

INSPECTION REPORT

ORMESBY MIDDLE SCHOOL

Ormesby St Margaret, Great Yarmouth

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120917

Mr. A.T.George

Reporting inspector: Ian Curtis
3689

Dates of inspection: 19th – 22nd June 2000

Inspection number: 188529

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Middle deemed primary
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	8 to 12
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Ormesby Middle School North Road Ormesby St. Margaret Great Yarmouth, Norfolk
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body, Ormesby Middle School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr. D. Hill
Date of previous inspection:	1 st July 1996

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Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Ian Curtis	Registered inspector	Science	What sort of school is it?
		Art	The school's results and pupils' achievements
		Geography	How well are pupils taught?
			How well is the school led and managed?
Brian Halling	Lay inspector		Pupil' attitudes, values and personal development.
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Chris Corps	Team inspector	English	
		French	
		Music	
		Equal Opportunities	
Peter Scott	Team inspector	Information technology	
		Design and technology	
		History	
		Special educational needs	
Ian Gardner	Team inspector	Mathematics	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Physical education	
		Religious education	

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The Registrar
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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Ormesby Middle School serves the parishes of Ormesby St Margaret, Ormesby St Michael, Filby, Scratby, California, Runham, Stokesby and Mautby on the east coast of Norfolk, just north of Great Yarmouth. About one in six pupils are from outside the traditional catchment area of the school. The school caters for pupils from the ages of eight to twelve. There are currently 228 pupils, 119 girls and 109 boys. There are no pupils from minority ethnic backgrounds.

Although the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is below that normally found in similar schools, the proportion with statements of special need is nearly twice the national average. The achievement of pupils on entry to the school is about average. The number of pupils who are entitled to a free school meal is not significantly different from that found in many schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school. Standards are above average in a number of subjects, including science. It is well led. Almost all the teaching is at least satisfactory, and much of it is good. It is a happy school in which pupils are made to feel cared for and valued. Almost all enjoy their lives at the school. The school provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils' achievements in reading, science, design and technology, geography and French are higher than those in many schools.
- Standards in music are outstanding.
- Pupils are very well behaved.
- The school is well led.
- Pupils have a good understanding of moral issues such as fairness and honesty. They relate well to each other and their social development is good.
- Almost all the teaching is at least satisfactory, much is good, and some is excellent.
- Pupils with profound special educational needs are supported well and make good progress.
- Learning in class is extended successfully by opportunities to visit places of interest linked to pupils' studies.

What could be improved

- Standards in information technology are not high enough.
- Some lessons are too long and this leads to some inefficient use of time.
- Pupils are not given enough opportunity to develop their reasoning skills or to become more independent in their learning. This leads to under-achievement by the most able pupils in some subjects.
- There is insufficient monitoring of teaching and learning.
- Not enough attention is given to developing pupils' awareness of other cultural traditions.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since the last inspection in July 1996. Standards in English, mathematics and science are similar to those found previously. In only one subject, information technology, are standards - which were good in 1996 - now lower than those expected. Teaching has improved. Only six percent of lessons are now judged to be unsatisfactory, compared with eleven percent four years ago.

In response to the action points from the last inspection, the school now provides much clearer guidance to teachers on what to teach and when to teach it. Pupils' performance is now analysed very thoroughly and the information is used to bring about improvements. This has particularly been the case in English. There is closer monitoring of the curriculum and spending, but the monitoring of teaching and learning still needs to be more rigorous.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with			
	All schools			similar schools
	1997	1998	1999	1999
English	D	C	E	E
Mathematics	D	C	C	D
Science	D	C	B	B

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

The results show a gradual improvement over the last three years, except in English. The poor performance in English in 1999 was due to low results in writing. In response to these results, the school has placed much greater emphasis on the teaching of writing. This has resulted in marked improvement, not only in the work of those pupils in Year 7 who took the tests in 1999, but throughout the school. Results in writing are now much closer to those expected. Standards in reading are above average. This improvement is confirmed by the provisional results in this year's tests.

