

# INSPECTION REPORT

**Elm C of E Primary School**  
Wisbech

LEA area : Cambridgeshire

Unique Reference Number : 110800

Headteacher : Mr C Child

Inspection No: 187734

Reporting inspector : Mr D Nightingale  
OIN 18911

Dates of inspection : 8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707026

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

© Crown Copyright 1999

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated. Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school.

Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the appropriate authority must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. Every registered parent of a registered pupil at the school should receive a free copy of the summary of the report within ten working days of receipt of the summary by the appropriate authority. A charge not exceeding the cost of supply may be made by the appropriate authority for any other copies of the report and/or its summary provided to any person who asks for one.

The appropriate authority should make a copy of the report and the summary available for inspection by members of the public at such times and at such a place as may be reasonable

Any enquiries about this legislation should be addressed to the OFSTED Compliance Helpline

Tel. 0171421 6567

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school :	Primary School
Type of control :	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils :	4 - 11
Gender of pupils :	Mixed
School address :	Main Road Elm Wisbech Cambridgeshire PE14 0AG
Telephone number :	01945 860295
Fax number :	01945 860295
Appropriate authority :	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors :	Mrs M Shorten
Date of previous inspection :	May 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr D Nightingale, RgI	Mathematics	Attainment and Progress
	Science	Teaching
	Design and technology	Leadership and management
	Special educational needs	
Mrs B Moore, Lay Inspector	None	Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupil welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
		Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs M Hulme, Team Inspector	Areas of learning for children under five	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
	Religious education	Spiritual, moral, social and personal development
	Art	
	History	
	Music	
Mr A Woodward, Team Inspector	English	Curriculum and assessment
	Information technology	Efficiency
	Geography	
	Physical education	
	Equal opportunities	

The inspection contractor was:

Lincolnshire Education Associates

The Innovation Ccentre  
Europarc  
Grimsby  
NE Lincolnshire  
DN37 9TT

Tel: 01472 500360

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints which are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Registrar  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway

London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

### Paragraph

#### MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well  
Where the school has weaknesses  
How the school has improved since the last inspection  
Standards in subjects  
Quality of teaching  
Other aspects of the school  
The parents' views of the school

#### KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

#### INTRODUCTION

1 - 4

Characteristics of the school  
Key indicators

#### PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

##### Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

5 - 27

Attainment and progress  
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development  
Attendance

##### Quality of education provided

28 - 59

Teaching  
The curriculum and assessment  
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development  
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare  
Partnership with parents and the community

##### The management and efficiency of the school

60 - 74

Leadership and management  
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources  
The efficiency of the school

#### PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

##### Areas of learning for children under five

75 - 84

##### English, mathematics and science

85 - 106

##### Other subjects or courses

107 - 145

#### PART C: INSPECTION DATA

##### Summary of inspection evidence

146 - 149

##### Data and indicators

150 - 153

## MAIN FINDINGS

### What the school does well

By the time they leave the school pupils have made good progress in English, mathematics and science. Progress in religious education is very good

- .Relationships between adults and pupils and between pupils themselves are very good. They are supportive of one another in many ways and respect other people's feelings and opinions.
- .The overall quality of teaching is good.
- .Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development is very good. This is particularly effective in teaching values of honesty, fairness and respect for the truth and respect for other people and their beliefs.
- .The school takes good care of its children through its good procedures for promoting and monitoring behaviour, attendance and health and safety. Procedures for child protection are very good.
- .The school is very good at involving parents in their children's learning, particularly through an effective homework policy.
- .The ethos of the school is good and reflects the successful implementation of the school's aims and values.
- .Financial and school administration are good and effective in allowing teaching staff to concentrate on their work with pupils.
- .The school has very good grounds, which provide attractive quiet areas, an extensive sports field and a variety of environmental habitats.

### Where the school has weaknesses

Subject co-ordinators are not involved enough in the monitoring and evaluation of standards of work and in the contribution made to the targets and financial planning in the school development plan.

I.The school development plan does not contain sufficient criteria to help the staff and governing body evaluate the success and impact of the targets it sets itself.

II.The level of resources for mathematics, religious education, geography, history and music is unsatisfactory.

**This is a good school where the weaknesses are outweighed by what the school does well. The weaknesses will form the basis of the governing body's action plan which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils in the school.**

### How the school has improved since the last inspection

Overall, the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the issues raised at the last inspection. Good progress has been made in sustaining the breadth and balance of the curriculum. Improvements to the curricular planning, particularly the development of clear learning objectives, have helped to improve the quality of teaching. The development of procedures for monitoring the work of the school has been satisfactory. Although the headteacher has monitored classroom teaching, the evaluation of the effectiveness of the teaching and planning is still limited, as the subject co-ordinators do not have a sufficiently active role in this. This remains an issue for the school to address. The school is in a sound position to continue to improve, as the subject co-ordinators have positive attitudes towards developing their role and there is a commitment by the senior staff and the governing body to continued improvement.

## Standards in subjects

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

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

The evidence from the inspection shows that improvements in planning and in teaching have had an influence on pupils' attainments so that in English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education pupils' attainments are close to those expected of pupils of their age by the time they leave the school. Inspection findings are more consistent with the results of the 1998 tests, when the cohort of pupils tested had fewer pupils with special educational needs than in 1999. The information in the table shows that in 1999 pupils' attainments by the time they left the school were similar to the national average in English but below it in mathematics and science. When compared with similar schools the results achieved by pupils were below the average for those schools.

### Quality of teaching

Teaching in:	Under 5	5 - 7 years	7 - 11 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Insufficient seen	Insufficient seen
Religious education		Insufficient seen	Insufficient seen
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The quality of teaching is good or better in 73 per cent of lessons. It is very good or excellent in 22 per cent of lessons. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. The good quality of teaching makes an important contribution to the overall good progress made by pupils. Very good relationships, well chosen activities and very well organised lessons are significant features of the very good teaching.

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



## Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Pupils have good attitudes towards learning. Behaviour is good both in and around school. There are very good, caring relationships throughout the school.
Attendance	Satisfactory.
Ethos*	Good. This is a warm and welcoming place where pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and for others and where their personal achievements are valued.
Leadership and management	Satisfactory. Aims and values are effectively implemented, particularly for pupils' personal and social development. Subject co-ordinators' role in monitoring and evaluating the curriculum and standards is unsatisfactory. They have insufficient input into the targets of the school development plan. This lacks appropriate success criteria to help the staff and governing body evaluate the effectiveness of targets for development.
Curriculum	Broad and balanced to implement effectively the National Curriculum, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and religious education. Planning is good and is based upon key learning objectives. Assessment procedures are satisfactory but not enough use is made of the information available from tests.
Pupils with special educational needs	Good provision through effective support staff and well-written individual education plans.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	Very good. Provides well for pupils to develop knowledge of themselves, understand the values of society and to build good relationships. Fosters an understanding of their cultural heritage and of cultural diversity.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	Good level of teaching and support staff. Good outside accommodation and adequate classroom and other space for the delivery of the curriculum. Resources are unsatisfactory in mathematics, religious education, geography, history and music.
Value for money	Satisfactory. Pupils make good progress; the quality of teaching is good. Costs are reasonable. Resources are limited.

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

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

<b>What most parents like about the school</b>	<b>What some parents are not happy about</b>
<p>III.The school's values and attitudes which they feel have a positive effect on their children.</p> <p>IV.The enjoyment their children have in coming to school</p> <p>V.It is easy to approach the school with any concern or problems.</p> <p>VI.The school helps their children to achieve good standards in their work.</p> <p>VII.Children behave well at school.</p> <p>VIII.That they are encouraged to take an active part in school life and with their children's learning.</p>	<p>IX.No significant issues of concern were raised by parents.</p>

Inspection evidence supports the parents' positive views of the school.

## KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

In order to continue to raise standards and to improve the overall quality of school management, the school should

X. Develop the procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching to focus more on the standards achieved by pupils and the effects of implementing curricular planning by:

- Establishing more rigorous and systematic monitoring of the curriculum and the work of the school to involve the subject co-ordinators more effectively in the regular review of their subjects;*
- Providing appropriate amounts of time for subject co-ordinators to monitor and evaluate their subject through more direct observation in classrooms;*
- Providing opportunities for co-ordinators to report on standards in their subjects to the governing body;*
- Making more effective use of information from test results to identify areas for improvement.*

*(paragraphs: 47, 61, 65, 91, 99, 106, 112, 117, 123, 127, 131, 136, 144)*

●. Improve the quality of school development planning and the effectiveness of the evaluation of the work of the school by:

- Involving the subject co-ordinators more fully in the construction of targets in the school development plan;*
- Developing clear and succinct criteria by which the work of the school and the decisions of the governing body can be regularly evaluated;*

*(paragraphs: 63, 70)*

●. Improve the quality and range of resources in mathematics, religious education, geography, history and music by:

- Allocating available finance to meeting the identified priorities for resources;*
- Linking expenditure on resources to the priorities of the school development plan;*
- Rigorously evaluating the effect of new resources on helping raise pupils' attainments.*

*(paragraphs: 69, 99, 117, 131, 136, 140)*

In addition to the key issues above, the following less important weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. They are indicated in paragraphs 40, 29, 64, 67, 68, 73, 84, 82, 80,

\*. Review and revise the planning for children under the age of five so that time is more appropriately allocated to all the recommended areas of learning for children of this age.

\*. Review the roles and responsibilities of senior staff in order to achieve a suitable balance between management and curriculum responsibilities.

\*. Determine what can be done to provide suitable outdoor play provision for the physical development of children under the age of five as recommended by the Department for Education and Employment.

\*. Investigate ways in which additional support can be provided for children under the age of five.

## INTRODUCTION

### \* Characteristics of the school

1. The school is situated in the village of Elm close to the market town of Wisbech. It is of average size for a primary school, with 207 pupils on roll aged four to eleven years. There are similar numbers of boys and girls. They are taught by seven full-time teachers, including the headteacher, and two part-time teachers in seven classes. Children are admitted to school in the September before their fifth birthday. During the inspection there were 25 pupils under the age of five. Children are assessed when they enter school and usually attainment on entry is below that expected of children of their age. The school is in the Elm Ward, where the last census return showed that the percentage of adults with higher educational qualifications was below the national average and that the percentage of overcrowded households was above the national average. The area is classified by the European Community as an area with social and economic needs. The 12 per cent of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. There are 53 pupils (25.6 per cent) on the register of special educational needs and this is a higher percentage than schools nationally. Six of these pupils have statements of special educational need. There are no pupils with English as an additional language and a small number of pupils from traveller families. Many parents in Wisbech choose to send their children to school in Elm, so that about 44 per cent of pupils come from outside the village. Since the last inspection, in 1996, four new teachers, including a deputy headteacher, have been appointed.
2. The overriding aim of the school is to enable pupils to realise their maximum potential. Pupils are encouraged to develop the skills, attitudes and knowledge to enable them to relate to others, to become self-confident and to understand their place in the community. The individuality of each pupil is recognised and the school acknowledges the entitlement of each child to be treated fairly and equally as well as the need to cater for their spiritual, moral, social, cultural, mental and physical development.
3. The school's priorities for the immediate future are:
  - To assess the impact of the Literacy Strategy and to develop a scheme of work in English to help identify and organise the teaching of key skills to appropriate year groups;
  - To introduce the National Numeracy Strategy and assess its impact on pupils' attainments;
  - To develop new planning and assessment documents and to develop systems for the evaluation and comparison of standards of pupils' attainments;
  - To continue to develop management strategies through implementing the new senior management structure, continuing the involvement of the governing body in the life of the school and improving information technology facilities for the management of information;
  - To develop the teaching of information technology to make effective use of innovations such as the National Grid for Learning in order to enhance the opportunities available to pupils;
  - To monitor attainment;
  - To develop an outside play area for children under the age of five.

