

INSPECTION REPORT

Colman Middle School
Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique Reference Number: 120937

Headteacher: Mrs A Genge

Reporting inspector: Mr D Manuel

Dates of inspection: 4th – 7th October 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707601

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle (deemed primary)

Type of control: County

Age range of pupils: 8 – 12 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: South Park Avenue
Norwich
Norfolk
NR4 7AU

Telephone number: 01603 444201

Fax number: 01603 444208

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs M Vogwill

Date of previous inspection: March 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
David Manuel, Registered Inspector	English Information technology Modern foreign languages	Attainment and progress Teaching Leadership and management Staffing, accommodation and learning resources The efficiency of the school
Susanna Stevens, Lay Inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance Support, guidance and pupils' welfare Partnership with parents and the community
Elaine Brittan	History Geography Religious education English as an additional language	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
Ken Parry	Mathematics Design and technology Art	Curriculum and assessment
Maurice Leyland	Science Music Physical education	Special educational needs Equal opportunities
Chris Lewis		Special unit for deaf and hearing impaired pupils

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Ltd
National Westminster Bank Chambers
Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea, Somerset
TA8 1AN
Tel: 01278 795022

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The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
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MAIN FINDINGS

Colman Middle School provides its pupils with a good quality of education within a caring and secure environment.

What the school does well

- By the end of Key Stage 2 and the end of Year 7 when pupils leave the school, standards in art, music, physical education and French are above those normally seen from pupils of this age.
- Standards in information technology and design and technology now match expected levels and have improved since the previous inspection when they were below expected levels.
- Overall, the quality of teaching is good.
- The provision for pupils' social development is very good and relationships within the school are very good.
- The provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent.
- The headteacher provides very good leadership.
- The school ethos and implementation of the school aims are very good.
- Financial planning, monitoring and controls are very good, administration is excellent.
- Specialist provision for pupils with hearing impairment is very good, enabling their very good progress, and provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, enabling their good progress.

Where the school has minor weaknesses

- The school has no significant weaknesses. However, the following minor weaknesses should be rectified.
- I. Practical activities in science are too teacher-directed.
 - II. There are few opportunities for pupils investigative work in mathematics.
 - III. The time allocation for religious education is not consistently maintained in the summer term due to other curriculum priorities.
 - IV. Teachers' subject knowledge in design and technology is not fully developed to support the progressive development of skills.

What the school does well, significantly outweighs the minor weaknesses. These will, however, form the basis of the governors' action plan which will be sent to all parents and guardians of the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection, standards by the end of Key Stage 2 and Year 7 in information technology have risen from being below national expectations to meet expected levels. Significant improvements have taken place in staff expertise and provision and have had a good impact on pupils' standards. In design and technology standards have risen from below national expectations to match those normally seen from pupils of this age. This is due to better provision and better teaching.

The school has established good criteria for monitoring and evaluating the success of decisions taken by governors on pupils' progress and standards, a key issue in the previous inspection. Suitably challenging targets to match attainment levels are set for pupils in all year groups.

Progress is now monitored regularly and individual targets are reviewed annually. The school's financial planning is closely linked to these reviews. Funding for teacher training and resources is allocated according to identified areas of need. Success criteria are monitored closely and standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science and information technology have risen as a result. This is confirmed by the 1999 National Curriculum test results.

The previous issue regarding lack of access for wheelchair users to the first floor specialist accommodation has been resolved by the installation of a lift.

Standards in subjects

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

Performance in	Compared with all schools	Compared with similar schools	Key:	
English	C	C	<i>Well above average</i>	A
Mathematics	D	D	<i>Above</i>	B
Science	C	B	<i>Average</i>	D
			<i>Below average</i>	E
			<i>Well below average</i>	

Pupils enter the school with attainment levels which cover the full range but are, in the main, below those expected for their age. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected levels was close to the national average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Comparison with schools of a similar context shows that attainment in English was average, in mathematics below average and in science was above average. Over the past four years results have fluctuated, as for example, showing a decrease in 1998, followed by a significant increase over the past year. The cohort of pupils who took the tests in 1998 had been identified by the school as having a much higher proportion of special educational needs than normal. Although target setting for individual pupils and analysis showed improvements during the key stage, teacher assessment identified capabilities which were below those normally gained by pupils in the school, and which were reflected in the test results. In the 1999 national results, the school's results rose significantly by 10 per cent in English, by 12 per cent in mathematics and by 16 per cent in science. This was due to the reduced number of pupils with special educational needs and the good use by teachers of individual target setting for pupils.

Inspection evidence shows that across a wider range of work than that assessed by the national tests, the current Year 6 and Year 7 pupils attain average standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. Improvements are due to the slightly higher standards of the cohorts themselves and the more specific teaching of skills, particularly with the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and preparations for the National Numeracy Strategy.

In non-core subjects at the end of Key Stage 2 and Year 7 when pupils leave the school, the majority attain standards in art, music, physical education and French which are above levels normally seen from pupils of this age. In design and technology, geography and history, the majority of pupils attain standards normally seen from pupils of this age.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	7 – 11 years	12 years
English	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good
Science	Good	Good
Information technology	Satisfactory	Good
Religious education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Other subjects	Good	Good

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

Overall the quality of teaching is good. All teaching observed was satisfactory or better, of which 48 per cent was good and 16 per cent was very good. A full comparison with the previous report is not possible as the proportions of satisfactory and unsatisfactory teaching were not identified. However, improvements have taken place, as in lessons observed during this inspection there was no unsatisfactory teaching.

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils' behaviour is generally good.
Attendance	Good.
Ethos*	Very good. Pupils have very good attitudes, relationships are very good and staff are committed to high standards.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides very good leadership and is well supported by the governing body.
Curriculum	The school provides a rich, broad and well-balanced curriculum. Provision for extra-curricular activities is excellent.
Pupils with special educational needs	These pupils make good progress as a result of the good support provided. Pupils with hearing impairment receive very good specialist support and make very good progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Provision for pupils' social development is very good, for moral and cultural development provision is good and for spiritual development provision is satisfactory.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Numbers and expertise of teaching and support staff are good. The quality of the accommodation is very good. Resources are good and used effectively to support teaching and learning.
Value for money	The school provides good value for money.

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

The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
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<p>V. Pupils are encouraged to be involved in more than daily lessons.</p> <p>VI. The school enables pupils to achieve good standards of work.</p> <p>VII. Parents are kept well-informed about pupils' progress.</p> <p>VIII. The school gives a clear understanding about what is taught.</p> <p>IX. The school is easy to approach about problems.</p> <p>X. Complaints from parents are handled well.</p> <p>XI. Children like school.</p>	<p>XII. Some parents are dissatisfied with the</p>
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The inspection team confirms what parents like about the school. With regard to dissatisfaction about homework, the team judges that since the introduction of the home/school agreement, this term, homework is consistently set and marked and is having a good impact on pupils' progress and standards, particularly in English and mathematics.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

There are no key issues for action. However, the following minor weaknesses should be addressed by the governors, headteacher and staff and should form the basis of the governors' action plan:

- a) in science, provide opportunities for less teacher-directed activities in practical work; (paragraphs 81, 84)
- b) in mathematics, improve provision for investigative work to enable pupils to explore more open-ended problems; (paragraph 74)
- c) ensure that the time allocation for religious education is consistently maintained, despite increased curriculum priorities; (paragraph 98)
- d) further improve teachers' subject knowledge in design and technology in order to develop specific subject skills more progressively. (paragraphs 29, 107)

INTRODUCTION

Characteristics of the school

1. Colman Middle School is situated about a mile from the centre of Norwich. It shares the site with Colman First School and the Clare Special School. It caters for boys and girls in the eight to twelve years age range.
2. There are currently 255 pupils on roll, comprising 132 boys and 123 girls organised into 8 classes. The number on roll has steadily increased over the past few years. It is below the average size for this type of school. The teaching staff consist of 11 full-time, including the headteacher, and 8 part-time staff. This includes provision for a small special unit for deaf and hearing impaired pupils. The average class size is 32.
3. Pupils come from a wide variety of social backgrounds. Over the past three years, there are an increasing number of children coming from difficult social backgrounds. Nearby housing is a mix of private and council property. Twenty-seven per cent of pupils are identified as having special educational needs, mostly with moderate learning difficulties, hearing impairment or emotional behaviour. Eight have a statement of special educational need. Twenty per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals. These figures are above the national average. The number of ethnic minority children is also above average. The standard admission number is 65.
4. Attainment on entry covers a wide range, with pupils of higher and lower attainment, but overall below average, particularly in English and maths. The school has specialist facilities including separate rooms for, French, science, information technology, art, music, library and a swimming pool. A unit for deaf and partially hearing pupils is based at the school and it caters for up to six pupils. Most pupils in this unit transfer from a similar unit in the nearby first school. These pupils are attached to classes within the school and they integrate for most lessons apart from literacy and music.
- 4.
5. The school aims are to promote the fullest possible development of each child's intellectual, emotional, physical and social potential through the expansion of knowledge and experience and the development of relevant skills and attitudes. The school aims to develop in pupils:
 - the desire to learn;
 - personal integrity and a sense of social responsibility;
 - self respect;
 - self-confidence and the ability to take responsibility for their own actions and
 - respect for the aspirations, values, beliefs and property of others.
1. Current priorities in school management plan for this year are to:
 - complete the review of English from the previous year;
 - complete the review of assessment recording and reporting;
 - review the curriculum in a range of identified subjects – mathematics, science, geography, design and technology and physical education;
 - continue to monitor 'Target Setting' based on annual analysis, to raise standards in all year groups but particularly in Year 4 where English and mathematics are below average on entry.

The Standards Fund allocation is being used to support these priorities. The school allocates sums of money annually for redecoration and furnishing to provide a better working environment.

Key Indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 2¹

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	29	36	65

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	16	16	23
	Girls	26	20	29
	Total	42	36	52
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	65 (56)	55 (43)	80 (64)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils At NC Level 4 or Above	Boys	15	20	21
	Girls	25	23	28
	Total	40	43	49
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	61 (51)	66 (60)	75 (60)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (71)

Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.9
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	0
	National comparative data	0.5

Exclusions

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

Quality of teaching

Percentage of teaching observed which is :

	%
Very good or better	16
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL

Attainment and progress

- Pupils enter the school with attainment levels that cover the full range but are, in the main, below those expected for their age. Trends over time indicate that an increasing number of pupils enter the school from outside the normal catchment area. Of the current Year 4 pupils, just over two-thirds transferred from the nearby First School and almost a third came from other areas. The school's assessment processes identify the full range of attainment

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

but higher than normal percentages of below average attainment.