The school's successful adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy has led to improved standards, especially in mental mathematics. Pupils have a good knowledge of number and can calculate accurately. Their understanding of the relationships between numbers is weaker. Standards in science remain above average. Older pupils in particular make good progress in the subject. By the time that they leave the school at twelve, pupils are achieving very high standards in music. Standards are also good in geography, design and technology and French.

The targets the school has set for pupils this year are realistic, but those for subsequent years are not ambitious enough. They are determined by reference to what pupils are predicted to achieve, rather than what they might achieve with enhanced teaching.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. According to their parents, almost all pupils like school. They are keen to learn and take a pride in what they do. In lessons, pupils are diligent, and responsive to what they are asked to do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils move about the school in an orderly manner. They behave sensibly in class and in the playground. There was no evidence of bullying or aggressive behaviour, and there have been no exclusions for poor behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils enjoy each other's company and have respect for each other's feelings and sensitivities. There is much good humour and laughter in the school. Pupils are particularly caring and mindful in their relationships with pupils with special educational needs.
Attendance	Satisfactory, although there is a noticeable drop in attendance in the summer months because of holidays taken when the school is in session.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Aged 7-11 years	aged 12 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

Most of the teaching is at least satisfactory; in only one lesson in sixteen is it unsatisfactory. Over half the teaching is good, and there is some very good and excellent teaching. There is effective teaching throughout the school, and good teaching was observed in all year groups. Similarly the unsatisfactory lessons were not confined to any one class or year group.

The most effective teaching was observed in lessons where the teacher had obvious expertise in, and enthusiasm for the subject. This was particularly the case in lessons in English, science, music and geography. Lessons are usually planned thoroughly. Teachers explain new work and ideas well and manage behaviour effectively. Relationships with pupils are good, and there is often an abundance of good humour in the classroom. Where teaching is unsatisfactory it is often because the pace is too slow and poor use is made of the time. This occurs most frequently when lessons are excessively long. Not all teachers have sufficient expertise and confidence to teach some subjects, especially art and information technology. In some lessons, opportunities are missed to develop pupils' reasoning and deeper understanding through more challenging questioning and investigation.

Much of the teaching of English is good. Teachers convey their enthusiasm for books to pupils and teach them the skills they need to gain as much as they can from their reading. The teaching of writing is much improved. Appropriate emphasis is now given to ensuring that pupils learn how to write accurately for a range of purposes, but there are relatively few opportunities for pupils to develop their speaking skills. The teaching of mathematics is sound. There is much good teaching, but occasional lessons are unsatisfactory. Teachers have adopted the National Numeracy Strategy and, through this, there is a greater concentration on improving pupils' ability to calculate mentally.

