

# INSPECTION REPORT

Kersey Church of England Voluntary Controlled  
Primary School

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique Reference Number: 124705

Inspection Number: 187282

Headteacher: Mrs J Breeze

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Reporting inspector: Mrs K Beck  
10090

Dates of inspection: 01/11/1999-03/11/1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707812

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:             | Voluntary Controlled                                   |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 to 11 years  |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed  |
| School address:              | Cherry Hill<br>Kersey<br>Ipswich<br>Suffolk<br>IP6 7EG |
| Telephone number:            | 01473 823397   |
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| Appropriate authority:       | Governing body   |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mrs M Robinson   |
| Date of previous inspection: | 18/03/1996 - 20/03/1996                                |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| <b>Team members</b>                   | <b>Subject responsibilities</b>   | <b>Aspect responsibilities</b>   |
|---------------------------------------|---|--|
| Mrs K Beck,<br>Registered Inspector I | Under fives<br>Special educational needs<br>English as a second language<br>English<br>Mathematics<br>Geography<br>History<br>Music                     | Attainment and progress<br>Teaching<br>Leadership  |
| Mr D Binfield,<br>Lay Inspector       |   | Attitudes, behaviour and personal development<br>Attendance<br>Support, guidance and pupils' welfare<br>Partnership with parents and the community |
| Mr M Richards,<br>Team Inspector      | Equal opportunities<br>Science<br>Art<br>Design and technology<br>Information and communication technology<br>Physical education<br>Religious education | Curriculum and assessment<br>Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development<br>Staffing, accommodation and resources<br>Efficiency      |

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## **MAIN FINDINGS**

### **What the school does well**

- Leadership is very good and provides a very clear educational direction for the school.
- Attainment in science is above the national average.
- Children under five, attain well above the national expectation in personal and social development.
- Children read well.
- Teaching is good or very good in over half the lessons observed.
- Relationships and behaviour are excellent and attendance is very good.
- Partnership with parents and the community is very good. Links with the community are excellent.
- Provision for children's personal development and extra-curricular activities is very good.
- Very good financial planning, controls and use of teaching and support staff.

### **Where the school has weaknesses**

- I. Teachers' and children's expectations about the presentation of work are too low.
- II. Standards of attainment are below national expectations in information and communication technology and not consistently high enough in handwriting, spelling and punctuation.
- III. Teaching in literacy is inconsistent. Changes in staffing and leadership mean training in the National Literacy Strategy was delayed.
- IV. Statutory requirements are not met with regard to the appraisal of teachers.
- V. Teaching of the under fives is inconsistent as teachers' expertise varies according to the areas of experience.

· **The school has been through an unsettled period but looks forward to the future with great confidence. The weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well, but they will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents or guardians of children at the school.**

· **How the school has improved since the last inspection**

Improvement since the last inspection in 1996 is satisfactory. Initially the school made slow progress in overcoming the weaknesses identified. Changes in staffing and leadership, especially in the past 11 months, and the need to implement the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have improved the quality of teaching. The impact of changes and recent very good attention to the weaknesses found in the 1996 inspection means that the school is improving at a much faster rate. In art, a wider range of materials has improved children's artwork, especially painting. Assessment procedures are good. Teachers have good information about what children know and can do. This is used well to match work closely to children's ages, maturity, and abilities. This is reflected in the way children are often grouped by ability, regardless of age, especially in English and mathematics. Some children work on individual tasks to meet their particular needs. The balance of oral, written and practical work has been adjusted well so that there are good opportunities for children to find information from books. The role of the co-ordinators in planning has been strengthened, as teachers have planned and developed schemes of work together, in line with national guidance. The mathematics co-ordinator has implemented the Numeracy Strategy well and supported staff effectively in their planning. Communications with staff, governors and parents has improved significantly in recent months. Staff and governors are clear about their roles and are kept up to date with matters affecting the school. Health and safety issues, such as keeping fire doors clear and ensuring children do not share recorders, have been fully implemented. Improvements have been made to the playground and its surrounds, but the surface remains cracked and uneven. The school has set realistic targets for children to achieve the expected and higher than expected levels of attainment and is very well placed to reach these. Its capacity for improvement is very good.

· **Standards in subjects**

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

| <b>Performance in</b> | <b>Compared with all schools</b> | <b>Compared with similar schools</b> |                           | <b>Key</b> |
|-----------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------|
|                       |                                  |                                      | <i>well above average</i> | <i>A</i>   |
|                       |                                  |                                      | <i>above average</i>      | <i>B</i>   |
|                       |                                  |                                      | <i>average</i>            | <i>C</i>   |
|                       |                                  |                                      | <i>below average</i>      | <i>D</i>   |
|                       |                                  |                                      | <i>well below average</i> | <i>E</i>   |
| English               | A                                | A                                    |                           |            |
| Mathematics           | C                                | E                                    |                           |            |
| Science               | A                                | B                                    |                           |            |

This table indicates that when compared to all schools, standards are well above average in English and science and average in mathematics. When compared to similar schools, standards are well above average in English, above average in science and well below average in mathematics. The number of children entered for the Standard Assessment Tasks is very small. Each child represents a high percentage and therefore comparisons are unreliable and vary considerably each year.

Current attainment in Year 6, from lessons and scrutiny of work, is in line with the national average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Progress is good in mathematics, especially in Years 5 and 6 where children are making up for lost time. In other subjects, progress is satisfactory, except in information and communication technology where progress is unsatisfactory. Resources and teachers' knowledge in information and communication technology is insufficient to take children's learning forward at a good rate. Teachers are working energetically to improve the situation. Progress in the acquisition of a consistently joined and fluent style of handwriting is unsatisfactory and this hinders the quality of presentation of children's work.

From an average level of attainment when they enter the school, children under five mostly make satisfactory progress. Their progress in personal and social development is very good. Attainment meets the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes\* for children of this age, except in personal and social development where attainment is well above that which is expected. Lower attaining children, those with English as an additional language or from travellers' families make good progress.

**Quality of teaching**

| <b>Teaching in</b>                       | <b>Under 5</b> | <b>5 – 7 years</b> | <b>7 – 11 years</b> |
|--|----------------|--------------------|---------------------|
| English                                  | Very Good      | Good               | Satisfactory        |
| Mathematics                              | Good           | Good               | Good                |
| Science                                  | Satisfactory   | Satisfactory       | Satisfactory        |
| Information and communication technology | Unsatisfactory | Unsatisfactory     | Not seen            |
| Religious education                      | Not applicable | Not seen           | Good                |
| Other subjects                           | Satisfactory   | Satisfactory       | Satisfactory        |

Teaching was satisfactory or better in 89.5 percent of lessons. It was very good in 21.1 percent, good in 31.6 percent and satisfactory in 36.8. It was unsatisfactory in 10.5 percent. This represents only two lessons, one in literacy and the other in information and communication technology.

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

\* Desirable learning outcomes are standards expected for children aged five in the six areas of learning - language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, physical development and personal and social development.



· **Other aspects of the school**

| <b>Aspect</b>                                   | <b>Comment</b>   |
|---|--|
| Behaviour                                       | Excellent. Children consistently behave to a high standard. They care for each other very well especially in the dinner hall and in the playground. They work very well in groups and show good attitudes to learning.   |
| Attendance                                      | Very good. Consistently above the national average and a significant improvement since the previous inspection.  |
| Ethos*  | Very good. The school has a very strong commitment to raising standards. Relationships are excellent. Children make allowances for each other and respect their individuality.   |
| Leadership and management                       | Very good. The headteacher and governors provide a very good, clear educational direction for the school. They have a very good view of its long-term development. The annual report to parents requires a full financial statement and report on progress of the action plan following an inspection to meet statutory requirements.            |
| Curriculum                                      | Good. The curriculum for the children in the under fives, Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 is balanced well, with good attention to oral, practical and written work. Planning for continuity in children's learning is good, especially as all teachers teach the various age groups over the week.  |
| Pupils with special educational needs           | Good. No child is on a statement of special educational need or the higher stages of assessment as set out in the National Code of Practice. Lower attaining children and those with English as an additional language are given good and effective support in lessons as their work is matched well to their needs.                             |
| Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development | Provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. However, they learn little about life in a multi-cultural society and citizenship.   |
| Staffing, resources and accommodation           | Staffing is satisfactory, although there is only one full-time member of staff. Accommodation is adequate and has improved with the acquisition of the schoolhouse and grounds. Resources are unsatisfactory especially in information and communication technology and large toys for the under fives. New computers and software are on order. |
| Value for money                                 | Satisfactory.  |

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

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

**What most parents like about the school**

- VI. They would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems about their child.
- VII. All children enjoy school.
- VIII. The school gives parents a clear understanding of what is taught.

**What some parents are not happy about**

- XII. No issues raised.

- IX. Parents are kept well informed about their child's attainment and progress.
- X. Parents are encouraged to play a very active part in the life of the school.
- XI. The significant improvement in all aspects of school life since the appointment of the new headteacher.

Inspectors fully support the very positive comments of the parents. There is a very good relationship between the school and the parents.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

To raise attainment and the quality of education the governors, headteacher and staff should continue to take determined action to implements its own priorities\*, with particular reference to:

- 1 building confidence and pride in the school by improving the standard and consistency of care and neatness in the children's presentation of their work ;  
(Paragraphs: 4, 25, 29, 48, 129, 135, 146, 147.)
  
- 2 raising attainment in writing, mathematics and information and communication technology in both key stages by:
  - i) ensuring consistency in teaching literacy from class to class;
  - ii) improving standards of handwriting, spelling and punctuation;
  - iii) enabling children to work accurately in mathematics by setting out their work clearly;
  - iv) improving computer provision, and accelerating staff training in information and communication technology;
  - v) complying with circular 12/91 in respect of appraisal of teachers;
  - vi) ensuring consistency in teaching for children under five;
  - vii) improving resources for the under fives.  
(Paragraphs: 5, 16, 21, 35-38, 40, 48, 77, 88, 90, 98, 106, 109, 119, 120, 123, 130, 135, 143- 147.)

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

- make better provision for children to develop an understanding of the multicultural nature of our society;
- provide opportunities for children to begin to learn the skills of citizenship;
- ensure that the governors' annual report to parents includes a full financial statement, and details of the school's progress following the inspection.  
(Paragraphs: 49, 57, 59, 85)

\* all key issues are included in the current school development plan.

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Characteristics of the school**

1 A number of characteristics of Kersey Church of England Voluntary Controlled School have changed since the previous inspection. All teachers at the school have been appointed since the last inspection. In the last three years there have been two acting headteachers. The current headteacher was appointed in April 1999. The school has one full-time teacher and two part-time teachers. In addition there is one part-time teaching assistant.