2. In the 1999 end of Key Stage 2 national tests, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 and above was close to the national average in English and science and below average in mathematics. Comparison with schools of a similar context shows that attainment in English was average, in mathematics it was below average and in science above average. The percentage of pupils reaching the higher Level 5 in the same tests was average in English and mathematics and above average in science. Taking the previous four years, the performances of pupils has fluctuated as, for example, between 1998 and 1999 when standards in 1998 dropped significantly due to a cohort with a much higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. This cohort had challenging targets set for it and analysis showed a slight rise in standards but the school's own assessment by the time of the tests, showed results lower than those usually attained by pupils at the school. In the 1999 national tests, at the end of Key Stage 2, standards rose significantly, from the previous year, by 10 per cent in English, by 12 per cent in mathematics and by 16 per cent in science. This rise was due to the reduced proportion of pupils with special educational needs and better teaching as a result of individual target setting for pupils.
3. Inspection evidence shows that across a wider range of work than that assessed by the tests, the current Year 6 pupils attain average standards in English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. There is little variation between girls and boys. At the time of the previous inspection, the majority of pupils attained national expectations in English, mathematics, science and religious education but below expectations in information technology. Improvements in English and mathematics in the past year are due to more specific teaching of pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy. In information technology, better curriculum provision and better teaching have raised standards.
4. In Key Stage 3, by the end of Year 7 when pupils leave the school, inspection evidence shows that pupils attain average standards in English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education. This matches the findings of the previous inspection except in information technology when standards were below national expectations. Improvements are as a result of better curriculum provision and better teaching.
5. At Key Stage 2 in English, most pupils communicate clearly and become articulate. Time set aside for literacy every day is used well to focus on developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. A few higher attaining pupils show good command of language as demonstrated in their use of play scripts. Pupils listen attentively to each other, stories and factual information. Pupils with special educational needs participate fully in oral sessions, using their more limited language confidently. Overall they make good progress in speaking and listening. Hearing impaired pupils receive very good support appropriate to each task and often use 'signing' to communicate. In Key Stage 3, by the end of Year 7, most pupils speak confidently and develop good imagination and expression when reading prepared scripts. Drama makes a positive contribution to the development of speaking and listening skills.
6. Pupils make good progress in reading and by the end of Key Stage 2, standards in reading have risen from below average to average, with a small minority of pupils attaining above average levels. Most pupils read aloud confidently and accurately. They develop satisfactory reference skills, making regular use of the library and use a good selection of CDROM information technology reference sources. Pupils with special educational needs and hearing impairment are supported effectively and make good progress. In Year 7 most pupils read an increasingly challenging range of literature and continue to make good progress.

7. Standards of writing for the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 match national expectations and most pupils make at least satisfactory progress. A few higher attaining pupils make good progress. Pupils develop a considerable range of examples of imaginative writing. Pupils structure stories and poems well, use punctuation accurately and spell correctly. The standard of handwriting is generally good. Pupils use word processing skills well in some writing tasks. Pupils with special educational needs and hearing impairment make good progress and learn how to sequence their ideas in story writing. In Year 7, most pupils write effectively in a range of forms, using imagination and humour. Particularly good work was seen in their newspaper articles using alliteration to emphasise headlines. Over the past year, the implementation of the literacy hour has been good and has had a significant impact on raising standards.
8. In mathematics, pupils at Key Stage 2 and Year 7 carry out number work, including mental arithmetic with increasing confidence and attain standards in line with national expectations. Progress in numeracy is good, in measurement and shape it is satisfactory. However, in a few lessons, pupils make slower progress than expected in their investigative work as they are not provided with sufficient opportunities to explore open-ended problems. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and a small minority attain expected levels in numeracy. The effectiveness of the school's strategy for numeracy is satisfactory. Pupils develop appropriate links with science, design and technology and information technology which positively influences their levels of attainment in these subjects.
9. In science, most pupils make good progress at Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 in most aspects of the subject, to attain standards which are in line with national expectations. However, only satisfactory progress is made in pupils' abilities to experiment and investigate. Pupils have insufficient opportunities to choose their own materials to carry out experiments and ways of recording. This restricts the good rate of progress seen in other aspects such as life processes, physical processes and materials and their properties. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to set targets due to the good support they receive.
10. At the end of Key Stage 2 and Year 7, pupils make good progress in information technology and most attainment at least matches national standards with a small minority of higher attaining pupils attaining above expected levels. This shows an improvement from the previous inspection, when standards were judged to be below national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to other pupils.
11. Pupils' progress in religious education is satisfactory throughout Key Stage 2 and Year 7. Attainment is broadly in line with the expectations of the local agreed syllabus. Pupils acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of the main beliefs and practices of Christianity and other main religions. Older pupils understand that different points of view exist between and within religions.
12. At Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, in art, music, French and physical education most pupils make good progress and attain standards above those normally seen from pupils of this age. This maintains the standards achieved in the previous inspection. In art, most pupils use a variety of techniques and materials and present work of good quality. In music, most pupils produce imaginative compositions. Many pupils have their own instruments and play to a high standard. In physical education most pupils make good progress in gymnastics, dance and games and very good progress in swimming. Pupils are very successful at competitive sports. Although not compulsory in Year 6, French is taught to all pupils and they make good progress in oral and written work. In Year 7, pupils continue their good progress and by the time they leave the school, most attain standards higher than those normally seen from pupils of this age.

13. The majority of pupils make satisfactory progress in design and technology, geography and history and attain standards normally seen from pupils of this age. This is an improvement in design and technology since the previous inspection when standards were judged to be below national standards. Pupils develop satisfactory manipulative skills with a wide range of materials and resources, including construction kits, textiles and pneumatics. In geography, good use of field work enables pupils to carry out a range of local studies. In history, in both key stages, pupils show an increasing knowledge and understanding of different periods, empathising well with people born into different societies.
14. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to prior attainment and targets set in their individual learning programmes. Pupils in the unit for deaf and hearing impairment are well integrated and supported. They make very good progress and their attainment is mostly in line with other pupils in most curriculum areas allowing for their deafness and appropriate modifications in speaking and listening skills. The attainment and progress of the very small number of ethnic minority pupils is variable depending on prior attainment and length of stay in this country. Some are totally fluent in English, others have very limited English skills and understanding. Through its target setting and analysis, the school has set realistic targets for all pupils in its commitment to raise standards further.

Attitudes, behaviour and personal development

15. The previous report identified positive relationships between adults and pupils. Evidence from this inspection confirms that relationships within the school are very good and are a strength of the school. There is a warm, respectful, caring ethos in the school where pupils feel valued and they in turn value and respect all adults in the school. The collaborative manner in which pupils and staff work together contributes to their good personal development and to the quality of their learning.
16. Most pupils have good attitudes to their work. Throughout the school these positive attitudes and their eagerness to learn make a significant impact on their progress and attainment. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, concentrate well and respond willingly in question and answer sessions. They contribute thoughtfully to discussions and their self-confidence is enhanced by the skilful strategies used by many teachers. Deaf pupils develop their self-confidence through a good range of specialist strategies used in their unit and in other classes. They integrate well with their peers at break and lunch times.
17. Behaviour is generally good, with most pupils settling quickly to their work and staying on task in a courteous, self-disciplined manner. A small number of pupils show potentially disruptive tendencies, lose motivation and are impolite. This challenging behaviour is managed well by staff and most other pupils do not allow this poor behaviour to disrupt their concentration. Behaviour in and around the school generally shows good self-discipline, good humour and respect for others. Pupils respond well to school and class rules and are generally polite and kind to one another. Deaf pupils relate well to one another, to adults within their unit and to all pupils and adults throughout the school. Bullying is known to be unacceptable and pupils have confidence in sharing concerns with the staff. There have been no exclusions for a considerable period of time.
18. Personal development and social behaviour have a high priority in the school and underpin all areas of learning. All pupils develop a feeling of security. They become more confident through careful strategies such as encouraging the learning of sign language to communicate with deaf pupils. They also gain confidence from participating in a range of sporting events. In their personal and social education classes, pupils learn to reflect on

their own behaviour and feelings. They respect the feelings of others and readily share in their achievements. Pupils listen carefully to other points of view and develop an awareness of the wider community through their close contact with pupils from the unit for the deaf and with the on-site school for disabled pupils.

19. Most pupils show a willingness to take responsibility, recognising what needs to be done, such as opening a door for another person or setting out chairs for assembly without instruction. Over 80 per cent of the parents, who returned the questionnaires, are of the view that the school achieves a high standard of good behaviour. Over 90 per cent are of the view that their children like school.

Attendance

20. The good level of attendance reported in the previous inspection has been successfully maintained. Attendance at the school is consistently good and just above the national average. This impacts favourably on pupils' progress and attainment. Pupils are eager to attend school and arrive punctually. Registration takes place promptly and in all classes there is a friendly and efficient start to morning and afternoon sessions. The marking of registers meets statutory requirements and there are no unauthorised absences.

QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED

Teaching

21. The quality of teaching is a strength and impacts strongly on pupils' attainment and progress. In lessons seen, 48 per cent of teaching was good, 16 per cent very good and the remaining 36 per cent was satisfactory. No unsatisfactory teaching was observed. Examples of good teaching were found in most classes. In the previous inspection just over half the teaching was judged to be good or very good but there was no evidence of how much was judged to be satisfactory or unsatisfactory.
22. Throughout Key Stage 2 and Year 7 in Key Stage 3, the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers make good provision in their planning to meet pupils' varying needs. The pupils are given appropriate and sensitive support, enabling them to make good progress. Individual education plans are informative and contain clear targets for improvement. Good use is made of praise to ensure that pupils maintain and build on self-esteem. The specialist teaching of pupils in the unit for deaf and hearing impaired pupils is very good. The use of skilled communication support workers is also a significant strength. Pupils are always with a teacher or classroom assistant who uses signing and, when relevant, radio microphones are used by other teachers. Class teachers and support staff have an appropriate awareness of positioning in the classroom, when communicating with these pupils.
23. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach is good in both key stages. Teachers show a good understanding of the principles of the literacy hour and are making sound progress in the early stages of implementing the numeracy strategy. In information technology, teachers and support staff have developed better knowledge of computing than was identified in the previous inspection and plan appropriate links with other subjects. Their improved knowledge is used well in the technology suite to teach particular computer skills to the whole class. In art, music, physical education and French, good subject knowledge contributes significantly to the good progress and standards attained. In design and technology, a review of the subject is a current priority and improvement of teachers' subject knowledge is needed in order to develop skills progressively.