Pupils with more profound special educational needs are supported well and make good progress. Pupils are organised into groups with others of similar ability for some subjects. Teachers use this system well to provide suitable work for the majority of pupils, but there remains a need to stretch the most able pupils even more.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is suitably broad and there is an appropriate emphasis on teaching pupils the skills of literacy and use of number. There are too few planned opportunities for pupils to improve and practise their speaking skills. Some of the lessons are too long.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for pupils with statements of special educational needs is very good. They are well-supported in class and make good progress. There are weaknesses in the provision for pupils with less profound needs. The targets set for them are sometimes too general and do not give support staff a clear enough picture of what needs to be done.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision for pupils' moral development is very good, and that for their social development is good. They acquire a good understanding of moral principles such as fairness, justice and honesty, and learn the benefits of working together. Their spiritual development is satisfactory, but opportunities are occasionally missed to deepen their awareness. They receive a good grounding in their own cultural traditions, but there is little opportunity to become familiar with other non-European traditions.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. There is a strong ethos of care and support in the school. Pupils are made to feel valued and that their opinions count. Their relationships with staff are such that they can approach them with any difficulties, confident that they will be listened to sympathetically. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour and for checking pupils' progress are good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well led by the headteacher and his deputy. Through close collaboration and a shared sense of purpose, they give a clear lead to the work of the school. One result of this is that all staff work well as a team. Teachers charged with co-ordinating the work of different year groups, do so successfully. Those teachers who have responsibility for co-ordinating work in subjects have insufficient opportunity for monitoring learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have been effective in setting an appropriate tone for the school. They work closely with senior staff in moving the school forward, and have a good understanding of how the school works. They are supportive and keep a close watch on progress. By means of an informative newsletter, they keep parents abreast of what is happening at the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has very good systems for monitoring and analysing the performance of pupils. Although there has been some monitoring of teaching and learning, this has not been rigorous enough to identify some of the weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Finances are controlled and managed efficiently. In deciding on how funds are to be spent, highest priority is given appropriately to those measures that will improve standards. The school development plan is comprehensive, and provides a useful framework for future improvement. The school is vigilant in ensuring that it receives best value for the money it spends and there is very little wastage of resources. The layout of the school creates difficulties in terms of accessibility and disruption to lessons.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school. • The progress made by their children. • Standards of behaviour. • The way in which the school helps pupils to become mature and responsible. • The openness of the school and the sense that any concerns are listened to sympathetically. • The use made of homework in supplementing the work in class.. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The narrow range of activities for pupils to take part in outside normal school hours.

The inspection team agrees with the views expressed by parents. The school works well in partnership with parents.

This is a caring school in which pupils are made to feel valued. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions and to behave in a mature and sensible way. Many of the teachers manage to convey their own enthusiasm for what they are teaching, and this encourages pupils to do well. Homework is used productively to extend learning in English and mathematics. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop their interest and skills in music at lunchtimes and after school, but the range of other activities – particularly sport – is very limited.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In 1999, the latest year for which comparative results are available, pupils achieved results in the national tests for eleven year-olds that were well below average in English, about average in mathematics and above average in science. When compared with similar schools with a similar intake – as measured by the numbers entitled to a free school meal - the results remained well below average in English and above in science. They were, however, below average in mathematics. The poor results in English were as a result of low standards in writing. The results in reading were close to the national average.
2. Taking the longer term view, the results in 1999 in mathematics and science were an improvement on those in 1997, the year following the last inspection. Results in English, improved in 1998 but dipped again in 1999.
3. Boys have achieved higher results in mathematics than girls in all years since 1997. There is no similar pattern in the results in English and science. For example, whereas boys did significantly better than girls in English in 1998, the situation was reversed the following year, with girls out-performing boys. In science, boys have tended to perform better than girls, but the difference is not so marked as in mathematics. Current inspection evidence indicates that boys are generally achieving higher results than girls in mathematics, but the differences in English and science are not significant.
4. In response to the poor results in 1999, the school embarked on a major overhaul of the way that writing was taught. A programme, to which the school gave the title 'New Directions', sought to develop writing skills in accordance with the recommendations of the National Literacy Strategy, but with enhanced opportunities for writing. Inspection evidence indicates that this has paid off. The standards of writing achieved by pupils in Year 6 are now much closer to those expected, and there has been a marked improvement in the work of Year 7 pupils, that is those pupils who were tested in 1999. Some of the writing now produced is of high quality. Pupils know how to draft their work and to correct it before producing their final piece. In their writing, they recognise the need to consider the person reading it and can vary it according to the audience. Standards in spelling are about average, although some of the lower attaining pupils have few strategies beyond sounding out the word. The presentation of work is usually good, with pupils taking care over what the writing looks like and how they set it out. This improvement in writing is confirmed by the provisional results in the tests in 2000.
5. Standards in reading are above average. By the time that they leave the school at the age of twelve, most pupils are fluent readers. They are able to use a range of strategies to help them identify words that are unfamiliar to them, including breaking the word down into its different sounds and looking at the word in the context of the sentence. Those pupils who struggle with their reading do so most often because they find it difficult to blend separate sounds together. Pupils generally have a good understanding of what they read, and are able to scan quickly to discover the main points in the text. In teaching reading, the school places considerable importance on reading for information, but pupils have relatively few opportunities to use their skills in research.
6. Pupils throughout the school are good listeners, and can generally recall what they have been told. Most are able to speak clearly and to communicate their thoughts

and ideas successfully. The lack of opportunities to develop their speaking skills through activities such as drama and debate means that they are not developed as well as they might be.