2 The school is housed in a Victorian building close to the village church. Since the previous inspection the school has acquired the schoolhouse, which provides additional space for a headteacher's room, staffroom, library, kitchen, resources room and girls' changing room. The garden of the house provides a grassed area for children to play on. In the school, one of the large rooms has been partitioned to provide a classroom and activity area. The activity area is multi-purpose. It is used as a dining hall, an assembly room and space for the under fives to work away from the Key Stage 1 children. The children walk to the village hall, which is nearby, for physical education lessons. A paved area has been identified for development as an outside play area for children under five.

3 This is a very small primary school situated in the village of Kersey close to the rural town of Hadleigh in Suffolk. Children attending the school come from the village and surrounding farms and hamlets. Some walk to school but many travel by car or the school bus. The number of children on roll is increasing. 43 children attend the school, compared with 35 at the time of the last inspection. There are five more girls than boys in Years 1, 4 and 5. At the time of the inspection there were nine children under five years of age. The social and economic circumstances of the area are above the national average. Very few children receive free school meals, which is well below the national average. No child has a statement of special educational need or is on the higher stages of assessment as set out in the National Code of Practice for special educational needs. This is well below the national average. However, the school identifies nine children who require particular attention during lessons, which is below the national average. A few children come from the ethnic minorities, travellers' families and speak English as an additional language. With the increasing roll, the attainment of the children on entry ranges from above average to well below average, but mostly it is in line with that which is expected for children aged under five. Attainment of children joining the school at other times also varies widely between above average and well below average. Some older children joining the school can hardly read.

4 Children are taught mostly in two classes, one for children aged four to seven years and one for children aged eight to eleven years. Children of all ages receive specialist teaching in the under fives, science, physical education, religious education, art, and design and technology, as teachers teach all children the subjects in which they are most experienced. Children aged under five are taught separately (within activities) for part of each literacy and numeracy session, and during one morning and one afternoon each week.

### **The school's aims and priorities**

- to review the school's aims;
- build confidence and pride in the school by improving care and neatness in children's work;
- raise standards in writing, mathematics and information and communication technology;
- improve the provision for children aged under five;
- improve the school building and environment.

- **Key indicators**

- Attainment at Key Stage 1<sup>1</sup>**

As only 3 children undertook the Standard Assessment Tasks in Year 2 in 1999 these results, and comparisons to all schools and similar schools are not reported. This is because individual children can be identified and comparisons are unreliable.

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

As 6 children took the Standard Assessment Tasks in Year 6 in 1999, 5 girls and 1 boy, these results are not reported as individual children can be identified. Comparators with all schools and similar schools are stated in the report. Such comparisons are unreliable as each child counts for a high percentage. This means in a very small school, results vary greatly each year.

### Attendance

|   |              |                           |     |
|---|--------------|---------------------------|-----|
| Percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year: |              |                           | %   |
|   | Authorised   | School                    | 4.2 |
|   | Absence      | National comparative data | 5.7 |
|   | Unauthorised | School                    | 0.0 |
|   | Absence      | 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    | 21.1 |
|   | Satisfactory or better | 89.5 |
|   | Less than satisfactory | 10.5 |

## PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

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

#### · Attainment and progress

5 Evidence from tests taken when they first enter the Reception year indicates a range of abilities but most children have attainment that is average for their age. They settle quickly and confidently and make satisfactory progress in all the areas of experience except information and communication technology, which is unsatisfactory, and personal and social development, which is very good. At the age of five, children are attaining the national expectations in all the nationally required desirable learning outcomes, except personal and social development which is very good.

6 Current attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 and 2, observed in children's work and lessons, is average in all aspects of English and mathematics and above average in science. Standards are similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. This is because the school has been through an unsettled period. Standards are now rising as the quality of teaching improves and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are implemented. The number of children reaching expected and higher than expected levels is increasing in mathematics and science at the end of Key Stage 2.

7 Only three children took the Standard Assessment tests at the end of Key Stage 1. This number is too small to make reliable comparisons with national averages and is not reported.

8 Results in national tests for children at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999, indicated that the number of children reaching the expected level (level 4) and higher than expected level (level 5) was well above average in English and Science, and average in mathematics, when compared to all schools. When compared to similar schools, results were well above average in English, above average in science and well below average in mathematics. Again, however, the very small number of children involved makes these figures unreliable.

9 Over time, attainment has varied. The school, with its small intake has very broad range of abilities. Some children, joining Years 1 to 6 from other schools, can hardly read. The number of children taking the tests is very small and each child counts as a high percentage of the whole. At the end of Key Stage 1, attainment in reading has continued to improve faster than the national trend since 1996. In writing, standards improved between 1996 and 1997, but declined much faster than the national trend between 1997 and 1998. In mathematics, attainment rose slightly between 1996 and 1997, but declined rapidly to below the national average in 1998. Staff changes, improvements to the quality of teaching and the good and effective implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are beginning to raise standards. At the end of Key Stage 2, in comparison with national averages, standards have risen much faster than the national trend in English, mathematics and science between 1996 and 1999.

10 This significant improvement stems from:

- some very good teaching in all key stages in different aspects of the curriculum;
- high expectations of what children can attain at the age of 11;
- detailed analysis of the previous year's test results to find children's strengths and weaknesses. From this, changes were made to curriculum planning;
- detailed coverage of the mathematics and science curriculum;
- significant improvements in behaviour.

11 There are no children with learning difficulties on the stages of assessment as identified by

the National Code of Practice. Lower attaining children, those with English as an additional language or from travellers' families, make good progress as they are supported well in lessons.

12 Taken over three years, 1996 to 1998, there is some evidence to show that at the end of Key Stage 1, boys attain slightly better than girls in reading and writing. The performance of boys in English, mathematics and science was close the national average, while the performance of girls was well below the national average, with poor attainment in mathematics. The school has identified mathematics as a priority for development. Action so far is showing good results and promise of significant improvement.

13 Throughout the school, children's good reading, speaking and listening skills enhances attainment in other subjects at the end of both key stages. Many children are keen to contribute to class discussions, group work and enjoy conversations with adults and other children. They share ideas and differing points of view keenly. Children in Key Stage 2, write for a range of reasons in English, such as letters, plays, stories, newspaper reports, debates and poems. However, there is less evidence of children writing accurately at length. Children know how to use information books that they often use in lessons such as science, history or art to find out information independently.

14 In mathematics, by the age of eleven, skills in using and applying mathematics to other subjects are used well. For example, in science, mathematics is used to record data in bar or frequency charts. Information and communication technology is used sometimes to gather a range of data and present it in graphical ways. At the end of Key Stage 1, some children know simple multiplication facts and recognise fractions such as half and quarter and link this with telling the time. Knowledge of basic number facts is satisfactory. At the end of Key Stage 2, children use proper mathematical terms correctly in their work. They practise using their skills in number, measuring and gathering data, through problem solving activities.

15 In science, at the end of both key stages, children have a good knowledge of the science curriculum, particularly plant life. At the end of Key Stage 2, children have charted the growth of shoots and roots and know a little about the complex process of photosynthesis. Children carry out simple experiments with the help of the teacher and know the importance of a fair test.

16 Attainment in information and communication technology is below the national expectations at the end of both key stages. This is because resources are limited and teachers lack the expertise to teach it effectively. Most children know how to use simple word processing skills, such as varying the font size and colour in simple word processing programmes and find out information using a CD-ROM. However, this work is limited as the hardware and software available is insufficient to meet the demands of the National Curriculum.

17 Attainment in religious education is in line with the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus at the end of both key stages. Children have a good understanding of the nature of communities and by the time they are 11 most realise that all communities must have rules if they are to meet members' needs. They have good knowledge of the life and teachings of Christ and sound awareness of stories from the Torah. They know a little about Jewish worship and family life, and something of other faiths such as Hinduism.

18 Strengths in attainment in other subjects include, in music, investigating the different sounds instruments make and using them to reflect the moods of the sea in short compositions. In art, there are examples of good work as children develop their painting skills using shape, line and tone from the ideas of famous artists such as Klee. In design and technology, children make good quality puppets from a variety of materials. Children know the geography and history of their immediate locality well. Swimming was not planned to be taught during the inspection. Nevertheless, the level of provision is good. In other aspects of physical education, children acquire satisfactory games and



gymnastic skills. An improvement since the previous inspection is the increased number of opportunities for children to investigate their ideas in all subjects. The opportunities to work in such a practical way, especially in mathematics, do much to enhance children's attainment and progress.

19 The school has set realistic targets for more children to reach expected and higher than expected levels of attainment and is very well placed to reach these. With the determination of the headteacher, staff and governors, the school's capacity for improvement is very good.

## **Progress**

20 Overall, progress is satisfactory. There is clear evidence that the rate of progress is improving as the quality of teaching improves. The scrutiny of children's work indicates satisfactory progress over time. It also shows an increased rate of progress since September 1999. Much of the teaching is good, especially in mathematics, and this enables children to make good progress. Teachers attended training in the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy together. This has enabled them to develop a good and consistent approach to teaching mathematics. In some literacy and under fives' lessons, children make very good progress.

21 Progress is enhanced as teachers' lesson plans make greater provision for building children's skills and knowledge systematically. There is some variation in progress depending on the quality of teaching. Progress is unsatisfactory in information and communication technology, some literacy and under five's lessons. This is because teachers' expertise is insufficient. With changes in leadership and staffing, information received during training in the National Literacy Strategy was not passed on. Training has taken place for individual teachers, but as yet the approach to teaching literacy is inconsistent.

22 From an average level of attainment when they enter the school, children in the under fives make satisfactory progress in all the areas of experience except personal and social development which is very good. Work for children in the under fives is planned according to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and nationally required areas of experience. Opportunities to work with an adult to develop, enrich and extend early speaking and listening, literacy and numeracy skills are effective in enhancing progress. In lessons where children are clear about the purpose of each activity and what they are to learn from it, they make rapid gains in knowledge and skills. Progress is slower when interactions between the children and other adults are insufficient to take learning forward.