24. Teachers pay good attention to planning across Key Stage 2 and Year 7. Lessons are planned in detail with interesting and stimulating activities and the required resources readily available. In lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils' attainment and behaviour, especially in English, art, music and physical education. In a high proportion of lessons, teachers make good use of time and resources. Lessons get off to a prompt start, often with good introductions which build on previous learning. In many lessons good pace is maintained throughout.
25. Teachers have good strategies to manage pupils and as a result, responses are very positive. Good use is made of praise to encourage pupils and to acknowledge good answers to questions. Overall teachers value the pupils' contributions which does much to develop their self-esteem. Teachers' methods and organisation are very effective. Previous work is regularly reviewed and follow-up activities are structured carefully, especially in English and mathematics, to meet the differing needs of pupils. Good use is made of time at the ends of lessons to assess pupils' progress and understanding. In a very small number of less successful lessons, teachers' strategies are not always effective in ensuring that pupils do not call out or interrupt. As a result the pace of lessons slows. In science, much of the practical work is heavily teacher-directed and pupils are not given sufficient opportunities to select materials or ways of recording evidence. In a few mathematics lessons, there were insufficient open-ended problems for pupils to explore. As a result, pupils' progress was slower than expected. This was also identified as a minor weakness in the previous inspection.
26. The quality and use of day-to-day assessment is good in both key stages. This is used well to plan what pupils need to learn next. Pupils' work is regularly marked and in English particularly, there are helpful and constructive comments, enabling pupils to improve the quality of their writing. During the inspection, homework was set or checked in many lessons and had a significant impact on pupils' progress. Since the home/school agreement was established this term, homework is used well to support a range of skills. Pupils take books home on a regular basis to share with parents, who often take the opportunity of writing comments in the reading diary. Pupils also learn spellings and tables and apply their knowledge to good effect during the literacy hour and in mental mathematics.

The curriculum and assessment

27. The school provides a curriculum which is rich, broad and well balanced. It meets pupils' present needs effectively and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. As a result of the school's programme of continuous review and development, a number of refinements and improvements have been made since the previous inspection. These include the successful implementation of the national strategies for literacy and numeracy. In addition to ensuring a balance between the subjects, there is a clear commitment by subject co-ordinators to maintain a rich curriculum. This is evident in art, French, music and physical education where standards are better than those normally seen from pupils of this age. It is evident also in their determination to promote the essential study skills of their areas of the curriculum. As part of the school's very good provision for personal, social and health education, sex education and an awareness of the uses and misuses of drugs are dealt with very effectively. The curriculum fully meets statutory requirements for the National Curriculum and religious education. However, during the previous summer term the time allocation to religious education in Year 6 was insufficient due to other curriculum priorities.
28. The curriculum is enhanced by a very good range of educational visits and in Year 6 a

residential experience for pupils. Regular visitors to the school include representatives of local churches, the community policeman and games coaches. Extra-curricular provision is excellent, and includes a variety of activities in sport and music and an impressive list of clubs. All of these make a considerable contribution to pupils' personal, social and cultural development. Pupils' intellectual development is supported by the very good arrangements for homework, and a varied physical education programme effectively promotes their physical development.

29. All pupils have equal access to the full curriculum and the principles of equal opportunity are clearly evident in documents produced by the school. The school's planning procedures ensure that work is planned to challenge pupils of all attainment levels. In Years 6 and 7 pupils are taught in class sets matched to mathematical attainment. This is a very effective arrangement which not only contributes to the good progress made in these lessons, but also has a very positive effect on the self-esteem of less confident pupils.
30. Teachers' planning is based on a comprehensive range of clear and supportive policies and helpful schemes of work which are firmly rooted in the Programmes of Study of the National Curriculum. Teachers plan effectively and efficiently in year groups, sharing both the workload and their considerable expertise across a wide range of subjects. They ensure that pupils' learning builds on earlier experiences and this is an important factor in the good progress pupils make as they move through the school. Teachers establish very effective links between the subjects of the curriculum, and this helps to make certain that pupils' learning is relevant and purposeful. For example, in science Year 6 pupils' study of plants and growth is supported effectively by watching a video and using a computer program, while in art, they produce and decorate intricate flowers in clay, and demonstrate their good knowledge of the anatomy of flowers while printmaking.
31. The school's arrangements for assessment are good. They are manageable and realistic, and they are based on a clear policy which provides teachers with helpful clarification of the nature and purposes of assessment. It also provides a clear direction for the future development of assessment which is managed efficiently by the co-ordinator and headteacher. There are well established systems and procedures in place which provide teachers with a good range of information about pupils' attainment and progress. Assessment of deaf pupils is ongoing through daily teaching and there is a strong emphasis upon the development of vocabulary and key words in specific curriculum areas.
32. Pupils are assessed when they first enter the school, and a useful range of standardised tests in mathematics, reading and spelling are administered annually as well as the National Curriculum tests taken at the end of Key Stage 2. In addition, teachers regularly make assessments of pupils' work in all subjects and maintain accurate records in their mark books. However, there is insufficient guidance available to help new or inexperienced teachers to make judgements about the levels pupils attain in relation to standards attained nationally. On a day-to-day basis, marking of pupils' work is used effectively as an assessment tool and teachers provide helpful feedback for pupils. Pupils' involvement in self-assessment is a very effective strategy which is used widely throughout the school. They are regularly expected to talk about their work, to identify precisely what they have learned in particular lessons and what they need to do in order to improve.
33. The school makes good use of the information about pupils which is gathered in these ways. Test results are carefully monitored and analysed, and comparisons are made with national data. Information is shared with governors and parents, and used systematically by teachers to plan future work and to group pupils within classes and sets. Realistic but challenging targets are set using test results to predict future performance. Pupils who learn English as an additional language are assessed by the external support teacher on a

special scale, devised to assess specific language needs.

Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

34. The provision the school makes for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, for moral and cultural development it is good, and for social development it is very good. These findings are generally in line with those of the previous inspection. The provision made for social development is a strength of the school. The school has a strong personal and social education policy which underpins its commitment to these aspects of development. Ninety per cent of parents approved or strongly approved the attitudes and values promoted by the school.
35. Spiritual development is soundly promoted through assemblies in which pupils are given time for prayer and reflection. Approaching Harvest Festival time, the local vicar amusingly encouraged pupils to think about a variety of human attitudes and behaviour, and to give thanks for food. In a Year 4 lesson on Buddhism a teacher effectively created a sense of calm and reflection as pupils concentrated on the beautiful sound of a 'singing bowl' and watched the spinning of a prayer wheel. Pupils learn how religious belief affects everyday life on various levels. For example, pupils understand what worship means to a Christian, and how and where worship is carried out. They have a good understanding of the symbolism of kneeling, bowing of heads and putting hands together in prayer. During the inspection, a deaf lay preacher led a small Harvest service to support the spiritual development of the deaf pupils in the unit.
36. Good provision for pupils' moral development is made through the school's recently adopted behaviour policy. This stresses self-discipline through a framework of rights, responsibilities and rules. These are reinforced sensitively and consistently by adults within classrooms and around the school. Pupils are left in no doubt about what is right and what is wrong. Stories in assembly are well chosen to encourage pupils to think about moral issues such as sharing, and respecting other people. This was reflected in a story during the inspection of a selfish king who would not share a portion of the 'elixir of life'. The school collects for a variety of good causes such as Comic Relief, Children in Need and the Salvation Army.
37. The school makes very good provision for pupils' social development. It places strong emphasis on creating a positive and supportive climate where good behaviour is expected. School rules reflect this. Class rules are devised with the help of pupils, are displayed in each room and regularly reinforced by staff. The school provides a good, regular programme of lessons in personal and social education. In one very good lesson pupils discussed how arguments and quarrels arise and how resolutions can be reached. Pupils very effectively learn to take responsibility for themselves and others in a variety of ways. Many volunteer to help pupils with disabilities at the nearby special school at break and lunch times. Some pupils have learnt sign language in order to be able to communicate with deaf and partially hearing pupils in the school. Pupils organise their own teams for chess and cross-country running. For Comic Relief they organised a 'Teachers' Sports Day' and sponsored the staff. On the Year 6 residential visit to Osmington Bay, pupils are responsible for their chalet, equipment and sometimes for a group. In Year 7 pupils organised their own questions for an interview with an Anglia TV presenter. They are helped to develop a sense of citizenship in entering a winning float in the Lord Mayor's Procession, planting bulbs in a nearby park, and painting murals in an underpass in

Norwich.

38. Overall, the provision for pupils' cultural development is good. Pupils have a rich variety of visits to museums, theatres, castles and other places of interest in East Anglia and further afield. They participate in a wide variety of sports activities such as sailing, korfbal and golf. The school stresses the changing, pluralist nature of society and has made some good attempts to help pupils to develop an appreciation of the cultural richness of other ethnic groups in our society. Pupils benefit from the visit of a Jamaican performer, and the holding of a day of cultural activities on the theme of 'Our World'. They study St Lucia in geography, sometimes listen to music from other cultures whilst entering the hall for assembly, learn about world faiths in religious education, and sometimes make objects from various cultures in design and technology. However, the school has yet to realise the full potential for this enrichment in other areas of the curriculum such as English, art and history.

Support, guidance and pupils' welfare

39. The previous report gave a positive picture of the school's support for its pupils and this good quality has been maintained well. Concern for the welfare of the pupils is central to the aims of the school and is reinforced by effective whole-school procedures. The very good relationships that exist at all levels and the high priority given to the day-to-day care of pupils, enable staff to provide good pastoral care. Pupils' progress in their academic and personal development is monitored formally and informally and contributes effectively to all areas of teaching and learning. Staff make very good provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those for whom English is a second language. The very good support for deaf and hearing impaired pupils, enables them to be fully integrated into the life of the school. Procedures for monitoring attendance are very good. Staff are supported by parents in emphasising the importance of regular punctual attendance if pupils are to achieve good standards.
40. The school has very good procedures for promoting good discipline and good behaviour. These are understood by pupils and carefully monitored and consistently applied by staff. These factors contribute significantly to pupils' development and their feeling of security. Pupils have the confidence to go to teachers if they feel something is wrong and they know that staff are always willing to listen and help. In classes where there are pupils with behavioural problems, staff generally deal positively with situations that arise. The behaviour policy contributes effectively to children's learning and parents confirm that behaviour is good and pupils are calm, orderly and polite. Pupils respond well to school and class rules and recognise the need for them in an orderly community. Pupils show due respect for their well-maintained school.
41. Procedures for child protection are in place and known by all staff, including ancillaries. Effective procedures for promoting pupils' well-being, health and safety are consistently applied by staff to a high standard. The level of trained support for pupils with special educational needs and hearing impairment is very good and every effort is made to ensure that all pupils have a stimulating environment in which to learn and feel happy and secure. All pupils are made to feel valued in a school community where their well-being and happiness in their learning is paramount.