7. Attainment in mathematics at eleven and twelve is broadly average. By the time that they leave, most pupils can calculate accurately, using a variety of methods to arrive at their final answer. Their recall of number facts, such as multiplication tables, is good, but their understanding of the relationships between numbers – as in algebra – is weaker. Pupils can identify correctly the names and properties of the more common two- and three-dimensional shapes. By twelve, more able pupils can use formulae to find the area of shapes such as circles.
8. By eleven, pupils are attaining standards that are above average in science. Good progress is maintained in Year 7 so that by the time that they leave, pupils' attainment remains above that normally found. As they pass through the school, pupils acquire a good basic knowledge of scientific facts. They are able to relate these facts to the evidence that they discover through experiments. They know what to do in order to make an experiment successful, recognising the need for careful measurement and control of possible variables.
9. Standards in the other subjects taught are summarised as follows:

Subject	Standards at eleven	Standards at twelve
Art	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Design and technology	Good	Good
French	Not taught	Good
Geography	Good	Good
History	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Information technology	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Music	Very high	Very high
Physical education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Religious education	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

10. Pupils acquire a broad range of skills and techniques in art, and there are examples of individual work of good quality. Because teachers do not have sufficient confidence and expertise in the subject, the more talented pupils are not being stretched enough. In design and technology, pupils become adept at making models and other artefacts, using a range of materials. There is less emphasis on design, but this aspect of their capability is satisfactory overall.
11. As a result of skilful and stimulating teaching, pupils make a good start to learning French. By the end of Year 7, most pupils know sufficient words to conduct, with some confidence, a simple conversation in French. Their pronunciation is usually accurate.
12. The experience of visiting localities nearby and in other parts of the country helps pupils to develop a good understanding of geography. They know about the processes that shape the land and are aware of the ways in which people adapt to living in different localities. Skills in reading and interpreting maps are good. In history, pupils acquire a good sense of chronology and can recall the more significant events in, and features of, the periods that they have studied. By twelve, they can discriminate between different sources of historical information, recognising that some are more reliable than others.
13. Standards in information technology are below those expected. Pupils have relatively few opportunities to use computers at school. Whilst they have had experience in

using, for example, computer programs for writing and editing text, and analysing and interpreting data, their skills are not as well developed as those normally found. They understand how information technology can be used for control, but have very little experience of modelling.