23 Throughout the school, good quality teaching enables children to make good and sometimes very good progress. This stems from:

- changes in teaching methods;
- the appointment of new staff with specialist skills in the under fives, science, physical education, religious education;
- the teaching commitment, example and leadership of the headteacher;
- focused teaching of literacy and numeracy each day;
- improvements learned during inservice training, allowing subject co-ordinators to share their expertise in mathematics, art and design and technology well;

24 The pace of progress has improved significantly this year, throughout the school. This has much to do with:

- teachers having a clear focus for each lesson, which helps children to build well on their previous work and make steady gains in knowledge and skills;

- good procedures for assessing and tracking children's progress so that work is often matched to their needs;
- good planning, especially in the short and medium term, so that work is more demanding;
- some very good teaching in which teachers challenge children to think hard about what they are doing;
- the school day begins efficiently and lessons begin and end promptly;
- more time for literacy and numeracy.

25 However, teachers have low expectations with regard to the consistent presentation of children's work. This makes it hard for children to develop their handwriting and mathematical skills so that they can work accurately and present their work to a high standard.

26 In English and science, progress is satisfactory overall in both key stages and in mathematics it is good. Children make clear gains in their reading skills, especially in Key Stage 2, basic mathematics skills and scientific knowledge. Work is set at different levels and is increasingly demanding. In each subject, except information and communication technology where progress is unsatisfactory, there is a clear promise of higher standards and improving levels of children's confidence.

27 The few lower attaining children, travellers' children and those with English as an additional language make good progress in both key stages as they are effectively supported by the teachers and teaching assistant. Effective planning, teaching and additional support from the teaching assistant enable children to take a full part in all lessons.

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

28 Parents are very pleased with the high standards of behaviour and the attitudes and values the school promotes. Such high standards were identified in the previous report. They make an important contribution to educational standards and personal development.

29 In all key stages, including the under fives, children show good attitudes to learning. During whole class lessons they listen attentively and join in discussions with interest. Children work hard and show good levels of concentration. When working in small groups, they collaborate well. For example, in a Key Stage 2 music lesson, groups of children worked closely to create an accompaniment to a poem they had written. There are many opportunities for children to develop investigative and enquiry skills, especially in mathematics, history, geography and art. However, children take insufficient care with written work, so that presentational standards are not as high as they should be.

30 The behaviour standards of all the children are excellent. All children behave very well in lessons, assemblies and in the playground. Children's table manners at lunchtime are a particularly impressive feature. Serious misbehaviour and bullying rarely occurs. There have been no exclusions over the last three years. Children are trustworthy and courteous. They enjoy helping to keep the school environment tidy.

31 Relationships throughout the school are excellent. Staff maintain a friendly and purposeful atmosphere, which prevails throughout the day. A very commendable aspect is the friendly way boys and girls from the different age groups, in the two classes, relate to one another. The children are polite, helpful to adults and show respect for others.

32 The provision for personal development is very good. Weekly 'circle-time' discussions,

introduced earlier this year, are successful in developing children's knowledge, speaking skills and self-esteem. Children take on routine responsibilities in each class. Once a term they take part in fund raising activities to support a different charity. Each Year 6 child is a prefect whose duties include a variety of responsibilities including looking after the younger children at lunchtime, helping them to cut up their food if they find this difficult. A successful cycling proficiency scheme is in operation. Participation in church services, school clubs, educational visits, village events and inter-school activities add much to children's personal development.

#### **Attendance**

33 Attendance is very good. It is consistently above the national average for primary schools. A particularly good feature is that unauthorised absence hardly ever occurs. Children arrive punctually. During the day, lessons and other activities start and finish on time. Such features make a positive contribution to children's attainment and progress.

### **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

#### **Teaching**

34 The number of lessons observed was less than at the previous inspection as literacy and numeracy lessons were observed in full. Overall teaching in the under fives, Key Stages 1 and 2 is satisfactory. The quality of teaching has remained satisfactory overall since the previous inspection but there has been an improvement in the percentage of good and very good lessons. This improvement stems from required changes in classroom practice by the headteacher and governors, the implementation of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and changes in staffing.

35 All teachers teach all children, regardless of age or ability, over the week. Children receive specialist teaching in religious education, science, art, physical education and design and technology. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in 89.5 percent of lessons. In 21.1 percent it was very good and in 31.6 percent was good. 36.8 percent of teaching was satisfactory and 10.5 percent, representing teaching in only two lessons, was unsatisfactory. One of these lessons was in literacy and the other in information and communication technology. Some very good lessons were observed in literacy and under fives.

36 Teaching in the under fives is variable. One teacher is very skilled with this age group and teaching then is very good. Other teachers have undergone training so that their knowledge is satisfactory, but they still lack experience. All teachers teach personal and social development very well. Literacy is taught very well in lessons set aside especially for this age group. In literacy lessons, when children join in with the whole class sessions with Year 1 and Year 2, and work on activities planned for their age and ability, teaching is less secure. This is because there is less time for adult helpers, or the teacher, to work closely with the children to extend their vocabulary or their reading skills. Teaching in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory, as tasks are inappropriate for this age group. Planning for other subjects is good. Work within the numeracy session is matched particularly well to children's needs. Methods and organisation are satisfactory. They are very good in some sessions where children are involved in dramatic role-play to extend children's language, mathematical and early reading skills. These imaginative tasks, for example acting out 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', also provide children with a range of stimulating, practical and written activities that promote their self-esteem and confidence to learn.

37 Children under five are managed well so that there is a positive, caring atmosphere in all sessions for the under fives. Children's attainment is assessed well. Information gained from checks on children's attainment is used effectively to provide activities to meet precise needs for all children except in information and communication technology.

38 In Key Stages 1 and 2, in the very good lessons, teachers share their expertise very confidently with children and use very imaginative approaches. Lessons are taken at a very brisk pace which means children have to concentrate well and think hard about what they are doing. Expectations of what children can achieve are very high. That said, handwriting is not consistently joined and teachers do not insist that literacy skills are reinforced in all subjects. Work is planned to build very well on what the children have attained in previous lessons. Effective questioning deepens and extends children's understanding. Teachers manage the children very well with humour and show clearly their pleasure in what the children achieve. These factors give children a very clear sense of purpose about their learning, raise their confidence and self-esteem and enable them to make very good progress.

39 Teachers have sound and sometimes very good subject knowledge depending on the age group and subject being taught. Specialist subject knowledge such as in science, physical education, religious education, mathematics and design and technology helps them to be clear about what they teach. They share their enthusiasm for learning well and this motivates children to want to do well. Numeracy teaching is particularly good, as teachers pay close attention to the guidance offered in the National Numeracy Strategy. They work together well so that there is a consistent approach to teaching mathematics throughout the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is weaker in literacy and information and communication technology throughout the school, which hinders children's progress.

40 Teachers know the children well and expectations of what they can attain are good. Expectations for positive attitudes and behaviour are very high. Teachers are skilled in providing children with demanding individual targets to aim at. This encourages them to do their best. However, teachers give little guidance about how children can present their work to a high standard and in this way expectations are unsatisfactory. This makes it hard for children to work accurately in subjects such as mathematics. There are examples of work that are well presented, such as newspaper reports after lightning struck the school. This is not consistent in exercise or project books however. Children are rarely encouraged to use a fountain pen, develop a consistently joined and fluent style of handwriting or use information and communication technology to present their work.

41 Teachers' lesson plans are good. Teachers ensure that girls and boys at all ability levels progress steadily. They set out clearly what is to be taught and what children are expected to attain. Tasks vary in their level of challenge according to the children's ability. Higher and lower attaining children and those with English as an additional language are challenged well throughout the school. Teachers make the purpose of the lesson clear to the children and explain clearly what it is they are to learn and achieve. Teaching methods are satisfactory. Most teachers give clear explanations, providing the children with new knowledge. There is a sound balance of written and practical work. There are good opportunities for group tasks where children learn from each other and pursue their own ideas.

42 Methods and organisation are satisfactory. For the most part, reading, speaking and listening and numeracy skills are taught effectively. Numeracy is used well across the curriculum, especially in science and information and communication technology. Literacy and numeracy are taught in whole class sessions according to the guidance in the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. This works well as children are motivated by teachers' careful choice of materials. Following this, work which children do in their groups is matched well to their needs. In very good lessons, teachers use the 'summing-up' session at the end effectively, to remind children what they have learned, which enhances progress. Sometimes there is too little direct teaching of literacy skills in the early part of the lesson.

43 Teachers' management of the children is good so that there is an industrious working atmosphere in many lessons. Relationships are excellent. Children are expected to listen carefully

and materials are chosen well to capture their interest. The school behaviour policy is implemented effectively and consistently. However, sometimes in Key Stage 2, class discussions are too long and this interrupts progress towards the learning children are expected to do during the lesson. In most classes, time and resources are used appropriately to support learning.

44 Sound checks are made on children's progress over the week and during lessons. Lesson plans are evaluated each day and teachers use this information well to adapt work for the children for the next lesson. Teachers comment well on children's work as the lesson progresses. However, teachers miss opportunities which enable children to evaluate, refine and improve their work. Teachers give clear additional, often individual explanations to help children learn and apply new skills in each subject. Praise and encouragement add to children's self-esteem and confidence. Children's work is marked but this gives them little clear guidance about what they have done well and how they can improve. Homework is used well to raise children's skills in literacy.

45 There is no specific provision for teaching children with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Specialist provision for children from traveller communities did not take place during the inspection. Teachers respond well to the challenge to provide tasks matched well to the broad range of abilities in each class, so that children's individual needs are met. This helps children to improve their reading, writing and numeracy skills, preserves their self-esteem and means they make good progress. Good communication between teachers, teaching assistant and parent helpers means these children are supported well within their class and group work. This means children have full access to the curriculum.

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#### **The curriculum and assessment**

46 Since the last inspection the school has improved its curriculum. Key issues within the previous report were i) to improve the balance of the work programme with regard to opportunities for enquiry and investigation, and ii) to ensure better progression of learning through improved curriculum development. Both these issues have been addressed successfully, and the curriculum for children in Key Stages 1 and 2 is now of good quality overall.

47 The curriculum for children under five is good. It is broad and balanced and based on the nationally required areas of learning for children under five as well as the first levels of the National Curriculum. Children are involved in a range of practical, oral and written activities, which often promotes high standards, especially in personal and social development and prepares them well for the next stage in their education. Work challenges children's intellectual, physical and academic development. Tasks build well on children's abilities, so that both higher and lower attaining children make satisfactory progress. Good arrangements for timetabling activities means children under five have full and equal access to all aspects of the curriculum. The curriculum offers a varied range of challenging activities that are related to children's everyday life. This makes learning real and purposeful. The needs of higher attaining children and those with special educational needs are met well. The impact of this good curriculum on children's attainment depends on the confidence and expertise of the teacher leading the session.

