, discussions with children and teachers' plans.

2.Progress for most children in Key Stage 1 is unsatisfactory. Children in Years 1 and 2 know and can do the same things. By Year 2 they recall accurately the story of Grace Darling's rescue of the crew of the Forfarshire. More able children use their writing skills effectively to include details in their recount of the rescue. Children make little progress in the other elements of history; "Why did people behave as they did?" and "How do we know?". Planned work does not challenge most children in Year 2.

3.Children in Year 2 find it difficult to recall their previous learning because of the long gaps between their two history units. Children in Year 1 will have to wait over a year for their next opportunity to find out about the past.

4.At Key Stage 2 most children make satisfactory progress because there are sufficient opportunities to carry out historical enquiries. By Year 6 most children write in an extended way about life in England during World War II. Their recreations of a night during the Blitz and the evacuation of children show accurate detail and empathy with people at the time. Children are very knowledgeable about aspects of life during this period and in discussion recall a similar occasion when the threat of invasion worried people in England: the Spanish Armada.

5.Progress for more able children is unsatisfactory because they are not expected to make and explain links across periods. Opportunities to use a variety of sources to answer their questions are too limited.

6.Children in Key Stage 2 talk enthusiastically about the people and events they have studied: pyramids and Tutankhamun's tomb, life in a Tudor house and town. Children in Year 6 enjoyed 'Bertie's Blitz', a recreation of life during the Blitz in England. Children's folders and displays show the pride they take in their work. Most children use their self-evaluation sheets to comment on presentation because they do not know how to get better in history.

7.Most teachers' plans reflect the content in the school's scheme of work. The development of historical skills is less clear. Teachers acknowledge children's recorded work. Their comments occasionally identify historical thinking but advice on improvement is limited to literacy and presentation skills.

8.The subject leader has identified raising teachers' expectations of attainment as a target for improvement. She plans to include this in her introduction of the new National Curriculum. She provides effective leadership within the time and opportunities available to her.

## **Information technology**

1.The last inspection judged standards in information technology to be in line with national expectations. These expectations have risen since then and the school has, until recently, slipped behind with the subject. Following the purchase of new computers at the end of 1998, children's progress is satisfactory in both key stages. It is judged that attainment will be in line with national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1 but below at the end of Key Stage 2.

2.In Year 2 children find, print and store their work, with support. They type text in a word-processor and, with help, highlight and change the font and size of their work. They use a paint program to draw pictures with free curves, lines and filling space. They use a simple CD ROM based dictionary to find, for example, a tiger and know how to use buttons to get additional information.

3.By Year 6 they confidently use information technology to access their work to amend, print and save it. They use a graphics package to chose, alter and re-size shapes and pictures in their work on, for example, designing a classroom. All have used a spreadsheet for entering tables and adding columns of figures. Many are unsure of how to work out a formula and they have not used information technology to produce graphs or charts. Most use Logo to produce shapes and change variables to alter the outcomes. None have used systems to control events or to sense physical data.

4.Two lessons were seen in Key Stage 1 and five in Key Stage 2. Almost all teaching is at least satisfactory and is good in nearly half the lessons seen. Lessons are generally planned well and the learning objectives shared with children. Teachers know the programs used and explain and demonstrate clearly. Children are managed well and expected to behave sensibly. The systems for pairs and threes to share a computer give good access to computers in most lessons. Children's progress in lessons matches the quality of teaching. When teaching is good, children learn and consolidate appropriate skills with a good pace. Occasionally, there is too little information technology in the lesson plan and children spend valuable time illustrating a few word-processed words.

5.Children generally respond well to information technology lessons. Most are interested in the tasks and work hard. Children behave sensibly, particularly on the computers, which they treat with care. A minority of children find it difficult to show interest in teacher-led discussion, preferring to get back to their task. When sharing computers, children co-operate well and work collaboratively when producing a joint effort.

6.Planning for information technology is based on material produced nationally, supplemented and modified by the school's own materials. This ensures the work is well structured for children as they move through the school. Each unit contains an integrated assessment task which is useful in tracking children's progress.