14. Standards in all aspects of music are very high and the subject is a major strength. Pupils sing tunefully and with considerable energy and enthusiasm. Several can play an instrument, and have a number of opportunities each week to practise as part of a large school orchestra. They are able to compose tunes, and the knowledge they exhibit in talking about music and composers is impressive. Progress in physical education is satisfactory and standards are similar to those found in many schools. By eleven, almost all pupils are able to swim the twenty-five metres expected by this age. Standards in gymnastics are satisfactory, and there are examples of good work in all year groups. Pupils have reasonable skills in team games, but there are few opportunities for them to put these into practice in competitive sports outside the normal school day. Consequently the achievement of some pupils is not as high as it might be.
15. In religious education, the standards broadly match the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus. Pupils' knowledge of different beliefs and religious traditions is sound, but there is little depth to their understanding of religious symbolism and the central role that faith has in the lives of many people. There are too few opportunities for pupils to discuss or to question matters of faith, or to reflect on their own beliefs.
16. Pupils with statements of special educational needs make good progress, especially in English. They are supported well in class, and there are many opportunities for them to talk about their work. Teachers actively involve them in class discussions, with the result that they grow in confidence and achieve well. The progress of other pupils with special needs is generally satisfactory, although for some the very general nature of the targets set for them means that it is difficult for them to demonstrate how much progress they have actually made.
17. Teachers use the system of grouping pupils for some subjects effectively to ensure that there is a reasonable match of activity to pupils' ability to tackle it. This leads to sufficiently challenging work for more able pupils, particularly in English and science. In some lessons, however, pupils are not challenged to think hard enough, or to reason things out for themselves. This has the effect of restricting the rate of progress, particularly of the most able and gifted pupils. This was typical of work in a number of subjects, but was most evident in some of the work in mathematics.
18. The school is making good progress towards achieving the targets it has set itself. The targets themselves are, however, insufficiently ambitious. They are determined by reference to what pupils are predicted to achieve, rather than what they might achieve with enhanced teaching.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

19. Pupils' attitudes are good. They are happy coming to school and display a positive approach to their work in the classroom. Most pupils are diligent, responsive and willing to contribute to discussions and practical work. They participate enthusiastically in extra-curricular activities, particularly musical performance, and in a range of events to raise funds for charities. They appreciate and respect the facilities of the school, which is evident from the absence of graffiti and gratuitous damage. Pupils with special educational needs have a very positive attitude to their work, which reflects the effective nature of the support they receive. When suitably challenged, most pupils are able to study independently and complete set tasks.

20. The standard of pupils' behaviour, both in and out of the classroom, is consistently very good. They move around the school in an orderly manner, despite the cramped conditions, and show due consideration for their fellow pupils, teachers and visitors. The school takes a low key approach to discipline, and pupils respond well, socialising in the hall at break time and playing games in the playground with little intervention needed from the staff. There is no evidence of bullying or aggressive behaviour; very few incidents require intervention from the head teacher. There have been no pupil exclusions during the last year. The very good school ethos is built on sound values, and it is clearly a major strength of the school.
21. Pupils' relationships with each other and with teachers and support staff are very good. They work co-operatively in the classroom, in pairs, small groups and as a whole class. All the staff are approachable and encourage dialogue; pupils respond with appropriate courtesy and respect. Teachers understand the needs of individual pupils, which fosters positive relationships that directly benefit the quality of their learning. Pupils are prepared to exchange views and reflect on the views of others in personal discussions during lessons and in assemblies, and recognise the need to evaluate their own opinions about right and wrong. Attitudes to pupils with special physical or educational needs are particularly praiseworthy; they are seamlessly integrated into classroom and playground activities, enabling them to participate to their full capability. Pupils are offered some opportunities to assume responsibility. Older pupils run a stationery shop, control access to the dining hall at lunch time and act as librarians; other responsibilities include litter collection, classroom tidiness and helping to organise the summer fair.
22. Attendance is sound; a level of 93.4% was achieved during the last school year and unauthorised absence was very low at 0.2% of all sessions. Any unexplained absence is followed up with the parents and explanations recorded. Punctuality is generally good and pupils' late arrival in school is recorded in the registers.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

23. Teaching is satisfactory at both key stages, and there is much good teaching. Of the 81 lessons or parts of lessons that were observed, only five were unsatisfactory. In over half the lessons teaching was good, and there were examples of very good and excellent teaching. The proportion of lessons judged to be unsatisfactory is about half that reported in the last inspection in 1996 and represents a significant improvement.
24. Literacy is taught well. The school has implemented the National Literacy Strategy fully at Key Stage 2 and is introducing the key elements of the Strategy into Key Stage 3. Through the Strategy teachers are helping pupils to recognise unfamiliar words by breaking them down into their various sounds. They also provide good opportunities for pupils to practise their reading. In response to the poor test results in 1999 there is now a much greater emphasis on teaching writing skills. Opportunities are also actively sought to develop writing through other subjects such as geography and history. The teaching of numeracy is sound. Appropriate attention is given to helping pupils acquire a secure knowledge of number facts and to use these to calculate accurately. Through their work in science and geography, pupils are encouraged to practise their skills in handling data and representing statistics as graphs.
25. Teachers are usually very thorough in the way that they plan their lessons. The purpose of the lesson is outlined for pupils at the outset. Some teachers usefully write this on the board; this is for pupils to be able to check that they have understood