48 The curriculum in Key Stage 1 and 2 is a broad and interesting one, which meets statutory requirements. Staffing changes meant that the school was late in implementing the National Literacy

Strategy, but this is now in place. It is having a good impact on children's reading, and some aspects of their writing. In handwriting, spelling and the presentation of written work, the curriculum is not yet satisfactory. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented thoroughly. This too is having a good impact on children's learning. The information and communication technology curriculum is unsatisfactory because teachers' skills are limited. The school lacks the good quality software and hardware it needs to follow its new scheme of work effectively. Sound arrangements are made for sex education, and children learn in science about the dangers of unhealthy substances. The programme for religious education follows closely the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus.

49 The school's membership of a cluster of local, small schools brings curricular benefits. There are now opportunities for some of the children to join those from other schools for art club activities, and in preparing a musical presentation with a professional composer. Very good use is made of the local environment as a source of historical and geographical learning. The curriculum is enriched by visits, such as those to a major cement works, in the course of science lessons on materials. Groups travel regularly to Ipswich to support the town football club. Little attention has yet been paid to teaching children about democratic processes through a citizenship programme, or helping them appreciate the multicultural nature of our contemporary society.

50 Although the school has no formal policy for equal opportunities, staff are fully aware of the importance of ensuring that all groups of children have the same chance to benefit from the full curriculum. The planning of work is good, and very much improved since the last inspection. Schemes of work, often based on nationally recommended models, guide the teachers' planning. Their daily lesson plans are carefully constructed. They are matched well to the different age and ability groups in each class, and help ensure that all children make steady progress in their learning.

51 There is no specific provision for children with special educational needs or with English as an additional language. There is some provision for children from the travellers' community. Teachers make provision for these children within lessons, by planning work that meets their needs. This, they do effectively so that the children make good progress.

52 The school offers a very good programme of extra-curricular activities for the children. These include sports, board games and musical activities. They further enrich and broaden a good curriculum.

53 When the school was last inspected, it was found that too little use was made of assessment in ensuring that the work set always suited the needs and abilities of the children. This has been rectified, and assessment arrangements are good. The school now has a comprehensive collection of assessment data about all the children. This means that staff have a very accurate idea of what each child knows, and can do. As a result, children work in small groups, in most lessons, on tasks especially designed for them.

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

54 At the time of the last inspection provision for children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development was found to be a strength of the school. Despite some minor shortcomings, provision in all of these areas remains good, including for children under five. Provision for the youngest children is the same as that for all Key Stage 1 children.

55 Parents are rightly very appreciative of the attitudes and values the school promotes. Assemblies and religious education lessons make a major impact on the children's moral and spiritual growth. In one assembly for instance, the theme of All Saints' Day led children to reflect on the good people they have known, and to identify some of their own good characteristics. In a religious

education lesson, Key Stage 2 children analysed the 'Ten Commandments', discussing perceptively the relative importance of each of the rules, before putting them into an order of priority.

56 Opportunities for spiritual and moral growth are provided within in the broad curriculum. Moving poems are written capturing the stillness and beauty of the village ford. Children debate important contemporary issues such as the ivory trade, and fox hunting. While feeling strongly about issues such as these, they learn to respect the views and beliefs of others. The school's influence in spiritual and moral development is often subtle yet imaginative. A wall poster simply asks children what they feel the significance is of the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month. All of this work helps the children to develop their understanding of right and wrong, and deepen their spiritual awareness and self-knowledge.

57 The school community is very small. It operates as a family in which all the children know each other, and take responsibility for each other and for the school itself. All the Year 6 children have the chance to be prefects. Their main responsibilities are carefully set out. They welcome visitors, help teachers, aid younger children at lunchtime and in the playground. Older and younger children, higher and lower attaining children, sometimes work together in pairs in lessons, sharing tasks and responsibilities excellently. The school supports a range of village events. Harvest gifts are taken to the elderly in the village, and the school receives moving notes of gratitude from the recipients. Children make cakes and biscuits to be sold to visitors to visitors in the summer, in aid of charities, for example, Kosovo refugees. They run stalls at the summer fair. They plan several charity initiatives of their own, making and selling refreshments in school for funds to support Macmillan Nurses, and organising a "weird hairstyle" competition for 'Red Nose Day'. As yet, little attention has been given to finding ways of giving the children some planned experience of the democratic process, which is important in developing a sound sense of citizenship.

58 The school's good cultural provision draws heavily on its intimate relationship with its local community. A strong sense of cultural identity is illustrated by activities such as the children's careful redrafting, and illustrating, of the village 'Visitors' Guide'. They study their local community in history and geography, learn about the building of the church and about how Kersey people earn their living. Art, games and music clubs broaden the curriculum. With children from other schools in the local "cluster", older children will compose and present a musical performance at Snape, under the guidance of a professional composer. There is a strong interest in literature, with parents and children sharing favourite books with each other as part of 'World Book Day'. Visits further afield also broaden the children's cultural awareness. These include trips to the Colne Valley Railway, and to Ipswich Town Football Club. A new grounds landscaping project is raising awareness of environmental issues.

59 There are very few opportunities in the school programme for children to develop an appreciation of the multicultural nature of contemporary society, and this aspect is unsatisfactory.

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

60 Provision for children's support, welfare and guidance is good. Parents are pleased with the high level of support provided and indicate that their children are very happy at school.

61 Systems for monitoring children's progress and personal development are good. Teachers monitor and record each child's attainment and this helps them to plan future work. Such information is used well to inform parents about their child's progress. Tests have been introduced in English and mathematics for years 3, 4 and 5 to track children's attainment and progress. Results in national tests are carefully analysed and used to formulate plans for improvement in each subject. Training is being undertaken to improve the quality of teachers' assessments.

62 Arrangements for promoting attendance and punctuality are very good. Registration work is undertaken well and the procedures for following up absences are effective and efficient. There is

good co-operation with the education welfare officer who visits termly. Parents are informed well about the school's expectations regarding attendance.

63 There are very good procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour. Children are aware of the school's expectations and respond very well. Children and parents value highly the reward system, especially certificates awarded each term for a variety of achievements. There is a clearly defined system for dealing with misdemeanours.

64 The arrangements for children's well being, health and safety are satisfactory overall. There is a very supportive and caring environment. Children are encouraged to raise any individual concerns with their teacher or supervisor. Illness and accidents are managed well by staff who have received first-aid training. There are very good systems to ensure that child protection issues are managed effectively. A much-improved programme for sex education was introduced this year. Drugs education is provided as part of the health education and science curriculum.

65 Following the previous inspection, action was taken to ensure that fire exits are readily accessible. Improved boundary fencing and gates were provided. The playground surface was patched. Records are no longer passed to other children without being sterilised.

66 A high priority is given to safety issues. A comprehensive health and safety policy has recently been adopted and a named governor has special responsibilities for this aspect. Regular inspections and risk assessments are undertaken. During lessons children exercise due care when handling materials and equipment. Nevertheless, there are two health and safety issues which require attention.

67 The surface of the playground is now in a very poor condition. An education authority surveyor has recently indicated that resurfacing works are needed. There are difficulties with the oil-fired heating system. The system has to be switched on by a contractor's representative and there is no means of controlling room temperatures. The heaters are noisy and this interrupts teachers and children when trying to create an atmosphere of stillness. As a result, classrooms are often either too hot or too cold limiting the provision of comfortable environment in which children can concentrate.

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

68 An outstanding feature of the school is the very effective partnership arrangements with parents and the community. This compares very favourably with the good provision made at the time of the previous inspection. Many improvements have been introduced during 1999 and parents are rightly delighted with the present arrangements.

69 The quality of information for parents is very good. Staff are welcoming and any individual queries are dealt with in a very helpful manner. Newsletters give details about forthcoming events and parents are advised about the main areas of work to be studied in the forthcoming term. Consultation meetings for parents to discuss their child's attainment and progress with teachers in the autumn and spring terms are successful. The annual written reports give excellent advice on attainment and include targets for improvement.

70 The prospectus and governors' annual reports provide much helpful information about the school. However, a statement of progress on the post inspection plan and a clear indication about the school's overall financial position has been omitted.



71 Parents' involvement in children's learning is very good. They are consulted about important developments such as the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies and the draft home-school agreement. The school's drama productions, special assemblies and church services are well attended. Individual parents help with educational visits, information and communication technology. Parents attended training to help with information and communication technology and often helped in school until the lightning strike damaged the computers. Parents give very good support to the homework arrangements and this has a positive impact on learning. The reading diary scheme works well.

72 The Friends of Kersey School, established in February 1999, has already had a substantial impact on the life of the school. Successful social and fund-raising events have been organised. Donations have been used to provide library books and a drinking fountain. Funds are being raised to improve the school grounds.

73 There are excellent links with the community, which make a significant contribution to children's attainment and personal development. The vicar of St. Mary's Church takes collective worship each week and participates in other school activities. Services are held in church as part of the curriculum. Children play a full part in the life and work of the village. Local residents attend many functions organised by the school and children enjoy taking part in events promoted in Kersey. The village hall is used for physical education lessons and the village playing field for sporting activities. A landscape company and Otley College are actively involved in the current project to improve the school grounds.

74 Younger children take part in a number of successful activities organised in collaboration with the local playgroup. Music, drama, art and sporting activities are organised jointly with nearby primary schools. Swimming takes place at Hadleigh pool during the spring term. Most Year 6 children move on to Hadleigh High School and the transitional arrangements are well organised. The High School helps with work in science and drama. Children participate in a wide range of educational visits which augments work in the curriculum and enhances general knowledge attainment and personal development.

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

### **Leadership and management**

75 Leadership is very good. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. At that time leadership was said to only be 'effective in promoting the aims of the school and enhancing standards of attainment'. The headteacher has been in post 11 months. Since then, the headteacher, the governors and the staff have worked well together as a team. They have worked very hard to develop very effective communications so that all connected with the school work together well on behalf of the children. The governors, the headteacher and the staff share a common purpose, to do their best for all children. This means the school has a very good, clear educational direction. As a result there has been significant improvement in children's behaviour, quality of teaching, curriculum planning, the partnership with parents and the community, provision for lower attaining children, those with English as an additional language and travellers' children and the provision of resources across the curriculum. These factors have had a significant impact on children's attainment and progress and have effectively tackled weaknesses identified in the previous inspection.

76 Overall, the school has made a satisfactory response to the weaknesses identified in the previous inspection. The pace of improvement has increased substantially since January 1999. An action plan devised in 1996, set out what was to be done, but gave little information about how its success was to be judged in relation to improvements in children's attainment. With a complete

change of staff and many governors, new staff and governors knew little of its priorities or the work done. This reduced its effectiveness. The new headteacher revised the action plan, incorporating it into the school development plan. This involved all the staff and governors, and successfully put in place many practical and effective strategies to bring about improved standards, especially in curriculum planning, teaching and provision for children under five, in a short period of time. This is already having a significant impact on the attainment and progress of children throughout the school.