Partnership with parents and the community

42. The good relationships which the school enjoys with parents and adult helpers, and which were identified in the previous inspection, have been maintained. Parents confirm that the information they receive is much improved since the previous inspection. There are a small number of regular and committed parents who help in the library and regular volunteers who assist with transport to sailing venues and other sporting events. There are few parents,

however, who regularly assist in the classrooms.

43. The quality of information provided for parents is good with a well-written, informative prospectus and regular newsletters. The school also provides a regular curriculum information leaflet. Parents' consultation evenings are valued, as is the regular availability of the headteacher and staff to discuss any issues. Annual written reports are of a consistently high standard, giving detailed progress and attainment and setting targets for improvement. The clarity of these reports keeps parents fully informed of the quality of their children's education. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved termly and informed of all developments regarding the provision for their children.
44. The responses to the parents' questionnaires and written comments show that the vast majority of parents are very happy with the school's provision. Concerns about the variable quantity and quality of homework have been rectified by a new home/school agreement. There is clear evidence that the school investigates all complaints and involves parents in discussion to resolve matters. Parents very much appreciate the willingness with which staff give considerable time for extra-curricular activities, such as music, drama, sailing and a wide range of other sports.
45. Links with the community are good and enrich the quality of education provided. They also have a significant impact on the personal development of most pupils. Visitors are welcome to the school and contribute to many areas of the curriculum. For example, to support work in history, 'Normandy Veterans' talk to pupils about their experiences in World War 2. The school is closely linked to the nearby special school for pupils with disabilities. Year 7 pupils volunteer to help these pupils during their break and lunchtimes. Colman Middle School also has its own unit for deaf and partially hearing pupils and these are well integrated into the community. There are good links with the deaf community with deaf adults visiting the school to work with pupils and provide positive role models. All pupils benefit from the involvement with these pupils and parents confirm that their children develop a caring, responsible and tolerant attitude towards others as a result. There are close links with the on-site feeder First School and careful arrangements are made for the smooth transition of these pupils to the Middle School and for Year 7 pupils who transfer to local secondary schools.
46. The active Parent/Teacher Association organises many activities involving the local community and raises much appreciated funds for facilities and resources such as the project for the new library. Many adult groups use the school premises and facilities each evening. Pupils enjoy a range of visits in the vicinity to support class work and go further afield to places such as Osmington Bay for residential visits which extend learning in a range of curriculum areas. These visits greatly enhance pupils' education beyond the statutory curriculum and broadens their understanding of the wider world.

52.

THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL

Leadership and management

47. The overall leadership and management of the school are very good. The headteacher provides very good leadership, reflecting her clear vision for the future educational direction of the school. She is well supported by the governing body, the senior management team and all staff. Significant improvements have been made in key areas including addressing key issues from the previous inspection and responding to national initiatives. A very good and detailed school management plan, covering three years, identifies agreed priority areas, targets, costings, success criteria and personnel responsible. Targets are regularly reviewed

and evaluated as, for example, identifying improvements in standards over the past year.

48. The previous inspection identified the need to make greater use of the analysis of outcomes to inform governors to enable them to monitor improvements in provision. Very good improvement has been made in addressing this issue. Subject co-ordinators attend governors' meetings to discuss and evaluate the latest monitoring of progress in their subjects. Governors also annually monitor the latest target setting and test results, identifying both successes and areas for further support. Appropriate committees with terms of reference have been established to cover staffing, finance and buildings and the whole governing body monitors the curriculum. Effective strategies have been developed to help them monitor and evaluate the quality of education provided as, for example, in developing the roles of teaching staff. Governors successfully meet their statutory obligations, including the provision for daily collective worship and the monitoring of special educational needs provision.
49. The headteacher's own monitoring of teaching and the curriculum, is proving effective in identifying individual and whole-school needs. In addition, year group teachers meet regularly to monitor progress and consistency of provision and assess samples of work. Subject policies and schemes of work are regularly updated in order to improve the progressive development of knowledge, skills and understanding across the full age range. Particular emphasis has been placed upon improving literacy and numeracy in accordance with national strategies. Curriculum co-ordinators and year group leaders have clear roles and responsibilities and those with current priorities are effectively involved in monitoring and evaluating standards and progress in their subjects.
50. The headteacher has established a detailed programme of professional development to successfully meet individual and whole-school needs. This includes regular reviews and the use of appraisal which is in its third cycle. The emphasis given to this priority has had a significant impact on the work of the school. The school has appropriate aims and values, effectively meeting these and reflecting them in its work. These aims have resulted in a very good ethos, which demonstrates a shared commitment to raise standards even higher. The school is a very orderly community where relationships are very good. Care is taken to ensure equality of access and opportunity for all pupils within the curriculum, and offers good support for the pupils with special educational needs, including those with hearing impairment. Daily routines are well understood by staff and pupils. Communications, both internal and external, are very good and the school benefits from very efficient and effective administrative and ancillary support. Leadership and management within the unit for deaf pupils are very good. The headteacher views the Unit as an asset and is very supportive in the unit. The aims and values are clearly stated through the policy statement and are well integrated into the overall school policies.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources

51. Overall, the quality of staff and the availability of accommodation and learning resources give good support to pupils and significantly enhance the quality of education provided. Particular strengths are the arrangements for the professional development of staff, the contributions of the classroom assistants to the life of the school and the provision of specialist areas for learning. There has been improvement since the previous inspection in successfully addressing the issue of access to the first floor, with the installation of a lift.
52. The school has sufficient, suitably qualified and experienced teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. There is a good balance of expertise and staff are hard working and very committed, a strength, acknowledged and greatly appreciated by the parents. Subject co-ordinators have successfully developed their roles and there is a good match of

subject responsibilities with teachers' qualifications, expertise and interests. Sufficient and well-qualified specialist staff provide very good support for the hearing impaired pupils. Their professional development is well organised. The school has a clear recruitment policy to ensure that new staff are well supported and an appropriate induction programme for newly qualified teachers.

53. Teachers are well supported by a good number of well-trained and experienced classroom assistants. They make valuable contributions to many aspects of school life. The efficient administrative staff, caretaker and cleaners all work successfully as part of the school team and make important contributions to the smooth running of the school. Arrangements for the professional development of all staff are very good, with training clearly linked to targets in the school management plan and the staff's individual needs. Current focus is on literacy, numeracy, assessment and the monitoring of target setting. An effective appraisal programme is in its third cycle.
54. Overall, the accommodation is very good and effectively supports teaching and learning as, for example, in information technology, music, art, science and design and technology rooms, the library and the swimming pool. These are particularly good facilities which have a direct impact on pupils' attainment and on the quality of education provided. The buildings are well-maintained and very clean and there is a planned programme of redecoration and improvements. Wheelchair access to the first floor accommodation is now possible since the installation of a lift. This was an identified issue in the previous inspection.
55. The quantity and quality of learning resources throughout the school are good and contribute to the good quality of education provided. Resources are very good for information technology and music. These have a significant impact on pupils' progress. Resources for other subjects are generally good. There are clear procedures for determining priorities for future spending. The school has acquired many new, good quality books for English in the past year. The library is a valuable resource which contributes to pupils' learning. Resources to support pupils with special educational needs, including hearing impairment, are good and enable them to make good progress. These include information technology equipment and video recorders with closed caption readers.

The efficiency of the school

56. The school is very efficiently run. Financial planning is very good and spending in relation to the current management plan is very closely linked to the school's strategies for improving curriculum provision, teaching and raising standards. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when it was judged that there were insufficient criteria for monitoring and evaluating the impact of spending decisions on pupils' achievements. Decisions about evaluating success and identifying areas requiring greater support are now taken at the start of each financial year in order to provide the most effective support possible. A new five-year business cycle has been established to enable governors to respond appropriately to years of identified growth and decline and plan efficiently. This accounts for the present carry forward figure.
57. The whole process is managed efficiently by the headteacher, the chairman of the finance committee and the finance officer. All co-ordinators efficiently manage funding to support development in their subjects, related to priorities in the school management plan. No audit by the Local Education Authority has been carried out since before the previous inspection, when the small number of recommendations were responded to appropriately. School administration is excellent and enables the school to run very smoothly.
58. Taking into account, the below average levels of attainment on entry, the standards attained

by the end of Year 7 when pupils leave the school, the good teaching, the very good leadership and management, the good quality of education provided and the average unit costs, the school provides good value for money.

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

64. CORE SUBJECTS

English

59. When pupils enter the school in Year 4, attainment covers the full range but is below average, overall. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests at the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 was close to the national average as was the percentage attaining the higher Level 5. In comparison to schools of similar context, results were average. Pupils' performances over the past four years have been broadly average until the drop in 1998 and the rise of ten per cent in 1999. These results are confirmed by the school's own monitoring, which identified the 1998 cohort as one with higher than normal proportions of pupils with special educational needs and below average attainment. Inspection evidence shows that by the end of Key Stage 2 and by the end of Year 7 when pupils leave the school, attainment across the whole range of literacy work matches national expectations.
60. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils communicate clearly, gain in confidence and become articulate. Time set aside for literacy every day, when pupils focus on speaking, listening and reading is used well to express themselves. A majority of pupils use a wide range of vocabulary effectively. They listen carefully to teachers' explanations, to stories and respond confidently to questions. At Key Stage 2, pupils build systematically on previous work and by the age of eleven, many pupils have good oral skills. They express opinions clearly and use an increasingly wide range of words and phrases, as demonstrated by Year 5 pupils, discussing the personalities of characters in Peter Pan. A few higher attaining pupils show good command of the English language. They listen attentively to one another and show their ability to listen to opinions and factual information by responding with detailed and accurate answers to questions. Pupils with special educational needs participate fully in class discussions, using their more limited language confidently. Overall, they make good progress in speaking and listening. Hearing impaired pupils receive good support appropriate to each task and often use signing to communicate. Given their levels of hearing loss, their attainment in speaking and listening is towards the lower end of the range expected from hearing pupils. The attainment and progress of pupils with English as a second language is variable depending on prior attainment and length of stay in this country. Some are totally fluent in English, others have limited English skills and

understanding. In Key Stage 3, by the end of Year 7, most pupils speak confidently and develop good skills of imagination and expression when reading prepared scripts and reading them in the styles of particular characters. Drama makes a positive contribution to the development of speaking and listening skills.

