

INSPECTION REPORT

Edgar Sewter Community Primary School
Halesworth

LEA area : Suffolk

Unique Reference Number : 124585
OFSTED Inspection Number: 187281

Headteacher : Mr P A Rodgers

Reporting inspector : Mr R E Fern
OFSTED Inspector Number: 6637

Dates of inspection : 27 - 30 September 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707804

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school : Infant and Junior

Type of control : County

Age range of pupils : 4 - 9

Gender of pupils : Mixed

School address : Norwich Road
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Appropriate authority : The governing body
Address as above

Name of chair of governors : Dr J A MacHeath

Date of previous inspection : 12 - 16 February 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members | Subject responsibilities | Aspect responsibilities |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|
| Mr R E Fern, Registered Inspector | Science Religious education | Attainment and progress; Teaching; Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development; Leadership and management; Under fives. |
| Dr A Walton, Lay Inspector | | Equal Opportunities; Attendance; Support, guidance and pupils' welfare; Partnership with parents and the community. |
| Mr M D Harvey | Mathematics Design and technology History Geography | Attitudes, behaviour and personal development; Staffing, accommodation and learning resources; The efficiency of the school. |
| Miss J M Crook | English Information and communications technology | The curriculum and assessment; Special educational needs. |
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MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

The school makes very good provision for the children in the Nursery.

- The children make good progress in their learning in all aspects of English and very good progress in reading. The standards achieved by age 7 are well above the national average.
- Throughout the school, the children make good progress in their learning in mathematics and science. From a relatively low starting point, they reach standards as high as those in similar schools.
- In information and communications technology (ICT), the children are making good progress in all classes. Very good provision for ICT has recently been set up by the school in a well-equipped specialist room.
- Children with special educational needs make very good progress, especially in reading and spelling.
- The national programmes in literacy and numeracy have been successfully introduced. They are having a positive impact on learning and teaching.
- Children have very positive attitudes to their learning.
- The quality of relationships throughout the school is good.
- Teaching reaches at least a satisfactory level in very nearly all lessons. In 44% the teaching is good and in a further 26% it is very good or excellent.
- The personal support, guidance and care shown towards children's well-being is a strength.
- Good relationships have been built up between school and homes, based on shared values.
- Strong links have been forged with local community groups in Halesworth.
- The school benefits from strong leadership.
- The monitoring of children's progress and standards is very good.

Where the school has weaknesses

There are no major weaknesses in the school but these key issues need to be acted upon:

despite good overall progress in English and mathematics across the school, the higher attaining children in Year 4 do not receive sufficient challenge from their teachers, and their progress tends to slow down.

- I. Occasionally the introductions to lessons last longer than the children's concentration can cope with and they fidget and, very occasionally, resort to mild misbehaviour.
- II. Some children, especially in Key Stage 1, need more guidance so that they can make the best use of their time in group activities, especially in literacy and numeracy.
- III. Expectations about the standards of tidiness and the quality of presentation of children's work are sometimes not high enough.

This is a good school in which the strengths far outweigh the weaknesses. The headteacher and teachers regularly monitor and evaluate the quality of education provided and the attainment of children. This has led to significant and on-going improvements, particularly in the last three years. The weaknesses will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to parents or guardians of children at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The progress made by the children and their attainments at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4 have shown improvements since the last inspection. All the key issues from the previous report have been met and the quality of education provided has also improved:

IV. standards in design technology throughout the school, and in English, ICT and music in Years 3 and 4, have all reached satisfactory levels;

V. a good range of policies and schemes of work has been produced for all subjects of the national curriculum and religious education;

VI. teachers make good use of the opportunities provided for in-service training, both in-school and at a variety of venues in the County;

VII. assessment procedures have been improved and provide good information for planning what children will learn next;

VIII. curriculum co-ordinators now have a more influential role in the school and make an important contribution to monitoring standards;

IX. the range of teaching approaches has been extended and enables children to carry out investigations, especially in mathematics and science. Children are learning how to frame very good questions, especially in Year 4, to give them the information they need;

X. the quality of what is provided for the children is regularly monitored, including the deployment and effectiveness of staffing resources;

XI. the provision for children's personal development continues to be good. In particular, there has been substantial improvement in providing opportunities for children to increase their awareness of western culture and of cultural diversity.

The headteacher and staff, well supported by the governing body, have taken very seriously the key issues from the previous inspection. They continue to have a positive attitude towards all that they do and are determined to keep moving forwards. As a result, the school's capacity for further sustained improvement is good.

• **Standards in subjects**

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds in 1998 based on the National Curriculum tests:

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

(*similar means schools nationally which serve similar catchment areas indicated by the percentage of children eligible for free school meals.)

The children make very good progress in the Nursery and good progress in the Reception class. By age five most of them reach the expected levels in four out of six areas of learning. The exceptions for many of them are in language, especially speaking and listening, and mathematics.

By age 7, the children's attainment in reading is well above the national average and above average in spelling and writing. Progress in reading is very good and in other aspects of English it is good. This is reflected in the more recent 1999 results than those shown in this table. The indications are that standards in writing are higher than they were in 1998. The children make good progress in mathematics and science and achieve standards in line with the national average.

Overall, they make good progress in English in Years 3 and 4 and reach higher than average

standards by the end of Year 4, especially in reading. In mathematics and science the children make sound progress and reach standards in line with other schools.

Throughout the school, the children make steady progress and reach the expected levels in religious education. Good progress is made in all classes in ICT following the recent installation of a new computer suite. Standards in ICT by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 are now in line with what is expected. The children make sound progress in all other subjects.

Children with special educational needs make very good progress, especially in reading and spelling.

· **Quality of teaching**

| Teaching in: | Under 5 | 5 - 7 years | 7 - 9 years |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| English | Very good | Good | Good |
| Mathematics | Good | Good | Good |
| Science | * | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Information technology | * | Very good | Very good |
| Religious education | * | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |
| Other subjects | Good | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |

** these subjects are not studied in this form by children under 5.*

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

Other aspects of the school

| Aspect | Comment |
|---|---|
| Behaviour | Behaviour in class, in the playground and around the school is good. |
| Attendance | Attendance is very high. |
| Ethos* | Children have very positive attitudes towards their learning. Relationships are good. There is a clear focus on learning and a purposeful approach to raising standards. |
| Leadership and management | Strong leadership from the headteacher, deputy and Key Stage 1 co-ordinator, very well supported by the governing body. There is an emphasis on monitoring and evaluating to raise standards. |
| Curriculum | The curriculum is broad, well planned and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and religious education. It is reasonably balanced. Literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully introduced. Assessment procedures work well. A whole-school approach to personal and social education is being developed. |
| Pupils with special educational needs | Very good provision is made for children with special educational needs. These children are identified early in the school, especially in English. The teaching is very good. Children are helped to develop high self-esteem. |
| Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development | Very good provision is made for children's moral development. For spiritual development provision is sound and for social and cultural development it is good. |
| Staffing, resources and accommodation | The staffing levels are good and staff deployment is effective. Resources and accommodation are adequate and looked after well. |
| Value for money | The school provides good value for money. |

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

• The parents' views of the school

| What most parents like about the school | What some parents are not happy about |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The results of the parents' questionnaire show a consistently positive view of the school. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There were no significant criticisms of the school in the parents' questionnaires. |

Out of 252 questionnaires, 77 were returned. 23 parents attended the pre-inspection parents' meeting. All of them presented a generally positive picture of the school. The inspection team's evidence and judgements support the parents' positive views.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

i.Improve teaching where there are weaknesses by: (paragraph numbers 39, 41, 43, 131 and 137 refer)

- .ensuring the introduction to all lessons is a suitable length to hold all the children's attention;
- .increasing the expectation and challenge in the teaching for higher attaining children in literacy and numeracy in Year 4;
- .ensuring the organisation and expectations of group work, especially in literacy and numeracy, increase the children's independent study skills.

i.Improve the presentation of children's work. (paragraph numbers 40 and 146 refer)

Other more minor points for action are to be found in paragraphs 50, 53, 68, 81 and 86.

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1.Edgar Sewter Primary School serves the town of Halesworth, a small market town in north central Suffolk. Most of the pupils live in the town and walk, or are brought by car, to school. Some are brought by bus from surrounding villages, especially Wissett, Rumburgh, Chediston and Huntingfield. A few years ago it was larger than most first schools, but the number on roll at the time of the inspection (225; 104 boys and 121 girls) makes it around average in size. In Years 1 to 4 there are two classes in each year group and no mixed age classes.

2.Children enter the school representing a broad range of attainments. A significant proportion of the children join the school, either into the Nursery or into the Reception class, with attainment a little lower than the average, especially in their social development, spoken language and numeracy skills. Provision in the Nursery and Reception is particularly effective; the children make good progress so that the number on the school's register of special educational needs is below average. Three children have statements of special educational need.

3.There is no child for whom English is a language additional to that spoken at home. This is well below what is normally found.

4.The 1991 Census data indicates that in Halesworth there is a lower than average number of adults with higher education qualifications and a larger than normal number of children who are living in households with high occupancy rates. 15% of the children are eligible for free school meals, which is broadly average when compared with other first schools.

5.Most children join the Nursery when they are aged four. Groups are admitted at the beginning of each term. Most stay in the Nursery for two terms before entering the Reception class at the beginning of the term in which they become five. A few children join the Nursery when they are still three and so stay for three terms. At the time of the inspection there were 20 children (11 boys and 9 girls) still aged 4 who were attending full-time in the Reception class. There were 38 children (26 boys and 12 girls) attending half-time in the Nursery.

6.In its statement of aims the school sets out its 'beliefs':

- .that children should enjoy coming to school;
- .there should be good relationships between home, school and the community;
- .an atmosphere should be created in which children are valued and caring;
- .there should be an equality of opportunity;
- .children should reach high standards of work, play, manners and appearance;
- .all children should do their best.

1.The school's current priorities and targets are to:

- .introduce the national numeracy strategy;
- .raise standards in science;
- .continue to implement and monitor the national literacy strategy;
- .produce and implement a programme for personal and social development;
- .review policy and practice in meeting children's special educational needs;
- .introduce revised arrangements for teacher appraisal in the light of national guidance.