77 Under the guidance of the headteacher, there is a very good and rigorous commitment to curriculum development and school improvement. Since January, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented with appropriate training. The mathematics co-ordinator has observed lessons and given good, clear advice to others about the way to improve the teaching of numeracy. This has had a good impact on the quality of teaching in mathematics. The headteacher holds detailed discussions with each member of staff to clarify areas for development to promote teachers' confidence and self-esteem. Much good work has been done in literacy, design and technology and art. There is still work to do in literacy, as well as in, information and communication technology and the under fives. The school now reviews its performance regularly with regard to standards and the analysis of test results. Children's progress is checked carefully to ensure work is matched well to their needs. Systematic monitoring and evaluation of teaching is at an early stage of development. The governors and headteacher have a very clear view of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They are not afraid to take difficult decisions. For example, a review of the budget indicated that the school was spending beyond its limit. This meant the redundancy of two part-time teachers, one for music and the other for children with special educational needs. The reasons for this were communicated well to parents, and teachers took over these responsibilities willingly and effectively.

78 Governors have a substantial interest in the school and conduct their business efficiently through an effective committee structure. Visits to the school and regular reports from the headteacher means they have a very good idea of what goes on in school and do much to support it. They have a very good view of the long-term development of the school with regard to raising standards and improving the profile of the school within the local community. Recent training has helped governors and staff work out a very clear definition of their roles and responsibilities, which is assisting very good communications and excellent relationships.

79 Curriculum co-ordinators are enthusiastic and have worked hard together with the headteacher to improve curriculum planning to enhance children's progress. Planning has improved substantially since the last inspection. Work is set to help children make progress in their learning, by taking on more challenging work week by week. This good planning enables teachers to plan carefully what children are to learn and when. Job descriptions for all staff have been agreed. This puts right a weakness from the previous inspection and enables teachers to take more responsibility for their subject. The art, and design and technology co-ordinator and science, mathematics and physical education co-ordinator take a leading role in teaching their subjects, as well as raising the skills of their colleagues.

80 The implementation of the school's aims, values and policies is very good. It is very successful in its particular aim to promote work with parents and the community to create a safe, caring school where children have a strong sense of identity. There are very high expectations that children are polite, well-behaved and tolerant of others. Much work has been done to implement the school's aim to give all children a pride in their community and raise their self-esteem. This is having a significant impact on attainment.

81 School development planning, monitoring and evaluation is very good. This too is an improvement since the last inspection report. It includes very effective strategies to secure rapid improvement in the short term and sustained improvement over the next three years. All staff and governors contribute to the school development plan that identifies very clear priorities for curriculum, personnel and buildings development. These are fully costed and linked to appropriate timescales.

82 Although the school has no written policy to show how it ensures that all children have equal opportunities to benefit from its programmes, practice in this area is sound. In the small family community of the school, the needs and abilities of each child are known and provided for. The ethos of the school, actively promoted by the headteacher, staff and governors ensures that no groups of children are at a disadvantage.

83 The school has a very good ethos, which is promoted very successfully by the governing body, headteacher and staff. There is a very strong commitment to raising standards, even though this does not feature specifically within the school's published aims. There is a very good climate in which children can learn. Relationships between the teachers and children are excellent, as staff provide good role models for children to follow. Parents praise the school for the attitudes and values it promotes. They particularly praise the way the school makes it easy for them to approach it, to deal with questions or problems to do with their children. This promotes children's confidence and self-esteem and enables them to make satisfactory progress.

84 Although there is no specific provision for children with special educational needs, the management and organisation of the provision for children with special educational needs is good. This is overseen by the headteacher. Children of all abilities are supported well in lessons. Work is matched well to their needs and additional adult help is effective in enabling children to complete tasks successfully. Governors ensure provision is monitored carefully, so that teachers work in line with the school policy and comply fully with the Code of Practice for special educational needs. Management and provision for children with English as an additional language is good. The headteacher oversees this provision. She is skilled in enabling teachers to plan effectively for the needs of these children so that they make good progress. Provision for children from travellers' families is provided by the local authority. Advice from the local authority is fully implemented so that the children are supported well.

85 Governors meet most of their statutory responsibilities, although their annual reports to parents do not contain all the required information. Details about progress on the school's post-inspection action plan and a full statement of the school's finances have been omitted.

86 There is very good commitment to improve the school. The leadership has very clear insight into what needs to be done for the school to improve. There is a strong, shared sense of determination to succeed and move forward. The school is very well placed to meet its targets for improved standards in the future.

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

87 The school's staffing, learning resources and accommodation provision is satisfactory overall. At the time of the last inspection a number of shortcomings were identified and most of these have now been rectified.

88 There has been considerable instability in some areas of staffing in the period since the last inspection. There have been two acting headteachers, and the current headteacher has been in post for less than a year. Neither of the other two teachers was on the staff at that time. They are both part-time and give a strong commitment to the school. However, as both are part-time, this creates some management and organisational difficulties. All teachers are all suitably qualified and experienced in their work, although there are weaknesses in the teaching of children under five and in information and communication technology. All teachers carry subject leadership responsibilities for several subjects. At the last inspection, job descriptions were found to lack clarity. The school has taken action on this, and job descriptions are now satisfactory.

89 There is only one teaching assistant in the school who carries a wide range of responsibilities and supports children effectively. Additional training is undertaken willingly so that

maximum support is given to the teachers as they develop new initiatives, such as the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies.

90 The school's staff development programme properly follows the priorities set out in the development plan. A strong emphasis has therefore been placed on literacy and numeracy. All staff attended training in numeracy, resulting in a consistent approach across the school. Training provision in information and communication technology and in teaching children under five has been insufficient to ensure consistently good standards in these areas. The teacher appraisal programme has lapsed well behind the required schedule, and the school is in breach of statutory regulations in this regard. Appraisal is an important instrument in ensuring consistently high expectations of the children.

91 The school's accommodation is satisfactory, and has improved markedly since the last inspection. In taking over the schoolhouse, the governors and headteacher have been able to create a more spacious and appropriate learning and working environment. For the first time there is a proper staffroom, and the headteacher has a suitable study upstairs in the schoolhouse. Space has been found for a pleasant small library, and there is an additional classroom for the children under five when they are not working in the Key Stage 1 room. The acquisition of the schoolhouse has also meant that children no longer have to walk to the village hall for lunch. However, there is no suitable space for outdoor play for the under fives or for indoor physical education. The village hall is still needed for this purpose.

92 Outside, the school now has a grassed play area. Plans are in place for landscaping the grounds. The poor quality of the hard play area was noted in the last report. Since then it has continued to deteriorate. It slopes irregularly, is badly patched and cracking, and creates difficulties for small apparatus work in physical education.

93 There have been significant improvements in the learning resources available since the last inspection. Equipment provision for art and physical education was criticised, as were shortcomings in the stock of books. All of these areas are now adequately resourced. The library stock is varied, adequate in range, and of good quality. Books are well displayed, in a pleasant corner of the classroom. This is a major improvement since the last inspection, and the Friends of the School have provided much of the money needed to fund it. However, there are shortcomings in computer hardware and software, and in equipment provision for the children under five. There are also shortcomings in equipment for religious education, especially with regard to resources to support teaching about religions other than Christianity, as required by the Agreed Syllabus.

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

96 Teaching and support staff are very well deployed. The teachers and the headteacher teach some subjects across the school, each leading those in which they have particular skills. The headteacher manages special educational needs provision, and uses her particular expertise with the children under five to good effect.

97 The use of accommodation is very good. Additional space made available through the acquisition of the schoolhouse has been brought into use in a very thoughtful way, and makes a significant contribution to the good curriculum the school offers.

98 Learning resources, while lacking in information and communication technology, provision for children under five, and religious education, are nonetheless generally well used by the teachers,

and respected by the children. Staff know what is available and use a range of books, equipment and media to enhance their lessons. Scrutiny of work shows computers are under-used to enrich work in other subjects, an indication of the lack of teacher confidence in this area of work.

99 The school day starts promptly. Children come to school punctually, and most lessons progress at a good pace. Time is used well, to the benefit of the children's learning. In relation to its pattern of expenditure and income, the quality of intake and the educational standards achieved, the school continues to provide sound value for money.

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

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

100 Provision for these children is new as there are now nine children in school who are under five. This provision is satisfactory. During one morning and one afternoon each week, the children are taught in a small group, exclusively for children under five, in the activity area. In other lessons, work is matched well to their needs within a mixed reception, Year 1 and Year 2 class. All teachers in the school teach this age group during the week. For example, the science and physical education co-ordinator teaches these subjects to the children. One teacher has very good expertise with this age group.

101 Children under five make a good start to their education as they learn from a broad curriculum. Attainment on entry to school is average. Social skills are in line with or above the national expectation for their age. Reading and numerical skills are in line with the national average for girls and below average for the boys. These are checked carefully soon after the children start school. Work is matched well to ability so that children make satisfactory and sometimes very good progress and meet the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes for children of this age, except personal and social development where attainment is well above average.

#### **Personal and social development**

102 Attainment and progress in personal and social development is very good within a caring and secure environment. Children play co-operatively with each other, taking turns and sharing resources. They are keen to try things on their own and respond well to praise. Children are happy to play on their own or together. Children quickly show their independence in choosing activities and materials they wish to use when making models. They help to keep the classroom tidy. Children undress and dress in good time for physical education lessons without adult help. They work successfully without constant adult supervision and persevere when tasks are challenging. In church and in school they behave respectfully. They wait for their turn patiently and pay attention to good manners saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Behaviour and relationships are excellent especially at lunchtime, which is a very good social occasion. Higher attaining children are challenged well to acquire early literacy and numeracy skills so that they are prepared well for entry into Year 1.

103 Children have good attitudes to their work. They respond well to challenges such as making finger puppets and playing out well-known stories imaginatively. Children listen attentively to their teacher and become absorbed in what they are doing. Children work well together, especially when playing mathematical games.