61. At Key Stage 2, most pupils make good progress in reading and by the end of the key stage, standards in reading are in line with national expectations. A significant number of pupils read aloud confidently and accurately. They use their knowledge of punctuation to read with expression, using intonation effectively. Higher attaining pupils predict confidently how the story they are reading might end and in doing so express a good understanding of plot and characters. They express clearly their preferences for different sorts of stories. The lower attaining pupils use an appropriate range of strategies to gain meaning from their reading, including sight vocabulary and context clues. Pupils have clear views about favourite authors, such as Roald Dahl. Most pupils develop satisfactory reference skills and make regular use of the library. They use a good selection of CDROM to develop appropriate research skills, such as those used by Year 6 pupils when finding out more about plant pollination. Pupils with special educational needs, including the deaf, are supported effectively in their reading, enabling them to make good progress. They use pictures and their knowledge of letter sounds to read and tell stories about the characters in their favourite books. In Year 7 most pupils read increasingly challenging literature and study the lives and works of famous authors such as William Shakespeare. Pupils plan their work well and use computer skills creatively to enhance presentations. Pupils take reading books home and reading record books are used effectively, providing a useful dialogue between home and school about interest and progress in reading. Reading is given good emphasis and is enhanced by activities such as drama and reading play scripts. Regular homework is also used to consolidate skills in sentence work and grammar.
62. By the end of Key Stage 2, standards in writing for the majority of pupils are in line with national expectations and most make at least satisfactory progress. A few higher attaining pupils make good progress. There is a considerable range of examples of imaginative writing. Pupils construct their stories and poems well, use punctuation accurately and spell correctly. They use dictionaries competently in their written tasks. They correctly identify adjectives, nouns, verbs and adverbs. During the literacy hour, the high profile given to sentence work, grammar and the study of how authors and poets use language to create effect enables pupils to become confident in using these conventions. Good examples of work were seen in Year 6 when pupils wrote accounts of the lives of the poor in Victorian times and wrote sequels to stories they had read. The standard of handwriting is mostly good; it is joined, legible and in most instances, letters are formed correctly. Pupils make good links with information technology, using word processing skills effectively in some writing tasks. Pupils with special educational needs and those with hearing impairment, get good support and learn how to sequence ideas. They make progress similar to most other pupils. In Year 7, most pupils write effectively in a wide range of forms, for example, play scripts, biographies and in the style of journalists. Particularly good work was seen in their newspaper articles using alliteration to emphasise headlines.
63. Pupils' behaviour and attitudes to learning are good. Throughout the school, in the literacy hour lessons, pupils are keen to contribute to discussions and do so thoughtfully and at times imaginatively and with humour. They are motivated, settle well to tasks and concentrate hard. They work well independently and co-operate well on shared tasks when required. They treat books and other resources with due care and respect.
64. The quality of teaching in both key stages is consistently good during the literacy hour. Teachers show good understanding of the principles of the literacy hour. Detailed planning

takes full account of the literacy framework. Pupils' interest is captured by lively introductions and good pace is maintained through a variety of carefully selected activities. Whole-class teaching and guided reading are particularly successful. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' work and behaviour. The management and organisation of pupils are good. Teachers use effective strategies to gain pupils' attention when they wish to make a particular teaching point. Questions are used effectively to assess pupils' understanding and to encourage explanations of phrases, words and conventions in the literature. Good use is made of time at the end of lessons to assess progress and understanding. Work is marked regularly and in a good number of instances teachers make helpful and constructive written comments, enabling pupils to improve the quality of their writing. Teachers in both key stages are aware of the importance of developing literacy in other subjects and one of the strong features of the curriculum is the good link between subjects. This is done well in information technology, geography and history. Homework is set regularly to support pupils' learning, especially in reading, spelling and written work to develop basic grammar skills. It is used very effectively to support class work and makes a significant impact on progress.

65. The co-ordinator is effective in supporting and monitoring the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy. She has monitored teaching in all classes and given good feedback and guidance to teachers. All teachers use effective assessment procedures to plan carefully what pupils need to learn next. The provision of texts for guided reading is good. These have been carefully chosen and many reflect a wide range of characters and cultures. These factors contribute strongly to pupils' improving attainment and progress.

Mathematics

66. The National Curriculum test results for 1999, at the end of Key Stage 2, show that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 and above is below average. The percentage attaining the higher Level 5 is average. Compared to similar schools, attainment was below average at Level 4 and average at Level 5. The school's results had been rising steadily since 1995, but fell sharply in 1998. However, the school's regular assessments of this particular group of pupils as they moved through the school show that they consistently produced lower scores than other groups within the school. In addition, the proportion of pupils with special educational needs was higher than average. In 1999, there was a significant improvement of twelve per cent in the percentage of pupils gaining Level 4 and above. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that at the end of Key Stage 2 and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7, the majority of pupils attain standards which are in line with national expectations. A significant minority attain standards which are above national expectations.
67. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory. The school attaches great importance to the teaching of number and the learning of tables, and these are regular features of all mathematics lessons. Teachers throughout the school have wholeheartedly embraced the principles of the National Numeracy Strategy which is currently being implemented successfully. Lessons begin with a brisk oral session, and this good pace is almost always maintained throughout the lesson, ensuring that pupils' concentration is sustained. Pupils carry out number work with increasing confidence as they move through the school, and teachers provide frequent opportunities for them to practise and develop these skills in other subjects. For example, in science Year 5 pupils count their heart rates before and after exercise, and in Year 4 they use co-ordinates confidently while developing skills of graphical awareness in design and technology.
68. The majority of pupils make good progress in number, in their knowledge and understanding of measures, shape and space and in their varied experiences of handling data as they move through the school. Although pupils with special educational needs, including deaf

pupils, attain levels which are below average, they make good progress towards their targets as a result of the effective support provided by teachers and classroom assistants. Most teachers plan carefully to ensure that the tasks they set are matched closely to pupils' needs, and this is particularly effective in Years 6 and 7 where pupils are taught in sets determined by prior attainment. This makes a significant contribution, not only to the good progress they make, but also to the self-esteem of less confident pupils. However, pupils make slower progress than expected in their investigative work as they are not provided with sufficient opportunities to apply their skills to solving problems. This was also identified as a minor weakness in the last inspection.

69. Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are good. They behave well, and sustain their concentration for extended periods of time. They form good relationships with teachers who work hard to make sure that pupils enjoy their lessons. They co-operate effectively with their peers, and this makes a significant contribution to the very positive ethos for learning found in classrooms.
70. Overall the quality of teaching is good. Strengths include the good subject knowledge of teachers, their clear explanations and their effective questioning to establish links with earlier work and to ensure that pupils understand the objectives of the lesson. All teachers share these objectives with their classes at the start of the lesson and encourage pupils to refer back to them in order to identify precisely what they have learned. This is a very effective strategy, and it contributes to the good progress made in most lessons. Teachers know the pupils well as a result of the effective day-to-day assessment which occurs in lessons, and they provide useful feedback to help them improve. Teachers generally have high expectations, and they plan work at a variety of levels to challenge all pupils. This was clearly evident in a very good lesson on multiplication in Year 7, when the teacher insisted on good quality responses from all pupils, ensuring that everyone worked to their full potential. In less successful lessons, a weakness occurs when teachers' strategies are not always effective in ensuring that pupils do not call out or interrupt. As a result, the pace of the lesson slows and continuity is lost.
71. The subject is well managed by an enthusiastic co-ordinator who provides good support for colleagues. Together with the headteacher, a comprehensive development plan has been drawn up which includes opportunities to monitor teaching, and to evaluate its effectiveness with the intention of raising standards. Test results are carefully analysed and targets for improvement are set, but the school has not identified weaknesses in specific aspects of teaching and learning. The quality and quantity of resources are good. However, insufficient use is yet made of the materials purchased to support the implementation of the numeracy strategy.

Science

72. Attainment by the majority of pupils at the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, is in line with national expectations. These are similar standards to those adjudged in the previous inspection. Pupils' attainment in the end of Key Stage 2 National Curriculum tests has varied from year to year since then, with the most recent in 1999 being close to the national average. These results improved by 16 per cent compared to the school's previous results. This is a very significant increase and reflects the efforts of the school in areas such as well-organised revision, in-service training and an increase in materials organised by the co-ordinator to improve staff confidence and knowledge. Compared to schools of similar context, results are above average. There is no significant difference between the attainment of girls and boys. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to the targets of their individual education plans.