1.Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1¹

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

| Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|------|------|-------|-------|
| 1998 | 29 | 22 | 51 |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results | | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|--|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or Above | Boys | 24 (22) | 23 (24) | 26 (25) |
| | Girls | 19 (22) | 19 (24) | 20 (24) |
| | Total | 43 (44) | 42 (48) | 46 (49) |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 86 (41) | 84 (94) | 92 (96) |
| | National | 80 (80) | 81 (80) | 84 (84) |

| Teacher Assessments | | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above | Boys | 24 (24) | 28 (25) | 28 (23) |
| | Girls | 20 (22) | 20 (24) | 21 (23) |
| | Total | 40 (46) | 48 (49) | 49 (46) |
| Percentage at NC Level 2 or above | School | 88 (92) | 96 (90) | 98 (96) |
| | National | 81 (81) | 85 (85) | 86 (86) |

7. Attendance

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------|--|-----|
| Percentage of half days (sessions) Missed through absence for the Latest complete reporting year : | | | % |
| Authorised Absence | School | | 4.3 |
| | National comparative data | | 5.7 |
| Unauthorised Absence | School | | 0.0 |
| | 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 | | 26 |
| Satisfactory or better | | 99 |
| Less than satisfactory | | 1 |

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

7. EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

7. Attainment and progress

7. Children under five

2.The children join the school in the Nursery or Reception classes with a range of attainments. Results from early assessments (baseline assessment) indicate that at the beginning of the year in which they enter the Reception class their overall attainment is a little below average. The aspects of their attainment in which this is most marked is in speaking and listening; their understanding of number and letters; and some aspects of social development. Boys' attainments on entry to the school in 1998 were higher than girls.

3.The children make very good progress while they are in the Nursery and good progress in the Reception class. By age five they have reached the expected level (described in Desirable Learning Outcomes) in four of the six areas of learning. The exceptions are in language, especially speaking and listening, and mathematics. Some of the children still leave words out of sentences and confuse tenses and pronouns. Their counting and use of numbers and identification and naming of shapes continue to be less than expected.

4.Progress in their physical and creative development is good. They can use pencils and other drawing and writing equipment and scissors competently. They enjoy physical education and control their movements well. The younger children accompany a story with percussion and show good control of volume and rhythm. The children's awareness of the world around them is growing quickly. They are fascinated by the change from summer to autumn. Most of the children have learned how to work with others and to listen and concentrate for appropriate periods of time.

9. Children aged five to seven, Key Stage 1

English, mathematics and science

1.By the end of Key Stage 1, the children's attainment is well above the national average in reading and above the national average in writing and spelling. The 1998 national assessments for these aspects reflected this picture but with a smaller than expected percentage reaching the higher level 3 in writing. The school has addressed this issue and the 1999 results indicate that writing has improved to reach the expected proportion of children at level 3. Given the lower than average starting point for many of the children when they arrive in the school, these figures show that they make good progress. English in general and reading in particular is a strength in Key Stage 1.

2.In mathematics the children's attainment by the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with the national average. This is reflected in the last three years of national assessments. The results in mathematics have improved since the last inspection and are now in line with those achieved by schools serving similar areas. There have been improvements in all aspects of mathematics since the last inspection. However, children's confidence and competence in carrying out investigations (for example, which of the four rules to use in problem solving) has rightly been targeted by the school as an area for further development. Overall, the children make good progress in mathematics during Key Stage 1.

3.The children's attainment in science is in line with the national average. They make good progress. By the end of Year 2 they have built up a sound range of subject-specific vocabulary and can carry out an investigation with adult help. They know about fair testing and understand basic safety issues.

14. Other subjects

1. In ICT the children's attainment is in line with the national expectation. They are very much enjoying the school's new facilities and making good progress in word-processing, using a range of programs covering other applications and in controlling the mouse. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations at age 7 of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus and children are making sound progress.

2. In all other subjects where the inspectors had enough evidence to arrive at judgements, children's progress was found to be satisfactory.

16. Children aged seven to nine, Key Stage 2

English, mathematics and science

1. In English, by the end of Year 4 the children reach standards above what is expected nationally, especially in reading. They make good progress during Year 3 in reading and sound progress in other aspects, thus building on their attainment at the end of Key Stage 1. In Year 4, overall, the children make sound progress, but this masks some unevenness. The lower attaining children and those with special educational needs continue to make good progress. Some of the higher attaining children do not receive sufficient challenge in English and their progress tends to slow down. When comparing the reading test results at the end of Year 2 and at the end of Year 4 for the 1998-9 Year 4 children, there is an indication that higher attaining girls, in particular, achieved below what they were capable of.

2. Children's attainment and progress in mathematics by the end of Year 4 is in line with what is expected. They are competent in a wide range of calculations, measure accurately and work successfully with shapes and angles. They carry out investigations and record their findings appropriately. In science, the children make sound progress and their attainment overall is at the expected level. They build on their knowledge and understanding from Key Stage 1. The children carry out investigations with increasing precision and contrast their predictions with what actually happens in their experiment. In Year 4 they are particularly good at framing key questions which will help them to find the information they need.

18. Other subjects

1. In ICT, the children in all classes are becoming increasingly familiar with the new facilities. Having had limited opportunities in ICT previously, they are making good progress and attaining what is expected, using a range of graphics and word-processing programs in particular.

2. Progress in religious education is sound and continues to be in line with the expectations of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus. The children in Year 4 are very perceptive in the questions they ask of members of faith communities. In other subjects, where there was sufficient evidence to arrive at secure judgements, children's progress was found to be satisfactory.

20. Children with special educational needs in both key stages

1. Children with special educational needs make very good progress in both key stages, especially in their reading and spelling. This results from carefully planned programmes of work in small groups and transfers to their class lessons in literacy where they continue to make good progress. Each of the children has clear and appropriate targets related to their Individual Educational Plan (IEP). Most of them meet the targets and reach a good standard of achievement bearing in mind their previous attainment.

21. Literacy, numeracy and ICT across the curriculum

2. Children's attainment in reading stands them in very good stead in all other subjects. It enables them to gather information from books and other printed material when researching in history, geography

and science. Skills in handwriting and spelling are adequate, but the quality of the presentation of written work is sometimes untidy.

3. Confidence in numeracy skills serves them well and enables children to measure and present tables of results in science, graphs in geography, data handling in ICT and a bar graph (with adult help) in Reception.

23.

Trends since the last inspection

1. The progress made by children and their attainments at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4 have shown improvements since the last inspection. In particular, Key Stage 1 standards in reading have been sustained at well above the national average. Standards in spelling are at the appropriate level, and writing has improved and is in line with the national average. Progress in Years 3 and 4 has improved, but the school has identified the need to continue to raise the standards reached by higher attaining children. Standards in the subjects identified by the last report, that is in music, design and technology and information technology, and the investigative aspects of science and mathematics, have improved and are now where they should be.

24. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

2. Throughout the school children have positive attitudes to learning. Their response was at least satisfactory in almost all lessons and it was good or better in 2 out of every 3.

3. The children in the Nursery and Reception classes make good progress in their personal and social development. By age five they take turns, share and play co-operatively. They concentrate for sustained periods of time. The children enjoy coming to school, are well behaved and enthusiastic in all that they are doing.

4. Children generally listen well to the teacher and to each other. They contribute well to lessons by sharing their experiences and answering questions enthusiastically as well as asking them. They are keen to join in discussion and to demonstrate what they have learned. They persevere with their work. They follow instructions carefully and endeavour to improve, as in handwriting lessons. When required, they observe well such as in a video about weather forecasts in Year 4 geography or a teacher's demonstration of cutting card and paper in design and technology in Year 3. They usually settle quickly to written tasks and some complete a lot of work in the time given to the activity. Most children enjoy their homework and some do extra of their own choosing.

5. Occasionally the response of some children is not so positive. This is the result of overlong introductions whilst sitting together on the carpet, or where work is too easy, too hard or is to be completed well within the time allowed. In these few lessons children lose concentration, fidget and, very occasionally, resort to mild misbehaviour. Overall, however, behaviour in class, in the playground and around the school is good. No pupil has been excluded in the last 3 years.

6. Relationships are good. Children co-operate well, as when testing each other's spellings. Most are developing independence in their learning and from a young age are taught to access resources and clear away properly. They are proud to undertake a variety of jobs. On the odd occasion, as in an ICT lesson or group work in mathematics, children are reluctant to solve problems without help and confirmation from the teacher and will wait for reassurance.

7. The school enjoys a central place in the local community and contributes to its life in a variety of ways, including entertaining the elderly at Christmas for example. The school also benefits from the community's help in activities like living history.

8. The children enjoy their school.

31. Attendance

1.The attendance level at the school is very high and there are no unauthorised absences in the recorded year. The school's code for classifying absences is consistently implemented in the registers which are kept well and constitute a permanent record.

2.Children come to school and to lessons on time.

3.The school's very good attendance rate has a beneficial effect on children's attainment and progress.

34.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

34. Teaching

1.Throughout the school teaching reaches at least a satisfactory level in very nearly all lessons. It is good in 44% and very good or excellent in a further 26%. The teaching which is good, or better, has a strong impact on children's progress and attainment. Although teaching is a strength across the school, there are variations and occasional weaknesses.

2.There is a large majority of good teaching in all parts of the school. There are significant proportions of very good teaching in Year 3 and in the Nursery.

3.In the great majority of lessons throughout the school teachers are knowledgeable about the subject content and of the needs of the children. The resources from the national initiatives in numeracy and literacy have been used well to extend teachers' knowledge and understanding. Occasionally phonics teaching is hindered by adults and children adding too much of an 'u' sound to consonants and so making it difficult to blend sounds. In ICT and music, teachers have made good use of training provided in the school to extend their skills and knowledge. All the teachers are very good role models as learners for their pupils.

4.Teachers mostly have high expectations of children's learning and attainment. For example, children in Year 4 are expected to use the computer to copy and change the size of shapes. Throughout the school, the children are taught and expected to use subject specialist vocabulary in mathematics, science and religious education. The teacher in a Year 2 class teaches the children about alliteration in poetry and enables them to use the technique in their own writing. Particularly effective are the high expectations teachers have of children with special educational needs.