#### **Language and literacy**

104 Overall attainment at age five is in line with national expectations and progress is

satisfactory in language and literacy. Children make their needs clear and talk about what they do; their use of language is developed effectively. They enjoy talking about their experiences in small groups and to the whole class. They speak confidently and articulately to adults. Good imaginative situations enable children and adults can enter a role that involves stimulating children's language and creative ideas. Opportunities to extend children's language skills through stories, such as 'The Little Red Hen' and 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', rhymes, conversations with adults or sharing their news with the rest of the class are good. Children know the names of letters and the sounds they make. They handle books appropriately and a few can read simple words. Children enjoy telling stories from pictures. Some can write their names accurately. Children are expected to use subject specific language. For example in science, they use the words 'electricity', 'circuit' and 'battery' appropriately. Children use complex sentences to describe their findings. In handwriting, most children begin to form their letters correctly and do their best to write neatly.

## **Mathematics**

105 At the age of five, children's attainment is in line with national expectations. Progress is satisfactory as children are taught according to the National Numeracy Strategy. Activities are practical so that children recognise patterns of colours and copy them by ordering plastic bears or elephants by colour or size. In turn they create repeating patterns of their own. They are familiar with number rhymes such as 'Ten Green Bottles' which allows them to count well in sequence. Children know and use mathematical vocabulary like circle, square, triangle and rectangle. They can measure using words such as taller and shorter.

## **Knowledge and understanding of the world.**

106 Progress in children's knowledge and understanding of the world is satisfactory. At the age of five, attainment is in line with national expectations. Children have a sound understanding of times past and present. For example, when studying holidays in the past they recognised differences in the clothes people wore then and now. They described activities that take place at the seaside now and in the past. They acquired this knowledge appropriately by looking at pictures and books. Children know about time passing, by thinking about their birthdays, the seasons of the year and festivals such as Christmas and Easter. In science, children know about objects, which need to be plugged into an electricity supply to work and those which run on batteries. Skills in information and communication technology are unsatisfactory, as work planned for them is too hard. However, they do know how to operate tape recorders independently. Children know much about their local environment and confidently explain characteristics of the village.

## **Physical development**

107 Progress in physical development is satisfactory, so that at the age of five children's attainment is in line with the national expectations. Children have sound manipulative skills, cutting, sticking and painting with care. Tools and equipment are used safely. In physical education children acquire sound skills in hopping, jumping, skipping and running. They are agile and sustain energetic activity well. Some children have not yet learned to use the available space well. They listen attentively to the teacher's instructions and practise skills with concentration and care. The lack of large toys, such as tricycles, limits opportunities for children to develop their co-ordination.

## **Creative development**

108 Progress in creative development is satisfactory. Attainment at the age of five is broadly in line with national expectations. In art, children represent their ideas in a variety of ways including drawing, painting, weaving and clay work. They recognise and name primary colours and enjoy

choosing and mixing colours to paint self-portraits. In drama, especially 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', children act out their ideas creatively. Finger puppets and construction toys provide additional opportunities for children to play co-operatively and creatively. They use their keen observational and listening skills to explore their ideas about sounds in science. For example, children learned that when they made a noise, a duck quacked and it stopped when they were quiet. This led the children to ask many interesting and thoughtful questions to find out why this happened.

### **Other factors related to the quality of education**

109 Teaching is satisfactory overall. It varies depending on the expertise of the teacher. Teaching in personal and social development is very good. Teachers have high expectations that children can work independently and co-operatively. They provide very good role models for the children. Teaching is satisfactory in the other areas of experience, except information and communication technology, which is unsatisfactory. One teacher is highly skilled in the teaching of the under fives. Teaching in language and literacy, mathematics and creative development is very good in the sessions set aside for these children to be taught separately from other year groups. Often children remain part of lessons planned for children in Year 1 and 2. Separate activities are planned appropriately for the children but there is little time for the class teacher to spend with the children. While inservice training has raised other teachers' knowledge and skills in teaching for this age group, there are occasions when teachers and other adults do not work sufficiently with the children to extend their vocabulary and early reading and writing skills. Lesson plans are good with a clear focus on what the children are to do and achieve in each session. Activities are matched well to children's ages and some, such as writing a letter of apology from 'Goldilocks to the Three Bears' are imaginative and relevant to children's lives. Basic resources are satisfactory and used selectively to cope with the limitations of the activity room. Children's attainment is assessed well. It is clear that the information teachers gain is used well to match children's work to their needs. Children are managed well so that there is a positive, caring atmosphere in all lessons in the under fives.

### **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

#### **English**

110 In 1999, test results for children at the end of Key Stage 2, showed that the number of children reaching the expected level of attainment (level 4) and higher than expected level (level 5) was well above average in comparison to the national average for all maintained schools and for similar schools. The number of children entered for the Standard Assessment Tasks is very small and therefore comparisons to national figures are unreliable. Each child represents a high percentage. Children in the present Year 6 have a wide range of abilities. Lesson observations support the view that currently, children's attainment in English is in line with the national average at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2.

111 In English, at the end of Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 1, there has been a significant rise in standards since 1996. Attainment is improving in comparison with national averages at a rate much

faster than the national trend.

112 This rise is due to:

- improvements in the quality of teaching, especially in Key Stage 2;
- individual targets for all children;
- implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.

113 There is evidence of a difference in the attainment of boys and girls in all aspects of English at the end of Key Stage 2. Over three years the performance of boys in English was above the national average, while the performance of girls was well below the national average. In Key Stage 1, the girls attained slightly better than the boys in reading. In writing, the girls' performance was well above the national average, while that for the boys was well below the national average. The school has set ambitious but realistic targets for improvement and is very well placed to reach them.

114 Progress in lessons observed was very good. This is because lessons were planned closely to the format of the National Literacy Strategy. Progress was unsatisfactory in one Key Stage 2 lesson as there was little direct teaching to enhance children's literacy skills. The scrutiny of work shows that progress was satisfactory during the year prior to the inspection, but there has been a significant improvement in the quantity of children's work, and their progress in literacy, since September 1999. This shows very good promise of improved attainment and progress.

115 Standards in speaking and listening are above average at the end of both key stages. As children enter Key Stage 1, their speech and their capacity for effective listening are good. Young children's comments and replies are interesting and closely related to the matter in hand. They speak confidently, articulately and at length, enjoying conversations with adults and each other. Older children are articulate in responding to differing points of view. They speak clearly and confidently in formal and informal situations, such as presentations to parents and class discussions.

116 Progress is good when children work in pairs and groups. It is better when there are opportunities for children to use talk for role-play, developing imaginative ideas and individual points of view. For example, in Year 6 a debate about the pros and cons of foxhunting. Children listen well in assemblies, and they respond appropriately to instructions. They enjoy humour. Children make valuable comments, and ask questions which show curiosity and thought.

117 Attainment in reading is average at the end of Key Stage 1 and above average at the end of Key Stage 2. From a modest start children in Key Stage 1 make satisfactory progress. A few higher attaining children use the context of the story to work out more difficult words in Key Stage 1. They make sensible predictions about what is likely to happen next in a story. Some children read aloud fluently and with expression, especially if they have read the story before.

118 Children make good progress in reading in Key Stage 2. Children read books appropriate for their age and particularly enjoy humorous stories and poems by authors and poets such as Roald Dahl, Michael Rosen and Philip Ridley. In lessons, with the help of the teacher, they respond well to the work of famous authors to write their own plays that they share confidently with others. In discussing their favourite books, children interpret and discuss their understanding of what they have read in detail. By the end of both key stages, children know how to use reference and non-fiction books correctly to find information, and are practised in doing so. There are many opportunities for them to find out information from books. This enables children, especially in Key Stage 2, to use their literacy skills effectively across the curriculum. Children's reading has improved since the previous inspection as books are matched well to their level of understanding.



119 Attainment in writing at the end of both key stages is average. In Key Stage 1, children make satisfactory progress. When they enter Year 1, children know how to write most letters of the alphabet. At the end of Key Stage 1, a few join up their letters but this is inconsistent. By the end of the key stage, some children write short stories. However, children make common errors with their spelling and forget to use full stops and capital letters properly. Tasks in writing often capture children's imagination and enable them to try to spell words independently.

120 Progress in Key Stage 2 is satisfactory overall depending on the quality of teaching. Progress was very good in two lessons observed in both Key stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Very clear explanations provide new knowledge for all children that they can easily understand. Tasks are matched very well to children's abilities and build well on what they have learned before. Progress is unsatisfactory when work builds insufficiently on previous lessons and children make few gains in literacy skills. In both key stages, children write appropriately for a range of purposes, such as poems, to express their opinions about foxhunting, to write letters, newspaper reports and plays. For example, children wrote a play about when the lightning struck the school earlier in the term. However, few children write with a consistent joined script, spelling lacks accuracy, although it is better than at the time of the previous inspection and there are mistakes in punctuation. Full stops, capital letters and speech marks are insufficiently used consistently and accurately. Information and communication technology is rarely used to enhance skills in this subject.

121 Lower attaining children, children from the travellers' community and those with English as an additional language make good progress in the light of their prior attainment in literacy skills. This is because tasks are matched well to their needs and effective support from a teaching assistant enhances their progress.

122 Children throughout the school have good attitudes to learning English, particularly where teaching is very good. Children settle down to tasks willingly and promptly. They show independence in using dictionaries, thesauruses and other aids in the classroom. Children have very good relationships with one another and their teachers. They are confident and respond well to the teachers' questions. Children from different backgrounds are integrated well into classes. Nevertheless, children take too little care in presenting their work to a high standard.

123 The quality of teaching in the three lessons observed was very good in two lessons and unsatisfactory in one lesson. There is still some variation in Key Stage 2. The implementation of the National Literacy Strategy was delayed by changes in staffing and leadership. Teachers have recently undergone training. There is still work to be done to enable all teachers to use the strategy consistently throughout the school. In the very good lessons, teachers plan children's work carefully, adhering closely to the guidance in the National Literacy Strategy. Teachers assess children's work well. On this basis, they regularly set children appropriate and challenging targets of what they need to achieve. This enables faster progress. While most teachers use an effective range of activities to enable children to acquire literacy skills, methods to teach handwriting and spelling are inconsistent throughout the school.

124 Expectations of what the children can achieve are high. In the best lessons, teachers use imaginative resources to promote children's interest and motivate them to want to learn. In the unsatisfactory lesson, there were few opportunities for children to gain higher order learning skills of skimming and scanning. Children in all classes take home a range of fiction and non-fiction books to read. Homework in other aspects of English is set and used well to enhance children's skills. The homework policy has been incorporated into the home/school agreement following consultation with parents.

## Mathematics

125 In the 1999 national tests, the number of children reaching and exceeding the expected level of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 was in line with the national average when compared to all schools. It was well below average when compared to similar schools. Since September 1999, there is clear promise of increased attainment. This is because the quality of teaching is improving with the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. However, the range of abilities of the children in the current Year 6 is broad. Lesson observations and scrutiny of the work indicate standards of attainment in mathematics are average at the end of both key stages at this time.