7.The co-ordinator also runs the Key Stage 1 unit which puts pressure on time. Her teaching base is removed from the information technology room which makes supporting teachers more difficult. Despite this, information technology is moving forward in the school. The recent purchase of a network of computers, housed in a teaching space to allow a class to be taught, and the timetabled hour for each class, have had a positive impact on attainment. Technician support ensures most computers are working at any one time and new software is installed efficiently. At present, the computers are not used sufficiently in subjects of the curriculum, although this is slowly increasing. With the Internet installed, children's access has to be supervised and this limits the use of computers outside timetabled time. These issues need to be resolved to provide facilities for children, particularly those without other computer access.

## **Music**

1.Judgements about children's progress are based on lessons seen, listening to children's singing and playing in assembly, and a rehearsal of the recorder band. Class music was not taught in Year 6.

2. During Key Stage 1 children make satisfactory progress in all aspects of music. By Year 2 they select instruments to create the effect they want in their simple sound sequences. They play with an awareness of each other and most sustain the beat. Most children sing simple unison songs accurately. They use simple terms, slow, calm, bumpy, to describe and compare sounds. In two lessons observed children made good progress in using their appraisal of 'Carnival of the Animals' to improve their compositions about an elephant.

3. At Key Stage 2 most children make satisfactory progress. Older, higher attaining children make good progress in violin and cello lessons taught by visiting teachers from the County Music Service. Most children in Years 3 and 4 sing in tune with an awareness of phrasing. Fewer children identify and sustain the rhythm when accompanying a song. Children in Year 3 combine voiced sounds and select instruments to create a journey across their sound map. They improved the quality of their sounds in their compositions during one lesson seen during the inspection. Children in Year 4 know the names of their selected instruments. They are becoming aware of texture in their compositions. In one lesson, groups used continuous sounds alongside short phrases to create the effect of a journey over water.

4. In lessons children show enjoyment of music, particularly when composing and performing. They are quick to organise into groups and most work with sustained concentration and awareness of others. Children handle instruments with care. They listen to each other and offer constructive advice. In assembly they listen carefully and with pleasure to live and recorded music.

5. Examples of good and very good teaching were observed in both key stages: two class lessons in Key Stage 1; two small group lessons in Key Stage 2. The best lessons are in composition and performance and are taught by teachers with enthusiasm and secure subject knowledge. They use correct terminology, organise the use of instruments efficiently and have high expectations of all children. One example of weak teaching was seen at Key Stage 2. In this lesson the teacher had low expectations of children's accuracy in singing and pulse. Mistakes were not corrected. Since the last inspection there has been little increase in the opportunities for children in Key Stage 2, who learn instruments to use their expertise in class lessons.

6. The school's scheme of work provides a sound basis for progression from Reception to Year 6. Music is taught using a variety of recorded radio programmes. At Key Stage 1 these are supplemented by the school's own planning and materials. This has had a positive impact on teachers' and children's enthusiasm. The range and quality of instruments are good. They allow children to make selections for the mood and effect they want.

7. The subject leader provides extra-curricular opportunities for children in Key Stage 2 to play the recorder and keyboard in a small band. A parent and two other teachers run beginner recorder groups. About fifty children enjoy taking part and make sound progress in skills and performance. These children are given the opportunity to take part in assemblies and concerts outside the school. Opportunities for children to be involved in large performances are provided at Harvest Festival and Christmas.

## **Physical education**

1. During the inspection, swimming lessons were observed in both key stages, along with the teaching of games and dance in Key Stage 2. In these aspects of the physical education curriculum, the children make satisfactory progress. In swimming all children make good progress.

2. The scrutiny of teachers' planning indicates that, overall, the children receive a balanced physical education curriculum, and take part in a full range of activities, including gymnastics, and athletic activities for the children in Key Stage 2. The school's timetable for this term, however, indicates that the children in Year 1 have only one 30 minute physical education lesson each week, with swimming being provided as the second activity for the children in Year 2.