5.In Years 3 and 4, the children are set by attainment into two different groups for literacy and numeracy. The teachers in Year 3 ensure that all the children, including those with higher attainments, are challenged by the teaching and make the expected progress. This happens somewhat less in Year 4 and the progress of some of the higher attaining children tends to slow down. To increase the challenge in the teaching of literacy and numeracy to higher attaining children in year 4 is a key issues for action.

6.In a Year 2 class the teacher provides the children with handwriting targets and this helps them to improve the presentation of their work. By contrast, in another class the teacher's own handwriting does not present children with a good role model, neither on the board nor when marking the children's books. Expectations in the school about the standards of tidiness and the quality of presentation of children's work are often not high enough. This is a key issue for action.

7.Lessons are carefully planned and reflect the detailed medium-term subject plans. Planning in the Nursery is consistently very good. The teacher uses information from a thorough assessment of children's attainment to ensure that activities extend their learning and help them to make further progress. In art, music and physical education lesson plans are generally good and ensure a sequential approach to children developing skills. In a few lessons insufficient attention is given to

what children will learn as opposed to what they will do. However, in most lessons there is a clear structure and work is planned to take account of the range of abilities in the class. There are good examples of this in the group work of literacy and numeracy lessons and in ICT. On most occasions there is an introduction followed by group work and a conclusion in the form of a whole-class session to reinforce what has been learned. This is usually managed well. Occasionally, the introduction lasts longer than the children's attention span can cope with and they start to fidget. To ensure the introduction to each lesson is an appropriate length, and all the children are engaged by it, is a key issue for action.

8. In the great majority of lessons teachers manage children well and achieve high standards of discipline. A good pace is maintained and effective use is made of questioning and explanation. The use of praise and encouragement to help motivate children is a strength.

9. In some numeracy, literacy and ICT lessons the teacher becomes closely involved with a group of children or an individual and pays insufficient attention to the activities of others in the class who are not concentrating on what they should be doing. Some children, especially in Key Stage 1, need more help to make the best use of their time in group activities, especially in numeracy and literacy. This is a key issue for action.

10. Resources are mostly used well. In science a small model skeleton captured children's attention and helped them to understand the purpose and location of bones. Enlarged texts and other aids are regularly used effectively in literacy sessions. The efficient deployment of the nursery nurse, classroom assistants and other adults is a strength in many of the lessons in the Nursery and Reception class. They are generally well briefed by the teachers about what the children should be learning. In other classes, the classroom assistants provide good support for the children in their groups, especially the lower attainers, and help to extend their learning.

11. Informal day-to-day assessment is good in most classes. In all year groups, but particularly in Year 3, lessons habitually start and finish with whole-class sessions to check and recap on what children have learned and to reinforce new learning. The marking of children's work is more variable. In some marking teachers acknowledge what children have achieved and suggest how they can improve. There are other examples, though, where only ticks have been used with the odd comment, occasionally not decipherable to the child, about presentation. This is not consistent with the school's marking policy.

12. Homework is set and followed in line with the school's policy. The arrangements are welcomed by parents and mostly enjoyed by the children.

13. The special educational needs co-ordinator and a classroom assistant withdraw the children with special needs at different times through the week to support their work, mainly in literacy. The teaching in these sessions is very good. Detailed planning and carefully chosen resources help the children to meet their targets. The teacher has an extremely good relationship with the children and high expectations of their attainments. The children are assessed regularly to track their progress and amend programmes and targets if necessary. In their own classes they are supported well with appropriate tasks and guidance.

14. Since the last inspection there have been significant improvements in the teaching. These are especially in the planning of lessons, the teachers' subject knowledge and, in the main, the expectations of what all the children should be achieving.

48. The curriculum and assessment

1. The quality of the curriculum provided by the school is good and has a positive impact on the standards achieved by the children and the progress they make. The national literacy and numeracy strategies have been successfully introduced. The curriculum is sufficiently broad, covering all areas of learning for the under fives and all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education in both

key stages. Health and sex education is taught through these subjects. Personal and social education is taught informally at present, but there is no whole-school policy or scheme of work to ensure coherence and progression through the school. The current School Development Plan shows that this is an area to be developed.

2.The curriculum is reasonably well balanced, with suitable time allocated to each subject. However, following the introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies, the management team is ready to review the distribution of subjects and the length of some lessons. At present, some lessons are too long and result in an inefficient use of time. Many children only experience physical education once a week. Literacy and numeracy sessions are generally planned for the morning, which means that some of the children tend to be very tired by lunchtime. There are good links between subjects. Children's literacy, numeracy and ICT skills are promoted well in other subjects. To review the distribution of the curriculum across the week is a point for action.

3.All pupils have equal access to the curriculum. The provision for children with special educational needs is very good, with effective procedures in place which are in line with the Code of Practice. Individual education plans with clear, specific and appropriate targets are drawn up for those children who need them. These are normally taught in small groups withdrawn from classes to work with the special educational needs co-ordinator and followed up with appropriate activities in the classroom.

4.The curriculum is enhanced by a number of extra-curricular clubs, activities and visits. At different times of the year, children have the opportunity to take part in computer, recorder, football, netball and swimming clubs. They undertake visits to local places as part of their history, science and geography work. For example, the Nursery visits a farm and Year 3 study Anglo Saxons at West Stow. During world book week, children were given the opportunity to visit different teachers for story telling sessions at lunchtimes.

5.Curriculum planning is good. There are policy statements for each subject and curriculum co-ordinators update these to reflect new initiatives. Long-term plans for each year group ensure coverage of the desirable learning outcomes for under fives and of the National Curriculum. Teachers of each year group write medium-term plans together, which ensures classes of the same age group have similar opportunities. These plans are good and allow for the differing needs of the children. Teachers' daily plans do not follow a consistent approach and vary in quality. Not all plans have clear, specific learning objectives for the class and for specific groups. This is a point for action.

6.The school's procedures for assessing children's attainment and progress are good. Baseline assessments are made in the Nursery and Reception classes. Apart from the national standard assessments at the end of Key Stage 1, the school uses a wide range of other tests and end of unit tasks in the core subjects to gain further information about attainment and progress. The data is analysed thoroughly by the senior management team to identify general issues and by class teachers to provide appropriate activities for the children. For example, information from spelling tests given at the start of Years 3 and 4 is used to group children into sets for spelling activities appropriate to their attainment. The assessment co-ordinator regularly arranges for samples of children's work from across the school to be shared at staff meetings in order to ensure that progress is being made from one year to the next, and that teachers' judgements are secure and consistent. Teachers assess children's knowledge and understanding during lessons and use this information to assist their teaching. This is particularly evident in numeracy where the next half term's plans are written in the light of these assessments.

7.Information about the children is passed from one teacher to the next at the end of the year and is used to help plan appropriate activities from the beginning of the new term. Parents appreciate the end of year reports. These outline in straightforward terms the progress children have made in each area of the National Curriculum and set targets for the children to work on in the following year.

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

1.The school's provision for children's personal development is good. Almost all the parents who responded to the questionnaire feel that the school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on their children. Provision for the children's moral development is very good and for their spiritual development is sound. Provision for the children's social and cultural development is good. The latter is an improvement from the last inspection when it was identified as a key issue for action. For children under five, the school's provision for their personal and social development is very good.

2.Throughout the school the children are encouraged to be thoughtful and reflective about the things they learn. Children in the Nursery and Reception classes are given opportunities to share the wonders of summer changing to autumn. They are taken for walks around the school grounds and shown how to look at what they find with magnifying glasses. Year 4 children are helped to discover Fibonacci's number pattern and share the excitement of what they find. Work from children in all year groups is clearly valued in the weekly sharing assembly and in the range of displays in corridors and classrooms. The daily act of collective worship meets the statutory requirement, although there are sometimes limited opportunities for quiet reflection. In religious education the children are introduced to the diversity of belief and practice by members of faith communities. In Year 4 the children are helped to frame the 'big questions' which face believers of all faiths.

3.From the time they come to school the children are taught the difference between right and wrong. There is a strong sense of behaving well, looking after one another and taking care of property and premises. These are regular themes in assemblies which are repeated judiciously in lessons and registration periods. The set of rules which the children and teacher have agreed early in the school year are displayed in each classroom. Strong leadership and the example set by all the adults in the school community helps to promote the values and moral principles upon which it is founded.

4.In many lessons the children are encouraged to play and work together co-operatively in small groups. As they get older they are provided with opportunities to work collaboratively, for instance when carrying out investigations in science and mathematics. This helps to nurture the children's social development. All children are expected to help in classrooms as monitors and the older children are given small tasks around the school. Outdoor equipment is regularly made available and the children are expected to play with it sensibly and safely. A wider social understanding is fostered through links with local organisations in the town.

5.Good provision is made for the children's cultural development. In some subjects, especially music, art and religious education, and in a wide range of visits and visitors, the children are introduced to cultural diversity as well as western culture. An Indian Dance Group and visiting theatre company have had a significant impact on children's awareness and understanding of dance and drama. Displays around the school demonstrate links with a sponsored child in Kenya and a study of the special books and beliefs of Islam and Christianity. An 'artist of the month' and a variety of music suitably introduced and played in assembly for a week at a time both provide children with the opportunity to appreciate the work of great artists and musicians.

6.The school's provision for the personal development of children with special educational needs is very good. They are successfully encouraged to play a full part in the life and work of the school and their achievements are recognised and celebrated along with everyone else's.

7.Although the provision for children's personal development is good it is not currently underpinned with a whole-school policy and scheme of work. This has been well established as a priority in the current School Development Plan.

62. Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

1.The school provides very good support and advice to the children. Class teachers play a major role with respect to their personal development. It is a caring school which gives high priority to the welfare of the children. Moreover, children are encouraged to support each other and to take on responsibilities in school.

2. There is a good range of effective policies and guidelines which relates to children's welfare. The behaviour and discipline policies are consistently implemented. The attendance policy is clearly set out in the prospectus and firmly adhered to. Those who attended the parents' meeting prior to the inspection are happy with the policy and practice. There is an effective system for the follow up of absences. After a long-term absence, especially if it is for medical reasons, the child is carefully reintegrated into school by the class teacher.

