

INSPECTION REPORT

Ixworth C of E VC Primary School

Bury St Edmunds

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique Reference Number: 124704

Headteacher: Mrs J Milton

Reporting inspector: Mr C Parker 11897

Dates of inspection: 1st – 4th November 1999

Under OFSTED contract number: 707811

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
Type of control:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Crown Lane Ixworth Bury St Edmunds Suffolk IP31 2EL
Telephone number:	01359 230228
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Wolf
Date of previous inspection:	13 th – 17 th May 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr C Parker, Registered Inspector	Mathematics	Attainment and progress
	Science	Teaching
	Information technology	Leadership and management
	Design technology	The efficiency of the school
	Art	
	Physical education	
	Special educational needs	
Mr K Greateorex, Lay Inspector	Equal opportunities	Attitudes, behaviour and personal development
		Attendance
		Support, guidance and pupils' welfare
		Partnership with parents and the community
		Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Mrs P J Underwood	English	The curriculum and assessment
	Religious education	Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development
	History	
	Geography	
	Music	
	Areas of learning for children under five	

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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

Characteristics of the school 1 - 8
Key indicators

PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Educational standards achieved by pupils at the school

Attainment and progress 9 - 18
Attitudes, behaviour and personal development 19 - 23
Attendance 24

Quality of education provided

Teaching 25 - 31
The curriculum and assessment 32 - 39
Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development 40 - 44
Support, guidance and pupils' welfare 45 - 49
Partnership with parents and the community 50 -
54

The management and efficiency of the school

Leadership and management 55 - 61
Staffing, accommodation and learning resources 62 - 65
The efficiency of the school 66 - 68

PART B: CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS

Areas of learning for children under five 69 - 76
English, mathematics and science 77 - 101
Other subjects or courses 102 - 120

PART C: INSPECTION DATA

Summary of inspection evidence 121 - 128
Data and indicators

MAIN FINDINGS

What the school does well

- Standards in speaking and listening, reading, mathematics and science are above average by the end of Year 4.
- Relationships are very good and the pupils are encouraged to develop positive attitudes.
- Behaviour is good throughout the school.
- The teaching is consistently good. Lessons are thoroughly planned.
- The pupils are making good progress as a result of the high proportion of good teaching.
- The curriculum is broad, balanced and thoroughly planned.
- Assessment procedures are comprehensive and effective.
- The provision for the moral and social development of the pupils is particularly strong.
- The school's partnership with the parents is very good.
- The school is very well led and managed. Strong teamwork underpins a clear commitment to on-going improvement.
- The school provides good value for money.

Where the school has weaknesses

- There are no major weaknesses. However, the following are areas where further improvement could be made.
- I. Standards in writing are not as high as in other aspects of English.
 - II. The annual written reports to parents do not contain specific areas for development or improvement.
 - III. The governing body is not systematically evaluating the impact of the time and money invested in improvement activities.
 - IV. The information technology resources are not being used to the full to provide the pupils with a broad range of opportunities to extend their skills across the curriculum.

The school makes good provision for its pupils. The strengths of the school far outweigh the weaknesses. The areas for further improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan, which will be sent to all parents and guardians of pupils at the school.

How the school has improved since the last inspection

The school has made very good progress since the last full inspection in May 1996. As a result of changes in personnel, relationships in Key Stage 2 are considerably improved and are now very good. The quality of the teaching has also improved and is now consistently good. Weaknesses in the planning for information technology and design technology have been addressed, although information technology is not yet fully integrated into all subjects of the curriculum. The assessment, recording and analysis of the pupils' attainment and progress have improved significantly and are now very good. The school is very well placed to continue with further improvements because there is a strong sense of teamwork that involves the headteacher, deputy headteacher, teachers, support staff and governors.

Standards in subjects

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

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

The above table shows that in the National Curriculum tests for seven-year-olds in 1998, the school's results were well above the national average in reading and in line with the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In the test for writing, the pupils' attainment overall was above the national average although below the average of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In mathematics the results exceeded the national average and the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The results of the 1999 tests were not quite as good but attainment remained above the national average in reading and writing, and the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in writing rose slightly. The results in reading and writing are in line with those of schools where pupils come from similar backgrounds. In mathematics, the results were in line with the national average but below the average for schools where pupils come from similar backgrounds. The fluctuations in attainment reflect the uneven distribution of pupils with special educational needs within the school. In 1999 almost a quarter of the pupils taking the tests were on the special needs register. This is a much higher proportion than usual in this school.

Analysis of the results of all National Curriculum tests over the three years from 1996 to 1998 indicates that overall standards, at the end of Key Stage 1, are consistently above the national average.

The inspection findings show that standards are above average by the time the pupils leave the school, but standards in writing are not as high as in reading and speaking and listening. In mathematics, the inspection evidence indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for seven-year-olds continues to be similar to the average but by Year 4 standards are above average. Standards in science are above average. The pupils are making good progress in English, mathematics and science.

In information technology the pupils are attaining appropriate levels both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school. The pupils are taught the skills they need but are not given a broad enough range of opportunities to apply them across the curriculum. The pupils are meeting the expectations of the agreed syllabus for religious education. In history and geography, the quality of the pupils' work at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with what is expected and is better than expected in Key Stage 2. The products made by the pupils in art and design technology are of a good standard. The quality of the pupils' performance in music and physical education is similar to that expected of this age group. Taken overall, the pupils are making good progress in most areas of the curriculum because they are well taught.

The youngest pupils make a good start in the nursery and reception classes and most achieve the nationally expected desirable learning outcomes by the age of five years.

Quality of teaching

Teaching in	Under 5	5 – 7 years	7 – 9 years
English	Good	Good	Good
Mathematics	Good	Good	Good
Science		Good	Good
Information technology		Good	Good
Religious education		Good	Good
Other subjects	Good	Good	Good

The teaching is good. In the lessons seen during the inspection the teaching was never less than satisfactory and in over four fifths of the lessons it was good or better. In a quarter of the lessons seen the teaching was very good. There is a high level of consistency in the teaching that contributes significantly to the good progress made by the pupils. The teaching of the children under five is good and the pupils gain a solid foundation, which is successfully built on in Key Stages 1 and 2.

The lessons are very well planned. The teachers are very clear about what it is they want children to learn. They use direct teaching effectively, set interesting tasks and encourage lively discussion. The teachers' assessments keep them well informed about the progress the pupils are making.

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

Other aspects of the school

Aspect	Comment
Behaviour	Behaviour around the school is consistently good. In lessons, assemblies, at lunchtimes and playtimes virtually all pupils achieve high standards of behaviour.
Attendance	Attendance at the school fell slightly last year although it is still above the national average. The number of parents taking their children on holiday during school time has increased and this accounts for much of the reduction in the attendance rate.
Ethos*	The school provides a very positive climate for learning. The pupils are interested and well motivated. There are high expectations of the pupils to do well.
Leadership and management	The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the school through strong and purposeful leadership of the teaching team. The governing body provides good support for the school and facilitates on-going improvement.
Curriculum	The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils. The school teaches the full range of the National Curriculum with an appropriate emphasis on the literacy and numeracy.
Pupils with special educational needs	The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All individual education plans are comprehensive and contain clear targets and tasks that help the pupils to progress.
Spiritual, moral, social & cultural development	The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Moral and social development are particularly strong. The teachers provide an environment where the pupils are valued and encouraged to value each other.
Staffing, resources and accommodation	The school is very well staffed with a good blend of recently qualified and experienced teachers. The resources are generally satisfactory but the school does not have enough computers or books in the library. The accommodation is very

	good and is used fully to deliver the curriculum.
Value for money	The school continues to give good value for money.

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

• The parents' views of the school

What most parents like about the school	What some parents are not happy about
V. the good progress made by the pupils; VI. the positive and friendly atmosphere in the school; VII. the range of information they receive; VIII. children are well supported; IX. they are welcomed, valued and well briefed when they help in classrooms; X. the good range of extra curricular activities.	XI. homework arrangements; XII. the pressure caused by the introduction of the literacy XIII. the need for a mixed Year 1 and 2 class; XIV. the information they receive about their child's

Inspectors agree with the many positive comments made by the vast majority of parents at the pre-inspection meeting, via the questionnaire and through letters. However, at the pre-inspection meeting a few parents expressed strong views about the negative impact of the school's homework policy and the literacy and numeracy strategies. Conversely, some parents wrote to the registered inspector to express their strong support for the school's provision and a small number suggested that the older pupils should receive more homework. The inspectors found that the school's homework arrangements reflect the recent guidance published by the Department for Education and Employment and that most parents (87 per cent) were happy with the current arrangements.