73. Pupils make good progress in both key stages in Life Processes and Living Things with expected standards being attained. Pupils build up a sound knowledge and understanding of the vital life systems of both plants and humans. Year 7 pupils understand the different principles involved in the working of the hip and the elbow joint. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils identify the reproductive systems of flowers, with the school's excellent stock of microscopes enhancing their enjoyment and learning. There is some under-use of the school's nature area and the local environment, in the pupils' study of different habitats.
74. By the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, standards in work about Materials and Physical Processes are in line with national expectations. Most pupils make good progress in their knowledge of the properties of various materials and their suitability for particular tasks. The youngest pupils explain why certain building materials are used because of their properties such as 'waterproofness'. Older pupils know how the water cycle involves evaporation and precipitation and carry out experiments successfully to discover the properties of insulation and precipitation. Much of the pupils' work in these areas seen in the scrutiny of work, showed a lack of challenge through the over-use of worksheets. This results in the pupils gaining more in knowledge than in understanding.
75. Satisfactory progress is being made in pupils' abilities to experiment and investigate in both key stages. Pupils recognise the need for fair testing and make series of measurements using appropriate instruments. The recording of results is much enhanced through the production of tables and graphs through the use of information technology. Standards are still below average, however, as much of their practical work is heavily teacher-directed. Pupils are not given sufficient tasks for which they choose their own materials, apparatus and ways of recording. This restricts the development of predictive and diagnostic skills.
76. Pupils listen well and answer questions willingly, particularly when the class teacher is sensitive to the range of attainment in groups or the class. They enjoy practical activities, such as using microscopes to look at flower parts. Pupils share resources unselfishly when working in pairs and treat apparatus with respect. Good collaborative skills are displayed in group activities, for example when measuring their length of vision on the playground, where they were seen to work sensibly and independently when not directly supervised. They work with interest when the task is clearly explained and suited to their level of attainment. They lose concentration when introductory or review sessions are too difficult for them or too long.
77. The quality of teaching is good. Two thirds of lessons observed were good, with no lessons unsatisfactory. In the best lessons teachers have high expectations, very good subject knowledge and promote high standards of behaviour, effort and attainment. Pupils are encouraged to pay attention and respond well to the teacher's enthusiasm. There is a good pace and structure to the lesson. The majority of lessons are based on clear planning documents, showing precise learning objectives and a good awareness of previous work. This is used appropriately in the introduction to lessons through skilful questioning. Good questioning techniques are also used when the teacher intervenes to assess the pupils' understanding, before giving appropriate help. The majority of teachers have pleasant, but firm management strategies.
78. There is good use of teaching resources, such as wall-charts, television programmes or the blackboard. Teachers also effectively promote the pupils' use of resources, like microscopes or measuring instruments. In some lessons the teacher supplies the resources, for example, flowers or cards with dots of different sizes. Teachers share their evaluation of the lesson with the pupils and explain how the information will be used to help with future planning. Other lessons end with a well-organised review session where pupils' comments are used to reinforce the learning and improve progress. Pupils of lower

attainment sometimes require a great deal of personal attention from the teacher because suitable work has not been planned at their level. Pupils of higher attainment are not always challenged by the work, particularly when it is based on text books or worksheets. This restricts their progress in experimental and investigative science and gives them little scope to draw their own conclusions from work which they have planned and initiated themselves.

79. Pupils are presented with a broad and balanced curriculum. The policy and scheme of work are useful and helpful documents, which are to be reviewed under the present school management plan. Suitable systems for regular assessment and the recording achievement are well established. Standards of attainment show good improvement and the skills of numeracy and information technology are used regularly to good effect. Literacy skills are less well-developed as the provision of opportunities for independent recording is inconsistent. Teachers are working hard to provide a wider range of practical work, with good support from the co-ordinator. Further monitoring of teaching and learning is planned, to be followed up with in-service sessions to share and disseminate good practice designed to increase the quality of learning of the pupils. Resources are of good quality and readily available to staff. The accommodation in the science room is excellent and a resource which is much appreciated and very well used by the staff.

Information technology

80. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils attain standards which at least match those expected nationally, with a small minority of higher attaining pupils exceeding these levels. By the end of Year 7, when pupils leave the school, the majority of pupils attain expected levels and a significant minority attain above expected levels. There are a considerable number of strengths in the subject, which shows significant improvement since the previous inspection when standards at both key stages were judged to be below expected levels.
81. All pupils competently load and run programs allocated to their particular year group. They are confident with word processing facilities, creating, saving and retrieving text of their own devising when redrafting stories and descriptive passages. This is demonstrated well in Year 5 with pupils using 'Pendown' to present and display stories and poems and using 'Keynote' to produce pie graphs and bar charts to represent the results of surveys carried out in a range of selected topics, such as favourite television programmes. This has a positive impact on improving pupils' literacy skills, including grammar and spelling and supporting work in mathematics. Year 6 pupils access a database about plants to support their science studies. By careful interrogation of information, they identify the differences between self-pollination and cross-pollination. Control work with models, the use of graphics to enhance text and the writing and modifying of 'Logo' procedures all contribute to the comprehensive provision for pupils by the end of the key stage. In Year 7 pupils extend their research skills by interrogating and retrieving information from CD-ROM sources, adding text and illustrations to enhance their work in a range of subjects.
82. Progress for most pupils throughout the school is good. At Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, pupils are systematically taught and encouraged to use correct loading, keyboard and printing techniques, as well as developing good techniques with the mouse control. Pupils use the very good information technology suite to develop a good range of skills and interests and benefit from direct teaching and opportunities for independent learning. Pupils with special educational needs, including hearing impairment, also make good progress due to the good support provided by teachers, classroom assistants and their peers.
83. Pupils are enthusiastic in their approach to information technology. They work well

independently and in pairs to achieve lesson objectives. Pupils sustain interest and concentration for lengthy periods of time. Their behaviour is very good and they take great care of the equipment.

84. At Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Occasionally it is good. At Key Stage 3 in Year 7, teaching is good. Most teachers are confident and are secure in their knowledge and understanding of the subject. Using a range of good strategies, they create a quiet but purposeful working atmosphere in lessons to enable pupils to concentrate without interruption. Teachers plan and manage information technology well, making good links with other curricular areas, such as literacy, numeracy, science and history, whilst developing pupils' skills and knowledge of the subject. They have high expectations of what pupils should achieve and reinforce these by the skilful use of questioning and the teaching of necessary skills to extend subject knowledge and its use. Classroom assistants are used effectively to support pupils.
85. The recording of pupils' attainment is achieved through the use of a checklist of programs and self-assessment of skills that the pupils have used and experienced. Resources are very good and are used very effectively by teachers, with all pupils in each class having access to the workstations at the same time. The school has a good selection of suitable software. Most of it is linked to other subjects and enhances the learning opportunities across the curriculum. Since the previous inspection, the co-ordinator has worked hard to raise staff confidence and expertise and this had a significant impact on raising pupils' standards. A comprehensive and progressive scheme of work provides clear guidance to teachers and pupils to promote the systematic development of technological skills across the school. Funding has been acquired from the National Grid for Learning, to update the school's PC format. This will provide opportunities to further enhance standards of teaching and learning.

Religious education

86. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 of Key Stage 3 is broadly in line with the requirements of the local agreed syllabus. This judgement is similar to that of the previous inspection, although a new agreed syllabus makes direct comparisons difficult. During the four years in the school, pupils acquire a sound knowledge and understanding of the main beliefs and practices of Christianity which are appropriate to their age. They also gain appropriate knowledge and understanding of the five other faiths identified in the syllabus.
87. In Year 4 pupils learn about Gautama Buddha's search for enlightenment and begin to identify similarities between religions on a simple level. Pupils in Year 5 know about some of the main leaders of Sikhism such as Guru Nanak. They examine some of the key symbols and explain what the 'Five Ks' mean to followers. In studying Hinduism they consider the range of different family structures in their own experience and how the faith of Hindus affects their daily lives within the often extended family system. In Year 6 pupils understand well the differences between facts, opinions and beliefs and use the Apostles' Creed as a basis for exploring Christian beliefs. Pupils learn how religions began and ask fundamental questions about why religions exist. They understand that there are different points of view not only between but also within religions. For example, they recognise that there are differences within the world-wide Christian Church and between the different branches which have developed in this country.
88. In Year 7 pupils study both Christianity and Islam in greater depth. They look at similarities and differences and how religious belief affects everyday life on various levels. For example, pupils understand what worship means to a Christian, and how and where worship is carried out. They have a good understanding of the symbolism of kneeling, bowing of

heads and putting hands together in prayer. Pupils learn about the five strands of prayer including adoration, thanksgiving and confession.

89. In the lessons observed and throughout their time in school, pupils make satisfactory progress. They learn more about each of the religions studied. Generally they progress from looking at the stories, festivals and outward symbolism of religion to examining their deeper meanings. However, progress is uneven. When teaching is curtailed because of other curriculum priorities, progress is inevitably slower. The progress of pupils with special educational needs is similar to that of other pupils and their attainment is in line with their prior attainment and set targets.
90. The response of pupils to religious education is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and in the one lesson observed in Year 7 it was good. Their motivation is generally sound. Pupils in Year 6 mostly work without fuss whilst there is some disruption as pupils go out for music lessons. In the good lesson in Year 7 pupils were keen to respond and did so thoughtfully. They listened well to each other and to the teacher.
91. Teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. Lesson planning is conscientious and activities match the aims set out. The use of time is generally satisfactory. However, in a Year 5 lesson the teacher spent too much time on developing the concept of a family at the expense of exploring the ways in which Hinduism affects the ways members of the family act and behave towards each other. In a Year 4 lesson the teacher was particularly effective in his use of incense, a singing bowl and a prayer wheel. This created an appropriate atmosphere for pupils' work on Buddhism and helped them to begin to understand the concept of spirituality. Pupils reacted very well to this input from the teacher.
92. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Since the publication of the new agreed syllabus in 1998, the school has rewritten its religious education policy. It is now in the process of trialling new schemes of work. The school is aware that there is some mismatch between what they were providing previously with what is now required. Last year pupils in Year 6 did not receive the full time allocation due to the subject because of the pressure of introducing the National Literacy Strategy, revision for National Curriculum tests and time-tabling issues in French. This had the effect of reducing the time available for consolidation and reinforcement of learning especially through writing. The result of this is that pupils sometimes struggle to remember adequately what they have learnt and occasionally confuse the work on religions other than Christianity. 'It was interesting but I get confused,' commented one pupil in Year 6. The school was aware of the shortfall in time and has taken steps to address the issue. Assessment is unsatisfactory being in the early stages of development. The subject is due for review in the spring term when the co-ordinator plans to monitor teaching and learning. The school has bought some good quality books and artefacts. These are assisting staff to feel more confident about the teaching of religious education especially faiths other than Christianity. Further in-service training to increase teachers' subject knowledge is also planned.

OTHER SUBJECTS

Art

93. In art, the school has maintained the high standards reported in the last inspection, and the majority of pupils attain standards which are better than those normally seen from pupils of similar age. The subject has a number of strengths. All pupils use a variety of techniques and materials, including detailed sketching, printing and clay work. They manipulate tools with good control and imagination. Their work shows good attention to detail and use of

colour and demonstrates their increasing skill in a wide variety of media. In order to ensure a balanced curriculum, art activities are planned to include work each year in drawing, painting, printmaking, textiles, ceramics and three-dimensional work. Throughout the school, pupils are introduced effectively to the work and techniques of famous artists, which not only extends their knowledge and understanding of art, but is effective in promoting their cultural development. In Year 4, for example, while drawing with oil pastels, they look at the work of Monet and Andy Warhol, and in Year 6 they examine the expressions on Paul Klee's faces. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to experience the work of artists from non-western cultures.