3. The monitoring of academic progress is good. The assessment procedures enable teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in children's work and to set targets to bring about improvement.

4. There is good support and advice for children with special educational needs. Their progress is carefully monitored by the special educational needs co-ordinator and they are set challenging but realistic targets. Their self-esteem is raised by encouragement and praise. When they work in small groups with the special educational needs co-ordinator they are encouraged to discuss any problems they have with any areas of the curriculum and are helped to overcome these. Good communication between the special educational needs co-ordinator and other members of staff ensures this system works.

5. Incidents of bullying are infrequent but, if an incident does occur, parents report that it is dealt with firmly and speedily.

6. Whilst adults in the school are aware of the appropriate procedures for child protection, these are not backed up with a written policy. The school recognises that the completion of the policy, which is in hand, endorsed by the governing body, is a matter of urgency. This is a point for action.

7. The school's arrangements for promoting the children's health and safety are very thorough. Midday supervisors and classroom assistants have up-to-date first aid qualifications and are trained well. Along with teachers, they play a major role in the care of the children.

8. The wide range of policies relating to health and safety are successfully implemented. The vice-chair of governors, with the headteacher, carries out a detailed annual safety inspection of the school premises.

70. Partnership with parents and the community

1. The school operates an 'open door' policy and teachers are readily accessible to parents. Fostering the home-school partnership is given a high priority by the school. Most parents are very positive about the school's wish to involve them in their children's formal education and find the school easy to approach. Parents, in general, feel that staff are willing to listen to complaints and that these are handled well.

2. The information provided by the school for parents is good. The prospectus is useful and the frequent newsletters provide up-to-date information. Contact is also made through homework timetables, children's reading logs and parents' meetings. Informal meetings can be arranged at any time. From September 1999 a home-school agreement was introduced following extensive consultation. It has already been signed by 60% of parents in the first month. Most parents are satisfied with the arrangements for homework.

3. There is an active 'Friends of the School Association' which organises social and fund-raising activities. Substantial sums have been raised on behalf of the school enabling some larger items of equipment to be purchased, especially computers in the last twelve months. Committee members of the Association also help regularly with events in school.

4. A significant number of parents help in classrooms with reading and information technology, and provide support for children with learning difficulties. They also help about the school with resources

and in the library, and with outside activities and trips. Many more parents help occasionally and make themselves available to assist with events and visits.

5.The special educational needs co-ordinator has set up a Parents' Group for any parent with an interest in special needs. The Group has regular meetings about specific issues, sometimes with guest speakers. She also provides parents with written guidance on using a Record of Support to enhance learning.

6.Induction procedures for entry to the Nursery or to the school are good, as are the pastoral arrangements for transfer to the middle school. The curriculum continuity between the two schools is sound. The headteachers of the two schools are working diligently to find ways of exchanging data about children's attainment.

7.The school has good links with external support agencies. Its links with the local community are also good. Visits, visitors and sharing of facilities are important features of school life. The school has tried hard to develop links with employers locally but opportunities in the area are limited.

8.Partnership with parents is a strength of the school and makes a significant contribution to children's attainment and personal development.

78. THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

78. Leadership and management

1.The school benefits from strong and effective leadership from the headteacher, the deputy headteacher and the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator. This enabled the school to respond positively to the last inspection. A systematic and extensive programme of action was put in place which has ensured virtually all of the key issues have been addressed. Working alongside subject and key stage co-ordinators the headteacher has created an evaluative culture amongst most of the staff, based on regular monitoring with a view to raising children's attainment. This is reflected in improvements in reading standards, especially in Key Stage 2, and in design and technology and information technology throughout the school. Attention has recently turned to standards of children's writing and signs of improvement are already beginning to show.

2.The governing body provides a very good level of support, based on detailed collective knowledge of the school. There is a clearly defined structure of groups and committees which enables the governing body to undertake its responsibilities efficiently. This is supplemented by individual governors linked to particular subjects or aspects in the school. Staff welcome this close contact. The range and frequency of their contacts with the working life of the school enable the governing body to exercise an appropriate level of accountability. They are also able to take a longer-term view for planning, especially the budget and staffing. This has been sensitively and effectively handled in the last few years in the face of a steadily declining roll. The governing body is extremely well led by the chair. A particular feature of her leadership is the care she takes to ensure that all governors are very well informed about what is happening in the school and in relation to local and national initiatives. This provides each of them with the opportunity to play their full part in the work of the governing body.

3.The role of subject leaders has been strengthened since the last inspection. They are playing a key part in providing guidance and advice to other staff. This is mainly through an extensive range of subject documentation, in-service training and one to one support. The introduction of the national initiatives in literacy and numeracy has been very well organised. Staff are mostly confident in using the new materials and following the Programmes of Study. In other areas, leadership by the co-ordinators of special educational needs and information technology is particularly good. All subject leaders are part of the school's monitoring arrangements. Each of them has built up a valuable folder of information about their subject and children's progress and attainment across the school. The non-contact time available, especially for the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator, to do this work is very limited. More training is needed in classroom observation. To set up training in classroom observation is a point for

action.

4. For several years the headteacher has thoroughly analysed the wide range of data on children's attainment and progress provided by the local education authority. This has been supplemented by further test and monitoring information gathered in the school. As a result, the headteacher and staff have been able to identify priorities for action in terms of teaching, grouping and setting children and deploying resources efficiently. The outcomes include improvements in teaching, better standards in reading and clear targets for further action in the School Development Plan. A useful element in this process of monitoring has been the evaluation of an external consultant.

5. The school's statement of aims published in the prospectus is clear and appropriate when describing the pastoral care and development of children's learning. There is a strong commitment to the aims from all the adults in the school and they permeate its life and work. The aims are less explicit in confirming the current focus, which is clearly present in the actions and aspirations of staff and governors, on school improvement and raising children's achievements. This point was also made in the last inspection report.

6. Provision for children with special educational needs is very well managed. The school has decided to pay for an extra one and a half days from a part-time teacher to cover this area of responsibility. This ensures that sufficient time is available for the co-ordinator to have in place effective procedures for the early identification and support for the children with special educational needs. Suitable advice and guidance is provided for staff. Good links are well established with parents. Efficient working relationships are also in place with other agencies outside the school. All of this results in children making good progress and having high self-esteem.

7. The School Development Plan is sound. It includes a useful review of the previous plan which is an interesting mix of description with some critical review and evaluation of progress. Priorities and tasks for the current year are set out in detail with timescales for monitoring put in the form of a calendar. This is used well to track progress. Success criteria, names of responsible people and resources have all been suitably identified. Proper links have been made with the budget. Some of the time frames are ambitious, but are generally kept to. The outline plans for the following three years provide governors and staff with a helpful reminder of likely priorities for action. Other useful development plans have been prepared for special needs and early years provision and the implementation of national literacy and numeracy strategies. They are valuable for guiding the priorities of the lead person in each case and, when put alongside the main school plan, help to clarify where programmes of work need to be co-ordinated.

8. Statutory requirements are almost all met. One exception is the lack of a school policy document for child protection. This is in process of being produced and is, therefore, a point for urgent action rather than a key issue.

86. Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

1. The school is staffed well. Teachers have appropriate expertise and experience to teach the range of subjects in the primary curriculum. They have welcomed the additional support and guidance provided by the national literacy and numeracy strategies and the contribution they make to assisting their planning and staff development. Classroom assistants are generally well deployed but the lack of support in Key Stage 1 classrooms during some literacy and numeracy lessons is noticeable. In a numeracy lesson where support from a classroom assistant was available, this made a significant contribution to the effectiveness of group work.

2. The school has a system of teacher appraisal in place. Teachers regularly attend in-service training to develop their expertise. Both of these processes have a direct influence on the quality of what teachers provide for the children.

3. Accommodation is adequate. The main building has a good range of facilities including a discrete

library, group room for special needs teaching, hall and dining room. Year 4 is housed in a large pre-fabricated temporary building separate from the main building. This provides one large and one smaller classroom. Generally classrooms are of adequate size. The school has sufficient outdoor play area and the Nursery, also housed in a separate temporary building, has its own play area. The teachers of the classes based in separate buildings make special provision for children when they need to come across to the to the main building in inclement weather.

4.Planned spending on learning resources in the year 1999 to 2000 is low. However, a large sum was spent last year on computers and the school generally has sufficient books and other learning resources. The library contains a good range of books and is a spacious room with appropriate seating for children. It is to be re-designed in the spring term following the school's successful fund-raising. Resources for subjects are generally adequate and they have a positive impact on the children's learning.

90. The efficiency of the school

1.The governing body is expertly led and financial planning is good. The governing body has decided to spend the money currently available on the children in the school, thus the contingency reserve is relatively small. The governors have an appropriate long-term budget plan.

2.Efficient planning for educational supplies and services involves the whole staff. There is effective use of learning resources, staff and accommodation. A good number of volunteer parents and friends of the school are suitably deployed to support children in reading and this supplements the activities of classroom assistants, particularly in Key Stage 1. The school has been successful in gaining support from the Prince's Trust to improve the library.

3.Time is generally used well as a resource. The management team is aware of the need to make even better use of the time available to children and staff and so a review is beginning shortly of the distribution and time allocation for subjects across the week. There is a prompt start to the day and to most lessons. The amount of lesson time for Key Stage 2 is lower than that recommended by the Department for Education and Employment.

4.The administrative assistant provides up-to-date financial information to budget holders and to governors. There is efficient financial control. The recommendations in the latest audit report have been implemented successfully.

5.Resources to support special educational needs have been spent on staffing, which is very effective. There are sufficient learning resources.