3. In Key Stage 2, children make sound progress. In Years 3 and 4 they are developing a range of hand eye co-ordination skills in preparation for games such as netball. Their throwing and catching skills are generally underdeveloped, although they are well motivated to meet the challenges set in lessons. In hockey, the understanding of how to hold the stick and control the ball is developing well in readiness for striking and field activities. In dance, children control and compose movements by varying tension, level and direction. They practise, improve and perform simple sequences and learn from watching the demonstrations of others. The Year 6 children have an opportunity to visit a residential adventure centre in the summer term, where they take part in activities such as climbing and abseiling. The children in Key Stage 2 have opportunities to develop their swimming skills, an extended report for this is attached.

4. In both key stages children show an enthusiasm for physical education and they generally respond quickly to the instructions and directions given. They show an understanding for the need to observe safety procedures. When working in pairs and small groups they co-operate and collaborate well. They share and take turns in a considerate and sensible manner. On occasions some children become over excited in the lesson which leads to inattention and slower progression.

5. The quality of teaching is sound. Teachers plan structured lessons and provide clear guidance and instructions. In the better lessons this contributes to the children's effective progress. In some lessons, however, opportunities for the children to practise and develop their skills is lost due to too many instructions and details being given at one time. This results in the children becoming restless and uncertain about what they are suppose to be doing. Teachers provide opportunities for the children to demonstrate their ideas and skills to each other and use the children's performance to build on and evaluate practice.

6. The co-ordinator for the subject has recently been appointed to the post; she has clear plans for where developments are required. Resources and accommodation are generally satisfactory, although further investment is required to replace and extend the number of mats available for gymnastics. The older children in the school take part in a range of curriculum activities such as football, basket ball, netball and swimming. The football team has recently been successful in winning a six-a-side trophy as a result of the hard work and enthusiasm that takes place in the football club.

## 201. Swimming

1. The inspection of this school included a focused view of swimming which is reported below.

2. The children in Key Stage 1 are developing confidence and the appropriate breathing techniques. They practise a range of movements to assist them in propelling themselves through the water. They travel across the pool using floats and are in the early stages of mastering the front crawl stroke. In lessons, they listen carefully and are quick to respond to instructions. They work hard and show a high level of motivation.

3. In Key stage 2, the children in Years 3, 4 and 5 were observed in swimming lessons in the on-site pool. The children in Year 6 swim at the local authority pool during the summer term.

4. The standard of swimming achieved by the end of Key Stage 2 is good. Children in Years 3, 4 and 5 make good use of the school's swimming pool and have an opportunity to build on their confidence and competencies in swimming. By Year 5, the majority of children swim a distance of 12 metres without the use of a float, using their legs only in a kicking action. In their work on the front crawl, the children are engaged and informed by good teaching and practise and improve their arm strokes and the appropriate breathing techniques. They listen well and respond quickly to the instructions given. By the end of Year 5 it is expected that all the children will be able to swim.

5. The quality of teaching in swimming is very good. Lessons are planned and structured well and the instructor demonstrates a high level of subject expertise. Each lesson commences with the checking of the safety and hygiene procedures. Relationships with the children are good and expectations are

high. Effective progress is made in all lessons due to the clear instructions and guidance given. The pace of lessons is very good and children sustain a high level of activity throughout the 20 minute session. The quality of teaching leads to a high level of commitment by the children who take a pride and enjoyment in their achievements.

6. Swimming in the school's pool is taught in the same sets as English or mathematics. This arrangement ensures that the additional curriculum activity does not interrupt the children's studies and enables the school to make effective use of the times either side of the swimming lessons. As the majority of children are able to swim, the less confident swimmers are given opportunities to develop their breathing skills through exercises such as blowing the small balls across the pool, ensuring that their chins are well in the water. Additional opportunities to practise with the use of floats are also made available. Children are expected to show a high level of organisation and independence in preparing for swimming. They change with little support and during the lessons observed no items of clothing went missing!