## 1. Key Indicators

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

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	18	13	31

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	12	14	17
	Girls	11	11	12
	Total	23	25	29
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	74(65)	81(65)	94(74)
	National	82(80)	83(81)	87(84)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	15	16	17
	Girls	11	11	11
	Total	26	27	28
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	84(65)	87(74)	90(81)
	National	82(81)	86(85)	87(86)

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

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999	16	15	31

National Curriculum Test Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	10	12	13
	Girls	12	10	12
	Total	22	22	25
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	71(77)	71(58)	81(77)
	National	70(65)	69(59)	78(69)

Teacher Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 4 or above	Boys	9	10	12
	Girls	14	10	11
	Total	23	20	23
Percentage at NC Level 4 or above	School	74(55)	65(68)	74(84)
	National	68(65)	69(65)	75(71)

<sup>1</sup>

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

<sup>2</sup>

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

## Attendance

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

		%
Authorised Absence	School	5.0
	National comparative data	5.7
Unauthorised Absence	School	1.8
	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	22
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

2. Children's attainment on entry to school is below that expected of children of their age. The evidence from teachers' assessments of children soon after they start school shows that the skills in literacy and numeracy of most children are less well developed than would be expected at their age and that a significant minority of children have poorly developed social skills. Inspection evidence shows that children make good progress, so that by the time they are five they are likely to have achieved the nationally agreed desirable learning outcomes for language and literacy, mathematics, knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development and physical development. This will enable them to begin the National Curriculum. Children make good progress in their personal and social development.
3. In language and literacy, children listen to stories and know how to handle books with care. They are beginning to recognise many letters by their shape and sound and to use pictures to help them tell a story. Higher attaining children try to read words in simple sentences. Children are beginning to be aware of the purpose of writing and some try to write letters. In mathematics, most children count a number of objects accurately and many are beginning to understand the idea of *more than* or *less than*. Higher attaining children count unaided and usually correctly. Children benefit from singing rhymes and songs which include counting. In their knowledge and understanding of the world children experiment with sand and dough and describe how it feels. They talk about their families as they begin to understand their relationship with the world around them and recall significant events from their lives. They use a mouse or appropriate keys on a keyboard to operate simple games on a computer. Children enjoy listening to different types of music as part of their creative development. They use percussion effectively when, for example, they add music to a story. They recognise most primary and secondary colours and are becoming aware of the effect of mixing them to produce another colour. Through using toys children develop their imaginative play. In their physical development children improve their control and co-ordination of movements and develop an awareness of the space needed by themselves and others when engaged in physical activities. They use pencil, paints, malleable materials and other tools with increasing control. Children make good progress in their personal and social development. They learn to co-operate in the role play area or when using play equipment. They concentrate on tasks better in small groups than when working as a class. With adult help they sustain concentration for appropriate periods of time. They are beginning to become independent in their personal needs and when changing for physical activities. They usually behave in an appropriate way but some children have still to learn the need to wait patiently for their turn at an activity.
4. The previous inspection reported standards of attainment in English, mathematics and information technology to be in line with the standards expected in the National Curriculum and that in science they were better than this. There were no judgements on religious education. The current inspection findings show that in general these standards have been maintained except in science, where pupils' attainments are average. This is consistent with the results of the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year olds for the past four years, in which pupils' performance has generally been close to the national average. The judgements of the inspection are that by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, their attainments are close to those expected of their age in English, mathematics, science, information technology and religious education.
5. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments in English are in line with those expected nationally. This varies from the results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven-year olds. In these tests pupils' average performance level was below the national average in the tests for reading and writing and the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level was well below the national average in reading and below the national average in writing. When compared with the results of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, the school's results were well below the average achieved by these schools. The 1999 test results, however, show a marked improvement from the previous year and inspection findings confirm this continued improvement, as most pupils were working at levels expected for their age. An analysis of results

since 1996 does not indicate any significant difference between the attainments of boys and girls. By the end of Key Stage 2, when pupils leave the school, pupils' attainments in English are close to those expected nationally. The results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven-year olds show that the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels was close to the national average but below those achieved by similar schools. The performance level attained overall was also close to the national average and below that of similar schools. The results are generally consistent with the trend of test results since 1996 when the average level of performance has been close to the national average. There is no significant difference between the attainments of boys and girls. The evidence from the inspection is consistent with the test results.

6. By the time they leave the school, most pupils read a range of books confidently and accurately. They use a variety of styles to write interesting stories, expressive poetry and detailed reports. Their work follows the rules of punctuation and is usually presented in legible handwriting. Higher attaining pupils spell difficult words correctly and use more advanced forms of punctuation such as commas and apostrophes accurately. They talk confidently about their work and make sensible responses to the views and ideas expressed by others in class discussions.
7. Pupils' attainments in mathematics, by the end of both key stages, are in line with those expected nationally. The findings of the inspection are consistent with the results of the 1999 National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, when the average of the levels attained by pupils was close to the national average and comparable to that achieved by pupils in similar schools. Although the percentage of pupils attaining the level expected of seven-year olds was above the average the percentage achieving the higher level was not as high. Results since 1996 have been inconsistent, partly owing to the differences between the number of pupils with special educational needs in each cohort. The latest results are a significant improvement on the previous year. There is no significant evidence of differences between boys and girls. Inspection findings were similar to the 1999 National Curriculum test results for eleven-year olds in that most pupils were working at the levels expected nationally. In the tests the percentage of pupils attaining the level expected was close to the national average and close to the average achieved by similar schools. The average level of performance, however, was just below the national average and the average achieved by similar schools. There was a significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the cohort and this influenced the average level of performance. Since 1996 the results of the tests have been consistently close to the national average. There is no difference between the attainments of boys and girls.
8. By the time they leave the school, pupils are confident about working with large numbers, including using negative numbers and decimal notation. They have a sound understanding of place value and use this well in multiplying and dividing by large numbers. They develop a good understanding of the properties of shapes when they conduct investigations into the properties of different triangles or quadrilaterals. They use skills in numeracy effectively in other subjects such as science and design and technology when they need to measure accurately. Pupils are able to represent information on different types of graph.
9. In science, pupils' attainments by the time they leave the school are in line with those expected nationally for pupils of their age. The results of the National Curriculum tests since 1996 show that pupils' performance has been maintained consistently close to the national average and has improved in line with national trends. This is consistent with inspection findings. In the 1999 tests the percentage of pupils achieving the expected level was close to the national average and close to the average achieved by similar schools. The significant number of pupils with special educational needs level influenced the average performance level, which was just below the national average. Analysis of results between 1996 and 1998 does not show any significant differences between attainments of boys and girls. The teacher assessment results for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 show a proportion of pupils achieving the levels expected nationally that is close to the national average. Inspection evidence supports this, as most pupils are working at the level expected for their age. The 1999 assessments were a significant improvement on the previous year, when the percentage attaining the expected level was well below the national average.
10. By the age of eleven, pupils confidently carry out suitable experiments, making appropriate predictions as to what may happen and drawing sensible conclusions from their observations. They ensure that their tests are conducted fairly. They have a good understanding of how systems such as circulation work in the human



body. They use this knowledge well to explain phenomena such as the heart rate increasing after exercise. They know how some materials can be changed in different ways such as heating or dissolving. They know about a range of physical processes and understand, for example, how vibration creates air movement to make sounds.

11. By the time they leave the school pupils have made good progress in English. The daily literacy lesson has established good routines which enable pupils to make good progress overall. Their speaking and listening skills develop appropriately throughout the school so that the oldest pupils speak confidently in a range of situations and are sensitive to the views and opinions of others. At Key Stage 1, progress in the development of reading and writing skills is good and pupils begin to learn and use the skills of literacy. They improve the expression and accuracy with which they read. They develop the correct use of capital letters and full stops and the higher attaining pupils improve their work by using question marks or speech marks in their stories. Most pupils improve the size and consistency of their handwriting. At Key Stage 2, pupils sustain their progress in reading and writing. They have extended the range of books they read to include fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Their understanding of the texts improves as they talk confidently about the characters in their books. Reading skills are extended so that pupils are able to use the library effectively for research. In writing they improve grammar, punctuation and spelling with more consistent accuracy. They extend the range of their writing to include poetry, speech writing, reports as well as stories of increasing length.
12. Overall, pupils' progress in mathematics is good. At Key Stage 1, they become increasingly confident in using numbers and most pupils are developing strategies for solving number problems. They develop a good understanding of how to use different units of measure. At Key Stage 2, progress is particularly good in developing mathematical investigations and in the use of correct vocabulary. Pupils make good use of their number skills to help them solve problems in other areas of mathematics, such as calculating areas of rectangles and circles.
13. Pupils make good progress by the time they leave the school in their development of scientific knowledge and understanding. Through observation and experiment younger pupils improve their understanding of physical processes such as forces. They develop their ability to record their predictions and observations on simple charts. Older pupils improve the skills needed to conduct successful experiments. They use their understanding of how to make a test fair when setting up experiments. They develop a wide body of knowledge about each aspect of the science curriculum and make good use of this when explaining the results of their investigations.
14. In information technology, pupils at both key stages make satisfactory progress, and their attainments are about the levels expected for their age. At Key Stage 1, most pupils write simple texts on screen and print their completed work. They control a mouse effectively when using a suitable program to help them draw and colour pictures on the screen. At Key Stage 2, pupils improve their word-processing skills and learn to use other functions to help them present information in an attractive way. They make effective use of the CD-ROM to research information. At both key stages, pupils, including those with special educational needs, use information technology effectively to reinforce work in literacy and numeracy lessons.
15. In religious education, pupils attain standards at seven and eleven that are in line with the expectations of the Agreed Syllabus of the local education authority, although in many lessons they often develop knowledge and understanding that exceeds that which would normally be expected of pupils of their age. By the time they leave the school they make very good progress in the knowledge and understanding they gain of the traditions and beliefs of Christianity and other major religions. By the time they leave the school they have extended their knowledge of the Bible so that they understand the different types of book which it contains. They not only develop their knowledge of different Christian festivals but also deepen their understanding through exploring feelings and beliefs as represented in art and music. They begin to understand the influence of religious belief on people's lives, particularly how some people's faith has positively affected the lives of others.
16. By the time they leave the school, pupils have made good progress in art, geography, history, music and physical education. They have made satisfactory progress in design and technology. The recently revised

and well thought out planning is influencing the quality of teaching, which is having a beneficial effect on the progress made by pupils. Literacy skills are developed effectively through other subjects. Opportunities are used sensibly for pupils to use their numeracy skills in other subjects such as science and design and technology.

17. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their individual learning targets. With appropriate support they achieve the objectives set out in their individual educational plans. Some pupils make sufficiently good progress as to no longer require additional support.

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

18. The majority of children under five enter the school, at the age of four, with poorer social skills than might be expected for their age. Although at the time of the inspection they had had only a few weeks in school, they are already building a good relationship with the teacher and are beginning to settle into the class routines. The personal and social development lays the foundation for all other learning and children's skills focus on how to work, play and co-operate with others. They are beginning to make friends and relate to one another when in groups. When working in small groups or individually they persevere with tasks and will seek help. However, some children have difficulty in concentrating for reasonable periods of time and need support to do so. Children are gradually becoming independent. Behaviour is mainly appropriate for their age and they understand that they must share toys and take turns when choosing activities.
19. At Key Stages 1 and 2, pupils have good attitudes to learning. They show interest in their work and respond well to challenging tasks. They are willing to learn from their mistakes and enthusiastically join in discussion or respond to questions. Their sensible responses show they have listened attentively and the majority persevere with tasks even when they find them hard. As they get older they take pride in their work and seek an audience with which to share it. Pupils are encouraged to become independent and by the time they leave school they are capable of taking responsibility for organising some of their work and carrying on without constant reference to the teacher.
20. Pupils behave well both in and around the school. Their outdoor play is boisterous but not aggressive. They behave courteously to visitors and one another. Older pupils take responsibility for younger ones who seek out their 'reading partner' if needing help. The outdoor environment has been developed as a pleasant place for children to play and pupils respect this in the same way as they care for their classroom by keeping it tidy. The good behaviour has a positive effect on the learning in class.
21. The quality of relationships is very good. Pupils form caring relationships with one another, teachers and other adults, which is a motivating factor in sustained work, as they do not disrupt others. Children say that there is no bullying and they know what to do when someone is unkind. There is respect for other people's feelings. They listen to the views and opinions of others and are learning to tolerate those that are different to their own. They co-operate well in small groups, sharing ideas, supporting one another in their work and, when necessary, making compromises in order to complete their tasks. Their capacity to reflect on and discuss their behaviour, feelings and experiences grows as they move through the school and is well developed by Year 6.
22. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils like to take responsibility and even in the younger classes they offer help, take messages and tidy up. Older pupils take responsibility for such activities as outdoor games and equipment or for keeping the paper store tidy. Some older children read with younger ones and take special responsibility for them out of doors if help is required. Older pupils are beginning to take some initiative in the way they organise their work.
23. Inspection evidence supports the views of parents and the previous inspection that the school is successful in promoting positive attitudes and values and in achieving good standards of behaviour within a well-ordered community.

## **Attendance**

24. The level of pupils' attendance is satisfactory and similar to the national average. There has been little change from the last inspection when then, too, attendance was reported as satisfactory. The school is diligent in its procedures and care is taken to ensure that there is consistency in the marking of registers throughout the school. Any lateness is carefully recorded and parents informed. Lessons start promptly and finish on time.

## **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

### **Teaching**

25. The good quality of teaching, particularly in the older classes at Key Stage 2, makes an important contribution to the good progress made by pupils. Teaching was good or better in seventy-three per cent of lessons and in twenty per cent it was very good. Two per cent of teaching seen was excellent. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. Teaching is good in English, mathematics, science and art at both key stages and in physical education at Key Stage 2. The teaching in design and technology at Key Stage 2 was satisfactory. Only a limited number of lessons was seen in other subjects but in most of those lessons teaching was good. Overall, teaching was good at both key stages.
26. Teaching of children under the age of five is good. Planning for the children is satisfactory and takes account of the expected areas of learning for children of this age. The current pressures of time required for the literacy and numeracy strategies are restricting the time available for other important areas of learning. The teacher uses a sound knowledge of the areas of learning to give clear explanations and ask suitable questions. The teacher makes effective use of knowledge and skills to teach, organise, intervene and support children in their learning. There is an appropriate balance between teacher directed activities and activities chosen by the children. The balance of suitable methods and appropriate organisation provides encouragement for the children to develop independence. The limited amount of time available for a support assistant is used effectively for work with small groups so that children maintain their interest and involvement with their work.
27. The very good relationships between teachers and pupils are most apparent in the lessons where teaching is very good. This helps to create good class management and discipline through which pupils are confident to offer opinions and views. Instructions are given very clearly so that pupils have a good understanding of what they have to do and what is expected of them. Activities are very well chosen and lessons well organised, reflecting the teachers' good knowledge and understanding of the subject and how it can be most effectively taught. Tasks provide pupils with a high level of challenge; for example, in a numeracy lesson in the oldest class all pupils, including those with special educational needs, were expected to understand positive and negative numbers and make appropriate calculations. In the best lessons, teachers use skilful questioning to make very good use of pupils' previous knowledge to generate ideas in discussion sessions. Lessons proceed at a very good pace to ensure that all planned activities are completed. In these lessons pupils make consistently good progress.
28. Overall, teachers have a sound understanding of all the subjects they teach and where they have a good understanding or particular interest, teaching is often good. This helps them to identify clear objectives for what pupils are to learn. These objectives are shared with pupils so that they understand what they are expected to achieve in each lesson. Teachers use their understanding of the subjects well to encourage pupils to use correct terminology or appropriate vocabulary. Where teachers' expectations are high, tasks are well chosen to provide challenge and pupils are inspired to produce work of above average standards. Good examples of this were seen in mathematics and science lessons with the older classes. In a few lessons the tasks were not demanding enough. For example, in a mathematics lesson, although the class were following the guidance of the National Numeracy Strategy, the level of work was that one would expect of younger pupils. In some lessons at Key Stage 1, teachers had limited expectation of the amount of work pupils would complete.