The school has approached the introduction of the both the literacy and numeracy strategies very positively. The inspectors could find no evidence of pupils being placed under pressure in either literacy or numeracy lessons. In many of the lessons observed, the children were clearly enjoying the challenges being set for them by their teachers.

The school had little option but to introduce an additional class into Key Stage 1 in order to reduce class sizes below 30 in line with requirements. The current admission limit is 36 in each year group. Mixed age classes are very common in schools of this size. The school is currently examining flexible approaches to grouping the Year 1 and 2 pupils in different ways for some lessons.

Parents at the pre inspection meeting said that they felt able to approach their child's teacher to discuss progress. However, approximately an eighth of parents responding to the questionnaire felt they were not kept fully informed about their child's progress. The inspectors found that the arrangements for the annual written reports and formal consultation meetings followed the pattern of most schools. Written reports give good information about attainment, effort and progress. However, they do not include sufficient detail about future targets for improvement.

KEY ISSUES FOR ACTION

Although the inspection found no major weaknesses, the school should continue to implement its development plan, placing particular emphasis on the improvement of the pupils' writing, in order to raise standards further. (Paragraph 79)

In addition the governors, headteacher and teachers should:

- XV. improve annual reports to parents by identifying specific areas for each pupil's development; (Paragraph 52)
- XVI. evaluate the impact of time and money spent on development and improvement of activities; (paragraph 58)
- XVII. improve and make the fullest use of the school's information technology resources.(Paragraph 106)

· **INTRODUCTION**

· **Characteristics of the school**

1. The school serves the large Suffolk village of Ixworth, in which it is situated. Unemployment in the area is generally low with many parents commuting to Bury St. Edmunds and Ipswich. The pupils come from diverse social and economic backgrounds although most have financially secure homes. The proportion of pupils taking free school meals is below the national average.
2. When they start school, the profile of the children's attainment fluctuates from year to year, but is clustered around the average. The baseline assessment carried out by the school last year shows that the profile of attainment on entry to the school was above average in social and physical development and average in letter and number recognition.
3. The school's admissions procedure allocates places in the nursery, each term, to children two terms before the term of their fifth birthday. In the term of their fifth birthday they transfer to the reception class. Places are available for 36 pupils of statutory school age in each year group.
4. The school caters for pupils from four to nine years of age and is smaller than average. There are 145 pupils on roll plus 20 four year olds who attend the nursery each morning. At the time of the inspection, 14 children who have not reached statutory school age were being taught in the reception class. Twenty-one pupils are on the special educational needs register, one having a statement of special educational need. The proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register is below the national average, but these pupils are not evenly distributed across the year groups. Currently, there is a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs in Years 2 and 3.
5. There are a few more girls than boys overall, but in most classes the numbers are similar. There are no pupils from other ethnic groups. All of the pupils speak English as their first language.
6. Since the last inspection there have been changes in the teaching staff, and two new teachers have been appointed. The school also has a nursery that opened in April 1998.
7. The aims of the school include:
 - to create a secure and stimulating environment in which pupils feel happy and work with a sense of purpose;

- to help each child to grow in confidence and self esteem by valuing their individuality;
- to build a partnership between home and school;
- to develop the skills of oracy, literacy and numeracy.

1. The current areas for improvement set out in school's development plan include:

English Literacy Hour – Writing
 Mathematics
 Assessment
 Information Communication Technology
 Monitoring and Evaluation

- 8.

Key indicators

Attainment at Key Stage 1

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

Year	Boys	Girls	Total
1999 (98)	11	15	26

8. National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	10	9	9
	Girls	13	13	13
	Total	23	22	22
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (92)	85 (88)	85 (92)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

8. Teacher Assessments		Reading	Mathematics	Science
Number of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	Boys	10	9	11
	Girls	13	13	15
	Total	23	22	26
Percentage at NC Level 2 or above	School	88 (92)	85 (92)	100 (88)
	National	82 (81)	86 (85)	87 (86)

8. Attendance

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

		%
Authorised	School	4.6
Absence	National comparative data	5.5
Unauthorised	School	0.3

Absence	National comparative data	0.5
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8.

8. **Exclusions**

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

	Number
Fixed period	0
Permanent	0

8. **Quality of teaching**

Percentage of teaching observed which is:

	%
Very good or better	24
Satisfactory or better	100
Less than satisfactory	0

8. **PART A: ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL**

8. **EDUCATIONAL STANDARDS ACHIEVED BY PUPILS AT THE SCHOOL**

8. **Attainment and progress**

2. In the National Curriculum reading tests for seven-year-olds in 1998, the results were well above the national average and were in line with the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In the test for writing, attainment overall was above the national average although below the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In both reading and writing the number of pupils achieving higher levels exceeded the national average. The results of the 1999 tests were not quite as good but attainment remained above the national average in both reading and writing, and the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in writing rose slightly. The results of the 1999 tests are in line with those of schools where pupils come from similar backgrounds.
3. In the 1998 national tests for seven-year-olds in mathematics the results exceeded the national average and the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was close to the national average. However, the results of the tests taken in 1999 were not as high as in previous years. Although they were in line with the national average, they fell below the average for schools where pupils come from similar backgrounds.
4. Analysis of the results in all tests over the period since the school was last inspected indicate that overall standards, at the end of Key Stage 1, are consistently above the national average. The fluctuations in attainment this year reflect the uneven distribution of pupils with special educational needs within the school. In 1999 almost a quarter of the pupils taking the tests were on the special needs register. This is a much higher proportion than usual in this school. The school has reflected this situation in its annual targets, but still aimed to exceed 80 per cent in all tests. In all cases the results were within one or two per cent of the targets set. The school has raised its targets for 2000 for the proportions of children attaining both the expected and higher levels.
5. The profile of the children's attainment when they start school fluctuates from year to year, but is clustered around the average. The baseline assessment carried out by the school last year shows that the profile of attainment on entry to the school was above average in social and physical development and average in letter and number recognition. The children make a good start in the nursery and reception classes and most achieve the nationally expected desirable learning outcomes by the age of five years. They make good progress in their language and literacy, mathematics and social development.
6. The inspection findings show that standards in speaking and listening, and reading are above average at the end of both Key Stage 1 and by the end of Year 4. Almost all of the pupils are able to write competently and most achieve the level expected for their age. There is some variation in the attainment of girls and boys. The school has identified weaknesses in the reading performance of boys and has acted to address this. The pupils make good progress as they move through the school. They further develop their reading skills and become proficient readers in Key Stage 2. Their writing improves and they use an increasingly wide vocabulary. The pupils have good opportunities to develop their literacy skills across the curriculum. It is possible to track progress in writing from the pupils' first attempts at emergent writing to the interesting and imaginative writing of the Year 4 pupils. However, despite an emphasis on spelling and regular tests in both key stages, many pupils do not consistently spell correctly or use punctuation effectively in their free writing. Overall, standards are above average by the time they leave the school but standards in writing are not as high as in reading and speaking

and listening. The school has set itself targets, within the school development plan, to further improve standards in writing.

7. The inspection evidence in mathematics indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for seven-year-olds continues to be similar to the average, but by Year 4 standards are above average. The pupils steadily build their knowledge, understanding and numeracy skills as they move through the school. They have a secure understanding of place value and can solve simple problems using addition and subtraction. Most pupils name and describe the properties of simple two-dimensional shapes and are confident to tell the time to half past the hour. By the end of Year 4, the pupils can handle more demanding numbers in their work.
8. The results of the National Curriculum assessments of seven-year-olds in science were in line with the national average in 1998. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels was similarly in line with the national average. Analysis of the 1999 results shows a considerable improvement with all pupils achieving the expected level whilst the proportion attaining higher levels remains in line with the national average. The inspection evidence indicates that, in the current year, standards are better than average. Scrutiny of the pupils' work and observation of lessons suggests that most pupils are working at the expected level by the age of seven and by the age of nine a good proportion are exceeding this level. Overall, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 4 are above average.
9. The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school. This is because the quality of teaching is good, and assessment and analysis of test results are used effectively by the teachers.
10. In information technology, the pupils are attaining appropriate levels both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school. Moreover, there are examples in some of the pupils' work that show they are working at higher levels. The pupils are taught the skills they need but are not given a broad enough range of opportunities to apply them across the curriculum.
11. The pupils are making sound progress and developing an appropriate knowledge of Christianity and other major world faiths in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus for religious education. In history and geography the quality of the pupils' work at the end of Key Stage 1 is in line with what is expected and is better than expected in Key Stage 2. The products made by the pupils in art and design technology are of a good standard. The pupils' performance in music and physical education is of a standard expected of this age group.
18. **Attitudes, behaviour and personal development**
12. The pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They are enthusiastic about their work and eager to succeed. They usually sustain high levels of interest and concentration because the teachers plan tasks that interest and motivate them. They are encouraged to express their ideas and opinions, for example, when describing aspects of stories they like and dislike. Their skills as independent learners are well developed through working collaboratively in groups and in pairs. From the earliest stages in the nursery and reception classes, the pupils learn to pack away and prepare for the next session. They take responsibility for keeping their classrooms tidy.
13. The good behaviour reported at the last inspection has been maintained. Behaviour around the school continues to be consistently good and this confirms the views of parents. During lessons, in assemblies, at lunchtimes and at playtimes virtually all pupils achieve high standards of behaviour. They move around the school in a quiet and orderly manner in line

with the standards expected in their own code of acceptable behaviour. As a result, there is rarely any need for sanctions. There have been no exclusions in the last year. During the inspection, there was no evidence of bullying or lack of respect for school property.