6.In the light of the good quality teaching, the children's attitudes and personal development, the satisfactory or better progress made and the standards achieved, the school is giving good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

96. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE

1. When they are first admitted to the Nursery some of the children show they are well-prepared for school. They have a good range of spoken vocabulary, extensive experience of books, numbers and letters and a good knowledge of the world around them. However, the majority demonstrates low attainment by national comparisons. They have a restricted vocabulary and a short concentration span. In the Nursery, all the children make good progress in all areas of their learning. By the time they move to the Reception class their physical and creative skills, personal and social development and knowledge and understanding of the world are just about at the expected level. Although good progress is also made in language and literacy and mathematics some levels of attainment, especially in speaking and listening and mathematics, continues to be below what is expected.

2. At the beginning of the school year in which the children enter the Reception class they are assessed using a Suffolk 'baseline assessment' of language and mathematical skills and personal and social development. The results in 1997 and 1998 indicate that children make good progress in the Nursery class and are well on the way to achieving the levels expected by age 5 in all six areas of learning. A similar pattern is beginning to emerge in 1999.

Personal and social development

1. The expectations, organisation and planning in the Nursery and Reception classes ensures that children make good progress in their personal and social development. By age five they take turns, share and work co-operatively. They concentrate for sustained periods of time.

2. In the Nursery they prepare 'meals' and act out stories in pairs and small groups in the home corner. Disagreements over, for example, who should play with a new toy are resolved with a little adult help and develop into small groups laying tracks and setting up quite a complicated road and rail system. The support of the nursery nurse as well as the teacher is very effective in this kind of situation. Very good use is made of 'circle time' in the Nursery. This helps the children to reflect on their experiences and share them with others.

3. At the time of the inspection the children in the Reception class had been in school full-time for three weeks. Some of them were, understandably, still coming to terms with longer, more tiring days with less adult support than they had been used to. Despite this, the evidence indicates the children continuing to make good progress in their personal and social development. They work co-operatively in producing collage and a bar graph with adult help and in independent groups on games linked to language skills.

4. In both classes the children show natural curiosity and enthusiasm for almost all of what they are doing. They quickly know and follow classroom routines. They are confident at choosing and using equipment and returning it to the right place when they have finished.

5. The school makes very good provision for children's personal and social development.

Language and literacy

1. Some children come into the Nursery with a good range of vocabulary and are able, for example, to describe what a lullaby is, or read the sign on the side of a haulage vehicle. Others, by the time they move to the Reception class, still show some immaturity in their speaking. This includes words missed out of sentences and tenses and personal pronouns confused.

2. In both classes the children enjoy stories. In the Nursery they join in with repetitions or rhyming words to complete a sentence. The children know how books work and use words like 'title' and 'author' confidently. They like to share stories one-to-one with an adult, and can talk about the pictures

and the characters. Some of the children choose to copy words and sentences from the shared books and a few of them start to write independently forming recognisable letters and words. All of the children are imaginative in acting out familiar stories in the home corner and in physical education.

3. During 'big book' sessions in the Reception class the children are building a sight vocabulary of common words and names. They are also developing an appropriate knowledge of phonics, especially of initial sounds. Writing skills show good progress as some of the children become increasingly confident in writing independently short phrases and sentences. Others continue to copy or write over the teacher's writing. Letter formation is generally accurate.

4. Teaching of language and literacy in the Nursery is very good. The teacher has high expectations of what the children will achieve. She uses her knowledge of what children have been able to do in previous lessons to plan new work in speaking and listening and the early stages of reading and writing, so that it enables them to make good progress. Both the teacher and the nursery nurse make very good use of stories and creative play to improve children's spoken language. Teaching of language and literacy in the Reception class is good. Enlarged texts are used effectively to develop children's early reading skills. On occasion the teacher feels under pressure to follow the school's approach to literacy and this results in sessions which are too long for some children.

107. Mathematics

1. The children in the Nursery have learned simple mathematical vocabulary to identify squares, circles and triangles. They follow instructions for naming and colouring shapes. They all confidently use a variety of words to describe the relative size of the three bears. Most can count up to six and some to at least ten. Using popular toy trains most of the children recognise single digit numbers. In the Nursery there is little formal recording of numbers, but children in Reception make good progress in this and a few start to set out simple addition sums. The children, working with an adult, enjoy cutting apples, counting the pips and making a block graph to represent the number in each apple. Although the children in both classes make good progress overall in mathematics their limited knowledge and use of mathematical vocabulary means they do not meet the expected standard by the time they are five years old.

2. Teaching of mathematics in both classes is good. In the Nursery it is part of other activities as well as having an identity of its own. A particular strength is the emphasis on children acquiring a knowledge and understanding of simple mathematical language. In the Reception class a good start has been made to introducing the early stages of the numeracy strategy at a level appropriate for the children.

3. Knowledge and understanding of the world The children in the Nursery respond very positively to the wide range of opportunities provided for them. Some of them have drawn splendid 'maps' following a walk round the Nursery building and on to the school field. They show children clearly constructing and developing their understanding of the world around them. Photographic evidence shows them fascinated by a variety of people known to the school who have come to talk with them about pets, new babies, their jobs and visits to the fire station and the postal sorting office. In Reception the children are very interested in colours of autumn and the leaves, berries and fruits they collected when walking round the school grounds. They think about and discuss the reasons for the changing colours. In both classes, but especially in Reception, children are starting to ask their own questions about the world around them. Children are developing good ICT skills in the Reception class. They can control the mouse to draw lines and most of them can block colour, and some can adjust the thickness of the line. There is a good collection of Reception class topic books which are used well to stimulate interests and as reading books.

4. The school's provision in this area is very good. Teaching is good. It is focused on learning and encouraging children to think about what they see and experience and to develop appropriate specialist vocabulary.

111. Physical development

1. The children's progress and attainment in their physical development is good. In the Nursery they are all developing good control of pencils, paintbrushes, scissors and other tools. In the weekly hall session they move around energetically without colliding. They run and jump with control and some can skip. In the outside area near the Nursery they are skilful riders of tricycles and other wheeled vehicles, a few can ride a bicycle without stabilisers. In the Reception class they continue to make sound progress. By age 5 the children are able to throw, catch and bounce a ball and they have sufficient hand control for writing, drawing, painting and cutting.

2. Teaching of physical development is good. By the age of 5 the children have reached the expected levels of competence.

113. Creative development

1. There are very good opportunities provided for children in the Nursery to develop creatively. They make good progress in expressing their ideas and feelings and exploring shape, colour and textures in drawing, painting and collage. All the children enjoy and are good at imaginative play in everyday domestic settings or through stories. In music they effectively control volume when playing percussion instruments as background to the story of Goldilocks. The classroom walls include display of the children's colourful and imaginative paintings. The children in Reception show increasing control and skill when working with dough, paint and glue. They show good imagination when making leaf patterns largely independently. Colouring and drawing is suitably accurate.

2. Teaching of creative development is very good in the Nursery and good in Reception.

Other aspects

1. Teaching in the Nursery is almost always very good. Particular strengths are:

- the detailed planning which focuses on what children will learn and appropriate ways of bringing that about;
 - regular and systematic assessment of children's progress and using that information to decide what they will do next, especially in developing language skills;
 - very good management of groups of children, and all the resources to support their learning, especially the other adults who work in the Nursery;
 - the use of questions and discussion with children which encourages them to think and reflect on what they are doing and learning.

1. Teaching in the Reception is good and sometimes very good. At its best it contains similar features to those already identified. Sometimes there is too much structure and this limits opportunities children have for making their own choices and experimenting.

2. In both classes children treat each other with respect. They listen to what each other has to say. They are very attentive to the teacher and their behaviour is good.

3. The curriculum is very well planned, based on the required six areas of learning. In the Reception class proper regard is given to introducing the Programmes of Study for Key Stage 1 and for linking with the literacy and numeracy strategies, although care must be taken not to do this too formally too soon. The school's early years development plan has a series of clear and appropriate priorities. The success criteria are not as clear, which makes it difficult to monitor progress in meeting the priorities.

4. Leadership of classes for children under five is part of the responsibility of the Key Stage 1 co-ordinator. This is more effective with the Reception class, in part because the curriculum planning and assessment arrangements are closer to Year 1. The location of the Nursery in a separate building and

the absence of non-contact time for the co-ordinator make regular contact difficult during the pupil day.

5. Accommodation for both classes is adequate and furniture is good. Both rooms are well resourced. Equipment is suitably stored and accessible to staff and children. The Nursery's outside play area is sufficient in size, easy to supervise and secure. Regular and effective contact has been made with parents, including a programme of home visits before children arrive. There are good induction programmes for children joining both classes. Regular information is provided for parents, especially in the Nursery, about the curriculum. Parents welcome all these arrangements.

120.

ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

120. English

1. Overall, standards in English have improved since the last inspection. By the end of Key Stage 1, children's attainment is well above the national average in reading. This is a strength of the school. Children's attainment in writing is above the national average. In 1998, in the standardised tests for writing, the number of children reaching the required level was well above the national average, but no child achieved the higher level 3. This meant the school was considered to be performing less well than similar schools. This year, due to the hard work the school has put into this area, the number of children attaining the higher level in writing is now in line with the national average. By the end of Year 4, attainment in reading and writing is above the national average. Standards in speaking and listening across the school are good.

2. Children across the school make good progress in speaking and listening. Most children at Key Stage 1 make very good progress in reading and writing. This includes those children with special educational needs who normally achieve the targets outlined in their individual education plans. The higher attaining children make very good progress in reading and satisfactory progress in writing. Progress in Years 3 and 4 is satisfactory overall. Children in Year 3 make good progress, building on the skills they have developed in Key Stage 1. Children in Year 4 make satisfactory progress overall, with the lower attaining children and those with special needs making good progress. Some of the higher attaining children in Year 4 do not receive an appropriate degree of challenge in English.

123.

Speaking and Listening

1. Teaching strategies within the literacy hour and drama sessions have helped children to make good progress in expressing themselves orally and extending their vocabulary. Children listen attentively to teachers and are confident in both answering and asking questions. Around the school they speak confidently and easily to adults and each other. Children in Key Stage 1 enjoy talking about their personal experiences. They are developing a wide vocabulary, including the technical terms in literacy, such as 'rhyme' and 'alliteration' and understand something of the work of a 'poet'. For example, a Year 2 class was observed discussing how the poem "Sea Seasons" made them feel. When asked about the verse on autumn, one child replied eloquently, "The sea sounds suspicious, you don't know whether it will blow up into a storm or not."