29. The overall quality of teachers' planning for lessons is good. The daily or weekly planning effectively develops the planning for each term into short manageable units of work. The objectives for pupils' learning are closely identified, not only for each lesson but often for the group activities as well. The planning provides a basic structure for the lesson. Activities are well chosen to ensure that the objectives are met and to stimulate pupils' interest. In most lessons the planning ensures that work is well suited to the pupils of different attainments. The good quality of the planning has a significant effect on the overall quality of teaching.
30. Lessons are well organised and teachers make good use of a range of teaching methods. Teachers ensure that there is a good balance between class discussions and group activities. Crisp introductions give a good start to many lessons. Introductions are used well to revise previous work and introduce new ideas. Questions are used effectively to help pupils recall work they have done and to tease out answers when developing new ideas. Explanations are given clearly to help pupils' understanding. Where possible teachers involve all pupils in the class activity through well focused questions, activities that all pupils can join with or by requiring all pupils to make a response. For example, good use was made of "number fans" in a mathematics lesson to ensure that all pupils could show they had calculated an answer. In a few practical lessons, such as physical education, there is not enough direct teaching of the skills needed or the rules required for an activity. Group activities are usually well managed. Teachers ensure that each group works at the tasks set and support groups or individuals as needed. In most lessons, particularly in literacy and numeracy, the teacher is able to focus on a group, having set appropriate tasks for the other groups. In a few literacy lessons this focus on a group is not used when it would be appropriate. Good use is made of short discussions at the end of lessons to consolidate what pupils have learned, share the work of different groups or to assess what pupils have achieved.
31. Relationships between pupils and teachers in all classes are usually good and in some classes they are very good. Praise and encouragement are used effectively to encourage pupils and teachers' positive attitudes towards pupils help them strive to overcome difficulties. Teachers show respect for the views pupils offer when they answer questions or volunteer comments. In most lessons there is a very high expectation of good behaviour and positive attitudes and this is reflected in the purposeful working atmosphere in all classes. When necessary, pupils are calmly but firmly reminded of the behaviour expected of them, although sometimes the level of noise is allowed to rise too high. In a very few lessons pupils become restless when discussions or introductions last for too long.
32. Effective use is made of resources to support teachers' explanations and to help pupils with their tasks. The successful organisation of these resources in most lessons means that time is used efficiently and pupils are able to develop some independence in their learning. Classroom assistants, students and adult helpers know what is expected of them and this helps them make a valuable contribution to lessons. These adults sometimes provide a level of expertise and knowledge that enhances the lesson. For example, a parent used her knowledge of historical artefacts to help pupils develop an understanding of how we find out about the past. The pace of lessons is well managed to ensure that pupils complete tasks or that they have sufficient time at each activity when a rotation of tasks is used.
33. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support to help them achieve the targets in their individual educational plans. Support assistants are well prepared, have good relationships with the pupils and manage activities well. They are successful in ensuring that those pupils with statements of special educational needs take a full part in all lessons. Some pupils are appropriately withdrawn for short sessions with a specialist teacher when it is necessary to teach specific skills related to their individual educational plans. This work takes account of the work pupils normally do in class.
34. The learning objectives for each lesson help teachers assess what pupils have achieved. Pupils' books are carefully marked and perceptive comments recognise the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' work in a constructive way and provide guidance on how work could be improved. During lessons teachers carefully observe how pupils are working and provide help when it is needed. For example, in a science lesson, the teacher used information gained from listening to a discussion to remind the class of ways of making a fair test. The reading diaries of younger pupils are kept well to record progress. The short discussions at the end of lessons are used effectively to assess what pupils have learned. Assessments following lessons help

teachers identify which pupils have been successful and which pupils need additional support. These notes help teachers plan their next lessons. Homework is used effectively to support what pupils do in school. Pupils in every year group have a suitable amount of homework set every week to help build good learning habits and to consolidate what they have learned. These activities include reading, learning spellings and multiplication tables, preparing lessons such as a design task for technology or conducting a research for a topic in lessons such as geography or science. The school is successfully implementing its homework policy. The majority of parents are satisfied with the amount of work that their children are asked to do at home.

35. The school has made a good start to the teaching of literacy through the Literacy Hour. Class discussions focusing on the text of a book are effective and group activities are usually well organised. The planned activities provide suitable challenge for most pupils. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced and pupils benefit from their daily lesson. Good use is made of the teaching session to develop pupils' mental recall of number facts and to extend their understanding of number patterns and relationships. Group activities provide activities with appropriate challenge for pupils of different levels of attainment.

### **The curriculum and assessment**

36. The school provides a good curriculum. It has balance, breadth and relevance and promotes pupils' intellectual and personal development. It enables all pupils to make progress in all aspects of the National Curriculum, the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus religious education and areas of learning for the under fives. All pupils, regardless of race, gender or ability have equal access to the curriculum. Provision for personal development, which includes sex education, is good. Pupils are well prepared for their next stage of education. The school makes good provision for personal and social education, including health education, which is delivered through a variety of topics. This makes a good contribution to the achievement of the school's aims, as attention is given to the establishment and development of pupils' positive attitudes to learning.
37. The curriculum for children under the age of five is appropriately planned to enable pupils to experience all the nationally agreed recommended areas of learning for children under five. The school is rightly concerned about the pressures created by the time required for literacy and numeracy at the expense of the development of some of the other important areas of learning. Relevant activities are carefully planned, well organised and appropriate for young children. There are good procedures for the assessment of children on entry to school. Results are used effectively to plan work and to identify children who may have particular difficulties in learning.
38. The time allocated to all subjects is appropriate and the teaching time each week is in line with recommended times for each key stage. There is a suitable emphasis on the teaching of literacy and numeracy, while at the same time the school seeks to maintain sufficient time for all subjects to ensure that pupils receive a broad curriculum. The Literacy Strategy is now well established. The Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced and every class has an appropriate amount of time allocated each week. Both of these core subjects have been allocated a school governor to monitor teaching and provide support when required. Areas of the curriculum are often linked and opportunities for the development of numeracy and literacy are taken in other subjects such as history, geography and physical education.
39. In response to the previous inspection curricular planning has been revised. It is now thorough and has a clear structure based on key learning objectives, particularly in the core subjects. Each key stage decides the long-term plan which provides the framework for implementing schemes of work produced by the local education authority. These are adapted for use as medium-term plans which provide direction for the curriculum each term. As a result of these improvements there is now a more consistent approach to planning throughout the school. This has led to improved continuity between what pupils learn in each class and enables pupils to make good progress. Individual teachers refine the learning objectives as they develop the planning for their lessons each week or each day. The headteacher, key stage co-ordinators and subject co-ordinators monitor the different levels of planning. The school is aware that some areas of the curriculum do not have current, written policy documents and this is recognised in the latest school development plan. The school has a good homework policy which is effectively implemented at both key

stages. At Key Stage 2, teachers make efforts to plan homework to match the curriculum for each half term.

40. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual educational plans contain clear and realistic targets, which ensure that pupils have appropriate programmes of work to enable them to make good progress. There are good links between work done in the classroom and work done when they are withdrawn for short periods of additional tuition. The current requirements for pupils with statements of special educational needs are met.
41. A strength of the curriculum is the range and quality of out-of-school activities, including competitive team games, that are available to pupils at both key stages. Over one hundred pupils take part most weeks, depending on the season of year. Activities include sports club, country dancing, recorder club, gardening club, netball, drama and rounders. Pupils are involved in successful football and squash teams. In lesson time some pupils are able to take advantage of instrumental tuition. Pupils have opportunities to accompany residential visits to Grafham Water, York and the Isle of Wight in a three-year cycle. Curriculum areas have been enriched by a wide variety of visits, including places of worship, the local fire station and a day spent experiencing life as a Victorian child. The headteacher, teachers, support staff and parents enthusiastically support the out-of-school activities. These activities enrich the curriculum and have a positive effect upon the quality of education provided by the school.
42. Sound progress has been made in addressing assessment issues since the last inspection. An agreed marking policy has provided a good starting point for all staff in their aim to raise standards. Throughout the school there are effective systems for assessing and recording pupils' attainment. Staff keep well-organised files on pupils and judgements are made against key concepts linked to National Curriculum levels. The information from these helps teachers identify what work pupils need to further develop. Teachers and support staff, including those for pupils with special educational needs, have regular meetings to make assessments which often inform the next stage of their planning. Portfolios of work to provide consistent judgements on standards in the core subjects are at a very early stage of development. Progress of pupils with special educational needs is carefully monitored through the achievement of targets on their individual educational plans.
43. Most parents appreciate the detail in the annual reports they receive on their children's progress. Teachers use the information from their assessments and observations of pupils to complete these reports and for their discussions with parents at termly open evenings. The school meets statutory requirements for assessing, recording and reporting.
44. A standardised reading test, administered once a year by the headteacher, is used to measure pupils' progress through both key stages. The school has recently adopted the non-statutory National Curriculum tests for use in Years 3, 4 and 5 to help measure pupils' progress at Key Stage 2. The information from these and of the end-of-key stage statutory tests is not sufficiently analysed to provide information on pupils' strengths and weaknesses. Thus, useful information for future teaching and to help towards the improvement of results in English, mathematics and science at both key stages is not made available.

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

45. The school successfully promotes pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Overall, this provision is very good.
46. There is very good provision for spiritual development through the curriculum, and approaches to teaching which show clear values and help children to gain understanding by reflecting on their own and other people's lives, beliefs and environment. All around the school in displays there is clear evidence of teachers' valuing children's ideas across the curriculum - for example, in writing, particularly poetry, art and religious education. Acts of worship play a significant part and during the week of inspection the theme of remembrance provided several occasions when pupils were provided with insights into values and beliefs. For example, a Year 6 class assembly used the idea of the *hero inside oneself* as a focus to develop spiritual awareness and self knowledge. Religious education is used as an effective vehicle for spiritual development, particularly when considering life's fundamental questions and how religious teaching relates to them. Year 6 pupils, for example, gain some realisation of how suffering and death raise questions for Christians about the love and power of God and they see how Christians respond. The singing at worship times is often spiritually uplifting.
47. Provision for pupils' moral development is very good. The school teaches the principles that separate right from wrong. There is a framework of values, supported by parents, which regulate personal behaviour through positive principles rather than fear of punishment. The youngest pupils are beginning to be aware when their actions cause unhappiness to others and this awareness is well established before pupils leave the school. Older pupils make moral decisions based on what they know to be right. There is particular concern for the way that their own village environment is treated and a tremendously positive response to those who need care and comfort.
48. Provision for pupils' social development is very good. Moral and social education are closely related, as the school fosters such values as honesty, fairness and respect for truth. Curricular subjects such as history and religious education provide opportunities to discuss moral values, personal rights and responsibilities and equal opportunities. In history, younger pupils discuss whether Catholics were right to oppose the laws of King James when they consider what happened to Guy Fawkes. Older pupils consider the deaths of many soldiers in World War 1 and whether the sacrifice was worth the suffering. The school encourages pupils to relate effectively to others. Relationships are very good at all levels and staff are good role models for the children. Pupils work co-operatively in lessons. They respond well to the opportunities to take part in team games and develop a sense of fair play.
49. Pupils are taught to appreciate their own cultural traditions and appreciate the diversity of other cultures. Provision for pupils' cultural development is good and is made through the curriculum, clubs and other activities. The subjects of religious education, art, history and literature are used particularly well to promote cultural development. Pupils have good opportunities to study the work of artists, involve themselves in music by performing or appreciating, write in the style of authors and poets, take part in visits, learn from the expertise of visitors and appreciate the natural world through art and literature. Some homework from Years 5 and 6 relating to India and Africa shows how researching these topics extends pupils' knowledge and understanding of two very different cultures. The topics of food, clothes, religion, animals and environment help pupils to appreciate differing life styles.

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

50. The last inspection report gave a positive picture of the school's support for its pupils, and this high quality has been maintained. Concern for the welfare of the pupils remains central to the aims of the school. The very good relationships between staff and pupils enable the teachers to be very knowledgeable about the pupils and to provide effective pastoral care. The monitoring of their academic progress is good. Regular records are kept of pupils' attainments in the core subjects as well as the results of the different tests pupils are given. These results help to chart each child's progress through the school. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Records are kept of any significant incidents but no formal record is

maintained on each pupil's personal and social development. Teachers know their pupils well and this ensures that appropriate support and guidance are provided for all pupils.