14. The weakness in relationships mentioned in the last inspection report has been fully rectified and they are now consistently very good. The pupils play and work happily together and their interactions with their teachers are warm and supportive. The pupils work co-operatively together, listening with interest to each other. Older pupils try to understand the point of view of others. All pupils are consistently patient, tolerant and understanding of others.
15. The pupils' personal development is good. The school provides many opportunities for them to show initiative and take responsibility and they demonstrate that the trust is well placed. Their social skills and self-discipline are developed constantly. The personal and social development of the children under five is also good. They are increasingly confident, and are able to concentrate and persevere with their learning. As they progress through the school, greater degrees of independence are encouraged. The older pupils regularly perform jobs within the classroom and around the school. For example, they assist greatly with the maintenance of the wildlife area. They also help the younger ones with computer and play equipment. All pupils are eager to be involved in fund raising for local and international charities.
16. The very positive attitudes to learning, very good relationships, high standards of behaviour and the quality of the opportunities for personal development are important strengths of the school. They all have a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning.

23. **Attendance**

17. Although attendance at the school fell slightly last year it is still above the national average. The number of parents taking their children on holiday during school time has increased and accounts for much of the reduction in the attendance rate, totalling over 600 half day absences. There is some unauthorised absence but this is below the national average. Punctuality continues to be good, with almost all pupils coming to school on time and many arriving early. They come happily to school, eager and ready to learn enabling the school to make a prompt and efficient start to the school day.

24. **QUALITY OF EDUCATION PROVIDED**

24. **Teaching**

18. The teaching is good. In the lessons seen during the inspection, the teaching was never less than satisfactory and in over four fifths of the lessons it was good or better. In a quarter of the lessons, notably in Year 3, the teaching was very good. This marks an improvement on the last inspection when there was considerable variation in the quality of the teaching with a significant proportion that was unsatisfactory. This is no longer the case. As a result of changes in personnel and through well-managed school and professional development, there is now a high degree of consistency in the planning of lessons, the demands made upon the pupils and the relationships between the teachers and their pupils are very positive.
19. The teaching of the youngest children is good, and consequently they progress well in their early years. The teachers have a secure knowledge of the children's early literacy and numeracy needs. Their expectations of behaviour and the level of the children's independence are appropriate. In the nursery, the teacher works well with her assistant and supports the children effectively. In the reception class, the lessons are well paced; the activities are

interesting and there is often a buzz of excitement, for example, when the teacher uses a glove puppet to focus the children's attention in numeracy lessons. The teachers note the children's achievements and use them to plan lessons that have a clear focus for learning. The pupils are well managed and are reminded how to be kind to others; as a result, their social awareness develops well.

20. The teaching in Key Stage 1 is good, and the pupils make good progress as they move through Years 1 and 2. The teachers have a secure knowledge of the subjects they teach. Their lessons are well planned, have a good pace and are well organised. In Year 1, the teacher effectively draws on the pupils' experiences in personal and social education. In mathematics she fosters their enjoyment of numeracy through rhymes and interesting activities. In Year 2, the teaching of literacy is good, for example, when discussing in detail the story of 'Six Dinner Sid'. The assessment of the pupils' progress is very good. Their work is carefully marked and particular achievements well noted. This information is then used effectively to plan the next stage of their learning.
21. The quality of the teaching in Key Stage 2 is generally good, and is very good in Year 3 where the teaching of mathematics and English is particularly well planned and presented. For example, rapid, clearly focussed mental arithmetic practice begins each mathematics lesson and challenging tasks are set for the pupils to use and develop their skills. In the literacy sessions, the teacher skilfully manages the pupils and focuses on, for instance, particular spelling strategies. In all lessons, the teacher shares with the pupils what they are expected to learn, has high expectations of both behaviour and achievement and draws the lesson together at the end to check what the pupils have understood. In both Years 3 and 4, resources are used effectively and the pupils are challenged through an appropriate range of tasks that are often modified for different ability groups. The teachers are well supported by the classroom assistants.
22. The vast majority of parents are happy with the work their children are expected to do at home, but a few expressed considerable concerns about the demands made on children at a young age. A small number of parents would like to see more homework for the older pupils. The inspectors found that the school has a good homework policy that reflects the recent national guidance and is used appropriately to extend classroom learning. The focus is predominantly on reading and literacy, although this broadens somewhat as the pupils get older.
23. The pupils with special educational needs are very well supported. Throughout the school the teachers pay particular attention to developing the basic skills and competencies of the pupils on the special needs register through clear individual education plans that have precise targets for improvement. These are used effectively in the lesson planning, and the tasks are carefully modified to meet the pupils' particular needs.
24. Taken overall, the good teaching has a significant impact on the good progress the pupils make.

31. **The curriculum and assessment**

25. The curriculum is broad, balanced and relevant to the needs of the pupils. The school teaches the full range of the National Curriculum with appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy. Religious Education is taught in line with the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus. All the statutory requirements are in place with policies for sex education, drugs and health education. The latter is taught as part of the science curriculum. The curriculum for the children under five is also broad and balanced and offers them appropriate opportunities to develop the necessary skills that lead naturally into Key Stage 1. All areas of learning are well

covered and the children receive a wide range of experiences.

26. The curriculum is organised through carefully planned topics and themes on a two-year cycle. The school is using many of the recently published national schemes of work as a basis for planning, which helps to ensure good coverage in all subjects. The medium term plans show clearly what will be covered in each half term. The teachers then use a standard format for their medium term planning that includes learning objectives, a variety of activities and some assessment opportunities. The plans are often drawn up in key stage teams, where expertise can be shared. It also enables the teachers to ensure consistency in their planning, which is particularly important for the mixed age Year 1 and 2 class. The planning is consistently good and a particular strength in this school.
27. The previous inspection report stated that the school was not teaching the full range of the programmes of study for design technology and information technology, but this has now been amended. The pupils are now offered a wider variety of experiences although information technology is not yet fully integrated into all subjects of the curriculum. Equal opportunity for all pupils is ensured by planning an appropriate match of tasks to ability.
28. The introduction of both the literacy and numeracy strategies has been well managed. The school now has both strategies in place and these are positively influencing the teaching and learning. The teachers have fully incorporated both strategies into their planning and teaching. Consequently, their lessons are well planned and the pupils are well taught. A few parents expressed strong views that the literacy and numeracy strategies were restricting the range of opportunities available to the pupils and placing them under particular pressure. Whilst these developments have reduced time available for other subjects, the school ensures that the pupils still experience a broad range of activities. The inspectors could find no evidence of the pupils being pressurised in lessons. In most lessons, they were clearly enjoying the challenges set for them by their teachers.
29. The procedures for identifying the pupils with special educational needs are good. These pupils receive general support within the classroom from both the teacher and the classroom assistant and are withdrawn for specific help, usually during the literacy hour. The classroom tasks are made accessible to the pupils either through additional support or by matching the task to their needs. There are clear individual educational plans in place with achievable targets. These are reviewed and up-dated every half term.