what the teacher has intended that they understand. One teacher in Year 4 regularly refers to the statement on the purpose throughout the lesson to recheck that pupils are keeping on course.

26. In their introductions, teachers usually refer back to previous lessons to ensure that pupils have not forgotten what they have learnt. New ideas are introduced well. Explanations are clear, and, in discussions, teachers are careful to insist on the use of the correct technical terms. Questioning is used effectively to test understanding, but the questions posed are too often of the type for which there is only one answer. Opportunities are often missed to ask the kind of open question that requires pupils to use their reasoning or to draw on information from a number of sources. There are exceptions. Some of the work in science with older pupils is characterised by questions that call on the pupil to think deeply about a problem or to speculate on alternative possibilities. Some teachers have a habit of asking questions only of those pupils who raise their hands. This was particularly evident in a science lesson in Year 6 in which the question and answer session was dominated by about a quarter of the pupils, leaving the others only marginally involved in what was happening.
27. Teaching was often of a higher quality in those lessons in which the teacher had specialist knowledge of the subject. This was particularly the case in some of the work in English, science, French and music. On the other hand, there is a reluctance on the part of some teachers to make greater use of information technology because of their own lack of confidence in the subject. In art also, a lack of adequate expertise in the subject prevents some teachers from extending more gifted pupils as much as is possible.
28. Teachers' relationships with pupils are good. They are often characterised by good humour and a sensitive and friendly manner. The teachers' respect for pupils and concern for their well-being is clearly evident. This respect is reciprocated by pupils. Consequently, control is very good, and there is little inappropriate behaviour. In the best lessons, teachers successfully transmit their own enthusiasm for the subject and fire in their pupils a similar desire to learn more.
29. Only occasionally do pupils become restive and inattentive. Most often this occurs in very long lessons in which there is insufficient subject matter planned for the whole lesson. In these circumstances teachers tend to talk for too long or allow too much time for the completion of tasks. This results in time being used inefficiently, with pupils' attention straying from what they are supposed to do. This happened in an otherwise effective geography lesson with Year 5 in which pupils were given almost an hour to complete a relatively simple activity.
30. Much of the work in English and mathematics is undertaken with groups of pupils of similar ability. In these lessons there is usually a good match between the level of difficulty of the task and the pupils' ability. This is the case in those groups with the average and lower attaining pupils. The range of ability in the groups with more able pupils remains wide and, while the work is appropriate for most of the group, there is a need to provide even more challenging work for those of the highest ability.
31. Teachers mark work regularly. Often, marking is accompanied by positive remarks to encourage and motivate pupils. Many teachers occasionally add specific guidance on how work could be improved. Where this happens there is clear evidence that pupils take account in future work of these comments. It is a practice that could be used more widely.

32. Work in class - particularly that in English and mathematics - is usefully developed through homework. Often pupils begin work in class with the express purpose of completing it at home. Much of the homework is of high quality, demonstrating the pride that pupils take in completing it, and the importance given to it by both teacher and pupil.
33. Those pupils with more profound special educational needs - that is those with statements of special need - are supported well by the learning support staff. Support staff are involved in drawing up the individual education plans (IEPs) but the targets are often too vague and teachers do not always take sufficient account of them in their planning of the lessons. Support staff generally compensate for this by using their common sense in deciding what needs to be done. Learning could be more effective, though, if there was a more considered approach to devising the individual education plans.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