2. In Key Stage 2, children listen carefully to each other's opinions and respond appropriately. They use correct technical vocabulary such as homophone, thesaurus and tense to discuss their work. A lower attaining Year 4 group were able to discuss the structure of poems, including those brought from home by one of the children.

125. Reading

1. Most children read confidently by the end of Key Stage 1. The structured reading scheme and texts used in the literacy hour enable them to build an increasingly wide vocabulary and to tackle a variety of books confidently. They use a variety of strategies to read unfamiliar words including phonic, picture and context clues. They describe enthusiastically what they have read and are able to discuss other books they have enjoyed. By Year 2, some children are able to name favourite authors and books

written by them. Parents support children's progress by hearing them read at home on a regular basis, and many help listening to children read in school.

2. In Year 3, children continue to read with enthusiasm. They read appropriately challenging books and are beginning to develop good expression when reading aloud. The higher attaining children are able to summarise content and discuss favourite authors. In Year 4, children's fluency and accuracy continues to develop. However, some of the higher attaining children are less enthusiastic about books and are reading insufficiently demanding texts.

127. Writing

1. In Year 1, children show increasing confidence in writing independently and, by the end of the year, are able to write in simple sentences, sometimes punctuated with full stops. By the end of Year 2, most children use full stops to punctuate their work and those with higher attainments are able to use commas in a list and are beginning to use speech marks. Throughout the key stage, children learn to join their writing and most are able to write fluently with correct joins before they start Year 3. However, the good handwriting practised on special lines in handwriting books is not always evident in the rest of their written work. During Year 3, children learn about a variety of punctuation marks and confidently use speech marks, exclamation and question marks in more detailed stories, descriptions and accounts. During the inspection week the children were writing about familiar settings. One child wrote of her bedroom, "The flowers on my curtains and duvet seem to grow into giant snapping plants. Little shudders go through my body". By the end of Year 4, children are able to use commas more confidently and can use similes in descriptive writing. Handwriting is not joined consistently.

128. Other Aspects

2. Throughout the school, the children's responses in lessons are positive. They are keen to contribute to whole-class sessions in the literacy hour and many show interest by asking questions as well as answering them. They are keen to participate in discussions about meanings and sounds of words and the structure of different types of writing. Children generally behave well, with just a few losing concentration. During group work, children are sometimes slower to settle. When working with the teacher, they concentrate well and are keen to participate in the guided reading or writing task. When working independently, some children persevere well, sustain concentration and work well collaboratively to complete their work. However, a significant number of children find it hard to work independently and to remain on task.

3. Overall the teaching of English is good. A third of the teaching is very good or excellent. In all lessons teachers make good use of the literacy strategy guidance and are well prepared. They use texts which appeal to the children's interests and imagination and back them up with resources to teach key objectives. Whole-class sections of the lessons are particularly effective in all year groups. In the very good lessons the teacher's explanation and questioning makes it clear what the children are expected to do and at what level. Expectations of standards are high but achievable. Children are given opportunities to discuss ideas and to develop fluency and accuracy in their reading and writing. In some classes children still need further guidance about what is expected of them in the group activities. Although the tasks set for group work are generally appropriate, children are not set high enough expectations in terms of the quality of work they are to produce and the time they will have to complete it. In a small number of lessons the teacher does not monitor the behaviour of these groups sufficiently and ensure they work independently.

4. The English planning framework is good and teachers in year groups plan together to provide a wide range of reading and writing experiences. Information from a spelling test is used effectively to place children in Years 3 and 4 into groups once a week to teach spelling. The current setting arrangements for the literacy hour are appropriate. However, some of the higher attaining children in Year 4 are not challenged sufficiently by the teaching. The work given to them is too easy, even allowing for the early stage of the autumn term. This is a key issue for action.

5.The literacy co-ordinator has been instrumental in successfully introducing the literacy strategy. She provides guidance and support for all staff and has ensured that resources are sufficient, and are used effectively.

132. Mathematics

1.When children begin Key Stage 1 at the age of five their understanding of number is a little below average. In Key Stage 1 progress is good and by the age of 7 attainment is average. This is confirmed by the national assessments for 7 year olds. In 1998 the proportion of children achieving the nationally expected level (92%) was above the national average. In 1999 the proportion is at the national average. In both years the proportion achieving the higher levels was close to the national average. The attainment of boys and girls is similar. The results in mathematics have improved since the time of the last inspection and are in line with similar schools. Satisfactory progress is made in Years 3 and 4 and by the time children leave school the large majority is achieving expected levels.

2.By the end of Key Stage 1 most children are confident with number. They learn to count on and back in 2s, 5s and 10s. They can recognise simple number patterns and add and subtract accurately. They know their tens and units. They develop a sound understanding of basic shapes and also statistical analysis such as drawing graphs and reading bar charts. The national numeracy strategy is helping their mental recall and higher attainers already have developed strategies for mental calculations, for example to put the large number first and count on when adding two numbers. Although children have developed good number skills their use and application of these is less well developed and a minority do not know which operation to perform when solving problems. Children learn and use a wide range of mathematical vocabulary and, for instance, associate fewer, less and difference with subtraction.

3.Children make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 2 and by the time they leave school at the end of Year 4 almost all children are competent in a wide range of calculations. They learn their multiplication tables, can add and subtract hundreds, tens and units and the higher attainers are confident with subtraction involving decomposition. They are able to measure in standard units. They recognise plane and three-dimensional shapes and measure angles. They undertake surveys and represent their results graphically. Lower attaining children also make satisfactory progress and are able to tackle much of the same work as others but take more time and complete less.

4.Children's attitudes to mathematics are positive. In all lessons, their response was at least satisfactory and in half it was good. Children generally listen well to their teachers' introductions to the lessons, although some lose concentration if this is over long. They settle quickly to their written tasks; they concentrate and are keen to do well. They enjoy answering and are willing to explain their methods in the mental "warm up" in mathematics lessons. Higher attainers at each age are committing work to memory and are proud to show what they remember. Where required, they play number games, co-operating sensibly with others. When the start of the lesson is crisp, children join in enthusiastically and participate wholeheartedly in mental maths activities, often with a forest of hands up to answer. In some classes, where presentation is stressed and children are given guidance, children's work is neatly and helpfully presented. However, this is not always the case, and in some classes children's work is not well presented. Children in Key Stage 1 are becoming used to working independently in their groups without constant attention from the teacher as recommended by the national numeracy strategy. Some, however, find this difficult and require more support and training in order to make the best use of the time spent on group work.

5.The quality of teaching is always at least satisfactory. It is good or better in 6 out of every 10 lessons. There is a higher proportion of good teaching at Key Stage 2. Lessons are well planned in line with the national numeracy strategy and this has assisted the level of expertise of teachers. The knowledge and skills children should learn are clearly identified in planning and in some lessons in the older classes these objectives are shared with children so that they know what is expected of them. Teachers generally question children well and in the best lessons teachers ask each pupil questions which are matched to their level. In a Year 2 class, for example, some were asked to count back in 2s from 34 whilst others gave the next number in the sequence 2, 4, 6... In Key Stage 1, some

introductions and instructions to children about the written tasks to be followed are laboured. Children sit and listen for a long time, sometimes to instructions that do not apply to them. When this happens the teacher loses the attention of some children. Written tasks are generally provided at three levels of attainment and are well matched to children. At an early stage in the autumn term the work planned for the higher attaining children in Year 4 is too easy. This is a key issue for action.

6.A variety of equipment and other resources are used well. All classrooms have helpful displays which support children's learning. Homework is often set but it is not written down by children as having been so and may not be evident to parents.

7.Teachers recapitulate at the beginning and ends of lessons and are able to check what children have learned. In the best lessons these sessions have pace and even excitement and are enjoyable to children, contributing to their enthusiasm for learning. The information from assessment is used well to assist teachers in setting targets for children.

8.The subject leader has a good grasp of the requirements of the national numeracy strategy and it is being implemented positively by teachers.

140. Science

1.The attainment of children both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4 is in line with or a little above national averages. The 1998 national teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 showed the children's results were well above the national average for the expected level 2. They were also above the national average for the higher level 3. When compared with schools that had children from similar backgrounds, they were also above average. Although the 1999 Key Stage 1 results were not quite as good, but were still around the national average. The school tested the current Year 4 children at the end of the summer term 1999. The results showed them continuing to make steady progress.

2.All these results indicate considerable improvement since the last inspection across all areas of science, including the development of children's investigative skills. This was a key issue for action last time, and it has been achieved.

3.In Year 1 the children identify and name the main parts of a plant and know the conditions that seeds and plants need to grow. They observe and record with help the growth of the seeds they have planted. Their notebooks show good examples of classification of various natural and manufactured objects, categories of animals and electrical appliances. In Year 2 the children know and use correct vocabulary in their study of electricity, including plugs, sockets, current and conductor. They understand the dangers when water and electricity come together. The children's notebooks contain interesting and accurate pieces of illustrated writing including clothes for different seasons and care of teeth and demonstrate good use of scientific vocabulary.

4.The children in Year 3 are undertaking an investigation, with adult help, into the effect of various popular drinks on teeth. They understand fair testing, compare their predictions with their observations and begin to draw conclusions. Their notebooks contain carefully presented recordings from various investigations including materials for making the best spinners and different ways of wrapping bread. In Year 4 the children identify and name the main organs of the human body. They know that the skeleton is necessary to support the body, understand something of healthy lifestyles and are aware of the effect that exercise has on the body. In their investigations the children are particularly good, with help, at asking the right questions and they know that this will help them to arrive at useful answers.

5.Both boys and girls make sound progress in science as they move through the school. They build up an appropriate scientific vocabulary and carry out investigations with increasing independence.

6.The responses of the children to the subject are very positive. They are naturally enthusiastic and inquisitive, keen to take part in discussions and activities to the extent that, occasionally, tests the

boundaries of good behaviour. In a small number of lessons, the children are passive and compliant during long introductions spent sitting on the carpet. Throughout the school they take pride in learning and using the correct vocabulary. They listen to and respect each other's ideas and are confident in putting forward their own thoughts and reflections. Some of the work in children's books and folders is untidy. There is not a consistent school approach to showing the children how to set out their work, nor whether it is recorded in notebooks, folders or in worksheets.