30. The school offers its pupils a wide choice of extra-curricular activities that range from sports practices, recorders and choir to caring for the environment through 'Wild Life Watch'. Visits to places of educational interest, for example Dunwich and Orford Castle, are used effectively. Presentations by a theatre company and an Indian dance teacher also enhance the curriculum and add to the pupils' learning.
31. The pupils are assessed when they enter and various tests for reading, for example, are administered throughout the school. Assessment in both English and mathematics takes place through National Curriculum tests at the age of seven. The results are comprehensively analysed to highlight weaknesses and appropriate, follow-up action is planned. For example, the school found that boys were not reading as well as girls so they purchased books that would be of interest to the boys. This has had a positive effect on reading standards. The optional national tests are also given to the pupils in Years 3 and 4. The results of all tests are used effectively to inform the teachers' planning and to set targets for achievement and improvement.
32. The previous report highlighted the need to improve assessment practice and make better provision for the different levels of attainment of pupils in each class. The school has now developed a comprehensive and effective system for assessing pupils. Within the core subjects, particularly English and mathematics, the teachers regularly assess their pupils, giving them weekly spelling tests and mental arithmetic tests. Periodically, after writing a story, the pupils in Years 3 and 4 are asked to assess their own work for content, grammar, punctuation, then to discuss it with their teacher and from this decide areas for improvement. All pupils have targets that have been discussed with their parents and these are displayed in the classrooms. Targets for both academic improvement and social development are set and reinforced by the teachers.
39. **Pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development**
33. The provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good overall and the pupils' moral and social development are particularly strong. The teachers provide an environment where their pupils are valued and are encouraged to value each other. A Christian ethos pervades the school and this is reflected in the aims.
34. The pupils' spiritual development is good. It is a feature of religious education through which they are taught to value the faiths of others and to develop positive attitudes towards everyone. This is enhanced through listening to music, looking at works of art and observing the wonders of nature in the environment. Their spiritual development is also enhanced through the effective use of stories. For example, the pupils were captivated during an act of worship by the story of a boy who lost his favourite guinea pig. The previous report noted that there could be greater opportunity for reflection. Collective acts of worship now usually allow time for reflection. Moreover, at the end of a session in other areas of the curriculum, the pupils are often given time to reflect on what they have learned or how they have felt during a discussion.
35. A detailed behaviour policy with clear rewards and sanctions ensures that the pupils understand what is and what is not acceptable. The teachers reinforce good behaviour with plenty of praise. Special assemblies are held weekly to celebrate the pupils' successes and good work. The school rules are few but promote safety and the care of others. Each class devises its own set of classroom rules that are displayed in a prominent place and can be altered if they are not effective. The notion of right and wrong is explored through assembly themes. Circle Time provides another vehicle for discussing behaviour and relationships. The vast majority of parents feel that the school's values and attitudes have a positive impact on

their children.

36. The pupils are given many opportunities to work co-operatively and collaboratively in a variety of subjects. For example, in a history lesson pupils worked in pairs, using pictures of artefacts, to discover more about the Ancient Greeks and in a religious education lesson to share a family celebration with a friend. They are expected to share resources and ideas and respect the feelings and opinions of others. Older pupils take part in paired reading with the younger pupils and spend time in the nursery. A range of jobs around the school encourages the pupils to become responsible for caring for the environment. The pupils are encouraged to raise money for the TEAR fund through baking and selling cakes and for the NSPCC by collecting twenty pence pieces in Smartie tubes. They also participate in Children in Need and Red Nose Day. These activities help to raise their awareness of the plight of others.
37. A variety of materials and resources are used to promote cultural development. The pupils become aware of cultural differences through religious education, history, geography, music and art. Stories from other lands are used for literacy. A teacher of Indian dance visited the school and pupils benefited from the experience. They spoke about how relatively unimportant their own hand movements were when they dance compared to those used as part of the story telling in Indian dance. The pupils have also been involved in African and Indian cooking. Visits around the school, and to nearby towns enhance the pupils' awareness of their own culture. Visitors to the school, such as a storyteller, an illustrator and police officer, further enhance their appreciation of both their own and the culture of others.
44. **Support, guidance and pupils' welfare**
38. The school gives all its pupils very good support and guidance and effectively promotes their welfare, health and safety in a caring, harmonious environment. The teachers show great concern for the well-being of pupils and use a wide range of measures to promote their development. The teachers are sensitive to the needs of pupils and consistently monitor their progress and their ability to cope on a day to day basis. Those pupils with special educational needs continue to have good support. The school is small enough for all staff to know the pupils well and relationships between staff and pupils throughout the school are very good. Older pupils continue to be well prepared for the transfer to the middle school and look forward confidently to the move.
39. All staff continue to work hard to maintain high standards of behaviour. The procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very good. The school behaviour policy is understood by the whole school community and is consistently applied. It contains the statutory reference relating to the use of force to control and restrain pupils. The staff pre-empt incidents of possible misbehaviour with firm, calm interventions. In addition they encourage good behaviour by making the school a warm, caring and happy environment.
40. The procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are satisfactory. The registers are marked correctly and efficiently at the start of the day and after lunch. All absences are properly noted and contact made with parents to justify absence. Aggregations of the figures are not completely accurate but do not materially distort them. Provision is made for attendance figures to be reported in the brochure and in the governing body's annual report to parents.
41. Child protection continues to be handled very effectively with the headteacher as the designated person. All of the members of staff are aware of the need for vigilance and the steps to take if suspicions are aroused.
42. Health and safety is very well promoted in the school. Potential hazards are identified and remedial action taken where appropriate. All of the staff are safety-conscious and are careful to ensure the security of the children. Hazardous materials are kept securely away from pupils.

All of the staff at the school work hard to successfully create a safe and caring environment where the well-being of pupils is promoted very effectively.

49. **Partnership with parents and the community**

43. The partnerships with parents and the community have been developed further since the last inspection and are now very good. Parents and other adults are encouraged to become involved in the work of the school and many respond enthusiastically by participating in a range of activities. Many parents and other adults help regularly within the classroom and around the school. Helpers are deployed effectively, they are given clear instructions and their efforts are well directed. They are knowledgeable, relate well to the pupils and good use is made of their time. The parents are enthusiastic and supportive of the school and its ethos.

44. The Parent Teacher Association is active and organises a range of events to support the work of the school. The school values highly the contributions made by the parents, which enhance the pupils' progress and personal development.

45. The parents are well informed about the school and their children's activities through a good range of letters, newsletters, reports and meetings. Approximately an eighth of the parents replying to the questionnaire were not entirely happy with the information they receive about their child's progress. The inspectors found that arrangements are similar to those found in most school and that annual written reports give good information about attainment effort and progress. However, they do not include sufficient detail about future targets for improvement. **This is an issue for improvement.** The information given to parents in the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents is useful and generally comprehensive but omits information about links with the community.

46. The school has worked hard to build the links with the local community and takes the initiative in organising events to strengthen the partnership further. Concerts and other functions are organised to celebrate the various festivals. There are good links with the emergency services and specialist agencies. The school has regular visits from outside speakers and theatre groups. Students from the local upper school and college continue to visit the school for work experience. Liaison with the local pyramid of schools continues to very effective and ensures a smooth transition. The pupils continue to be regularly involved in fund raising for charities.

47. The harmonious and comprehensive relationships with the local community provide substantial enrichment to the pupils' personal development and understanding of the outside world.

54. **THE MANAGEMENT AND EFFICIENCY OF THE SCHOOL**

54. **Leadership and management**

48. The strong and purposeful leadership reported at the time of the last inspection has been maintained. The headteacher, deputy headteacher, teachers and governors work very well together. This strong teamwork has been instrumental in successfully addressing the issues arising from the last inspection and places the school in a very good position to continue to improve.

49. The headteacher provides a clear educational direction for the school. She has established effective systems through which the curriculum is well managed, and standards are regularly monitored by subject co-ordinators. The headteacher has very comprehensive systems for monitoring both the progress and attainment of individual pupils and each cohort as it moves

through the school. The information collected by the headteacher is used in discussion with the local education authority adviser and governors to set targets for the future attainment of the pupils. The process of setting targets at both pupil and school level is well established.