126 The school is successfully focusing on numeracy and the development of mental arithmetic. By the end of Year 2, children count forwards and backwards and do simple addition and subtraction sums up to 50. A few know simple multiplication facts and the two times table. They recognise simple fractions such as half and quarter and link this with telling the time. Most recognise and draw flat shapes, such as circles, triangles and squares to show the correct features. They use information and communication technology appropriately to illustrate this work.

127 By the end of Key Stage 2, children use the four mathematical rules confidently in number work and in practical tasks. In mental arithmetic, they show increasing speed and accuracy, and have the ability to work out the right answer in their heads. Children's knowledge and use of fractions, decimals and percentages is sound, as is their understanding of shape and measurement. Children explain strategies for solving problems well. Children apply and use mathematical facts to solve problems appropriately.

128 Children's overall progress is good in lessons as the newly introduced National Numeracy Strategy is having a positive impact on children's attainment and progress. Over time, progress has been barely satisfactory in both key stages as too little time was given to the subject. Progress is now better in Years 3 and 4 than Years 5 and 6 where children are making up for lost time. Throughout the school, children learn the proper mathematical terms and use them correctly in their work. Children in Key Stage 2, practise using their skills in number, measuring and gathering data through problem solving activities. This helps them to consolidate and apply what they have learned before. Children cover the mathematics curriculum thoroughly, which assists good progress. Lower attaining children, children with English as an additional language and those from travelling families, make good progress, as work is well matched to their abilities and the teaching assistant gives effective support. This shows very good promise of improved attainment.

129 Children's attitudes are good in Key Stage 2 and excellent in Key Stage 1. Behaviour is excellent. Children are well motivated, have positive attitudes and try hard. In small groups, children help and support each other effectively and exchange useful ideas particularly in practical tasks. In whole class discussions, confident speaking and listening skills enable children to explain their mathematical thinking. It is challenging for them to explain different strategies for solving problems that might help others to understand new knowledge and skills. Exercise books are sometimes kept neatly, but often written work is untidy and poorly set out, which makes it difficult for children to work accurately.

130 Teaching is good in both key stages. This good teaching is an important factor in the improvement of standards found in the inspection. Teachers are confident and have a good understanding of mathematics. They expect children to work hard and have good class

management. Planning is good and teachers make effective use of the National Framework for Mathematics. Teachers make good use of assessment to adapt lessons each day. This helps children to consolidate or take on new knowledge at a good rate. Relationships are very good. Children receive good encouragement and effective guidance on how to improve their knowledge and skills in mathematics. However, they receive too little guidance on how to set out their work neatly.

131 The subject is well managed and the co-ordinator provides effective leadership. All teachers attended recent training courses together. This has enabled a good and consistent approach throughout the school. The co-ordinator has monitored the quality of teaching in mathematics. As a result improvements have been made. This is having a positive impact on children's attainment and progress. In order to raise standards, test results are analysed and the school has already successfully set targets for further improvement.

## • Science

132 The previous inspection found children's attainment in science to be in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Their skills in scientific experimentation and investigation however were less well developed than in other aspects of the subject. Attainment in science is now above average at the end of both key stages, representing a raising of standards since the last inspection. This is reflected in 1999 national tests. When compared to all schools, attainment was well above average but above average when compared to similar schools. Children of all ability levels make steady progress in their science lessons, and as they move through the school. The main reason for this sound progress is the very carefully sequenced programme of work the school has introduced. Each lesson begins with a revision of previous learning, before moving children's thinking on, a step at a time.

133 Children's sound progress is evident in most aspects of their science work. In studying living things for example, the younger children know about the main parts of a plant and about how seeds grow. By the time they are eleven, they have also learned, through experiment, about the factors which influence plant growth, such as water, nutrients and light. They have charted the growth of shoots and roots under experimental conditions and know a little about the complex processes of photosynthesis. Work on materials builds up from an early recognition of the properties of materials in everyday use, to an understanding of the processes by which mixtures of materials may be separated. The younger children learn that pushing, pulling, squeezing and blowing are forces that can make objects change shape or direction. In later years they recognise forces such as magnetism, gravity and air resistance, and their importance in flight and navigation.

134 As they acquire this scientific knowledge the children also learn the skills of scientific enquiry and investigation. By the end of Key Stage 1, they can set up a simple experiment under the teacher's direction, observe the outcomes, and record them in words and pictures. By the end of Key Stage 2, they conduct experiments with attention to the control of variables, observe and measure accurately, and record results in graphs and tables. Nearly all the experimental work is under close teacher direction, and children have too few opportunities to use their developing skills to devise and conduct simple tests of their own.

135 Children are very interested in their science work. They enjoy discussing scientific ideas, and listen well to the teacher and to each other. They are confident in putting forward their own ideas and experiences about, for example, how they avoid the possible dangers of electricity in their homes. When given the chance to work in pairs or small groups, they do so very sensibly indeed. They concentrate and work hard in most lessons. Occasionally the younger children lose interest and concentration when tasks are too sedentary and last too long. Much of the children's science work is poorly presented. Expectations for neatness, good handwriting and careful spelling are inconsistent.

136 At the time of the last inspection, the teaching of science was found to be generally sound but with some important shortcomings. These have been rectified, and all the lessons seen in the present inspection were satisfactory. One teacher teaches science to both the classes. The work

planned is matched very well to the various abilities of the children. Sound subject knowledge and well-paced lessons enable steady progress to be made. Equipment is used particularly well to capture and hold the children's attention. In one Key Stage 1, lesson an electric fan, the classroom lights and a striking coloured poster were used to focus children's attention on the different ways we use electricity. From a wide range of household implements the children had to work out which were electrically powered. This very good use of resources, linking science to their everyday lives, helps make the new learning meaningful to the children.

137 Occasionally in lessons, links between different elements of the subject, such as force and energy, are not made clear enough and the children are confused. Information and communication technology is insufficiently used within the science programme. The programme as a whole, while generally well balanced, does not allow the children sufficient opportunity to apply their skills to devising simple experiments of their own.

## · **OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES**

### · **Art, design and technology**

138 The school has rightly limited its art, and design and technology programme to make as much time as possible available for literacy and numeracy. Despite this, a broad and balanced programme is offered in these subjects. The main strengths of the current programme lie in the development of painting skills and in designing and making with flexible materials. The children make good progress in their work, and this represents a successful response to one of the key issues of the last inspection.

139 In Key Stage 1, the children use thick and vivid colour to create striking self-portraits. They learn about shape, line and tone in the course of this work. They extend their skills through the use of pastels to make bold and original images of the people in their families. In Key Stage 2, their powers

of accurate observation and representation develop further. In a particularly vivid piece of work, using a very limited primary colour palette, they captured the bustle and boisterousness of playground games. At both key stages, the children have a chance to see and discuss the work of mature artists, and artists from other cultural traditions.

140 In their design and technology work, Key Stage 1 children learned to make puppets using a range of flexible materials, such as paper plates and unwanted socks. Having designed and made their figures, they put on short plays for each other. Work in fabrics is a strong element of the programme and produces impressive results. The children learn a range of weaving techniques, some of which give an excellent insight into the effects of contrasting colour tones and textures. Food technology is addressed through designing and making biscuits and cakes, often in support of charities, or school events. In baking biscuits for example, the children first produced their own designs, showing how they would meet the particular requirements of the task. Some went on to design presentation packaging for their products.

141 Children's attitudes to art, and design technology work are very positive indeed. Their classroom behaviour is excellent. They work very hard, co-operate well in small groups, and quickly become absorbed in their tasks. This enthusiastic response helps them make good progress in the subject.

142 Only two lessons were seen during the inspection. The same teacher taught both and both were satisfactory. The main strength of the teaching is the selection of challenging and interesting tasks for the children. This, together with the teacher's enthusiasm, sustains the children's concentration throughout the lessons. In one lesson, work by the painter Klimt was discussed, before the children made their own wax resist designs on paper. They plan to extend these lively designs into batik patterns. In the other lesson, children were taught the step by step process of threading a needle, prior to sewing their puppet bodies together. This was a difficult task for the Key Stage 1 children, but with encouragement and very good teacher demonstrations they rose to the occasion.

### **Geography and history**

143 No lessons were seen in history and geography during the inspection. Scrutiny of teachers' lesson plans, children's previous work and talking with them indicates that the subjects are given appropriate time within the curriculum. Progress is satisfactory. The main strengths of the current history and geography programmes include an emphasis on the local environment linked to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. There are good opportunities for children to find information independently in order to develop their capacity for personal study. This is an improvement following the previous inspection. Children are encouraged to apply historical and geographical skills to everyday life. This makes learning purposeful and meaningful. A particular strength is the way in which children have used a range of cross-curricular skills to map the houses of the village and write an up to date information leaflet for visiting tourists.

144 Children at the end of Key Stage 2 know about rivers and settlements, map symbols and keys and the need for grid references. The lightning strike on the school provoked in-depth work on the reasons why weather becomes stormy. Children carried out independent research into different kinds of lightning. They looked at weather reports in the newspapers and climates in different parts of the world. From this work, and using atlases and statistics about rainfall, they discovered the best place to go on holiday and at what time of the year, if rain and stormy weather was to be avoided.

145 In history, children know much about the life and times of the Tudors and their homes. They use Tudor houses within the locality to gain much knowledge about the way Tudors lived. In discussion, children talked about music and games played at the time and the food the Tudors liked to eat. They also knew about events going on in Europe at the same time, such as the Renaissance.

146 Children are motivated well to find out about life in Tudor times. They know well the difference between the lives of rich and poor people. In addition they know well the difference between life at the time of the Aztecs and present day life. Work on the Viking invaders shows some in-depth research, extended and imaginative writing. Children took on the role of King Offa or one of his servants. Children have good knowledge about Viking boats, beliefs, food and music. In both history and geography, children use CD-Roms to find out information. Work is well differentiated. However, children's work lacks quality, inspite of many opportunities for them to express their own ideas.

147 No judgement can be made about the quality of teaching as none was observed. From the scrutiny of work, tasks are challenging and capture children's interest. Expectations of attainment and progress are high. Expectation about the quality of children's pride in their work was too low. There has been a significant improvement in the presentation of work since the appointment of the new headteacher and this shows promise, but expectations are not yet high or consistent enough.

### **Information and communication technology**

148 At the time of the last inspection standards in information and communication technology were found to be in line with national expectations at the end of both key stages. Attainment is now below average in relation to these expectations.