51. Procedures for monitoring of pupils with special educational needs are good. Concerns are identified early through the assessments of children soon after they enter school and through the effective use of the school marking policy. Regular reviews are held to assess pupils' progress and to consider what level of support is needed. The pupils benefit from the supportive atmosphere of the school and the effective classroom support. There is good liaison with the local education authority learning support service, which provides advice on assessment and programmes of work, as well as teaching relevant pupils.
52. The school's measures to promote discipline and encourage good behaviour are effective and monitoring of behaviour is good. There is a good policy on behaviour which provides guidance for staff. Through the consistency of their practice teachers show that it is understood well. Any incidents that could be deemed bullying are dealt with promptly and effectively. One child commented that school was enjoyable because bullying was not allowed. Parents endorsed this view. Pupils gain in confidence through the very good support provided by all staff. Pupils feel they are able to approach a member of staff if something is wrong and this helps them to feel secure in the school environment. Staff work hard to create a positive atmosphere for pupils' learning,
53. Procedures for monitoring attendance are good. The importance the school places on this was demonstrated by the thorough and effective review made of procedures in order to improve attendance. As a result some minor improvements were made to procedures. There is a good induction process when children first start school to help them settle quickly into school routines. The procedures for child protection are very good. Staff are experienced and vigilant. Effective measures are in place to ensure that all the related matters of health, safety and first aid are dealt with to a very high standard. In response to parental concerns the school through its governing body has done all it can to ensure safety of pupils on the busy road when leaving school. The school's procedures for promoting pupils' well being are very good in ensuring that pupils feel happy and secure. Every effort is made to ensure that pupils have a stimulating place to learn both in the school building and in the outdoor environment. Pupils are valued in the school community, where their well being is paramount. Parents' views that it is easy to approach the school with questions or problems are supported by the evidence of the inspection.

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

54. Since the last inspection report the school has continued to encourage parents to be involved in their children's education and this is a strength of the school. Parental involvement in their children's learning is very good. The positive views of parents that they feel the school welcomes them to play a part in its life and that it is easy to approach the school with questions or problems are supported by the evidence of the inspection. Parents particularly appreciate their partnership in the homework policy and the clear way this keeps them informed about their children's work. Displays of pupils' work included some examples of homework of a very high quality. The school values the help given by parents in classes and on visits.
55. The quality of information provided for parents is good. Letters to parents such as those regarding attendance are clear and helpful. Parents appreciate the information they receive, particularly meetings with details of the curriculum. Meetings for parents are arranged regularly to address a variety of topics, including handwriting and literacy and they are reasonably attended. Consultation meetings with teachers are well attended and parents appreciate the opportunity to discuss their children's progress. Reports to parents on their children's progress include information on what pupils have been taught and include helpful comments regarding pupils' achievements. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept well informed about their children's progress. They are informed about the targets in their child's individual education plan and involved in reviews when appropriate.
56. The school has a very supportive Parent Teacher Association which raises valuable finance to support the resources of the school. In addition, this group helps to involve the school in the life of the community through such events as the village fete, family discos and social evenings. Links with the parish church are



strong and pupils enjoy services in church throughout the year. The school's support of charities includes Christian Aid and the more local charity of the Milton Children's Hospice. Local visits such as to a nearby farm and to Wisbech to benefit from an educational workshop at the Octavia Hill Birthplace Museum, or to see the Magistrates Court, enrich the pupils' education. This good use of the resources in the local community help to enhance pupils' learning. Visitors also provide valuable support to the curriculum in subjects such as drama and music, especially visits, such as those by the Kings Church Gospel Group, when pupils are encouraged to participate in the activities. Links with local business help provide resources such as the outdoor quiet area and on some occasions provide good learning experiences when, for example, older pupils take part in activities of the Shell Energy Tour at the local museum. The governing body and staff work hard to maintain a positive role within the community so that the pupil's education extends beyond the statutory curriculum to broaden their understanding of the wider world. The school has good links with the local secondary school, including the occasional use of their information technology centre.

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

### **Leadership and management**

57. The school is effectively managed. The headteacher has a clear vision of how the school should provide a broad education to develop pupils' personal and academic understanding. This is appropriately expressed through the school's aims, which are fully supported by the staff and governing body. The value that the school places on people is reflected in the high quality of relationships between the pupils and in the very good relationships between teachers and pupils in the classes where teaching is consistently very good. The recently created senior management team provides effective support to the headteacher and is now helping the school to focus more closely on the issues that need to be addressed in order to further raise the levels of pupils' attainments. The chair of governors leads a hard working and supportive governing body, which seeks to achieve the best for the school and its pupils. The structure of committees enables the governing body to fulfil its responsibilities, not only for each year, but also in taking a longer-term view of the school's development. The governing body has shown that it is prepared to make difficult decisions, such as reducing levels of support staff, in order to achieve its priority of maintaining the present number of classes.
58. The last inspection judged the role of subject co-ordinators to be underdeveloped. Since then some improvement has been made as co-ordinators have led developments in planning for their subjects and provide support to their colleagues. Their role in monitoring of the curriculum is limited and their current involvement in the evaluation of the standards in the subjects for which they are responsible is unsatisfactory. The headteacher observes lessons, reviews planning and samples pupils' work to ensure that planning is implemented and that pupils make progress from year to year. Subject co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning but do not regularly see pupils' books. Although there has been some limited monitoring of the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy, subject co-ordinators are not given sufficient time to observe work in classes. As a result the focus of monitoring is on how planning is implemented rather than on its effect in raising standards. The current procedures are not sufficiently rigorous in providing regular and systematic monitoring of the standards attained in the core subjects of the curriculum or in using the available evidence, such as results from statutory tests. This limits the ability of co-ordinators to make effective evaluations of the standards in their subjects in order to analyse weaknesses, devise ways to make improvements and report their findings to staff and the governing body.
59. The school has a well-defined set of aims which focus on the development of appropriate attitudes, knowledge and skills. These provide a good focus for work, particularly in pupils' personal and social development. In this the school is very successful. Policies, which support these aims and values, are effectively implemented. The majority of parents appreciate and support the values which the school promotes and see them as having a positive effect on their children.
60. A sound school development plan clearly sets out the targets for each year in relevant areas of school development such as premises, staffing and the curriculum. The tasks to be achieved are a sensible balance between new developments and maintaining previous targets. For some targets appropriate financial implications are included. The weakness within the plan is a lack of clear and succinct criteria by which the

staff and governing body can judge how successfully each target has been in helping improve the quality of education and in raising standards. As a result, the governing body do not have clear guidelines to help them in their important task of evaluating the work of the school. Although the school development plan is produced in consultation with the staff and governing body, the subject co-ordinators do not have sufficient input. They are not involved in the earliest stages of discussion so that they can help establish priorities and agree necessary finance, nor are they responsible for the evaluation of targets set.

61. The day-to-day management of special educational needs is carried out well by a committed co-ordinator who is also the deputy headteacher with a number of other important responsibilities in the school. This places a considerable burden of responsibility on one person who is given very little time to carry out the duties associated with the roles. Documentation for special educational needs is appropriately detailed and the school is successfully operating the Code of Practice. Individual education plans are in place for all pupils who need them and teachers take an active part in setting and monitoring targets. The recently appointed governor for special educational needs is supportive. Relevant information is gathered on monthly visits but, as yet, it is not used to help evaluate the success of the policy for special educational needs. The school meets the legal requirements in respect of its pupils with statements of special educational needs.
62. After the last inspection an appropriate action plan was drawn up and most of the issues have been addressed. Good progress has been made in sustaining the breadth and balance of the curriculum. Planning has been developed well, largely owing to the very effective leadership of the deputy headteacher. This improved planning, particularly the clarity of learning objectives, has helped to improve the quality of teaching. Teachers have been supported effectively with developing planning for their classes and the subjects for which they are responsible. Satisfactory progress has been made in developing the monitoring process to ensure that curricular continuity and progression is consistently achieved. The evaluation of the effectiveness of the planning is still limited, as the subject co-ordinators do not have a sufficiently active role in this. Through a series of classroom observations the headteacher has monitored classroom teaching to help identify successful features and identify aspects which could be improved. The positive attitudes of the subject co-ordinators, the support of senior staff, particularly the deputy headteacher, and the commitment of the governing body mean that the school is in a sound position to continue to improve.
63. The school has a good ethos which helps to create an effective place for pupils to learn. There is a warm and welcoming sense of community where pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for themselves and others and where their personal achievements are valued. The very good relationships between pupils reflect the school's commitment to developing pupils' spiritual understanding, moral awareness and social skills.

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

64. There is a good level of teaching staff who are suitably qualified and experienced to teach the curriculum for children under five, the National Curriculum and religious education. There is a good level of well-qualified support staff, particularly to support pupils with special educational needs, who are effectively deployed to work with relevant pupils. The amount of time available for support staff for children under the age of five is limited and this restricts the progress these children are able to make when the teacher has to work with the class on her own. Teacher appraisal is in place and is used effectively in staff development. Carefully chosen courses ensure that staff development is good and whenever possible is linked to the needs of the school. The special educational needs co-ordinator has not yet had opportunity to undertake relevant training on implementing the Code of Practice. Courses are evaluated and careful records kept. There is a good system for the induction of new staff and all staff have clear job descriptions. There is an appropriate level of administrative staff who are very efficient and supportive of the school.
65. Internal accommodation is adequate and the school has worked hard to make the mobile classrooms attractive places for pupils to work in. Leaks in the roof of one mobile classroom cause inconvenience and damage to resources. The school building is well maintained and cleaned to a high standard. The school environment is greatly enhanced by the very good use of displays. Displays from the work of every year group feature in the hall and in the entrance where, for example, homework from Years 5 and 6 provides a pleasing display. All classrooms are of a suitable size for the number and age of the pupils. Effective and

interesting displays provide pupils with a stimulating place to learn. All available space is used effectively, including specialist areas such as the library. Outside accommodation is good with the exception of the required suitably enclosed area to provide space for the physical development of children under the age of five. The playground with its quiet seating area is very attractive and well used by the pupils who treat their surroundings with respect. This area enhances the school's provision for pupils' personal and social development. The grounds provide a large playing field, which not only enables the school to make good provision for pupils' physical education but is used to support learning in other areas of the curriculum such as history. The field is bordered by a variety of habitats which provide valuable resources for scientific and environmental education.

66. Although the school receives good support from the Parents Association the provision of resources for some subjects of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Not enough resources are available to support religious education, geography, history, music, and mathematics. These restrict opportunities for pupils' learning; for example in a mathematics lessons, one pupil had to wait for another pupil to finish using a cuboid before being able to complete a task. In most of these subjects teachers have provided their own resources. Resources for physical education, information technology, English, art, science and design and technology are satisfactory. Effective use is made of resources available for loan from the local authority or the Diocesan Board of Education, sometimes, as in religious education, to compensate for the lack of provision at the school. Where appropriate the school makes good use of external resources, visiting such places as local churches, Ely and Peterborough Cathedrals, local museums and theatres, to enhance pupils' knowledge and understanding of the topics they are studying. Residential visits to such places as Grafham Water provide experiences in outdoor and adventurous activities as part of physical education as well as good opportunities to develop pupils' personal and social skills. Visitors to the school, such as a missionary, sports coach and the local vicar, successfully extend pupils' understanding in subjects such as religious education and physical education.

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

67. The school has efficiently organised and satisfactory procedures for financial planning. The finance committee of the governing body works closely with the headteacher to monitor spending. They ensure that the governing body receives regular and detailed financial reports which enable them to have an accurate overview of the school's finances. There are currently procedures in place for contingencies and a five-year financial projection to aid strategic planning. There is a prudent carry-forward of funds to the next financial year. The headteacher and governing body are strongly committed to maintaining present staffing levels for as long as possible. Priorities for the coming year are identified by the headteacher, who produces a school development plan for discussion. The governing body and the subject co-ordinators are not sufficiently involved in the process of developing and evaluating the plan. This hinders the production of longer-term strategies and options for raising standards. The headteacher acknowledges that the plan lacks detailed costing and success criteria by which staff and governors can evaluate the effectiveness of decisions. This inhibits the rigorous evaluation of the impact of spending on raising standards and improving the quality of education, particularly necessary at a time when financial resources are limited.
68. School administration is good. Financial controls are effective and the headteacher has responsibility for the overall day-to-day management of the budget. The minor recommendations of the most recent auditor's report were immediately accepted and acted upon. The school secretary makes a significant contribution to the welcoming atmosphere of the school. The efficient routines in the office provide effective support for the headteacher in the day-to-day running of the school and enable the teachers to focus on their work with pupils.
69. The school makes effective use of funding and staffing provided for supporting pupils with statements of special educational needs. Pupils receive a good level of support in helping them achieve their targets.
70. Teachers are sensibly allocated to classes and there is an appropriate focus on maintaining classes of one age group. The deployment and use of support staff is satisfactory although the time available for supporting children under the age of five is limited. All staff make significant contributions to the standards achieved.

Teachers share responsibility for the subjects of the curriculum and other appropriate management tasks. The deputy headteacher has a particularly heavy burden of important responsibilities with very little time available to be fully effective in all aspects of the role. Although limited time and resources are available to support co-ordinators in monitoring work in class, the best use is not made of what time and resources are available. The school makes effective use of all its accommodation with all available space used for teaching. Although there are insufficient resources in many areas of the curriculum, teachers compensate for this by often providing their own resources. The resources available are suitably located and used to good effect by all staff.