50. The governing body is well informed, and many of its members are frequently active within the school. The governors are monitoring the work of the school effectively and are committed to supporting and facilitating improvement. Each member of the governing body has link responsibilities to a class to ensure they have good communications with the school. The governors also actively canvas the opinions of parents, for example, on the recently implemented home/school agreement. The annual governing body meeting is also used to keep the parents well informed. At a recent meeting, a presentation on the school's numeracy strategy was given to the parents.
51. The governors and teachers work together to formulate the school development plan. This is a useful document that has clear success criteria, although the very good target setting undertaken by the school is not yet fully incorporated. The current development plan is based on a careful evaluation of the outcomes of its predecessor. However, the governing body is not making judgements about the impact of the time and money invested in each initiative on the resulting standards of provision and attainment. The governing body should make more precise links with targets in the school development plan and evaluate the results of each initiative in respect of the time and money invested. **This is an issue for action.**
52. The school's policies are clear and comprehensive and result in a high level of consistency in the provision made for the pupils. The school's aims successfully underpin its work and, consequently, the school provides a positive climate for learning in which there are high expectations of the pupils.
53. The management of the provision for the pupils with special educational needs is good. The Code of Practice for Special Educational Needs is fully implemented. All individual education plans are comprehensive and contain clear targets, tasks and an evaluation of progress. Early intervention through baseline assessment is carefully undertaken. All meetings with parents and outside agencies are recorded.
54. The school meets the statutory requirements in all respects. For example, in response to recent requirements, it has produced a policy on the use of force to control and restrain pupils.
61. **Staffing, accommodation and learning resources**
55. The school continues to be very well staffed with teachers trained for the primary phase. There is a very good blend of recently qualified and experienced teachers. There are effective arrangements in place for recently appointed staff to receive support and guidance from a member of the management team. The school development plan outlines the commitment to provide high quality staff development.
56. The members of the support staff make a positive contribution to the standards achieved. They have appropriate experience and expertise to match the demands of their roles. The secretarial, caretaking, canteen staff and lunchtime supervisors work well as part of the staff team and their contributions are valued by the school.
57. Overall, the accommodation is very good and is used fully to deliver the curriculum. The accommodation has been further enhanced since the last inspection by the conversion of a classroom to a nursery extended by the roofing of a courtyard to provide extra space. The outdoor area has also been modified to provide secure play space. The library will benefit substantially from the planned extension to be created by the roofing of the adjacent small courtyard. The classrooms continue to be well organised. The clean and attractive appearance of the environment is enhanced by the displays of children's work throughout the school. The

high standard of care and cleanliness is being maintained and the site is litter free and secure.

58. The school has sufficient, good quality resources but with some variations between subjects. For example, the resources are good for mathematics, science, music and physical education and satisfactory in all other subjects apart from information technology. The school has some modern computers, but they are fewer than found in many schools. The library still does not have enough books but the school is working with the county librarians to improve provision. The old furniture mentioned in the last inspection report has largely been replaced. The overall good quality of accommodation and resources helps to create an attractive and effective learning environment that contributes positively to the pupils' attainment and progress.

65. **The efficiency of the school**

59. Secure financial control has been maintained since the last inspection. However, a full audit of the school's financial systems in 1997 identified a number of deficiencies. The school has improved its financial systems and a very recent 'follow up' audit found no adjustments were needed to the school's procedures. Appropriate consideration is given to the allocation of resources in regard to the planned school development. The governing body regularly monitors the spending and budgetary projections. The school carried forward a larger than usual amount of money two years ago, but this has been used to 'smooth out' fluctuations in income and to ensure that the school is able to maintain good staffing levels. The school runs efficiently and smoothly.
60. The teachers are carefully deployed so that their strengths are used to the benefit of the pupils. As a result, the pupils make a good start when they enter the school and progress well through Key Stages 1 and 2. The non-teaching assistants are effective particularly when working with the pupils on the special educational needs register, for whom they provide additional assistance. The teachers use the school's resources effectively and make satisfactory, although not full use of the good information technology resources. Overall, the accommodation is very well managed and used effectively.
68. The funds the school receives for each pupil are above average. Nevertheless, these funds are used effectively to ensure that the pupils are well taught, make good progress and attain the standards that are expected of them in all subjects. As a result, the school continues to provide good value for money.

CURRICULUM AREAS AND SUBJECTS**68. AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN UNDER FIVE**

61. Twenty children attend the nursery each morning. These children have two terms of nursery education before transferring to the reception class in the term of their fifth birthday. At the time of the inspection there were 14 pupils in the reception class. Only a few of these children were five years of age and none was of statutory school age. The profile of the children's attainment when they start school fluctuates from year to year, but is clustered around the average. The formal baseline assessment is carried out each September although children who start their nursery education in January have completed two terms by the time they are assessed. The school therefore undertakes its own assessments at the start of the spring and summer terms.
62. The teaching of the children under five is good. The teachers in both the nursery and in the reception class plan a wide range of purposeful activities and manage the children effectively. The good teaching results in the vast majority of the pupils meeting the nationally prescribed desirable learning outcomes by the time they reach statutory school age.

Personal and Social Development

63. The children's personal and social development is good and they make good progress. The teachers create a very supportive atmosphere where each child feels special. They have high expectations with regard to behaviour and the children want to please them. As a result, the children are confident, show respect for each other and the adults teaching them. They behave well in all situations and are sensitive to each other's needs. The children work and play well together, and role-play in the home corner allows them to explore relationships. They also work well independently, when required, and are able to concentrate and persevere with their tasks. They learn in many activities to take turns and to share equipment. This was observed, for instance, when a child was helping another to use the computer. They also co-operate well in the general classroom tasks. For example, when the Nursery children are asked to tidy up, most of them know where things are stored and they accomplish the task quickly and efficiently.

71. Language and Literacy

64. The children's attainment in this area is above average and they make good progress. They listen carefully and follow instructions well. They are beginning to recognise phonic sounds and letter names. The children enjoy books, handle them with care and are confident to talk about their favourite stories. Many in the reception class are able to read simple words such as 'went', 'me', 'my', etc and some can read short sentences. The children begin writing in the nursery by copying over the teacher's writing, and then move on to writing their names. This is further developed as they write the initial sound of each word and progress to writing recognisable simple words and sentences. Literacy forms part of the daily lesson structure in the reception class. The teachers provide an appropriate range of activities involving speaking and listening, reading and writing. The planning of the work is clear and takes into account what children already know and can do.

72. **Mathematics**

65. The children's attainment in this area is above average and their progress is good. Many of the children are able to count from 0 to 20, starting both at 0 and at differing starting points such as 3 or 9. They can also count back from 20 to 0 arriving at "Blast Off"! Most children recognise numbers on flash cards such as 0, 4, 10, 6, and can count how many sausages are 'left in a pan' and consequently understand the mathematical term "how many are left?" Rhymes and counting games are used effectively to reinforce learning in both the nursery and the reception class. In the reception class, the pupils are keen to help a puppet to sequence numbers to 12. The teacher uses the glove puppet very effectively to motivate the children and focus their learning. The reception children have also been introduced to data handling illustrated by a graph on the wall relating to the smell of shower gel. They also know the names of common shapes. The quality of teaching is good with thoroughly planned lessons and appropriate activities. The teachers' questions are carefully phrased for individual children to ensure all participate in the activities at an appropriate level.

73. **Knowledge and Understanding of the World**

66. The children are making satisfactory progress in this area of learning through a good range of activities and experiences provided by their teachers. They are able to identify members of their family and talk about their homes. The children in the nursery have been led to an understanding of buoyancy through their play in the water tray. As a result, they are able to say if they think a particular object will float or sink. They have also discussed what they might find at the bottom of the sea when fishing. They enjoy exploring different smells and trying to match the object with the hidden smell. They are able to express their opinions about their favourite smells and record their information. Last year the children visited a castle as part of a local study and compared their own village to an African village.

74. **Physical Development**

67. The children's fine motor skills are well developed and they show good pencil control, particularly when colouring. Most children are able to use scissors carefully although one or two children need more practice. In a physical education lesson, the children were able to run and skip in a controlled way avoiding contact with others and using space appropriately. The children were using the large apparatus with confidence when crawling along benches, jumping off the boxes, and twisting in and out of the climbing frame. During outside play the children are also encouraged to explore ways of using the large apparatus, on their own and with a friend. They make good progress in developing control over their movements. The children obviously enjoy their lessons and take great delight in demonstrating their abilities. The youngest children are able to undress themselves and change with little support from the adults in the room. The quality of teaching in this area is good. It presents challenges and develops appropriate skills.

75. **Creative Development**

68. The children are offered a wide range of activities and resources. As a result, they progress well. They have experience of colour mixing with paint, chalk and crayons. They are encouraged to draw their families and houses. Some of the drawings show good observational skills for such young children, particularly those in the Reception class. The children talk about shapes in mathematics and then use them to create pictures. The teachers provide good opportunities to use small and large construction kits and integrate music into areas of learning by singing rhymes such as 'Fat Sausages' to develop the children's ability to count.