149 The children's information and communication technology programme addresses the required elements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Most children can use simple word processing programmes, and by the age of eleven can vary font, size and colour. They learn to organise simple statistical data for electronic handling, creating tables, graphs and charts about issues such as how they spend their weekends. Some children can use a CD-Rom to import text and pictures into simple research work, and they have had a chance to learn a little about control technology through the use of a programmable floor turtle. However, this work is at a very superficial level.

150 The main reasons for the children's unsatisfactory progress in information and communication technology lie in the limitations of the hardware and software available, and the low level of teacher confidence and knowledge in the subject. Lessons do not build up children's skills in a sufficiently rigorous and systematic way. The headteacher and governors are fully aware of the position and are working energetically to improve it. A carefully conducted audit of teachers' training needs has been carried out, and the current school development plan makes improvement in this subject a priority. The school has wisely adopted a nationally recommended programme of work, but at present lacks the hardware and teacher expertise to implement it properly. Some new computers have been ordered. Plans have been drawn up to obtain additional national funding for further training, and to enlist help from parents who have information and communication technology skills.

151 Throughout the inspection only one information and communication technology lesson was seen. Otherwise the computers were not in use. This was partly as a result of the damage caused to the computers when the school was struck by lightning a few weeks prior to the inspection. That said, the scrutiny of work shows that information and communication technology makes a minimal contribution to work in other subjects at present. In the lesson seen, Key Stage 1 children showed very positive attitudes to the work, and tried their best to answer the questions they were asked.

152 The teaching seen was unsatisfactory because its content was inappropriate for most of the class, and far too difficult for the Year 1 children. Smaller children could not see the monitor easily and some lost interest in the proceedings. The lesson illustrated the main problems confronting the school, that is, unsuitable software, slow computers and a very limited fund of teacher knowledge.

## **Music**

153 Only one music lesson was seen during the inspection. However, scrutiny of children's work, and teachers' lesson plans, indicates that children enjoy many different musical experiences. As they enter and leave assembly they listen to and appraise music, such as Vangelis '1492 Conquest of Paradise'. Year 6 children justify why they like certain kinds of music well. When playing instruments, children are good at composing tunes that reflect poems about the sea and the Caribbean. In doing so they select well a variety of instruments such as xylophone, keyboard, shaker, tambourines, rainmakers and recorders. These tunes are imaginative and evoke the different moods of the poem and the sea.

154 At the time of the previous inspection, there was a music specialist on the staff. This is no longer the case. Provision for music is satisfactory, as teachers do their best to ensure the National Curriculum is covered. Children make satisfactory progress in music, in playing the various instruments, writing simple notation and singing. Teachers make good use of assessment to enable children to refine and improve their performance.

155 Attitudes to learning music are good. Children respond well to teachers' questions that enable them to think about their ideas and carry out the practical work effectively. Children work well together in small groups and are prepared to accept one another's suggestions. Behaviour is excellent and children perform confidently in front of others.

156 Teaching in the lesson seen was satisfactory. A variety of instruments were available. Children made decisions about the instruments they wished to use to reflect the sounds they wanted. Praise and encouragement motivated children to do their best. Time was used well and children were well managed. Subject knowledge was satisfactory.

## **Physical education**

157 Two physical education lessons were seen during the inspection, one at each key stage. Both were taught confidently by the same teacher who brings specialist skills to the subject. The Key Stage 1 lesson was in games. It took place outdoors, on a cold morning. The children showed a good range of hopping, skipping, jumping and turning movements. They held balanced positions well, both in movement and in stillness, and showed imagination in inventing different ways of moving around the playground with small apparatus. Appropriately, on such a cold morning, they sustained vigorous activity well throughout the lesson, especially in the relay races. The Key Stage 2 lesson was in gymnastics, and was held in the village hall some 300 metres away. The children showed a good awareness of ways of moving at different levels and speeds on the floor. They extended their movement sequences well onto the apparatus, exploring continuous movement while avoiding physical contact with each other. Their capacity to analyse and refine their own performance is less well developed than their gymnastic skills.

158 Children make satisfactory progress in their physical education lessons. Their tasks build on recently learned skills, reinforcing and extending them. The school's very good scheme of work, and planning, for physical education promotes this steady and ordered progression of skills.

159 The children's attitudes to their physical education work are good. They work hard, and collaborate very well indeed in group activities. In both lessons, some occasional noisiness prevented them from concentrating as hard as they could on some of the tasks set.

160 Physical education teaching is satisfactory. The teacher knows the subject very well, and brings energy and enthusiasm to the lessons. Safety is properly emphasised. There is a good balance of types of task during the lessons, and this helps the children learn to evaluate their work. On occasions children become over-enthusiastic, with the result that their concentration is affected.

161 The physical education programme as a whole is a strong and well balanced one. In addition to games and gymnastics, children learn dance and athletics skills. Older children experience an activity day at Ickworth, and the clustering arrangements for local small schools allows for some inter-school competitions. There are also opportunities for extra-curricular games according to the season.

A better range of good quality equipment is in use than at the time of the last inspection. However, the lack of a hall means that physical education lessons often have to take place in the village hall. This is inconvenient, especially in poor weather, and inefficient in the use of time. The poor condition of the hard play area noted in the previous inspection, and its irregular slope, hamper the development of games skills.

### **Swimming**

162 The inspection of the school included a focussed view of swimming. Provision for swimming is made at Hadleigh pool, in the Spring Term. All the children can attend the twelve lessons in the swimming programme, and will be taught by qualified instructors. Coach transport is used to the pool, and parent helpers give voluntary support and supervision to the younger children. No swimming lessons could be seen during the inspection, and the school holds no records of the swimming attainment of previous pupils. It is therefore impossible to comment on the rate of children's progress, or the quality of swimming teaching. The planned Spring Term programme however, represents a good level of provision.

### **Religious education**

163 At the time of the last inspection, children's attainment in religious education was found to be in line with the expectations of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus, at both key stages. This remains the case.

164 While only one religious education lesson was seen during the inspection, the children worked hard and made good progress. A scrutiny of past work indicates that children make sound progress in learning this subject as they move through the school.

165 Children's learning develops satisfactorily in the main areas of the locally agreed syllabus. They develop a good understanding of the nature of communities. They know that belonging is a basic human need, met through the family, the school, religious faith communities, and national communities. By the time they are eleven, most children realise that all communities need rules if they are to survive and meet members' needs. They know that while communities such as families often have tacit rules, other communities have laws or commandments that bind members together. In the Key Stage 2 lesson seen, the children worked in pairs, discussing the 'Ten Commandments', and reorganising them in a priority list. They explored the relative importance of each rule, its relevance to their daily lives, and the degree of difficulty they might have in keeping it. The children learn about religious communities, their beliefs, celebrations and sacred writings. In learning about Christianity, they have a good knowledge of the life and teachings of Christ, and of the complex events that led to the crucifixion and to Easter. In studying Judaism, they have learned some important stories from the Torah, and something about Jewish worship and family life. Their work programme, devised in consultation with other local schools, also includes work on Hinduism as a major world faith.



## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

170 Three inspectors carried out the inspection over 6 inspector days.

171 19 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. 14 hours and 20 minutes were spent collecting evidence from classroom observations. Additional time was spent scrutinising children's work and talking to them and hearing them read. All teachers employed by the school on a full-time or part-time basis were observed. Religious education and all subjects of the National Curriculum except geography were seen.

172 12 children were heard reading. They talked about the books they have read, authors they like and their skills in finding and using reference books. Reading records and results from standardised tests were scrutinised. More time was spent scrutinising children's previous work in all subjects.

173 Assemblies were attended and registration observed. Children were observed during breaks from lessons, in the dining hall, and arriving at school and leaving at the end of the day. The teaching assistant and adult helpers were observed as part of the teacher's classroom management.

174 Discussions were held with three representatives of the governing body, including the chairman of governors. Other discussions were held with the headteacher, curriculum co-ordinators, teaching assistant and administrative assistant.

175 A full range of detailed documentation that supports the school's work was analysed before the inspection. In addition, teachers' long term, medium term and daily lesson plans were scrutinised. Teachers provided supplementary evidence including, photographic evidence, samples of assessment records and individual reports to parents. Individual education plans for children were inspected. Arrangements for children with special educational needs were discussed and observed. Attendance registers were scrutinised. The accommodation and resources were evaluated. Displays were inspected carefully for evidence of attainment and attitudes to work.

176 Meetings were held with the staff and governors before the inspection to discuss the process and gather pre-inspection evidence. A meeting was held with 10 parents of children registered at the school. 16 responses to the parents' questionnaire were analysed.

· **DATA AND INDICATORS**

· **Pupil data**

|         | Number of pupils<br>on roll (full-time<br>equivalent) | Number of<br>pupils with<br>statements of<br>SEN | Number of pupils<br>on school's register<br>of SEN | Number of full-time<br>pupils eligible for free<br>school meals |
|---------|---|--|--|---|
| YR - Y6 | 43  | 0  | 9  | 0   |

· **Teachers and classes**

· **Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)**

|  |       |
|--|-------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent): | 2.20  |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher:                    | 19.09 |

· **Education support staff (YR - Y6)**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of education support staff: | 1    |
| Total aggregate hours worked each week:  | 17.2 |
| Average class size:                      | 22   |

· **Financial data**

|  |           |
|--|-----------|
| Financial year:                            | 1998/1999 |
|  | £         |
| Total Income                               | 104,450   |
| Total Expenditure                          | 108,281   |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2,926.51  |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | -3,831    |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | -1,500    |

## PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out: 41

Number of questionnaires returned: 16

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           | 60             | 33    | 7       | 0        | 0                 |
| I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren) | 69             | 31    | 0       | 0        | 0                 |
| The school handles complaints from parents well   | 29             | 36    | 35      | 0        | 0                 |
| The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught                                     | 29             | 57    | 7       | 7        | 0                 |
| The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress                                | 21             | 74    | 7       | 0        | 0                 |
| The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work                             | 29             | 57    | 14      | 0        | 0                 |
| The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons            | 14             | 57    | 21      | 7        | 0                 |
| I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home                   | 29             | 50    | 14      | 7        | 0                 |
| The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)                       | 40             | 47    | 13      | 0        | 0                 |
| The school achieves high standards of good behaviour  | 43             | 43    | 14      | 0        | 0                 |
| My child(ren) like(s) school  | 53             | 47    | 0       | 0        | 0                 |

The numbers may not add up to 100 as numbers have been rounded up and down; not all parents complete every aspect of the questionnaire.