71. Considering pupils' attainment at entry, the quality of the education provided, the standards achieved and the income it receives, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

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

72. The majority of children under five enter the school at the age of four with less skill in literacy and numeracy than might be expected for their age. A few have the knowledge and skills in literacy and numeracy that are expected for their age and a significant minority have poor social skills. This is confirmed by the teacher's assessments undertaken when they first enter school. At the time of inspection these children had had little time in school but had built up a good relationship with the teacher and were beginning to settle into the class routines.
73. Their curriculum is based on the recommended six areas of learning for children under the age of five and at this point in the year they are still working towards the goals they need to attain before they commence work on the National Curriculum. The children are making good progress and a scrutiny of work from the previous year showed that by the time they are five, the majority are likely to attain the knowledge, skills and understanding they need to begin the National Curriculum.
74. Children are making good progress with their personal and social development. This area of learning lays the foundation for all other learning and the teacher has worked hard to extend children's skills by focusing on how to work, play and co-operate with others in the class group. Progress is better when the teacher and support adult work closely together but such essential support is not always available.
75. Children are now willing to speak to familiar adults and to others in the class. They are respectful to adults and are beginning to make friends. They are learning to co-operate as they take part in domestic play such as the hospital corner or experiment with boats in water play. Most children find it difficult to concentrate as a whole class group but do better in smaller groups or in pairs. Many are still finding it difficult to concentrate for reasonable periods of time and to share the attention of the teacher with lots of other children. When working in small groups or individually they persevere with tasks and will seek help. When it is possible for an adult to work with them this perseverance continues longer and work is completed. They are still at the stage when they need time for purposeful play to develop their personal and social skills but this time is reduced in the morning when the class is trying to implement literacy and numeracy sessions. Children are gradually becoming independent, which is particularly noticeable when they attend to their personal needs and undress for physical activity. They recognise joy or pleasure in others and respond well to this and are beginning to realise when they are the cause of unhappiness in others. Behaviour is mainly appropriate for their age and they understand that they must share toys and take turns when choosing activities. However, they are still learning that they cannot always join an activity of their choice no matter how eager they are to do so and that there are good reasons for restricting numbers.
76. Priority is given to the language and literacy area of learning, as the teacher is keen to see that children are helped to acquire competence in English as soon as possible. As a result children make good progress in the development of language and literacy skills. In line with the school's expectations the teacher is trying to introduce a literacy hour but these children are not yet at the stage where they have the concentration span needed to take a full part in all the activities recommended. Children listen to stories from the big books they read together, they know how to handle books carefully and enjoy visiting the book area and choosing ones for themselves. There is a tape recorder to listen to stories but this is not used frequently as there is only one set of headphones, making it impossible for a small group to listen and read without disturbing others. Children are learning to recognise letters of the alphabet by shape and sound. They are learning to look at pictures for clues about what is happening in a story and some already do this well. The faster learners know how print is organised and make attempts to read words in simple sentences. They confidently take part in role-play and enjoy using puppets to try and retell a story. In their writing they use pictures to communicate meaning and some are trying to write letters as they become aware of the purpose for writing. Pupils from Year 5 come to work with the reception children to help them with their reading and this is working very well, as it extends the listening skills of these young children and also assists their personal and social development.
77. In the mathematical area of learning, children make good progress in the activities that provide the

foundation for numeracy. At present much of the work is concentrating on the skill of accuracy in counting. Children try to count a number of objects together as a class as part of the mental mathematics recommended in the National Numeracy Strategy. They count forwards and backwards and learn mathematical language such as *more* and *less* as they take part in games. For example, they count teddies in a tin and are learning when there are more or less. This activity progresses to one more teddy or one less teddy and children begin to relate addition to combining two groups of objects. The faster learners are able to count unaided and do so correctly. Children are learning to match objects, as they put out equipment in their imaginative play and use play dough to make one cake for each person around the table. They will make a set quantity of cakes and count them reliably. They knowingly create patterns of their own when using beads on a string or bricks in construction and talked about the patterns of autumn leaves on a string which they had made earlier. They enjoy number rhymes and songs that involve counting. Children are recognising the spoken sounds of numbers and are beginning to pick out written numerals from a line.

78. Children are making good progress in the area of learning known as knowledge and understanding of the world. They are focusing on their environment, other people and features of the natural and made world. Children use simple sentences to talk about their family and, when writing their journal, to communicate events that have happened in their lives. They are beginning to use information technology in their learning as they learn to control the mouse to change colours on the screen and use the cursor keys on the keyboard to move objects around. They experiment with water, sand and dough and are learning about their properties as they talk about how these feel. They investigate toys that move and discover that some are pushed, others pulled, while some need pushing and pulling to make them move. They name the colours on the display and when they use the kaleidoscope they talk simply about what they see. They are acquiring the skills of cutting, joining and building to make models or constructions.
79. Children make sound progress in physical development. In the classroom they handle appropriate tools, objects, construction and malleable materials, safely and with increasing control. They use pencils, paintbrushes and computer appropriately. They use a range of construction materials with confidence. Puzzles with interlocking pieces are completed and play dough is used to press objects into, pull or mould into various shapes. They use small apparatus such as bean bags and show growing confidence and dexterity as they balance them on various body parts. There was no opportunity to see children make use of climbing frames or any climbing apparatus and there is no designated outdoor play area for these specific physical development skills to be used, which limits the progress that children can make. In the hall area children show an awareness of space and others and take care to avoid bumping into them. They move confidently and are increasing their co-ordination as they try to make their bodies respond as they require.
80. Children's creative work has a focus on the development of their imagination and their ability to communicate in creative ways. Progress is sound. They listen to the sound of recorded music, at such times as assembly, and to the sounds they make with percussion. Children were preparing for a performance in school and are learning to add percussion to a story and use it effectively as part of a performance. Progress in exploring colour is good. They recognise both primary and secondary colours and many children select from variously coloured crayons and paints for different objects in their drawings and paintings. They are beginning to be aware that colours can be mixed to make a third colour. As they extend their experience they are able to work with adults to develop an understanding of colour and chose different shades of colours to wrap around a card. Children observe patterns and colours in the natural world, such as leaves turning red and brown in autumn. They play with small world toys such as animals and use them to retell a story or create one from their imagination. Some children are adept at incorporating the characters from stories or television into their imaginative play, particularly when adults become involved.
81. The quality of teaching is good in almost three-quarters of the lessons. It was never less than satisfactory. The teacher provides a happy, secure place where children learn and the positive relationships foster appropriate attitudes to learning that improve day by day. The teacher has a secure knowledge of the six areas of learning, enabling her to ask appropriate questions and give clear explanations. Overall planning is satisfactory. There is good planning for the areas of learning but the teacher is rightly concerned about the time that should be currently spent on literacy and numeracy sessions, as this is reducing the time for some important areas of learning and is limiting progress. There are suitable teaching methods when the teacher explains clearly, questions effectively and encourages children to be independent. There is generally a good

balance between teacher directed and child selected work, although the latter mainly happens in the afternoons owing to constraints on the timetable. Effective use is made of the resources available, some of which are made by staff. The additional adult supporting the teacher is deployed well and they work well as a team. The supportive adult has a good knowledge of children's needs and when working with small groups keeps them interested and involved in their work. At such times the children make good progress but this is more difficult for the teacher when she is working alone. The teacher uses her knowledge and skills well to teach, direct, intervene and support children's learning.

## ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE

### English

82. By the end of Key Stage 1, inspection findings are that the attainment of the majority of pupils in speaking and listening, reading and writing is in line with the national expectation. These findings do not reflect the school's results in National Curriculum tests in 1999. In these the average level of attainment for the pupils tested was below the national average in reading and in writing. When compared to similar schools the results follow a similar trend, with reading and writing well below the average. These test results, however, mark a noticeable improvement from the previous year and the inspection confirms this continued improvement, as most pupils were working close to the levels expected for their age. Results over the previous years do not indicate any particular differences in the attainments of boys and girls. By the end of Key Stage 2, findings from the inspection are that the attainment of the majority of pupils in speaking and listening, reading and writing to be in line with the national expectation. A number of pupils are working at a level above this. These findings reflect the school's results in National Curriculum tests in 1999, which show that the average level of attainment for the pupils tested was close to the national average. When compared to similar schools results were below average. The results in 1999 are generally consistent with results since 1996, which were close to the national average. There is no marked difference between the attainments of boys and girls. The findings of the current inspection are consistent with those of the previous inspection, which judged pupils' attainments overall to be satisfactory.
83. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils listen carefully to the teacher and they answer questions confidently and accurately in whole-class activities. Most seven-year-olds are confident readers who have developed sufficient fluency, accuracy and understanding to enable them to read aloud with expression. For example, Year 2 pupils read the story of 'Arthur' clearly, fluently and with expression. Pupils enjoy reading and talk confidently about their books when retelling the story and predicting what might happen next. They use a range of reading cues to help them read unfamiliar words. Most pupils know the difference between fiction and non-fiction. Some pupils are developing library skills and can use alphabetical order in an index to locate information. Most pupils use capital letters and full stops correctly when writing simple sentences and poems. Pupils of higher ability include question marks and speech marks in longer stories, which have a beginning a middle and an end. They are able to write in a variety of forms including a series of questions and answers intended to make the reader laugh. Many pupils spell simple words such as *school*, *house* and *garden* from memory and are beginning to use appropriate dictionaries to help them spell more complicated words and increase their vocabulary. By the age of seven most pupils are developing handwriting of a consistent size and style.
84. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have extended their skills in speaking and listening. They talk confidently about their work and take account of other pupils' opinions and views in group and class discussions. Pupils in Year 6 are beginning to employ strategies to deliver a speech successfully using Standard English. Eleven-year-olds read a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books, including autobiographies. They talk knowledgeably about the plot and characters in their books and give mature reasons for their preferences. They identify themes and select favourite phrases and sentences. They understand the term 'synopsis' and use it to help them in their choice of book. They have very well-developed library skills. By the end of the key stage pupils write interesting stories, letters, reports, poetry and speeches in a variety of styles. The content of their work is interesting and imaginative, often with vivid use of language and description. Writing in Year 5 about Van Gogh and in Year 6 about 'The Traveller' explores feelings and thoughts extremely well and uses similes and metaphors to great effect. Most pupils know the difference between fact

and opinion. Spelling and punctuation are satisfactory; pupils of higher ability spell difficult words correctly and are accurate when using an apostrophe, commas and paragraphs. Handwriting is usually legible, but at times the presentation of work in books is variable and inconsistent.

85. On entry to the school children's attainment in English is below that expected of children of their age. By the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have made good progress. Good routines are established in daily literacy lessons throughout the school which enable pupils to make good progress. At Key Stage 1 most pupils make good progress in the development of reading and writing skills. They improve their ability to recognise unfamiliar words so that their reading becomes more accurate and they are able to put in appropriate expression. Pupils become more consistent in the presentation of their handwriting, using correctly formed and appropriate sized letters. They use capital letters and full stops more consistently and the higher attaining pupils learn how to use other punctuation such as question marks and speech marks. At Key Stage 2, progress for most pupils, including those with special educational needs, continues to be at least satisfactory. Constant reinforcement of skills enable pupils to develop their understanding of grammar, punctuation and spelling to help improve their writing. They begin to use speech marks and adverbs to improve stories and poems and they extend their vocabulary by using a thesaurus. Higher attaining pupils make good progress, especially in writing. Pupils at both key stages learn to apply their skills across the curriculum - for example, in creating a badge in Year 2, or older pupils writing a report about a soil investigation in science and devising questions to ask the vicar in religious education. The use of these skills helps to raise attainment in other subjects.
86. Pupils' attitudes to learning are good at both key stages and in some lessons the response of pupils is very good. They are usually well behaved in lessons. Pupils are interested and listen carefully. They are eager to answer questions and they show a generous appreciation of other children's work. They patiently wait for their turn to speak and settle down quickly to working on their own or in a group. They enjoy whole-class reading and writing, especially when the work is linked to interesting activities which ensure their attention. They try hard with their independent tasks and mostly produce satisfactory amounts of work. Occasionally work suffers because of too much noise and some unsuitable activities.
87. The quality of teaching at both key stages is good and has a positive effect on pupils' progress in English. Well-planned and structured activities contribute to this progress. At Key Stage 1, teaching is good and at Key Stage 2 teaching is good overall and occasionally very good. Teachers have good command of the subject and the good planning and structured activities in most lessons means that literacy is taught in a systematic way throughout the school. Good knowledge and confident delivery to the whole class is a feature of all lessons. Teachers usually provide stimulating, interesting activities which pupils enjoy. In the best lessons probing questions are used very well to constantly challenge pupils and raise the quality of their thinking. Lessons generally move at a brisk pace. Teachers move effectively around the class to check on the progress being made and to help individual pupils. Pupils are organised into manageable groups and support staff and additional parent help are used well. The school marking policy is well followed by all teachers, who make good use of encouraging comments and written feedback to help pupils improve their performance. At both key stages marking makes an important contribution to pupils' learning and in some classes targets for future lessons are identified and shared with the pupils. The use of day-to-day assessment to help future lessons is generally satisfactory. Homework is also having a growing influence on the learning of some pupils and in some classes it is planned in advance for each half term.
88. The school has made a good start to the National Literacy Strategy. Planning has been sensibly adapted to meet its requirements. Planning and assessment have been improved since the last inspection. Procedures for assessments are sound. Teachers use key objectives and targets from the Literacy Strategy to help them assess pupils' attainments. Reading tests and National Curriculum tests are used annually to monitor pupils' progress. Insufficient analysis is made of the end of year test results to identify areas of weakness which may be addressed to help improve the results of the school's National Curriculum tests. The subject is managed by an enthusiastic and able co-ordinator who has successfully helped implement the literacy hour. The co-ordinator's role in monitoring and evaluating standards throughout the school is underdeveloped, particularly as there too little opportunity to observe standards in lessons. The governing body has appointed a governor to help monitor the implementation of the National Literacy Strategy.