34. The curriculum is suitably broad, with all the relevant subjects of the National Curriculum taught. There is some imbalance, both within and between subjects. For example, there are too few opportunities for pupils to improve their speaking and listening skills through planned experiences such as drama or debate. The emphasis in many subjects is on teaching knowledge and skills. There is less emphasis on developing pupils' abilities to reason and generalise. In mathematics, for example, while pupils are taught to calculate accurately and how to apply their number skills correctly in subjects such as science and geography, there is little work of an investigative nature to improve pupils' skills in logic and reasoning. This limits potential progress, particularly of the most able pupils.
35. The provision for information technology is unsatisfactory. The curriculum lacks coherence and, consequently, pupils' experience is too patchy. Whilst many acquire reasonable skills on the computer, they have insufficient opportunity to practise to keep these skills sharp, or to apply them in a broad enough range of situations.
36. Teachers' planning has improved significantly since the last inspection and is now, in many respects, good. Schemes of work for all subjects have been broken down into teaching units, each with a comprehensive set of objectives. Teachers working with classes of pupils in the same age group then co-operate closely to draw up plans for individual lessons to meet these objectives. By this means, they ensure that pupils cover the same ground, irrespective of which of the classes they are in. Pupils across the school are regrouped for mathematics according to their ability. Older pupils are also grouped by ability for most other subjects. The groups - particularly those with the lower attaining pupils - are smaller than the normal class groups. Teachers make effective use of these groupings to provide work that broadly matches the capability of the majority of pupils in the groups to complete it. However, the planning of individual lessons does not always take sufficient account of the full range of abilities that occur, even within these groups. Some of the work for the most able pupils is not demanding enough to stretch them fully.
37. The timetable is organised in such a way that there is ample time for the teaching of literacy and numeracy. However, some lessons in other subjects are nearly two hours long. Lessons of such a length place considerable pressures on teachers to maintain the momentum of learning. Not all are equally successful in ensuring that the time is used efficiently. Too often, work better suited to a much shorter lesson is drawn out to fill the time. As a result, explanations tend to be too long and the time

allocated for the completion of simple tasks is excessive. Where this happens, pupils become bored and restless and take too much time to complete their work. This was typical of a number of lessons in history, geography and religious education.

38. Sex education is suitably provided as part of the programme for science. Older pupils also learn about the hazards of the misuse of drugs. There is no formal programme for personal, social and health education, but issues of personal welfare and responsibility are tackled when they arise in other subjects. In science, for example, matters relating to hygiene and safety are regularly discussed.
39. Opportunities for learning outside the classroom are limited. Music is a clear exception. Through the week there are several opportunities for pupils to participate in musical activities. As a result of the teacher's own enthusiasm and commitment, well over half the pupils are involved in either the choir or school orchestra. Music making in these groups is of a very high standard. Pupils also have the opportunity to perform regularly in the local community and abroad. Opportunities for other activities, such as sport, are fewer than those found in many other schools. On the other hand, learning in class is considerably enriched by visits – including residential visits - to places of interest connected to the topics pupils study.
40. Links with the local community are sound. Members of the local community, including the police and members of the Health Service, make valuable contributions to what is learnt in school. There is close liaison with the local First Schools, and a regular dialogue with the High School to which most pupils transfer. The quality of these links ensures that there is a relatively smooth transition from the one phase of education to the next.
41. On balance, the provision made for pupils' personal development is satisfactory. However, within this provision there are distinct elements, some of which make more powerful contributions than others. The support and guidance for moral and social development is good. Both in policy and practice, the school is clear in its expectations, and consistent in its approach to recognising and confirming virtues of honesty, helpfulness and regard for others. These virtues are explicit in the stories and messages of school and class assemblies, and are reflected in the examples all staff set as models of behaviour. In this respect, moral development within the school is very good. The ethos of the school is clear to see, and pupils readily assimilate the high expectations. They show excellent behaviour in class, as well as around the school, and the opportunities they have to exercise responsibility, especially in Year 7, are important. These include lunchtime responsibilities and the monitoring of stationery for younger pupils. All pupils demonstrate sensible behaviour at mealtimes, and clear their own places with no reminders.
42. Opportunities for pupils to contribute to the life of the local and wider community are equally important. These range from helping to organise the Summer Fair to singing to groups within the village. Making this valuable contribution to community life beyond the school gates, is important for the pupils' self-esteem, as well their sense of service to others.
43. Provision for the spiritual development of pupils is less well managed. Opportunities in this aspect may be both planned and spontaneous, but in both regards there are missed opportunities. Assemblies, which otherwise have strengths in supporting moral and social guidance, are missing the element of reflection and 'quiet moments' during which pupils can develop their own inner ways of reflecting upon the world, or the implication of the messages which are central to a story. The same is true of many lessons, where the requirement to listen and respond quickly, very much outweighs encouragement to pause, think and reflect. Within the curriculum, many subjects offer the opportunity for pupils to bring their own experience to bear upon