94. Scrutiny of pupils' previous work shows that as they move through the school the majority of pupils make good progress. They become more competent at representing their ideas using a range of media, and they develop increasingly more complex skills. Often skills are developed through links with other subjects. This was demonstrated very effectively by pupils in Year 6, whose accurate and colourful observational drawings are enhanced by their knowledge of plants gained in science. In Year 7, pupils produced carefully worked guild signs based on their study of medieval crafts in history. Pupils with special educational needs also make good progress, and frequently produce work which matches the standard of others.
95. Pupils' attitudes to their artwork are good, and they clearly enjoy the stimulating and interesting activities which teachers plan for them. They listen attentively to instructions, follow them carefully and take considerable pride in refining their work in order to give of their best. This is a major factor in the good progress pupils make. Their work shows good attention to detail and they persevere well to complete tasks, often maintaining their enthusiasm from one week's lesson to the next.
96. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. It ranges from satisfactory to very good in small proportions with most being good. Lessons are well structured, with a good balance between direct, focused teaching of skills and techniques and pupil activity. They also include opportunities for pupils to make judgements about their own work and that of others in order to improve, as in a Year 6 lesson when they discussed the painting of their clay work as part of an effective review of progress made during the lesson. The use of assessment is good and has a good impact on progress. Teachers value pupils' efforts and this is evident in the high quality displays of work around the school which have a positive impact on the school's very good ethos. In the most successful lesson, the teacher's very secure subject knowledge enabled her to offer suggestions while encouraging pupils to try out and then make decisions about technique. She made very good use of a range of self-portraits by a variety of artists and other pupils to focus on technique when using brushwork and sponges to create impressionist faces. Teaching is less effective when it becomes too prescriptive and pupils are given insufficient opportunities to select materials and techniques.
97. The subject is well managed by a knowledgeable and experienced teacher who has produced a helpful scheme of work. She sets a very good example for her colleagues. Resources are plentiful, varied and of good quality, and the accommodation, which includes a specialist room, is very good. All of these make a significant contribution to the high standards attained by pupils throughout the school.

Design and technology

98. In design and technology, standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection and the majority of pupils are now working at the levels which are normally seen from pupils of similar age. They acquire a sound basic knowledge of the designing and making

processes and develop satisfactory skills while working with a wide range of materials and resources. These include construction kits, computer-aided design, textiles, and a variety of control mechanisms and structures. There are fewer opportunities, however, provided in food technology as a result of decisions made in the review of curriculum time which was slightly reduced. The youngest pupils design and construct a maze, and carefully evaluate a variety of fittings to make flexible, rigid and durable joints. In Year 5, they design a shoe for a particular purpose, and build successfully on earlier skills to construct a Tudor house. Pupils in Year 6 produce good quality finished products in textile technology and mechanical toys based on cam followers. Work in Year 7 includes the use of coping saws to cut accurate wood shapes, and working models using pneumatics.

99. Most pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, although in the lessons observed, pupils made good progress as a result of the good subject knowledge of the teachers. Scrutiny of work samples shows that on occasions teachers do not have a clear understanding of the essential elements of the design and technology curriculum, and therefore pupils' progress, especially in the development of their evaluative skills, is slower than expected.
100. Pupils are well motivated and they follow instructions carefully. They persevere well, take pride in the quality of their work and pursue tasks through to completion. They work independently and as part of a group where they co-operate effectively by sharing ideas and resources. This was demonstrated effectively in a Year 5 lesson where pupils used rules, saws and bench hooks safely and sensibly to cut accurate lengths of wood strips to construct sturdy rectangular frames.
101. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Medium-term planning is unsatisfactory. However, in a few lessons, teachers plan interesting and challenging tasks, and frequently establish purposeful links with other subjects. For example, arising from their work in history, pupils are introduced to computer-aided design in order to construct a Tudor house. At the same time the teacher maintained a clear focus on the development of the important elements of design and technology. Her continuous assessment of pupils' work and the accompanying constructive feedback made a significant contribution to the good progress which pupils made in this lesson. Weaknesses occur when teachers do not have the confidence or sufficient knowledge of the subject to monitor pupils' progress in order to develop specific skills. While the scheme of work provides an extensive range of options for each year, there is insufficient guidance to help teachers develop these important skills in a systematic and progressive way.
102. The subject, which is identified as a priority for development in the current year of the school management plan, is led by an enthusiastic and knowledgeable co-ordinator. There has been considerable improvement since the last inspection when design and technology was identified as a weakness and the subject is in a strong position from which to develop further. Resources are good and the specialist teaching room is used well, although teachers have identified time-tabling issues which need to be addressed.

Geography

103. Relatively little geography teaching was taking place during the inspection because most lessons take place in the second half of the year. However, from examining pupils' work and photographs, teachers' planning and records, and discussions, standards are judged to be in line with those normally seen from pupils of this age. This standard is maintained in Year 7.
104. In Year 4 pupils learn about the main physical features of the United Kingdom. They study

the journey of a river from its source to the sea, identifying that its water comes from rain and melted snow and that it flows downhill. Pupils learn correct geographical terms such as tributary, valley and stream. In Year 5, pupils study areas different from their own. They make a useful study of St Lucia, incorporating valuable historical elements starting with the fate of the original inhabitants. Their studies bring them to important geographical considerations of the impact of tourism and industry on the island today. In Year 6 pupils have good fieldwork experience in Norwich and Cromer, including surveys of traffic and pedestrians' views of the shopping facilities. In Year 7 pupils learn about climates and how micro-climates develop. They understand the various components that make up weather systems including the different types of rainfall. They develop an understanding of the causes of pollution, for example in our rivers.

105. In the small number of lessons observed, pupils made satisfactory progress. However, they make good progress overall in Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. The good extent and high quality of the fieldwork they undertake is a major factor in this progress. Fieldwork is well planned and integrated into the curriculum and all year groups benefit from the experience. This is a strength of the teaching and learning in this subject. It helps them to get a real sense of the places they are studying and how and why some are different from the area around their homes. They move from being able to identify and name the human and physical features of a locality on a simple level to understanding how the two relate in complex ways to each other. In the Year 6 fieldwork pupils pose their own geographical questions in their studies of contrasting town centre facilities. They draw conclusions from their data about differences and similarities between them. They begin to identify sources of pollution and how, in some instances, these are being tackled. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress due to the good support provided.
106. In the small number of lessons observed, pupils' responses were satisfactory and in one lesson they were good. Pupils show interest in the work, concentrate satisfactorily and answer questions posed by the teacher. They work quietly on their own when asked to do so.
107. Teaching was satisfactory in the lessons observed. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of geography are satisfactory. Teachers plan appropriate work, giving clear explanations and instructions. In one lesson the teacher was using an interactive CDROM on rivers with the whole class, and teaching the pupils how to use it for themselves. He appropriately stressed how to check anything they did not understand. When teaching about rivers, the teacher reinforced earlier geographical knowledge to explain the danger of being near the river's edge. The use of assessment to inform planning is satisfactory. The school has good resources for geography. The use of information technology is now progressing well and further interesting developments, for example in map work, are planned. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory. Links with history, in particular, are strong and effective especially in fieldwork. This utilises the rich local resources well.

History

108. Attainment of pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7 is broadly in line with standards normally seen from pupils of similar age. In Key Stage 2 in particular there are some strengths in the teaching and learning of the subject which arise from the high quality of fieldwork. Pupils in Year 4 make useful studies of the Ancient Greek civilisation, the Romans and the Anglo Saxons. Through these studies they develop a sound understanding of the passing of time and how life was different in the various periods. They use a variety of sources to find out information about life in a Greek city and understand some of the

differences between Athens and Sparta. Pupils learn how and why the roles of men and women were different, and some aspects of the lives of slaves. In Year 6 pupils make a good study of the Victorian Era. They use their imagination well to think how inventions such as the electric light, telephone and photography changed people's lives. In Year 7 pupils have sound knowledge and understanding of the daily lives and history of the native people of North America. They study the Plains Indians at the time of the arrival of the white settlers. This contributes to a developing understanding of the varied attitudes, beliefs and ideas of different societies.

109. In Key Stage 2 pupils make good progress in lessons and over time. In Year 7 only one lesson was observed and progress was satisfactory. Judging by the work done in the same year group last year, progress was good. Throughout their time in the school, pupils show an increasing depth of knowledge and understanding of the different periods which they study. They begin to link cause and effect as, for example, in Year 6 work on the coming of the railways. These pupils also develop skills of empathising with people born into different levels of society, for example, rich and poor in Victorian times. The attainment and progress made by pupils with special educational needs is similar to others in their classes.
110. The responses of pupils are good in Key Stage 2 and from the limited observation in Year 7 are satisfactory. They show good levels of interest in their lessons and work well on their own or in groups. Pupils in Year 4 persevere when using a new computer program. In Year 6 pupils become excited as they work out the answers to challenging questions. Pupils enjoy their lessons.
111. Teaching is good in Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, taking into account the progress evident in pupils' work over time. Teachers have good relationships with pupils, and often communicate their knowledge and enthusiasm to pupils with positive effect as was seen in lessons in Years 4 and 6. They prepare their lessons well and use a good variety of methods and resources. These include books, posters, artefacts, videos and interactive computer programs. The use of assessment to inform planning is satisfactory. Teachers make particularly good use of the locality and the wider environment to enhance pupils' learning. They organise visits to museums, castles, stately homes, Norwich Cathedral and the site of a Roman town. The high quality and quantity of fieldwork contributes significantly to the good progress pupils make because it brings learning to life. Teachers take care to examine the roles of men and women in the different periods studied. However, opportunities are lost, for example in studying the Victorians, to help pupils understand how and why our society has become so ethnically diverse. The leadership of the subject is good. Links with information technology are now developing well and this is an improvement since the previous inspection. Pupils' literacy is well supported, for example, when pupils in Year 6 write imaginary letters from a child labourer in a Victorian factory to a child in a rich family, or letters of protest at conditions in the workhouse.

Modern foreign languages

French

112. The school has chosen to teach French in Year 6 although it is not a statutory requirement at this age. Most pupils make good progress and attain good standards in oral and written work to justify the school's decision. At Year 7 in Key Stage 3, where the subject is a requirement, most pupils continue to make good progress and attain standards which exceed those normally expected from pupils of this age. This is an improvement from the previous inspection when standards were judged to be in line with national expectations.
113. Year 6 pupils communicate well with the teacher and each other. They understand and

use a suitable range of vocabulary and count to twenty in French. Pupils' listening skills are good and they answer quickly and confidently to commands, short statements and questions. When speaking in French, they use single words and short phrases, as for example, when welcoming each other and telling their ages. Their pronunciation is good. When writing, they use spelling lists accurately to copy familiar words and phrases. Reading skills are satisfactory with most pupils developing appropriate strategies. In Year 7, pupils build systematically on their knowledge and understanding of the language. Most count to one hundred and correctly answer questions about quantity. They extend their vocabulary to name months of the year, the seasons, pastimes and their likes and dislikes, speaking and writing well structured sentences. By the end of Year 7 when they leave school, most pupils have developed skills beyond those normally expected.