## Mathematics

89. The evidence of inspection shows that by the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainments are close to those expected for their age. In the National Curriculum tests for seven-year olds in 1999 the average of the levels attained by pupils was close to the national average and comparable to that achieved by pupils in similar schools. The percentage of pupils attaining the level expected of seven-year olds was higher than the average but this was not reflected in the percentage achieving the higher level. These results were a significant improvement on the previous year, when the results were well below the national average. The trend over the past four years has not been consistent and is influenced by the significant proportion of pupils in each cohort with special educational needs. There is no significant evidence of differences between boys and girls. Inspection evidence indicates that most pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 work close to the levels expected for their age, although few exceed them. This is consistent with the findings of the previous inspection report.
90. In the National Curriculum tests for eleven-year olds in 1999 the percentage of pupils attaining the level expected was close to the national average and to the average achieved by similar schools. The average level of performance was just below the national average and the average achieved by similar schools. The significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs and the below average percentage of pupils who attained the higher level influenced this. Results over the past four years have been consistently close to the national average. There is no difference between the attainments of boys and girls. The evidence from the inspection shows that most pupils work at the levels expected nationally and that in some aspects of their work the higher attaining pupils exceed them. This is an improvement on the previous inspection, when pupils were judged to be working broadly in line with national expectations but no pupils exceeded them.
91. At Key Stage 1, pupils work consistently at the levels expected for their age. They add, subtract and solve number problems involving numbers up to and sometimes greater than 100. They use different ways to find answers to sums involving adding tens and units. They explore regular number patterns as they begin to understand that multiplication is repeated addition. They investigate number patterns such as finding the similarities in the answers when an odd and even number are added. Higher attaining pupils use appropriate strategies to solve problems mentally and quickly. Pupils measure accurately, using standard measures such as centimetres and millilitres. The lower attaining pupils compare weights, saying which is heavier or lighter. All pupils recognise the properties of regular two-dimensional shapes such as square, rectangle, triangle and hexagon. The higher attaining pupils recognise the properties of simple three-dimensional shapes. Pupils record information they have collected on simple tally charts.
92. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils are working at the levels expected for their age. Pupils apply the skills they have learned in different situations such as designing a number game using the four rules of number or investigating the properties of triangles and rectangles to improve their understanding. Through investigating the perimeters of different shapes pupils are able to draw conclusions about the relationships between the length, breadth and perimeter. Pupils competently add, subtract, multiply and divide large numbers and most pupils use numbers involving decimal notation to two places. They calculate fractional quantities and find simple percentages. The higher attaining pupils use simple algebraic equations. Pupils use a compass and accurate measurement to draw triangles of a given size. Through counting squares they calculate the areas of regular shapes and use this to help discover the formula for calculating areas of rectangles. The higher attaining pupils use the appropriate formula to calculate the area of a circle. They understand that parallel lines are lines that never meet. They use a range of standard measures to calculate volumes, weights and lengths. Using timetables they solve problems involving the passage of time. Pupils use coordinates to plot simple graphs and use tally charts to help investigate probabilities, such as what happens when you toss a coin. The lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are able to achieve much of this work when supported by an adult.
93. Pupils enter school with attainments that are below those expected of children of their age. By the time they leave the school, pupils, including those with special educational needs, have made good progress in their acquisition of mathematical skills and knowledge. Progress is good at Key Stage 1 and sustained throughout Key Stage 2. In the lessons seen the oldest pupils at Key Stage 2 made good progress as the result of challenging work. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop a sound understanding of number. They progress from

counting numbers to being able to use them competently to add, subtract and explore number patterns. For example, in Year 1, pupils subtract single digit numbers from ten and by Year 2 they are competent to count in tens up to and beyond 100. They improve their understanding of shapes from simple identification of regular two-dimensional shapes to describing the properties which make each shape unique. At Key Stage 2, pupils become increasingly competent with calculations involving larger numbers and fractional numbers. They improve their understanding of the place value of numbers so that by Year 6 they are confident to make calculations involving positive and negative numbers. Pupils improve their knowledge of mathematical vocabulary and by the age of eleven refer confidently to factors and multiples, for example, when conducting an investigation into number relationships. Their knowledge of shapes is extended to calculations of areas and to accurately measuring angles using a protractor. They improve their understanding of standard units of measurement when they investigate how to find the volume of a cuboid. Pupils make good progress in developing mathematical investigations.

94. Pupils have positive attitudes towards mathematics. They enjoy working with numbers and exploring different number patterns and sequences. They are eager to answer questions in mental mathematics sessions and confidently explain how they calculated their answers. When given the opportunity they are willing to ask questions of the whole class and some of these questions are imaginative and challenging. They take responsibility for organising practical tasks, which they work at enthusiastically. The older pupils correct answers when they notice they are wrong whilst younger pupils respond positively when errors are pointed out. Some of the higher attaining pupils show initiative in the way they set out their work clearly and logically. Pupils maintain good levels of concentration when working on group tasks but some of the lower attaining pupils find concentration difficult to sustain throughout the mental mathematics session. These pupils show pride in their achievements when they successfully complete a task.
95. The overall quality of teaching is good at both key stages and makes an important contribution to the good progress pupils make by the time they leave the school. Teachers have a good understanding of the subject and use this well - for example, to explain correct terminology to pupils and thereby increase their knowledge and understanding of number and shape. Activities are usually well chosen to develop ideas, interest the pupils and provide a suitable level of challenge. Although pupils follow the same topic in lessons, the group activities are planned to take account of the different levels of pupils' attainments. In a very small number of lessons activities fulfil the requirements of the National Numeracy Strategy but the level of work set is that one would normally expect of younger pupils. In mental mathematics sessions, teachers suggest helpful strategies that pupils could use to solve problems. Questions are asked so that the whole class can respond, for example, by using number fans to show their answer. Sometimes these questions are carefully directed to pupils of different levels of attainment to ensure that they can answer appropriately. In some lessons teachers use this type of questioning for too long and spend too much time with one pupil and lose the crisp pace of the lesson. Planning is of a consistently good standard and teachers use notes made of pupils' progress to help them plan future work. The objectives of each lesson are shared with pupils to help them understand what they are to do. Pupils' work is carefully marked, using a balance between praise where due and setting targets to improve work. In most lessons effective use is made of short discussions at the end of lessons to share pupils' experiences and to review what they have learned.
96. The school has made a successful start to introducing the National Numeracy Strategy. Planning developed over recent years has been adapted to take account of the work expected in each year group. A detailed record system complements the Numeracy Strategy and helps provide a structure for planning work and a sound basis for assessing pupils' attainments. Teachers' assessments are supported by the use of National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2 and statutory tests at the end of both key stages. While these tests provide useful information on what pupils have achieved, the results are not sufficiently analysed to provide information on what pupils do well and areas of mathematics that need to be improved. Although the co-ordinator has successfully led developments in the subject, the role has been insufficiently developed to include the regular monitoring and evaluation of the standards of pupils' work through classroom observation and reviewing books. There is no up-to-date policy on mathematics to reflect the current approach to the subject, although its production is a target in the school development plan. The level of resources for implementing the Numeracy Strategy is unsatisfactory. In some lessons there are too few resources, such as three-dimensional shapes, for all pupils to have easy access to help them with their investigations. Many of the resources, such as those to help develop response in mental mathematics, are

made or purchased by the teachers. The limited resources are usually effectively used but in some lessons teachers do not always provide appropriate resources to help all pupils respond to questions in mental mathematics sessions. For example, number cubes, which were available, were not used to help younger pupils demonstrate their answers. Opportunities to use mathematics in other subjects are used when possible - for example, in measuring quantities of water when conducting a science experiment. The governing body has appointed a governor to help monitor the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy.

## Science

97. From the evidence of the inspection pupils' attainments are judged to be in line with those expected nationally by the end of both key stages. This is similar to the findings of the previous inspection at Key Stage 1 but it varies at Key Stage 2, when attainment was judged to have been good across the full curriculum. Current inspection findings are more consistent with results of National Curriculum tests for eleven-year olds in 1998 and 1999. In the most recent tests for eleven-year olds, pupils' overall performance was just below the national average. The significant number of pupils with special educational needs and the small percentage of pupils who achieved at the higher level influenced the performance level. Over the past four years results of national tests have been consistently close to the national average and have improved in line with national trends. There is no significant difference between boys' and girls' attainments. Results of statutory teacher assessments for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1999 are consistent with the findings of the inspection. In 1999 the percentage of pupils assessed at the level expected for their age was in line with the national average. This was a marked improvement from the previous year when the percentage at the expected level was well below average.
98. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils carry out simple investigations, such as whether jelly dissolves faster in hot or cold water. They make predictions about what they think may happen, state what is needed to make the test fair and record their observations using simple tables. Pupils have an appropriate knowledge of living things. Through growing beans they investigate the conditions plants need for healthy growth. They use pictures to show how they have changed as they grow older and to predict how they will change as they grow up. They classify animals in different categories such as insects, mammals and reptiles. When investigating materials, pupils classify objects according to the type of material or whether they are natural or man made. They understand that materials can be changed - for example, that spaghetti becomes softer when heated in water. They know about different forces such as pushing and pulling and conduct simple investigations to see their effect on everyday objects. Most pupils work on these topics at the level expected for their age but few pupils work at higher levels.
99. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils plan investigations carefully, identifying the resources and materials they need to use. They know that in order to make the tests fair they must keep most factors constant in order to compare the elements that may vary. For example, when testing sound insulation they knew that the size of box and distance at which they measured needed to remain the same but the material needed to be different. Pupils make sensible predictions, record the results of their observations and, at the end of the experiment, draw appropriate conclusions. Pupils know many of the characteristics of living things. For example, they know plants need light for healthy growth and the importance of a balanced and healthy diet. They know about the significance of leaves to plants and use vocabulary such as chlorophyll and stomata to correctly describe photosynthesis. When studying materials they discover that some changes, such as freezing and condensing, can be reversed while others, such as baking, are irreversible. They have a sound understanding of physical processes. They explore the properties of light, finding that it travels in straight lines. They know how day and night are related to the spinning of the earth. They understand the effect of forces such as gravity, friction and air resistance. Although all pupils cover the same topics, the higher attaining pupils produce work of good quality at and sometimes above the levels expected for their age. They support their written observations with detailed diagrams which show a good level of understanding. The lower attaining pupils' work shows less detail and more limited understanding of the ideas that have been studied.
100. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress by the time they leave the school. Foundations for sound understanding are laid with the younger pupils. They learn to use observation and listening skills, as, for example, they develop an understanding of how the five senses can help identify

different objects. These skills are developed as pupils move through the school, so that progress in experimental and investigative science is sound. At Key Stage 1, pupils begin to understand the need for a fair test and have improved the accuracy with which they predict what might happen in experiments and improve the quality of the explanations that they give. At Key Stage 2, pupils develop this further when they conduct experiments where there is a need to control the variable factors. They record their results in greater detail and are beginning to draw sensible conclusions from their observations. Pupils acquire an increased body of knowledge and understanding about the different aspects of science. Younger pupils know that plants can be grown from seeds or cuttings and older pupils extend their knowledge of plants by looking at pollination and how seeds are dispersed. From the understanding they gain at Key Stage 1 of how people change as they grow, pupils develop their knowledge and understanding of how the body works by the age of eleven through experiments such as investigating pulse rates. The older pupils make good use of previous knowledge to explain their results. Pupils extend their knowledge of materials from the simple classifying according to kind to more complex investigations of materials such as what makes an effective insulator. Their knowledge of the physical forces and processes is developed well. For example, pupils at Year 2 investigate how the sun creates shadows while at Year 6 pupils produce effective illustrations to explain how shadows are formed.