76. **ENGLISH, MATHEMATICS AND SCIENCE**

76. **English**

69. In the National Curriculum reading tests for seven-year-olds in 1998, the pupils' attainment was well above the national average and in line with the average for schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In the test for writing, their attainment overall was above the national average but below the average of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. In both reading and writing the number of pupils achieving higher levels exceeded the national average.
70. The results of the 1999 tests for seven-year-olds were not quite as good because a higher than usual proportion of pupils is on the special educational needs register. However, their attainment remained above the national average in reading and writing, and the proportion of pupils attaining higher levels in writing rose slightly. The results of the 1999 tests are in line with those of schools where pupils come from similar backgrounds.

71. Analysis of the results of the tests over the three years from 1996 to 1998 indicates that overall standards, at the end of Key Stage 1, are consistently above the national average. More detailed analysis shows some variation in the standards achieved in reading and writing. The school has used this and other information to identify weaknesses in the reading performance of boys and has acted to remedy this. The school has also identified that, taken overall, writing is not as strong as reading. By the time pupils leave the school, overall standards in English are above average but here again writing is not as strong as reading or speaking and listening. The school has set itself targets to further improve standards in writing within the school development plan. The school should place particular emphasis on this initiative. **This is an issue for action.**
72. The school's literacy strategy is securely in place. The implementation of the strategy has been successful, with the teachers effectively teaching the various elements each day. There is an appropriate balance between guided reading and writing. The role of literacy is also well developed in other areas of the curriculum as the pupils are expected to use their reading and writing skills to research topics independently and to record events in their own words.
73. The inspection findings show that standards in speaking and listening are above average at the end of Key Stage 1. When the teachers discuss issues with their classes and encourage the pupils to join in, they do so with enthusiasm. The pupils voice their ideas with clarity, listen carefully to each other and follow instruction well. Most pupils are articulate and use a wide range of vocabulary. Standards in reading are above average. Most of the pupils read a variety of texts with fluency and understanding. The teaching of reading is well organised and all pupils, including the more able, are developing appropriate strategies for decoding unfamiliar words and using other clues in the text. They are all able to express their opinions about their favourite books and authors. Information skills are well taught and the majority of pupils know how to use the contents and index of reference books to retrieve specific information. By the end of Key Stage 1, almost all of the pupils are able to write competently for their age and most achieve the level expected of them. However, standards in writing are not as high as in other aspects of English. The pupils write for a variety of purposes including letters, diaries, instructions, factual writing and retelling favourite stories. An example of this was an attractive presentation of the Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch, written and illustrated by Year 2 pupils. The teaching also includes appropriate emphasis on practising important skills such as punctuation, spelling and handwriting. However, the pupils do not transfer all they have learned about punctuation and spelling into their free writing. However, taken overall the pupils are making good progress.
74. In Key Stage 2, the pupils continue to develop their literacy skills effectively, and to use them with increasing confidence and greater accuracy. They are confident speakers in a wide range of settings. They speak clearly and explain their ideas in class discussion and smaller groups. They listen carefully to their teachers and to each other and make pertinent contributions. An example of their abilities to verbalise their opinions was seen in an English lesson when they were involved in an in-depth discussion about poetry. They enjoy sharing their work with their peers. The pupils' reading skills are further developed and they find pleasure in reading an increasing variety of books. Many are fluent readers with a love of books and poetry. They express their opinions about their favourite books and authors, highlighting parts of the book they enjoy most. The more competent readers can make predictions and deductions from the text. The use of the library is encouraged and the pupils' information skills are practised as they undertake research for topics, particularly in history. The pupils successfully tackle a range of writing tasks including letter writing, imaginative stories, play scripts, poems and retelling stories. For example, some interesting poems are displayed in the Year 4 classroom showing a good use of vocabulary to describe 'Summer'. The pupils develop their writing skills in other areas of the curriculum such as the recording of science experiments and in thoughtful comments about historical events.
75. Progress in Key Stage 2 is good. The pupils further develop their reading skills, become

proficient readers and can express their preferences articulately. Their writing improves as they use an increasingly wide vocabulary. It is possible to track the progress in writing from the first attempts of emergent writing to the interesting and imaginative writing of the Year 4 pupils. However, despite an emphasis on spelling and regular tests in both key stages, many pupils do not consistently spell correctly or use punctuation effectively in their free writing.

76. The provision for the pupils with special educational needs is good. They either receive additional support in the classroom or are withdrawn. Alternatively, the general class task is modified to their particular needs and abilities. As a result of good organisation and the careful matching of work, these pupils make good progress.
77. The pupils in both key stages enjoy their literacy sessions and are keen to do well. They listen attentively during the introductory part of the literacy hour, are keen to answer questions and enthusiastically join in the discussion. The pupils respond positively in group reading especially when reading play scripts or poetry. They co-operate with each other during group sessions and are able to work sensibly on their own without direct adult supervision. All pupils expressed an enjoyment in reading and regularly read both in school and at home. They also concentrate well when writing and many take a pride in their presentation. They share resources and ideas respecting each other's opinions and views.
78. The quality of the teaching in both key stages is good. The lessons are thoroughly planned with careful attention to ensure the progression of skills. The activities are modified to match the abilities of the pupils with appropriate challenges for all. Each lesson begins with an introductory class session followed by group activities and reading. All the lessons observed ended with a whole class session in which the pupils were encouraged to share their work with their peers. The teachers encourage the pupils, expect them to do their best and on some occasions successfully transmit their own enthusiasm. For example, in one Year 4 lesson the teacher read a poem about an engine driver so rhythmically that the pupils were almost beating time! The teachers' good use of questioning helps to extend their pupils' knowledge and challenges them to express their views. All of the teachers have good relationships with the pupils and manage them well.
79. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic, and regularly monitors the teachers' planning to ensure continuity and progression. The pupils' work is also scrutinised so that standards can be monitored. Although the library is a very pleasant area, there is insufficient space for a class group to work. There is also a lack of up to date reference books and a limited choice of fiction. The pupils have good experiences in drama when they perform their Christmas play and lead assemblies. Book weeks, visits from a storyteller and live theatre enhance the pupils' language curriculum.
87. **Mathematics**
80. Since the last inspection standards have consistently exceeded the national averages. In the 1998 national tests for seven-year-olds, the results exceeded the national average and the average of schools with pupils from similar backgrounds. The proportion of pupils achieving the higher levels was close to the national average. However, the results of the tests taken in 1999 were not as high as in previous years. This is because there was a higher proportion of pupils than usual on the special educational needs register. Consequently, the results were in line with the national average and below the average for schools where pupils come from similar backgrounds. Good standards are maintained in Key Stage 2, and by the time they leave the school a high proportion of the pupils attains the level expected of them and a good number exceed it.
81. The inspection evidence indicates that the proportion of pupils reaching the expected level for

seven-year-olds continues to be similar to the average, but by Year 4 standards are above average. The fluctuations in attainment reflect the uneven distribution of pupils with special educational needs within the school. The school has reflected this situation in its annual targets. Nevertheless, the pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress as they move through the school. This is because the quality of teaching is good, the subject is well led and assessment and analysis of test results are used effectively by the teachers.

82. The pupils steadily build their knowledge and understanding through Key Stage 1 so that most of the pupils attain the levels expected of seven-year-olds. They have a secure understanding of place value and can solve simple problems using addition and subtraction. Most pupils name and describe the properties of simple two-dimensional shapes and are confident to tell the time to half past the hour. The pupils also collect data, display it using bar graphs and extract simple information. Some higher attaining pupils can work out the change after 'buying' a range of goods and are also confident using everyday fractions.
83. By the end of Year 4, the pupils handle more demanding numbers in their work. Almost all pupils can successfully add and subtract money up to one pound, and higher attaining pupils work with much larger sums. Most pupils can multiply by 2, 3, 4 and 5. Some can also do simple division sums. The pupils explore the properties of interesting two-dimensional shapes and recognise their attributes.
84. Throughout the school, mathematics lessons now begin with a mental arithmetic session that is beneficially extending the pupils mathematical vocabulary and promoting a range of approaches to handling number problems. For example, at the beginning of a Year 3 lesson, the pupils were involved in a very good activity to help them to recognise numbers to 1000 and also improve their ability to increase and decrease them by both large and small numbers.
85. The pupils look forward to mathematics lessons. They enjoy their work, are motivated and respond positively to the challenges set by their teachers. The pupils are willing to discuss their work and they listen carefully to the contributions of others. This is particularly evident when well focussed questioning challenges them. They use a range of methods to solve problems and are prepared to take advice and evaluate the suggestions made by others.
86. The quality of the teaching is good overall. It is particularly strong in Year 3 where the teaching of mathematics is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when there was considerable variation. This is no longer the case and there is now a high level of consistency. The teachers are confident and have a good knowledge and understanding of mathematics. There is very good planning of lessons, with the teachers taking great care to match their teaching methods to the needs of the pupils. The lesson plans clearly identify what the pupils will learn, the tasks they will undertake and the resources they will use. The tasks are modified for different ability groups and this underpins the good progress that the pupils make. The pupils with special educational needs are often well supported by a classroom assistant. Regular assessment is built in to the planning and the assessments made in each lesson are then used in the planning of subsequent work. The teachers' good questioning skills and their use of appropriate mathematical vocabulary are evident in all lessons. In the most successful lessons, the teacher makes clear to the pupils what she expects them to learn, and the teacher's infectious enthusiasm ensures that the activities move along at a rapid pace. Whole class sessions are often used effectively to ascertain how much the pupils have understood. Relationships between the teachers and the pupils are very good and this makes a significant impact on progress.
87. The recording of pupils' attainment and progress is good. The information the teachers collect is used effectively for setting targets and planning the next stage in the pupils' learning. Scrutiny of pupils' work is carefully undertaken through regular monitoring and this