114. Almost all pupils make good progress in French. They speak, write and understand progressively longer texts with increasing accuracy. They use reference sources, such as dictionaries and word lists. Most pupils have good attitudes and obvious enthusiasm for the subject as a result of the stimulating teaching they receive. They are keen to communicate in the language and so, willingly, learning quickly from their mistakes.
115. The quality of teaching is good. The two teachers involved have good subject knowledge, plan lessons well, have high expectations of what all pupils should learn and create very good relationships in a stimulating environment. Since the previous inspection, two minor weaknesses have been improved. Lesson objectives are shared with pupils and opportunities are given for independent learning by pupils of all attainment levels. The target language is used almost exclusively to promote consistency. Different strategies are used effectively, including the progressive teaching of skills, the good use of games and resources and the involvement of all pupils and their contributions. These factors have a significant impact on pupils' good attitudes and good progress. Teachers make good use of day-to-day assessment to plan effectively for what pupils need to learn next.
116. The co-ordinator provides good leadership in the subject. There is a good policy and a detailed scheme of work to provide helpful guidance to teachers and ensure good progression in skills, topic by topic. Resources are good and include up-to-date books and other literature, games and cassettes. The acquisition of suitable computer software is a target when the school's new system and format are introduced.

Music

117. Standards of attainment are above those normally seen from pupils of this age at the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. There are significant strengths in the subject and the high standards judged in the previous inspection have been maintained.
118. Year 6 pupils pay careful attention when watching a video of examples of sound effects. They listen carefully and describe how particular sound effects are produced and give well thought-out opinions of the moods and feelings aroused by the music. Pupils produce imaginative contributions of their own in a very short time. Sensitive and challenging questioning by the co-ordinator is an important element in pupils' high attainment. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils rehearse and successfully perform music from the past using standard notation. Their work is organised very well with all pupils actively involved, either providing ostinato, drone, or percussion accompaniment or playing melodies using a variety of instruments. Lessons are greatly enhanced by pupils playing their own instruments to a high standard.
119. Most pupils make good progress throughout the school in all aspects of the subject with a general pattern of the co-ordinator teaching the performing and composing skills and class teachers teaching most of the listening and appraising skills. Pupils in Years 4 and 5

thoroughly enjoy listening to Peer Gynt and Peter and the Wolf and successfully describe the moods aroused and the instruments used. Pupils sing well in assembly and in class lessons. Good standards are heard in choir practices, with pleasant tone and notes being given true value. Very good performing standards are observed in orchestra rehearsals and performances in assemblies and in instrumental lessons.

120. Pupils enjoy all aspects of music and respond positively whether listening, composing or performing. Behaviour is very good due to pleasant but firm class management by teachers. Pupils collaborate very well in group compositions or performances. Pupils respond well to the good encouragement by teachers to supply their own ideas when composing or appraising the work of others. Due respect is shown for the opinions and efforts of others and the school's resources. Many choir members are very keen to audition for a part in the next school musical production.
121. The quality of teaching provided by the co-ordinator and the instrumental teachers is very good. The quality of teaching by class teachers is good. Class teachers show great enthusiasm and use sensitive questioning to encourage pupils to listen carefully and offer their own ideas. They make good use of intervention, stopping the recording to make helpful comments or ask questions. Instrumental teachers insist on accurate sight-reading and good practice methods. Their encouraging manner gives pupils confidence to try their best, whether playing alone or in a small group. The co-ordinator has very high expectations and very good knowledge and understanding of the subject. She works hard to improve a wide range of skills throughout the school. To achieve this, lessons are very tightly structured with brisk pace. High standards of attainment and behaviour are set in lessons, choir practices and orchestra rehearsals. All pupils know that their contributions will be valued.
122. The school policy and scheme of work have been recently reviewed and updated. Planning is clear and well-organised. An effective system of assessment is in place, recorded in pupils' individual folders. The subject has a high profile and large numbers of pupils attend instrumental lessons either privately or at school. Learning is enhanced by participation in the orchestra and local musical events. This in turn motivates all pupils who hear and enjoy good examples of playing in assemblies. Very good use is made of homework, which supports regular practice by the large number of pupils involved. Year 7 pupils make annual visits to West End musicals to extend their experiences and provide an excellent stimulus to improve their singing, acting and dancing skills in a very meaningful way. The accommodation is good, with a separate music room. Resources are of good variety and in good condition.

Physical education

123. Standards of attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 and Year 7 are above those expected from pupils of similar age. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and in the majority of lessons. Pupils with special educational needs and hearing impairment are well provided for and make good progress. There is no significant difference between the progress of girls and boys.
124. In gymnastics progress is generally satisfactory with good progress in the creation of imaginative travelling and balancing sequences in Year 4. The good progress is achieved when pupils practise skills thoroughly, showing refinement and improvement following pupil demonstration and careful questioning by the class teacher. Year 5 pupils produce interesting symmetrical and asymmetrical body shapes when working on the floor, but are less successful when using mats. In Year 7 pupils demonstrate very good star jumps and rolls with a polished start and finish. A minority perform head and hand stands proficiently.

125. Standards in dance are good. In Year 6 pupils compose very varied movements, mainly concentrating on variety of shape, size and direction to fit in with a basic four-beat rhythm pattern. They are encouraged greatly by the enthusiasm of the class teacher and the good choice of music suited to the activity. Pupils in Year 5 respond very imaginatively to the very appropriate recorded 'horror' music. They create impressively jerky, puppet-like movements. There is good progress in the lesson after pupils have made helpful judgements about the work of others, followed by opportunities to practise and refine movements.
126. The school is very successful at competitive sports and pupils benefit from the range of sporting activities provided both in lesson time and in after-school clubs. Pupils represent the school at korfbal, football, cricket, cross-country and athletics. Games skills are covered well in class lessons, planned progressively across all year groups. Only Year 4 pupils were observed in a games lesson during the inspection, in short sessions rearranged in the hall due to rain. They are developing good throwing and catching skills using large balls and are learning how to run and dodge with frequent changes of speed and direction. A good number of pupils strike the ball with one hand successfully in preparation for serving at volleyball. All these skills are acquired through careful planning and well-organised lessons.
127. Swimming is a strength of the school with the benefits of all-year swimming in the school pool and the well-established skills of their well qualified and vastly experienced coach. Standards in swimming are excellent with only one non-swimmer in Year 7, and none in Year 6. Almost all pupils swim the required 25 metres and many swim much longer distances. Pupils are proficient at water safety and personal survival skills as well as swimming successfully. Survival skills requiring deep water have been learned well using a local public pool.
128. Pupils have very good attitudes and enjoy physical education lessons. They work hard and try their best to follow instructions. They are very aware of the need for behaving safely and share apparatus sensibly. Class teachers remind pupils of these points regularly. Many pupils enjoy demonstrating to class, for example showing symmetrical body shapes or ways of travelling and balancing, and they are generous with applause for the performances of others. Pupils collaborate well in group work and show very good, responsible behaviour. They concentrate well when creating dance movements or composing gymnastic sequences. They appreciate the need for warming-up and cooling down and follow the teachers' good examples in wearing appropriate clothing and footwear. In a very small number of lessons, pupils do not progress well because they do not concentrate and their work-rate drops. However, this is rare as class teachers usually have a good range of pupil management strategies and keep pupils well occupied throughout the lesson.
129. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages. Nearly two thirds of lessons seen were good or very good and no lessons were unsatisfactory. In the best lessons there is provision of well-organised activities, planned to build up skills gradually. Pace of lessons is brisk to fit in a range of activities. Pupils are continually challenged to improve. Teachers have good subject knowledge and understanding and an enthusiastic approach to lessons. There is appropriate use of pupil demonstration and good opportunities for pupils to comment on their own and others' performances. A general strength is the use of intervention to comment on good examples of performance encouraging the good development of skills. All teachers use appropriate warm-up activities but only a few provide cool-down activities. There are regular reminders of safety practice and some teachers make good use of the ends of lessons to enable pupils to evaluate their own progress.

130. A clear policy and helpful scheme of work are in place, having been reviewed this year. There is very good accommodation with the swimming pool, the spacious field and playgrounds providing flat, even surfaces and the hall being well equipped with large apparatus. Resources are plentiful and of a good quality. The effective co-ordinator is supported well by colleagues in the excellent provision of after-school activities.

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE

- The inspection was carried out by a team of 6 inspectors over 15 ½ days.
- During the period of the inspection, 67 lessons or part lessons were observed, adding up to a total of just over 45 hours.
- Inspectors attended school assemblies and registration periods in all year groups.
- Samples of pupils' work were examined for each class for the current and previous academic year.
- A comprehensive range of school documentation including the school development plan, teachers' records, all curriculum planning documents, the records kept on pupils, sample reports sent to parents and the school register were inspected.
- In each class, inspectors listened to a sample of pupils read. Pupils were examined in their mathematical knowledge.
- Discussions were held with members of staff, governors, pupils, parents and administrative assistants.
- A parents' meeting held prior to the inspection was attended by 13 parents, at which they expressed their views about the work of the school.
- The responses to the 49 questionnaires completed by parents were taken into account during the inspection.
- The budget figures and the most recent audit report were examined.

DATA AND INDICATORS

Pupil data

Y4 – Y7	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent) 255	Number of pupils with statements of SEN 8	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN 70	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals 52
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Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers (Y4 – Y7)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	12.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.6

Education support staff (Y4 – Y7)

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked each week	92.5

Average class size:	32
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Financial data

Financial year:	1998/99
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	£
Total Income	502,376
Total Expenditure	504,142
Expenditure per pupil	2,083
Balance brought forward from previous year	40,951
Balance carried forward to next year	39,185

PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

255

Number of questionnaires returned:

49

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	20	67	10	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	65	33	2	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	38	53	9	0	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	41	57	0	2	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	33	65	2	0	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	47	51	0	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	50	50	0	0	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	12	53	12	16	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	31	59	10	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	14	69	14	2	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	41	51	4	4	0

Other issues raised by parents

Extra-curricular activities judged to be a strength. The teachers give considerable time willingly.