101. Pupils are very interested and enthusiastic about the practical tasks and quickly become engrossed in what they are investigating. They respond well to the challenges they are set. Younger pupils observe carefully and often watch with rapt attention when watching an experiment proceed. They willingly offer explanations as to why things have happened and are confident to make predictions. They are pleased when their predictions prove to be correct. Older pupils work quietly in groups and share ideas sensibly. Most pupils are able to organise their work independently and make sensible choices about how to conduct experiments. When doing vigorous activities as part of experiments older pupils behave very well and maintain high levels of concentration on the tasks set. Pupils look after resources sensibly, treating them with care during experiments.
102. The overall quality of teaching is good and in a third of lessons observed it was very good. Planning is good with clear objectives and well-chosen activities. Group work, particularly for the younger pupils, is well organised to ensure that all pupils have sufficient time to do the range of activities planned. Teachers use a good knowledge of the subject to provide clear explanations, select suitable tasks and develop pupils' understanding. Questions are used effectively to help pupils recall their work or to help them make sensible predictions about their investigations. Adult help, both for pupils with special educational needs and parent helpers, is used well to ensure that all pupils are able to complete activities or to ensure that experiments are conducted safely. Short discussions at the end of lessons are used effectively to share pupils' work and to consolidate what pupils have learned. Relevant opportunities are taken to extend pupils' skills in numeracy and literacy. For example, pupils use an appropriate style of writing or measure accurately when recording the results of their experiments. Older pupils are set interesting and challenging tasks to do at home to follow up the activities in class.
103. Planning for science is good. Key objectives for pupils' learning have been identified and these help to plan work, and to assess what pupils have achieved. Effective use is made of information from the local education authority. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment are sound and are supported by the use of National Curriculum tests at Key Stage 2. The results of these tests are not analysed sufficiently to identify what the school does well and in what areas the school has weaknesses. Although the co-ordinator has led the developments in the curriculum, as there is insufficient effective monitoring and evaluation of the standards achieved by pupils. The co-ordinator sees teachers' planning but does not systematically review pupils' books or observe teachers and pupils at work in classrooms. Nor does the co-ordinator have sufficient involvement in the school development plan, particularly in deciding on the allocation of resources; as a result there is little effective evaluation of how money has been spent. Resources overall are satisfactory and used effectively to support pupils' investigations. The school benefits from good grounds, which have been developed well by the school, to provide several places for pupils to explore different environments.

## OTHER SUBJECTS OR COURSES

## Information technology

104. Although there is some whole-class teaching during the school week it was not possible to observe any of these lessons. From observations of pupils using computers in other lessons, discussions with pupils and scrutiny of their work and displays; pupils' attainments are consistent with the expectations for their age by the end of both key stages. The standards achieved at the previous inspection have been maintained.
105. By the end of Key Stage 1, pupils' attainments are about those expected of seven-year olds. They confidently use the mouse and keyboard to undertake simple word processing to produce short, accurate pieces of writing, for example, to make a badge for their name and birthday. They know how to use the printer to make copies of their work. When using an appropriate graphics program they move the mouse accurately to change colours, select different tools or alter the thickness of the brush to produce abstract pictures. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' attainments are also in line with national expectations for their age. In word-processing pupils use a range of functions to combine text and pictures and select different font sizes to produce - for example, attractive holiday brochures on Greece or in projects on India and Africa. Pupils use the CD-ROM to research information such as matching musical instruments to the sounds they make. They use an appropriate data-handling program to classify information, when, for example, they sort books into fiction and non-fiction lists. Pupils use suitable programs to control events such as producing a set of commands to help revise rotation. They scan pictures from books to illustrate their writing; for example, pupils selected a picture of Van Gogh to insert into their descriptions of one of his paintings. Pupils use an appropriate program to control and model - for example, in art when they control shapes to create a picture.
106. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the development of skills in information technology at both key stages. Younger pupils become more confident in their control of the mouse and use of the keyboard. Older pupils extend their understanding of the range of functions available when using word-processing, so that older pupils are able to refine texts and add pictures to their work. They develop a sound knowledge of the different ways information can be handled on a computer. They learn, too, that data they have entered can be manipulated to produce information in various forms, such as different types of graph. For example, Year 5 pupils enter data about school dinners into a table, which is then organised to present the information in graphical form. Pupils use their skills to support their work in other subjects. In mathematics, for example, they use drawing programs to investigate fractions and draw shapes, while in literacy lessons Year 6 pupils produce posters of old fashioned words and their meaning.
107. Pupils generally have good attitudes. At Key Stage 1, pupils are very eager and enjoy working on the computer, especially with an adult alongside. They are confident and follow instructions carefully. In well-established routines they take their turn and help each other. At Key Stage 2, pupils show increasing independence and use the equipment well. They are capable of co-operating in a small group to share their knowledge and to complete the required work without disturbing the rest of the class.
108. Not enough teaching of information technology was seen to be able to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. Well-established computer areas are a feature of the best organised classrooms, where information technology is an integral part of some lessons. Clear instructions are found there, as well as procedures for teachers or pupils to record completed work. Teachers at Key Stage 2 are now teaching a weekly information technology lesson. Planning ensures that pupils are taught appropriate skills each year. Teachers use the targets in their short-term planning to help assess pupils' attainment. A record of work completed is readily available in tick lists and pupils' books. Many pupils receive competent assistance in the classroom from support staff and parent helpers who are usually well prepared with the relevant planning.
109. There is currently no policy on information technology, although the production of one is a target in the school development plan. The recently appointed co-ordinator is working hard to develop information technology and has realistic aims for the future. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject are limited, particularly as the co-ordinator has no time available to observe lessons or pupils using computers. The

arrival of new computers purchased through the National Grid for Learning scheme will ensure that the available resources are satisfactory.

## 112. **Religious education**

110. Religious education is seen as an important part of the school curriculum and is given prominence in displays and written work. The subject was not included in the previous report and no judgement can be made about progress since the previous inspection. Pupils' attainments at both key stages are in line with the expectations of the Cambridgeshire Agreed Syllabus for religious education and care has been taken to see that planning meets the recommendations for each year group.
111. A scrutiny of written work and lessons showed pupils' attainments at Key Stage 1 to be better than expected of their age and, that at Key Stage 2, it was much better than would be expected for eleven-year olds. However, when pupils have opportunities to learn from first hand experience, such as a visit to a place of worship, their knowledge and understanding are even better. This was seen when a Year 2 class visited the local church. There is no significant variation in attainment between boys and girls and generally pupils are extending their knowledge of the richness and diversity of religions and the range of issues they raise. Pupils have grasped the fact that religious traditions in our country are mainly Christian and that other principal religions are represented. There is recognition of the distinctive features of religious traditions and the ways they are applied in everyday life. Older pupils are well able to form views on religious issues and use appropriate terminology to describe matters relating to belief and the practice of faith.
112. By the age of seven, pupils' progress is good. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop a good knowledge and understanding of Christianity as they meet and talk to those active in the church and become familiar with a local place of worship and the way it is used. They develop a good awareness of how Jesus is special to Christians who remember His life and try to follow His teaching. They have extended their knowledge of the Bible as a special book used in Christian worship. They know that Christians worship God and may include prayers, singing and silence as part of their worship. They have a better knowledge of special occasions in the lives of Christians when they have opportunities such as witnessing a baptism ceremony with the support of the vicar.
113. By the time they leave the school at the age of eleven, their progress is very good. Pupils develop a good understanding that the church is a community of Christians from all races and nationalities. They know what leaders of local churches do. Through exploring some of the beliefs Christians have about Jesus in more depth and they develop their knowledge of those people who have affected the lives of others because of their faith. Their knowledge of the Bible is extended to include the many types of literature - gospel, laws, letters, poetry - and they know something of the history, writing and translation of the Bible. When finding out how Christians celebrate major festivals they explore feelings, values and beliefs through music, art and story. They are gaining some realisation of how suffering and death raise questions for Christians about the love and power of God and they see how Christians respond. Through thoughtful discussions pupils consider how religious teaching helps them consider some of life's fundamental questions. By the time they leave the school pupils have studied a number of other world faiths including, Judaism, Sikhism, Buddhism and Islam.
114. Only two lessons were seen, so no overall judgement could be made about pupils' response or the quality of teaching. However, in those lessons seen, pupils responded well and the teaching was very good. The teachers' knowledge of the subject was particularly good in both lessons and was used well to provide clear explanations and ask questions that made pupils think carefully. Teachers make sure that appropriate time is provided for the subject and that all pupils are included. Planning very clearly relates to the local syllabus and teachers feel secure when using the non-statutory guidance and scheme of work. Assessment of the subject is still mainly through observation in lessons and the information obtained is used to report to parents. The co-ordinator is guiding staff towards the assessment recommended in the scheme of work. Teachers provide resources themselves and borrow from two county resource centres, as the school's level of resources is unsatisfactory. There is no bank of resources that extend to all the faiths studied. There has been no opportunity for the co-ordinator to monitor the teaching and learning at first hand.

117.     **Art**

115. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2, they have made good progress in the acquisition of skills and in the development of a range of artistic techniques. This reflects some improvement since the previous inspection, particularly at Key Stage 2
116. Pupils make satisfactory progress at Key Stage 1. This is in line with the judgements reflected in the previous inspection report. They build on the work begun at reception stage by exploring colour. They draw and paint and use their sketchbooks to experiment. Using the work of other artists, pupils observe the range of one colour and try to use the technique themselves. By the age of seven they are exploring and experimenting with various media such as oil pastels, trying out the previous techniques they have learned to see whether they may be applied to a new media.
117. At Key Stage 2, pupils are making better progress and by the time they leave school it is at least good and sometimes very good. There continue to be some very good examples of finished work and the school makes exceptionally good use of the work of artists past and present. For example, Year 3 pupils compare the sunflower paintings of Monet and Van Gogh and apply this knowledge to produce acrylic paintings of high quality. Year 5 pupils produce some outstanding work in sculpture and are inspired by the work of Matisse. They use a viewfinder effectively to search for patterns and shapes to enlarge. Some pupils are skilled enough to use a computer and move the shapes around to make a new picture. Very good progress has been made in the use of pencil techniques at Year 6 to show texture. Some particularly fine detailed drawings of footwear show that progress is better than might be expected.
118. Pupils' response is good overall and sometimes it is very good at Key Stage 2. Younger pupils listen attentively and persevere with the task, reflecting carefully on any previous work in their sketchbooks and applying knowledge from one activity to another. Very occasionally supporting adults are over supportive and the activity loses challenge. Pupils lose interest when the pace slows or when the organisation is no longer appropriate. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are very interested in their activities. They use good recall of previous work very effectively and persevere even when the work is very challenging. Behaviour is very good and there is an exceptional level of concentration, particularly in the classes of older pupils. They show respect for their own and others' work. Clearly they are developing a love of the visual arts. This is seen particularly at Year 5, where the teacher's enthusiasm for the subject infects the pupils.
119. The quality of teaching ranges from satisfactory to very good. Overall it is good, which is an improvement on the previous report. Teachers' knowledge is used well to plan appropriate tasks for pupils to consolidate techniques and extend skills. Where the teacher's knowledge is secure there are clear explanations that extend pupils' understanding. In most lessons teachers make very good use of time, which ensures that pupils move on in their learning and in completing their work. Teachers provide very clear instructions so that pupils understand what they have to do. Without these strengths pupils would be unable to make the good progress that they do. In the better lessons the very good management and organisation help to maintain interest. Pupils, particularly faster learners, find the high challenge stimulating but this challenge is sensibly modified for slower learners. There are good links with other subjects. For example, at Year 3, children studying Victorian life looked at Victorian artists' style and impressionist techniques. Teachers give good direct instruction about the history of art and time is taken to show pupils that art seen in context has a spiritual, moral, social and cultural relevance to their lives.
120. The co-ordinator is very skilled and provides support and advice for colleagues. However, there is no time for the sharing of expertise although it is known that not all staff feel secure about teaching this subject. The limited sharing of expertise was commented on in the previous report. Progress has been made in monitoring the subject but the co-ordinator has no time to see the teaching and learning at first hand. Progress has been made with assessment and there is now identification of skill and understanding acquired by pupils.

## 123. **Design and technology**

121. It was possible to observe only a limited number of lessons at Key Stage 2 during the inspection. Evidence from this, looking at pupils' work and displays, and discussions with pupils indicate that by the time they leave the school pupils make satisfactory progress in the development of relevant skills and that they achieve standards that are appropriate for their age. The last inspection reported standards to be sound and that pupils made satisfactory progress. These standards have been maintained.
122. Pupils at both key stages, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in developing skills in designing, making and problem solving. Throughout the school pupils use and improve the basic skills of cutting, measuring, sticking and joining and use them competently by the time they leave the school. Pupils use a range of resources including wood, card, fabrics, food, natural materials and construction kits. Younger pupils develop an understanding of how to make effective designs for what they are to make through drawing their completed models and describing how they have made them. For example, pupils wrote a detailed description, including illustrations, of how they made a puppet with "springy legs". They begin to understand how models can be represented from different views, as when they draw pictures of a post box from front and back views. In the middle years pupils link their drawings to designs. For example, in one lesson, pupils made a model vehicle from a construction kit, drew a picture of what they had made and then converted it into an annotated plan. The model was then made from wood and card. Older pupils draw designs of models they are to make and sometimes work with a partner to refine and improve the plans. They improve their understanding of how to draw appropriate plans when they use extended drawings; for example, they draw a torch to show how its component parts fit together. Older pupils use their skills to make models with moving parts, such as pop-up books or a toy with an electrical component. Many tasks are set as a problem solving activity so that the evaluation of its success is through whether it works or not; for example, pupils were asked to design a "marble run" from materials available. Their success in the task was judged by how long it took for a marble to travel through the device. Older pupils make effective evaluations of their work, sometimes using the suggestions as to how their model could be improved.
123. Pupils enjoy designing and making. They work together well to solve problems learning how to compromise when different ideas are put forward. In lessons pupils sustain their concentration well and work with a good level of independence when given the opportunity. Older pupils describe that they particularly enjoy discussions to evaluate their work. Pupils look after equipment and tidy away sensibly at the end of lessons.
124. No teaching was observed at Key Stage 1 and only a limited amount of teaching was seen at Key Stage 2. In the lessons seen teaching was satisfactory. In these lessons activities were well organised and good use was made of adult helpers to lead and support groups involved in designing and making. There is currently no policy for design and technology, although it is included as a target to be achieved in the school development plan. The local education authority guidance on the subject has been sensibly adopted to provide a scheme of work which identifies what pupils are expected to learn each year. Where possible, design and making topics are linked to work in other subjects, such as making Tudor houses as part of a history topic. Appropriate opportunities are used to develop pupils' literacy skills through the subject. For example, when making felt from fleece pupils were able to write poems to express their feelings about the materials. The need for accurate measurements helps improve pupils' mathematical skills. The co-ordinator looks at teachers' planning but there is little formal monitoring of pupils' work in classes. Resources are satisfactory, with a suitable range of tools and an adequate supply of relevant materials.