7. The swimming instructor assesses children's progress and uses this to inform the planning for the next lesson. The progress of the children along with evaluations of the lessons are shared with the physical education co-ordinator in order that the planning remains in line with school expectations and is monitored for its effectiveness. Outcomes are also discussed at the key stage planning meetings. A record of each pupil's progress is kept and used to identify success in the achievement of proficiency certificates.

## **Religious education**

1. Throughout the school, attainment in religious education is broadly in line with the expectations set out in the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus.

2. By the end of Key Stage 1 children describe how they celebrate occasions that are special to them. They know of some celebrations in Christianity and Judaism. They use the correct words to talk and write about how Christians celebrate harvest in church. They express a simple understanding of what people mean when they use religious terms such as hymn and prayer. In Key Stage 1 children's knowledge of the distinctive features of religious traditions has improved since the last inspection.

3. In Key Stage 2 children have a sound understanding of some of the rituals and beliefs of Christians, Sikhs and Jews. They name and describe places of worship. By Year 6 they explain the meanings within different stories in the Bible and make links to earlier work on rules for living in different religions. In Years 3 and 4 children explain how families are different and some of the reasons why families are important to their members. They recognise that families may hold different beliefs.

4. Progress in religious education varies between key stages. In Key Stage 1 children make satisfactory progress in gaining knowledge about religious activities, beliefs and places. Their progress in understanding religious ideas and symbolism is just satisfactory. At Key Stage 2 children make satisfactory progress overall. In one lesson in Years 3 and 4, children moved quickly from explaining physical differences between families to considering feelings and behaviour within families. A class in Year 6 made good progress in their understanding of how Christians apply bible stories to their lives. They summarised their ideas after lengthy discussion.

5. Children are interested in their work. At Key Stage 1 children answered questions about a video on Christians celebrating harvest and were pleased to recall the special word 'hymns'. Their recorded work reflects their efforts to write neatly. In Years 3 and 4 children enjoy the variety of tasks. They contribute to discussions, are keen to take part in role play and listen attentively to stories. Children in Years 5 and 6 confidently offer their interpretations and opinions on religious issues.

6. In Key Stage 1 teaching is satisfactory and in Key Stage 2 it is good. Lessons are planned well and the learning objectives are shared with the children. Teachers give clear introductions and use resources, such as videos, well to illustrate the work. Good questioning ensures children understand

what they are doing and teachers use effective plenary sessions to summarise and extend the learning. Sometimes in Key Stage 1, teachers develop skills in English at the expense of increasing understanding of the relationship between beliefs and everyday experiences. At Key Stage 2 teachers use a variety of approaches. They foster an atmosphere of trust in which children can express feelings and opinions. Activities are challenging and matched well to the ages and abilities of the children. Teachers in both key stages do not use the assessments identified in the scheme of work designed to help children improve.

7.The subject leader is enthusiastic and has attended recent training. She has identified the need to monitor children's work across the school as her priority for improving achievement. She is effective within the time and opportunities available.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

1. The school was inspected in November 1999 by a team of 5 inspectors. They spent a total of 24 days in the school and observed 105 lessons or part lessons. Discussion took place with many children. Their work was evaluated and samples of children's work from all classes were inspected. Discussions were held with staff, governors and a number of parents. The school's documents, including plans, policies and records, were analysed. A meeting to hear the views of parents was attended by 22 parents. 149 parents' questionnaires were returned.

## 2. 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 6	376	1	69	73

### Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (Reception - Year 6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	15.9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23.65 : 1

#### Education support staff (Reception - Year 6)

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked each week	100

Average class size:	29
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### Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
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	£
Total Income	662,279
Total Expenditure	653,488
Expenditure per pupil	1,571
Balance brought forward from previous year	35,736
Balance carried forward to next year	44,527

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:	376
Number of questionnaires returned:	149

### 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	44	54	2	0	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	41	52	6	1	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	14	54	23	8	1
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	30	63	6	1	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	32	55	8	5	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	33	60	5	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	20	62	13	5	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	23	59	7	9	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	24	60	15	1	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	24	57	16	2	1
My child(ren) like(s) school	46	48	2	3	1