adds to information from formal tests that is carefully analysed by the headteacher and used to monitor the progress of both individuals and each cohort.

95. **Science**

88. The results of the National Curriculum assessments of seven-year-olds in science were in line with the national average in 1998. The proportion of pupils attaining higher levels was similarly in line with the national average. Analysis of the 1999 results shows a considerable improvement with all pupils achieving the expected level, although the proportion attaining higher levels remained in line with the national average. The inspection evidence indicates that, in the current year, standards are better than average. Scrutiny of the pupils' work and observation of lessons suggests that most are working at the expected level by the age of seven and by the age of nine a good proportion are exceeding expectations. Overall, standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 are above average.
89. The pupils in both key stages have a broad knowledge that covers the key areas of life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes. Analysis of test data shows that the pupils have a particularly strong knowledge of physical processes. They are making good progress in extending their knowledge as they move through the school. Their skills in investigative and experimental science are also being successfully fostered through a good range of activities; for example, in Key Stage 1, where the pupils carried out an experiment to find the warmest place in the room. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils were exploring forces by sorting objects that can be operated by pushing or pulling. Through this work they were making good progress in their ability to make observations and record them accurately. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils were carrying out experiments to establish that sounds and vibration are related. The pupils demonstrated that they can carry out an investigation by making predictions, recording their observations and suggesting simple explanations. Taken overall, the progress of pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, is good.
90. In almost all of the lessons seen, the teaching was good. The lessons are well prepared and based on half termly plans. These plans ensure continuity in learning and effectively support the teaching. The lesson plans clearly set out what the pupils will learn and help the teachers to focus on the knowledge and skills the pupils are expected to develop in the lesson. The teachers prepare the resources they need and manage practical activities efficiently. Consequently, the pupils make good progress.
91. The lessons often begin with a review of recent learning, move along at a brisk pace and are effectively drawn together at the end. All these features were evident, for example, in successful lessons on sound in Year 3. The teachers make important interventions to support, direct and develop the pupils' learning. This was a particularly important feature of a Year 2 lesson where the teacher helped the pupils to make good progress in their understanding of forces. The teachers encourage the pupils to record their findings in a number of different ways and expect the older pupils to generate their own methods of recording. The marking of the pupils' work is helpful and generally encouraging.
92. The science curriculum is effectively managed. The pupils' work contains a good balance of recording sheets and their own written records, and increasing consideration is being given to developing this style of writing as part of the pupils' literacy development. Conversely, some teachers are also using content from the science curriculum in the 'literacy hour'; this is a positive development. The pupils use their mathematical skills effectively in the science curriculum but information technology is not used sufficiently to collect and process information.
93. In all of the lessons seen, the pupils behaved well, contributed to discussions, listened to their teachers and concentrated on the tasks they had been set. Their attitudes and responses in

science lessons are very positive and aid the good progress they make.

101. OTHER SUBJECTS

Information Technology

94. The pupils are attaining appropriate levels both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school. There are some examples of the pupils' work that show they are working at higher levels. For example, Year 4 pupils produced programmes for a 'May Fayre' that used a number of desktop publishing features and successfully merged text and images.
95. The school has responded very positively to the last inspection report and implemented a systematic approach to planning and teaching information technology. There are now comprehensive plans that set out clearly the skills and knowledge the pupils will be taught as they move through the school. These plans cover all aspects of information technology and are linked to an increasingly broad range of software. However, at the present time the use of information technology is not fully integrated into other subjects of the curriculum and consequently the school is not making the fullest use of the resources it has available. Much of the hardware is of good quality but the school has fewer computers than usual.
96. The pupils are making satisfactory progress. They are being taught, for example, how to mark and move text and are given an opportunity to practice new skills. However, at the present time they are not presented with the breadth of opportunities to apply their skills in different contexts across the curriculum. Nevertheless, when they do use information technology they are industrious and show considerable interest in the tasks they have been set.
97. Only a few examples of the direct teaching of information technology were observed. However, in these situations the teaching was good. For example, in Year 3 the pupils were well supported in a lesson linked to a literacy activity on direct speech. They were using text boxes and graphics to produce speech bubbles to both enhance their information technology skills and reinforce their work on direct speech. The teachers use both small group and whole class activities in a purposeful manner. In Key Stage 1, a teacher successfully introduced aspects of information handling through an investigation into how the pupils travel to school. This lesson focused clearly on ways in which information can be presented so that is easy to interpret. The aim was clear and progress was skilfully reviewed at the end of the lesson.
98. In order to further improve the provision for information technology the school should take every available opportunity to increase its resources and make the fullest use of all the resources that are available. **This is an issue for action.**

Religious education

99. The pupils are making sound progress and developing an appropriate knowledge of Christianity and other major world faiths in line with the expectations of the agreed syllabus. In both key stages, the written recording is limited as much of the work is undertaken through discussion. However, when talking to the pupils in Key Stage 1 it is clear that they know about Christianity and the life of Jesus although some pupils are uncertain about other faiths. The environment fascinates them and as a result of discussing a story called, "Why the Sky is Blue?" they had posed some very interesting and difficult questions for discussion. The pupils in Key Stage 2 proved to be knowledgeable about aspects of Judaism including the Torah and how it is read, the Sabbath celebrations and the importance of 'not doing anything on the Sabbath'. They were able to explain the Easter story and the relevance of Easter eggs. They

also discussed their visit to the church, what they saw there and important events, such as baptism.

100. The pupils in both key stages are interested and well motivated. In the lessons observed in Key Stage 2, the pupils listened carefully to their teachers and expressed their opinions with confidence. They worked well together sharing their ideas and resources and talking to each other about their experiences of celebrations within the family. There is a positive attitude towards the subject and many pupils take pride in the presentation of their work.
101. No teaching was observed in Key Stage 1, but two lessons were seen in Key Stage 2. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. The lessons are well planned with assessment opportunities highlighted. The pupils are encouraged to express their opinions and to share their experiences with others. The teachers have a good relationship with their classes and offer them support through praise and appropriate intervention.
102. Since the last inspection further guidance has been produced on the sort of questions the teachers should be asking their pupils. This has given the teachers the confidence to lead in-depth discussions and as a result there is less written recording. The co-ordinator's monitoring of these new approaches indicates they are having a positive effect on the teaching of religious education.

History, Geography, Art, Design and Technology, Music and Physical education

110.