7. Teaching is satisfactory in both key stages. The teachers are confident with the content of the lessons and use appropriate scientific language. Activities are suitably designed to increase children's knowledge and understanding. In Year 2 and Year 4 the good lessons focus more clearly on what children are to learn and ensure that the activities which are set up enable that to take place. Questions and discussion are used well, and sometimes very well, to help children carry out their investigations.

8. The subject leader gives a definite sense of direction to science across the school. She has produced very helpful documentation, including long- and medium-term plans in consultation with the whole of the teaching staff. The implementation of the plans is monitored and an annual report prepared for the headteacher and governors. Constructive feedback is provided for teachers. A good collection of accessible resources has been built up.

9. There have been significant and suitable improvements in the provision for science, and in children's attainments, since the last inspection.

149. OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

149. Art

1. Two art lessons were seen during the inspection, one from each of the key stages. Samples of planning and children's work in each year group were scrutinised. Discussions took place with teachers and children. Based on this evidence, children are making satisfactory progress.

2. In Key Stage 1 children translate aspects of two-dimensional work into three dimensions well, drawing portraits which they reconstruct through cardboard and other materials. They make imaginative decisions concerning the appropriateness of materials based on their colour, texture and shape. Particularly good examples were seen in Year 2, where children were using silver cake foils for 'big, bright eyes', and bending the card to create 'eyelids'.

3. The children in Key Stage 2 study the techniques of great artists, including Klimt and Seurat and create portraits of their friends, employing similar techniques. They learn to appreciate the differences in effect of working in monochrome as compared with colour. The children make good use of computer software to experiment with the techniques.

4. The children's response in art lessons is good. They enjoy the subject and work co-operatively, sharing materials well. They talk about what they are doing confidently, discussing and evaluating their work and how to improve it. For instance, a child in Year 4 admitted that she had found some problems with a particular technique. She received a sympathetic response from the other children. They all began to explore their own difficulties and how to overcome them.

5. In the lessons seen, the teaching was good. Lessons are well prepared with clear expositions of the objectives. Teachers help the children to concentrate on their own work, evaluate and improve it by drawing attention to interesting work in progress as the lesson develops.

6. Throughout the school, exhibitions demonstrate the place of art in other subjects. Good examples include a project about India which led to an exhibition of the children's work in fabric printing and tie-dyeing. A collection of photographs shows the results of a successful day-long sculpture workshop provided by a local artist that extended children's understanding of the medium. The co-ordinator has

set up a range of good quality 'Artist of the Month' exhibitions to develop the children's awareness of visual art in their lives.

7.Worthwhile visits are made to local places of interest in relation to art, including the local church and library. Resources for art are adequate. The co-ordinator has a good collection of prints and posters, covering a range of different artists and styles, which is kept in the library for all to use.

156. Design and technology

1.During the period of the inspection only three lessons of design and technology were observed. Samples of planning and children's work in each year were scrutinised. Discussions took place with teachers and children. Based on this evidence children are making satisfactory progress in both key stages. Plans indicate that children are being taught the things that they ought to learn.

2.Design and technology was a weakness in the last inspection. Now, children are able to design, make and evaluate their work. The plans and documents available indicate that the co-ordination of the subject has improved markedly since the last inspection. Good guidance is available to staff on units of work, including time scales, differentiated skills and resources. The nature of some tasks still restricts opportunities for children, as there is relatively too much fabric work. The school is aware of this and has plans to change the units of work. The co-ordinator has had the opportunity to work alongside and support teachers, although this has now ceased owing to a change of staff and new school priorities. In these developments the school has made good use of the local education authority's advice and consultancy service.

3.By the end of Key Stage 1 children have had the opportunity for junk modelling where they are able to decide on their own design and techniques for fixing. They are able to suggest how their intentions can be achieved and also modify and improve their designs such as for cereal packet faces in Year 1. In Key Stage 2 children work with a range of materials including paper, card and fabric. By Year 4 children have developed skills of cutting and joining. They are mastering the use of some tools. They design their work according to a brief and to their own preferences. They work with a widening range of materials including food and design mechanisms for a Jack-in-the-box. They can choose appropriate materials. Lesson planning requires them to evaluate and suggest improvements, such as for supporting structures in Year 4.

4.In the lessons seen children's response was good. Children enjoy their work. They use tools and materials sensibly and show responsibility when clearing away or listening intently to instructions regarding health and safety, such as the use of tools or hygiene involving food. They practise their techniques and endeavour to improve.

5.The teaching seen was good. Resources were organised and used well, enabling children to get the maximum experience. Activities, particularly at Key Stage 2, guide children through the design, make and evaluate cycle. Children are managed well, even when they are excited by the activity.

6.There are sufficient resources for the current range of activities but with the removal of a fabric unit the school may need to invest in resources to support work in a wider range of materials, including electrical components, particularly in Key Stage 2.

162. Geography

1.During the period of the inspection only three lessons of geography were seen. Samples of planning and children's work in each year were scrutinised. Discussions took place with teachers and children. Based on this evidence children are making satisfactory progress in both key stages. Plans indicate that children are being taught the things that they ought to learn.

2.In Key Stage 1 children learn about their home and the local environment. They begin to draw maps and plans of familiar places. They learn about the seasons and record weather using a variety of

symbols. They learn about a village in India as a contrasting locality.

3. In Key Stage 2 they learn about a village in Kenya and are able to make comparisons with Halesworth, comparing schools, houses, employment and the environment. Children have the opportunity to do real geography on field visits to Dunwich Heath and Southwold.

4. The quality of the teaching seen was satisfactory in two lessons and good in the third. Lessons are well planned and resources such as video and maps are used well. Children are well managed. Some tasks are unchallenging for higher attainers, such as colouring the sea around a map of Great Britain.

5. Children listen carefully. They are keen to answer and share their experiences. They observe well, for example the various cloud symbols on a weather map. They settle briskly to written work and are interested in geography. Most work quickly and accomplish a good amount of work in the time allocated.

6. The programme of work for children provides a balance of themes, places and skills. The subject has been well led, although leadership has changed recently. The guidance and plans provided for teachers are supportive and helpful.

168. History

1. During the period of the inspection only three lessons of history were observed. Samples of planning and children's work in each year were scrutinised. Discussions took place with teachers and children. Based on this evidence children are making satisfactory progress in both key stages. Plans indicate that children are being taught the things that they ought to learn.

2. In Key Stage 1, children learn of differences between now and Victorian times, concentrating on familiar things like toys, their homes and transport. They also learn about the lives of famous people and something about interpretations of history, for example by comparing Mary Seacole and Florence Nightingale.

3. In Key Stage 2 they learn about 'Invaders and Settlers' and undertake a local history study. They also study ancient Greece. They can divide history into periods on a time line, describe similarities and differences and recount stories of the periods they have studied. They are aware that historians may have different viewpoints.

4. Children's response to history is always at least satisfactory and often it is good or very good. Where it is very good, the children contribute their opinions confidently and discuss perceptively, for example when deciding which parts of the Beowulf story may be true. Where the response is less satisfactory, the younger children have trouble listening whilst others talk. This is related to the amount of time devoted to this activity which is too long and some of the children lose concentration.

5. In the lessons seen, teaching was at least satisfactory. Strengths include the effective use of questions to draw children out and challenge their thinking with "why?" questions. Some teachers convey their own enthusiasm for history. Weaknesses include overlong talking to children which allows the lesson pace to flag and some children to fidget and lose concentration.

6. Resources for history are generally satisfactory but a more selective choice of artefacts, such as old toys which clearly demonstrate differences and similarities, would be helpful.

174. Information technology

1. Evidence from lesson observations, discussion with the co-ordinator and scrutiny of work from the autumn term 1999 and last year (1998-9) indicate that attainment in ICT at the end of Key Stage 1 and

at the end of Year 4 is in line with the national average. This is an improvement since the last inspection. During the summer of 1999, the school established a splendid suite of computers in a special room, which children from Reception to Year 4 are timetabled to use. This has had a very positive impact on the standard of work the children are able to achieve.

2. By the end of Key Stage 1, most children can use the mouse and keyboard to operate a range of software. They are able to enter and amend text and draw pictures using different colours and thickness of line. Children in Year 1 enter information about shapes into a simple database and use this to generate graphs. They use the mouse to drag pictures of objects across the screen and sort them in a Carroll diagram according to key characteristics. They use simple modelling programs such as "My World" to explore imaginary situations. For example, they move objects around the screen to look for a teddy in a room.

3. By the end of Year 4, most children have sound word-processing skills. They are able to vary the colour, font and size of text to suit the context and reader. For example, evidence in the school's portfolio of work showed that children have produced clear, attractive recipe sheets. They use graphics programs to draw accurately and then to copy and relocate their design, with the more able children re-sizing the design as well. During the inspection week, Year 4 children designed a tropical fish tank on their screen using this technique, aided by pictures of real fish gathered from the Internet. Children in Year 3 use a simple database to enter, graph and interrogate information. The portfolio shows how a child had entered information about the class. He was then able to select children by hair colour and by birth month to find out how many brown-haired children were born in March. Children give instructions in the program LOGO to draw simple shapes, with the more able responding to the challenge of drawing and then enlarging a pentagon.

4. Overall, progress in both key stages is good. The children are enjoying using the new facilities and making up for the limited opportunities that were available before the new room was set up. The children are suitably challenged and work at a good pace. They become more confident in using both hardware and software and building on skills learnt in earlier lessons. The children listen well to instructions and use the computers with great enthusiasm. They share equipment well and most manage to concentrate throughout the lessons.

5. Most of the teaching is very good. Teachers explain clearly what the children have to do and demonstrate what is expected of them. They are secure in their own knowledge of ICT. They assess the progress the children are making, and provide praise or further explanation when necessary. One lesson seen during the inspection week was unsatisfactory. During this lesson, some children did not progress in their learning either because they did not understand what they had to do or they finished the task very quickly.