## 127. **Geography**

125. It was possible to observe only three lessons during the inspection. Evidence from these, subject documentation, discussions with staff and pupils, scrutiny of past work and displays around the school show that by the time pupils, including those with special educational needs, leave the school they have made good progress and attain standards that are often better than is typical of their age. By the age of seven, most pupils understand and make simple maps - for example, through the effective use of stories they have heard such as 'The Jolly Postman'. Most pupils answer questions about maps enthusiastically and describe their



journey to school. They use appropriate geographical vocabulary such as route, direction and sign. At Key Stage 2 pupils are beginning to understand the importance of location. In Year 4 they know the points of the compass and learn to use appropriate language such as *coordinate* and *grid* when describing their work. In Year 5 pupils combine a range of geographical skills to carry out a micro-climate survey of the school. They locate Wisbech in an atlas and explain the difference between weather and climate. When using a globe they confidently find countries, continents, oceans and seas. They explain clearly how to measure rainfall, wind speed and identify different types of clouds. By the age of 11 pupils' skills and understanding have been successfully developed through in depth studies of the local area. They understand the terms *environment* and *pollution* and they have successfully carried out an environmental quality analysis. They have developed a good understanding of how to use this analysis to make sensible recommendations and practical suggestions in an effort to improve local environments, such as the village green.

126. Pupils usually have good attitudes to their learning and enjoy geographical studies. They are eager to answer questions and to discuss their work done. They respond enthusiastically, showing interest in their work and listening carefully to instructions and to each other's ideas. They particularly enjoy practical tasks. They co-operate very well in groups; for example, Year 2 pupils worked well together to produce large, well presented maps.
127. The quality of teaching overall is good at both key stages. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and this helps to produce good direct class teaching with informative introductions and well-chosen questions. Teachers plan interesting, structured lessons and have high expectations. Pupils' progress is supported by interesting and imaginative activities which are constantly challenging the pupils. Teachers match work to pupils' abilities and use limited resources well. In the best lessons teachers do not allow exciting activities to affect the quality of pupils' work or their behaviour.
128. Overall, planning is sound and assessment is based on the objectives identified for each activity. There is no policy for geography. The recently appointed co-ordinator has set targets for the development of the subject and identified that resources are unsatisfactory. This judgement is supported by the evidence of inspection. Monitoring and evaluation of the subject are limited, as the co-ordinator has little opportunity to observe work in classes.

#### 131. **History**

129. It was possible to see only two lessons of history, both at Key Stage 2. However, there is sufficient evidence from pupils' work, classroom displays and discussions with pupils to show that progress is good at both key stages and children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as they work towards the targets identified for them.
130. At Key Stage 1, pupils develop a sense of history within living memory, with a focus on the family and the introduction of key vocabulary. They begin to use a range of sources for their evidence and have started to develop a sense of history beyond living memory. Pupils suggest a number of ways of finding out about the past, such as using photographs, books, old clothing and objects. They have a good knowledge of what homes were like when their grandparents were children. They have studied an appropriate historical figure – Guy Fawkes – and talk knowledgeably of why he is remembered, including the date, the role of the king and punishments of that time.
131. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils have gained a view of Victorian life in Britain, through study of artefacts, drama, and by using relevant sources and visiting Stibbington Centre to experience school life of that time. Older pupils have developed knowledge and understanding about characteristic features of societies. They have compared civilisations of the past such as ancient Greece and looked at a past non-European society – Egypt and its legacy of civilisation to the modern world. Pupils benefit from the expertise of visitors who help them improve their understanding of how to find out about the past. They know that differing surfaces and colours of the materials from which artefacts are made give clues to an historical era. Some pupils are beginning to identify the pottery of different eras.

132. They are able to predict the artefacts which might be left on a modern person if discovered in many years time. There is a very good response from the pupils at Key Stage 1 when discussing the subject. They are articulate and provide clear explanations of the written work they have undertaken, extending this by information they have remembered. Their accounts show a secure knowledge and clear understanding of the topics studied. In the few lessons seen at Key Stage 2, pupils' response was satisfactory. Although pupils were interested and took part in discussion, the pace of the lessons slowed (for example, when sifting and discussing evidence at Year 5) and some pupils found it difficult to sustain concentration and interest throughout these sessions,
133. Too few lessons were seen to make a judgement about the quality of teaching. However, teachers' planning identifies appropriate objectives for learning and is firmly based on the National Curriculum programmes of study. The good planning included appropriate tasks for children at different stages of learning and care has been taken to enhance the subject with suitable visits, local expertise and a range of artefacts provided by teachers or loaned by museums. Teachers are concerned by the lack of resources for this subject but do their best to improvise where they can. There is no opportunity to monitor the teaching and learning first-hand and determine how the lack of resources affects the teaching.

136. **Music**

134. It was possible to see only one lesson at Key Stage 1 and two lessons at Key Stage 2. No evidence was provided from a scrutiny of written work but evidence from teachers' planning and discussion with pupils indicate that by the time they leave the school pupils make good progress. By the age of seven, they have explored sounds made by percussion instruments and are aware of the differences. They name both tuned and untuned instruments and have a good knowledge of how to use percussion for effect when accompanying a dance or story. Some children at Year 2 are taught to play the recorder by older pupils. This is done particularly well during lunchtime. Older pupils have effectively prepared for these sessions and although teachers are present, they do not interfere with the pupil teachers' tasks.
135. By Year 6, pupils listen to and appraise classroom instruments, often using brainstorming sessions to find descriptive words to use the sounds made. As they listen and appraise they sometimes make notes to report to the class. They listen to a range of music from contrasting musical traditions. As they express their ideas about music they develop a musical vocabulary. Year 5 pupils provided evidence of composition as they recalled earlier work using natural objects such as stones and wood combined with some percussion as their inspiration. A tape recording had been made which illustrated the use of well-defined rhythms, very effective repeat sequences, good use of percussion and notation. Pupils considered adding poetry and composed a cloud rap to use with the music that linked music with literacy exceedingly well. Assemblies provided evidence of good singing at both key stages. Attention is given to posture and diction. The singing is often spiritually uplifting.
136. Pupils' response to the subject in the few lessons seen was good. This response improved during discussion with them about their work. There was excitement as they talked about the high challenge and hard work they employed to succeed with the tasks. Clear evidence of pupils' enjoyment stemmed from the very good relationships they have with teachers and their secure feelings about trying out ideas. Even the younger children were eager to take part and listened attentively, following the teacher's directions carefully.
137. There is insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching. However, in those lessons seen the teaching was good. Methods are appropriate and teachers provide clear explanations so that children understand what they have to do. Those teachers who have a good knowledge of music theory use it well and link it successfully to the instrumental teaching, on notation, for example. At times very good direct teaching of skills is used. Teachers have some percussion resources but there is a limited range of teachers' music books, sheet music and tuned instruments such as xylophone or glockenspiel. The single keyboard instrument is not electronic but teachers have begun to use information technology as part of their music lessons.

140.     **Physical education**

138. By the time they are eleven most pupils make good progress and their skills and quality of movement are typical of pupils of this age. The school has sustained the standards reported at the last inspection, which described pupils as generally achieving appropriately. Pupils strike and control a ball with a hockey stick and are developing their knowledge of attack and defence strategies. They safely play small-sided team games with simple rules. Pupils show good control and co-ordination when moving and balancing at different levels. Through dance they explore feelings and moods and move rhythmically to music in groups to create characters and stories. Pupils make good progress in the development of body control in dance and gymnastics. They arrange movements together to produce a sequence in gymnastics. For example, when working with a partner they develop a sequence of four moves. They make good progress in their ability to practise and refine their work. All pupils sustain energetic exercise and understand the importance of warm up and cool down activities. During the inspection it was not possible to observe any lessons at Key Stage 1.
139. Most pupils have good attitudes to the subject. Most are suitably dressed and work with enthusiasm, although a few pupils do not have appropriate kit for the lessons. At Key Stage 2 pupils of all ages listen carefully to instructions and respond positively as they exercise. Features of all the lessons are good behaviour and the ease with which boys and girls work co-operatively together. Most pupils discuss their work and agree on how it will be developed. Some of the older pupils have an excellent attitude and show maturity in recognising the value of a calm working environment. These pupils greatly appreciate one another's work and performance. Pupils show a great enthusiasm and interest for physical education and it is obvious from their achievements that physical activity is an important part of school life at both key stages.
140. At Key Stage 2 teaching was never less than satisfactory and in half the lessons seen it was very good. Lessons are well planned. Objectives for what pupils are to learn are clear and a series of carefully structured activities means that the work is interesting and challenging. Some teachers have good knowledge and are confident in demonstrating movements where appropriate. In the best lessons enough time is given for pupils to practise and discuss their work and this enhances the quality of learning which takes place. In a few lessons, teachers do not give enough direct teaching of the skills needed or explain the rules for team games.
141. The subject is taught at both key stages and all aspects are covered in the planning. There is no current policy to provide guidance on the school approach to physical education. Good use is made of a residential visit to provide outdoor and adventurous activities. The school provides a good level and variety of extra-curricular sporting clubs. These involve a large number of children, of all ages, who achieve some good results. For example, during the inspection one team was successful in a local squash tournament. Effective use is made of support and resources provided by the district authority, particularly through the Top Sport Initiative. The facilities available and the interest and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator provide good support for the subject. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating are limited as there are few opportunities to observe lessons.

144.     *Swimming*

142. It was not possible to observe lessons during the inspection as the pool at the local leisure centre was closed for refurbishment. From discussions with staff, parents' views and examination of planning, records and provision, it is clear that the school makes good provision for the teaching of swimming. Through regular opportunities throughout their time at the school, pupils make good progress in swimming. By the time they leave the school all pupils are able to swim the minimum distance required and most pupils exceed it and gain relevant safety awards. Pupils are assessed regularly and detailed records are kept on pupils' progress in achieving relevant awards. Most pupils enjoy their swimming lessons and work hard to achieve success. As no lessons were seen, it is not possible to comment on the quality of teaching. The local authority provides qualified teachers who are supported by the school staff and suitably qualified parents. Appropriate time is allocated to swimming and this is organised so that all pupils have the opportunity to swim each term. Facilities at the pool at the local leisure centre are good and pupils use areas of the pool appropriate to their ability and the qualifications of the teachers. Transport arrangements are satisfactory

and ensure that time is not lost unnecessarily in travel.

## **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

### **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

143. An inspection team of four inspectors, including a lay inspector, spent a combined total of 14 days in the school. Before the inspection a range of school documentation was analysed. The Registered Inspector met the headteacher, staff and some governors on a pre-inspection visit. Before the inspection a parents' meeting was held which 21 parents attended. There were 73 questionnaires returned by parents and 15 parents wrote to the Registered Inspector supplying views additional to those covered at the parents' meeting. All views and information informed the judgements made by inspectors.
144. During the inspection, a total of 49 lessons or parts of lessons was observed, with 47 hours spent observing lessons and other activities, talking to pupils and scrutinising their work. Inspectors observed the beginning and end of the school day, during assemblies, break and lunchtimes. They heard a sample of pupils from every year group read and scrutinised samples of pupils' work for the present term and some of the previous year. Pupils' records and reports were scrutinised. The work of pupils with special educational needs was scrutinised and their individual education programmes examined. Samples of homework were inspected.
145. Pupils were assessed for their literacy skills and their ability to work with numbers. Discussions were held with children as they worked in groups or individually. Pupils' use of literacy and numeracy in all areas of learning was assessed.
146. Meetings were held with the headteacher, class teachers and some governors. Informal discussion took place with support staff, caretaker, parents and volunteers. Further documentation, schemes of work, teachers' planning, attendance registers, minutes of meetings and curriculum plans were examined.

## DATA AND INDICATORS

### 147. Pupil data

	Number of pupils on roll (full-time equivalent)	Number of pupils with statements of SEN	Number of pupils on school's register of SEN	Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals
YR – Y6	207	6	53	25

### 148. Teachers and classes

#### Qualified teachers (YR - Y6)

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.8

#### Education support staff (YR – Y6)

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked each week	100.5

Average class size:	29.6
---------------------	------

### 149. Financial data

Financial year:	1999
-----------------	------

	£
Total Income	335636
Total Expenditure	324115
Expenditure per pupil	1550.79
Balance brought forward from previous year	9537
Balance carried forward to next year	21058

## 150. PARENTAL SURVEY

Number of questionnaires sent out:

207

Number of questionnaires returned:

73

### 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	38	50	11	1	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	59	36	3	1	1
The school handles complaints from parents well	22	47	24	3	4
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	30	58	5	7	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	42	39	12	7	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	44	49	7	0	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	38	39	19	3	1
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	29	56	8	7	0
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	53	44	3	0	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	49	44	6	1	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	61	35	4	0	0