103. In history and geography, the inspection evidence indicates that at the end of Key Stage 1 the quality of the pupils' work is in line with what is expected for this age group, and the standard in Key Stage 2 is better than expected of eight and nine year olds. The last inspection stated that much of the written work lacked sufficient attention to interpretations of history and that pupils did not have sufficient opportunities to ask their own questions and pursue their own lines of enquiry. This was particularly so for the older more able pupils. This is no longer the case. The older pupils are now expected to research the topics using, for example, books and CDROM. These pupils have covered a good range of work that is recorded in different ways in their books. A notable feature of their work is the extent of their own writing and the detail of their explanations. It is clear when talking to the pupils that they enjoy both history and geography, are making good progress and increasing their knowledge.
104. The pupils in Key Stage 1 have visited Orford Castle and are able to describe its key features and some of the facts they discovered. In Key Stage 2, the older pupils enthusiastically discussed the Victorian day the school had held when everyone was expected to dress in costume. The lessons were delivered in the Victorian way with the pupils writing on slates. As a result, the pupils were able to make comparisons with life in the past and give clear views about why they would not like to have lived during the Victorian era. In their current historical investigation into the Ancient Greek civilisation, the pupils are encouraged to find relevant information. Their work shows they are increasing the breadth of their knowledge and developing their historical skills. The pupils are using artefacts successfully and links with other subjects, such as art, allow them to explore these artefacts. They did so, for example, by making clay pots in the style of Greek urns.
105. In Key Stage 1, the pupils recall work they have done about Africa. They talk about the similarities and differences between their own village and life in Africa and express opinions as to why they would not like to live there. During the study of a geography unit on India the pupils in Key Stage 2 had the opportunity to learn, not only about life in the villages and the towns of India but also about Indian Dance. The pupils were fascinated with this form of dance especially the importance of the hand movements for telling of the story. They also

listened to Indian music and developed a greater understanding of Indian life and culture.

106. The pupils have a sound knowledge of the local area and know that maps show how the village has developed and changed over the last three hundred years. They compared various maps and took photographs to record the village today. As a result of the broad range of activities they undertake and the good use of the locality, the pupils are developing a good sense of chronology, an understanding of their own area and how to compare and contrast it with others.
107. The quality of the pupils' work in art is in line with that expected for pupils of this age. There are a number of interesting wall displays of the pupils' artwork that are of good quality, such as those influenced by the work of Van Gogh and Monet. The pupils' artwork both on display and in their folders indicates that they progress well as they move through the school producing work that shows greater control and a broadening application of techniques, for example, in printing. The pupils are using a good range of media effectively and produce work in watercolour, pastel and pencil which shows an increasing attention to detail and in some cases an ability to create atmosphere by the time they reach Year 3. In one very good lesson in Year 2 the teacher introduced weaving. The lesson was very thoroughly planned and based on a plan for the half term that clearly set out how activities were to build and develop the pupils' knowledge and skills. The pupils used wool for the warp and textiles to weave and as a result of good support and their own careful and positive approach made very good progress in a short time.
108. In design and technology the quality of the products made by the pupils is of good standard with pupils developing the designing and making skills expected for their ages at an appropriate rate. They undertake a wide range of carefully planned activities that contribute to a broad and balanced curriculum. The school has taken steps to improve the provision for design technology through further staff training, more systematic planning and enhanced resources. This has resulted in a significant improvement in the teaching and learning since the time of the last inspection. The youngest pupils investigate and make flaps and levers in 'pop up' books and thereby develop their ability to shape, cut and join. In Year 1, the pupils extend and broaden their skills when they design and make a home for a hamster. In Year 2 the pupils make picture frames and in Year 3 they successfully bring together their art, design technology and information technology skills to make calendars with patterns created by using the LOGO computer program. Working on a major project with Year 8 pupils from the middle school, the oldest children continue to develop and extend their skills by building a Chinese dragon for a local parade.
109. The quality of the pupils' work in music is in line with expectations. The whole school was heard singing during hymn practice and assemblies. The pupils sing in tune with clear words, often from memory and with good dynamics. They are able to keep the beat and have a good sense of rhythm. An example of this was seen during a Year 4 music lesson when the pupils were creating their own rap songs. The pupils have a good range of opportunities to use percussion instruments and to write their own compositions, which they are encouraged to record using non-standard notation. "Peter and the Wolf" and "The Young Persons' Guide to the Orchestra" are used to familiarise the pupils with the various orchestral instruments and information is carefully recorded in their music books. Through a broad range of musical activities, the pupils are making good progress. The teachers in Key Stage 1 make good use of the scheme of work to support their planning, but at the present time the scheme of work does not extend to Key Stage 2 and consequently the school cannot ensure progression and continuity in the development of musical skills.
110. The pupils enjoy music. Some pupils expressed a preference for composition but all sing with enthusiasm. The younger pupils participate fully in number and action songs with obvious pleasure. They work well together and share ideas. They treat the percussion instruments with

respect and handle them appropriately. Good opportunities to participate in extra-curricular musical activities are offered through recorder groups and the choir.

111. The quality of the pupils' performance in physical education is similar to that expected of this age group. The school places particular emphasis of the aesthetic elements of dance in which the pupils' performance is of a higher standard than usual. In Key Stage 1, the pupils are developing their skills of sending and receiving a ball by kicking it. In one lesson ,they demonstrated reasonable control and through a clearly structured series of activities improved their ability to pass a ball accurately with the side of the foot. The teacher also gave particularly helpful support to individual pupils with special educational needs that helped to make a small, but nevertheless important, improvement in their ability to hop. In a Year 3 movement and dance lesson, the pupils warmed up by 'chewing gum,' before 'stretching it' and try to throw it away when the gum was 'stuck' to their fingers. This lesson developed very well because the teacher made excellent use of links with the work the pupils were doing in literacy. They used the characters from Roald Dahl's 'Fantastic Mr Fox' and in their movement created sequences to represent fat, short, lean and mean. This was a very good lesson because the teacher confidently demonstrated movements with an enthusiasm that transferred to the pupils. Consequently, they made very good progress.
112. The school has an open air swimming pool on the site. Although this is only used during the warmer months it plays a crucial part in the progress the pupils make. As a result, almost all pupils can swim confidently by the time they leave the school.

120. **PART C: INSPECTION DATA**

120. **SUMMARY OF INSPECTION EVIDENCE**

113. The school was inspected by a team of 3 inspectors over a period of 3.5 days. Together they completed a total of 9 inspection days, during which 36 hours of lesson observation and scrutiny of pupils' work were undertaken.
114. Thirty-eight lessons were observed either wholly or in part. A representative sample of pupils' work was scrutinised, covering all age groups and including examples from the last academic year.
115. All subjects taught during the inspection were observed, but it was only possible to see a small number of lessons in religious education, history, art and music. No geography lessons were taught during the inspection. All the available evidence was used to assess the standards the pupils are attaining and the progress they are making in these subjects.
116. The pupils were also observed arriving at and leaving school, during registration and on the playground. Discussions were held with the pupils about their work. A representative sample of pupils was heard to read in all year groups.
117. Discussions were held with the headteacher, the teachers, and some members of the non-teaching staff. The registered inspector met with the chair and two other member of governing body during the inspection.
118. Before the inspection, a meeting to seek the views of parents was attended by 18 parents. Questionnaire responses were received from 44 parents (30 per cent). In addition, a small number of parents spoke with inspectors during the inspection week.
119. The school development plan, curriculum plans, budget papers, policy documents, the teachers' planning, pupils' records, reports to parents and attendance registers were all analysed.
120. Most of the assemblies held during the inspection were attended.

128. **DATA AND INDICATORS**

128. **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 – Y4	145	1	21	10
Nursery Unit	10	0	0	N/A

128. **Teachers and classes**

128. **Qualified teachers (YR – Y4)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):

7

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

20.7

128. **Education support staff (YR – Y4)**

Total number of education support staff:

3

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

28

128. **Qualified teachers (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of qualified teachers (full-time equivalent):

0.5

Number of pupils per qualified teacher:

20

128. **Education support staff (Nursery school, classes or unit)**

Total number of education support staff:

1

Total aggregate hours worked each week:

17.5

Average class size:

24.2

128. **Financial data**

Financial year:

1998/99

£

Total Income	259 103.00
Total Expenditure	264 958.00
Expenditure per pupil	1698.45
Balance brought forward from previous year	20 410.00
Balance carried forward to next year	14 555.00

128. **PARENTAL SURVEY**

Number of questionnaires sent out:	145
Number of questionnaires returned:	44

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	43	45	9	2	0
I would find it easy to approach the school with questions or problems to do with my child(ren)	57	39	5	0	0
The school handles complaints from parents well	21	44	31	5	0
The school gives me a clear understanding of what is taught	35	53	9	2	0
The school keeps me well informed about my child(ren)'s progress	33	40	16	12	0
The school enables my child(ren) to achieve a good standard of work	48	43	7	2	0
The school encourages children to get involved in more than just their daily lessons	48	39	11	2	0
I am satisfied with the work that my child(ren) is/are expected to do at home	40	47	5	7	2
The school's values and attitudes have a positive effect on my child(ren)	50	39	9	2	0
The school achieves high standards of good behaviour	34	52	7	7	0
My child(ren) like(s) school	34	52	7	0	0