6. The policy statement is extremely useful and comprehensive. Planning is thorough and ensures links with other subjects of the curriculum. During the inspection week, many examples of these very purposeful activities were seen. For example, a Year 4 class used a graphics program to design a symmetrical Moslem prayer mat, thus incorporating knowledge and understanding from religious education, mathematics, art and ICT. The co-ordinator has been working with the local advisory service on a plan to link ICT with literacy. She ensures there are times when the computers can be used to support work in the literacy hour and other curriculum areas. Resources are of very good quality with new hardware and a very good range of software. The Internet is being used currently and e-mail is planned for later in 1999-2000.

7. The co-ordinator provides strong and purposeful leadership for the subject and has been instrumental in setting up the new computer room and in helping staff to improve their expertise. She has monitored lessons to gain information about children's attainment and staff training needs. Her support is greatly valued by the staff and the governors. Her enthusiasm and determination have ensured that resources are being used very effectively and efficiently. The school is very well placed to continue to raise standards further.

181. Music

1. During the period of the inspection, two lessons were seen, discussions took place with staff and children and samples of teachers' planning were scrutinised.

2. Since the last inspection the school has ensured that music is an established part of the curriculum. The co-ordinator has organised the purchase of instruments and other resources, provided training for staff and produced support and guidance for all year groups. As a result children make satisfactory progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection when standards in music in Key Stage 2 was a key issue for action.

3. In the two lessons observed, one in each key stage, the children's progress was satisfactory. Key Stage 1 children acquire knowledge of a variety of styles of music, commenting on their own feelings and associations in response to what they hear. They use a range of percussion instruments to express these feelings and interpret their ideas, including sounds associated with animals. They learn to sing songs at a brisk pace. At Key Stage 2 children develop their awareness of rhythm and pace. They clap and tap out pulses and beats with percussion instruments and move on to an examination of the number of syllables in words in lyrics and their rhythmic use in songs. Basic music notation is introduced and children are able to write and read simple graphic scores.

4. Children discuss enthusiastically in groups and listen with interest to each other's performance. They enjoy talking about their feelings and ideas derived from listening to music and demonstrate knowledge and imagination in their responses, such as 'I can hear violins' and, after listening to an extract from 'Carmen', 'it reminds me of my holiday'.

5. In the lessons seen teaching was good. Teachers show imagination in using pre-recorded music and ensure children play a range of instruments. Good links are made with other subjects, including phonic aspects of lyrics and movement, such as marching, to interpret rhythm, alongside the children's own creation of music or sound effects.

6. The purchase of a commercial scheme, as part of the action plan following the last inspection, has provided staff with a satisfactory structure and good scheme of work for the teaching of music across the school. A policy has been developed with detailed ideas for work at all stages of children's development in music.

7. Once a week, the co-ordinator talks to all the children about the music heard in assembly, encouraging their responses to it and emphasising links, where possible, with historical or current world events. There is a popular recorder group for Year 4 children. By the end of September, 32 have signed up for the new term. Two groups have been created to make the teaching manageable. The group plays for concerts in school and occasionally at a local old people's home.

8. The school has set up a separate music room. It contains tapes, a piano and a range of percussion instruments which are readily accessible to staff and children. The room is timetabled and thus provides a very valuable resource for all classes. The range of resources for the subject is good. It includes African drums, a good variety of pre-recorded music, software for composing and a CD ROM for accessing information about instruments and composers.

189. Physical education

1. Three lessons were observed during the period of the inspection, one in Key Stage 1 and two in Key Stage 2. Samples of teachers' planning were scrutinised and discussions took place with teachers and children. There is insufficient evidence to arrive at secure judgements about the quality of teaching or children's progress during Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2 the children make satisfactory progress in dance, gymnastics and games.

2. The children in Year 1 work sensibly in pairs and small groups. They demonstrate a good awareness

of space in gymnastics and dance. They move in a controlled way, changing speed and direction, making different shapes and taking up a variety of positions. In Key Stage 2 the children develop their skills in gymnastics and dance satisfactorily. They work well together in these activities and in games. The children demonstrate satisfactory skills in games, including football and hockey. They are developing, and enjoy using, skills of evaluating their own and others' performance.

3. In the lessons observed, the children's response was good. They enjoy the subject and are mostly enthusiastic participants. They sustain their energy and concentration throughout the lesson.

4. The teaching of physical education in Key Stage 2 is sound. Lessons are well planned with good pace sustained throughout. Resources are organised well and good use is made of whole-class and small group activities with a focus on developing skills. Examples of good performance in the lesson are used effectively to demonstrate what is expected from all of the children.

5. The National Curriculum Programmes of Study are suitably organised in half and whole term blocks. This ensures the children experience all the elements of the subject for a worthwhile period of time. There is a number of extra-curricular activities organised for the children, especially in Key Stage 2. The swimming awards scheme for the younger children is very popular. The school's provision is supplemented by commercially run activities on the premises, to which all the children have access. The courses available include various games, cycling and dance. They are well supported and extend the opportunities for children significantly.

6. The co-ordinator provides good quality training and documentary guidance for all teaching staff. There is an adequate supply of equipment for teaching the subject indoors and outside. Accommodation, in the form of an indoor hall, good-sized playing field and hard play areas and a covered swimming pool, is good.

195. Religious education

1. During the inspection, it was possible to observe only four lessons in religious education, one in Year 2 and three in Key Stage 2. The judgements about children's attainment and progress are, therefore, also based on discussions with children and teachers and a scrutiny of work collected from the school year 1998-9.

2. Throughout the school, children make steady progress in the subject, and reach levels of attainment in line with what is expected in the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus.

3. Mainly through discussion, with some illustrated writing, the children in Year 1 explore their feelings and reflect on their own and others' experiences. They make perceptive comments about what makes them happy and sad. They recognise extended family relationships and the significance of events like a christening. In Year 2 the children make steady progress in their understanding of special places, ceremonies and festivals for members of faith communities. From their study of belief and behaviour in Christianity, Judaism and Islam they are building an appropriate level of subject vocabulary. They have written about churches and temples, and the importance of the Bible and the Qu'ran.

4. In Years 3 and 4, the children explore in greater depth the significance of some of the beliefs and practices of Christians, Jews and Moslems. Their notebooks contain short, interesting pieces of illustrated writing about special ceremonies and celebrations and some of the characteristics of true friends. The children in Year 4 have prepared a collection of very searching questions to ask members of faith communities.

5. Children respond positively in lessons. They are attentive and interested, and respect each other's views and ideas. When touching on sensitive issues, including the death of older family members, the children support one another well.

6. Teaching in religious education is consistently satisfactory. The teachers are confident and well prepared, especially when dealing with what for them is new subject content. Some of the teaching is good. In these lessons the teacher uses questions and discussion particularly well to help the children reflect on their experiences and understanding. Teachers illustrate very well the beliefs and activities of faith communities via fictional children, for example Andy, Clare and Mark, in studying Christianity, Hannah and Reuben in Judaism.

7. The co-ordinator is an effective and enthusiastic advocate for the subject. She has produced very detailed plans based on the local agreed syllabus and its associated materials. The plans are based on a two-year cycle of themes and successfully guide teachers in each year group through what is to be covered. The co-ordinator provides the headteacher and the governing body with detailed subject monitoring reports from time to time. The content is shared with teachers. This process has contributed to the improvements in teaching and attainment in religious education since the last inspection.

8. There is a good range of resources. The library also has a good collection of children's books to support religious education. The co-ordinator has prepared a very useful list of resources in priority order with a view to extending them further.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

203. SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

1. The inspection was carried out by a team of five inspectors. During the inspection:

- 73 lessons or parts of lessons were observed;
- the day-to-day life of the school was observed including, registration, assemblies, lunchtimes, break-times and the start and finish of the day;
- children were heard to read and were asked questions about their knowledge and understanding;
- samples of children's work were scrutinised in all classes;
- the school recorder club was observed;
- the policy documents of the school and the School Development Plan were analysed;
- attendance registers, the records kept on children, and the teachers' plans were inspected;
- the budget figures were examined;
- discussions were held with children, with staff and with governors, including the chair of the governing body;
- the registered inspector held a meeting attended by 23 parents where their views on the school were sought and given;
- 77 responses to the parents' questionnaire were analysed.

1. DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

| | Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent) | Number of pupils with statements of SEN | Number of pupils on school's register of SEN | Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals |
|---------------------|---|---|--|---|
| Reception – Year 4 | 225 | 3 | 28 | 33 |
| Nursery Unit/School | 19 | 0 | 0 | |

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Reception – Year 4)

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

| |
|----------|
| 10 |
| 22.5 : 1 |

Education support staff (Reception – Year 4)

| | |
|---|----|
| Total number of education support staff | 4 |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week | 50 |

Qualified teachers (Nursery class)

| | |
|---|--------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent) | 1 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher | 19 : 1 |

Education support staff (Nursery class)

| | |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 0.5 |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week | 16 |

| | |
|---------------------|----|
| Average class size: | 25 |
|---------------------|----|

Financial data

| | |
|-----------------|---------|
| Financial year: | 1998-99 |
|-----------------|---------|

| | £ |
|--|---------|
| Total Income | 402,320 |
| Total Expenditure | 402,974 |
| Expenditure per pupil | 1,749 |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 18,000 |
| Balance carried forward to next year | 17,346 |

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

252

Number of questionnaires returned:

77

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 | 49.4 | 50.6 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 67.5 | 32.5 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well | 25.4 | 60.6 | 11.3 | 2.8 | 0 |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught | 35.5 | 56.6 | 5.3 | 2.6 | 0 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress | 49.3 | 41.3 | 6.7 | 2.7 | 0 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work | 53.9 | 43.4 | 2.6 | 0 | 0 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons | 35.1 | 55.8 | 6.5 | 2.6 | 0 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home | 29.3 | 60.0 | 2.7 | 8.0 | 0 |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren) | 46.1 | 50.0 | 3.9 | 0 | 0 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour | 44.7 | 50.0 | 3.9 | 1.3 | 0 |
| My child(ren) like(s) school | 62.3 | 29.9 | 5.2 | 2.6 | 0 |