issues of natural wonder, but there is little evidence that this is an integral part of everyday classroom practice, either through planned opportunities, or in response to spontaneous events.

44. The contribution of cultural development to pupils' overall personal development is relatively weak, although there are subjects which provide a wider perspective for pupils in their learning. Music lessons give valuable insight into the musical styles of British and other cultural traditions, and some lessons in geography also support wider cultural understanding. Units of study in religious education provide planned opportunities to study different religions and values, but the links between disparate elements of cultural education are weak, and do not provide pupils with a coherent experience.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

45. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance and welfare and the provision of informed support are good. Academic work is continuously assessed and the results are used to address pupils' individual needs. A portfolio of procedures underpins the effective provision of support and guidance required to raise pupils' personal achievements.
46. There are good procedures to ensure the welfare, health and safety of pupils, including those embracing behaviour, bullying, safety and security. Child protection procedures meet statutory requirements, and the head teacher is the designated member of staff responsible. There has been no child protection incident requiring formal action for several years, but all staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area. There are comprehensive and effective measures, using the Norfolk continuity programme, for easing the induction of pupils from the First Schools into Year 4 and the transition of Year 7 pupils to the High Schools.
47. Pupils' progress through the school is closely monitored. Teachers use the evidence from a variety of tests - including those devised by themselves, and others provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) and commercial organisations - to place pupils in the most appropriate ability groups. Progress in these groups is then kept under review so that pupils who find the work either too easy or too hard can be moved to other groups. Results in national tests are analysed closely to identify weaknesses that might require changes either to teaching or to what is taught. Through this analysis, senior staff are able to monitor the progress of individual groups as they move through the school.
48. The use of assessment is less effective when it comes to planning individual lessons. The range of ability within groups, even those organised by ability is still sometimes wide. In their planning, teachers do not always take this into sufficient account, assuming that all pupils in a group are capable of the same work. This leads to tasks that are too easy for some, yet too difficult for others.
49. The school is successful in using assessment to inform pupils of their academic progress and to establish overall objectives, but it does not set formal targets for raising pupils' individual achievements. However, teachers regularly talk to pupils about how they might address their individual needs and approach any personal problems.
50. Pastoral care is handled well by the school. Pupils receive individual, caring attention from their form teachers who are very effective in recognising and handling pupils' personal problems. The heads of each year group provide good frameworks for addressing the needs of their pupils and identifying considered approaches to

common problems. All teachers are charged with promoting good behaviour, and pupils are given clear guidance on key issues like bullying and other oppressive activities.

51. Good attendance and punctuality are generally well promoted, but a minority of parents continues to withdraw their children for holidays during term time. Although the head teacher makes positive efforts to discourage such holidays, about one third of all authorised absence falls into this category. Efficient procedures are in place to record and monitor attendance and to respond to any recurring issues. The attendance registers are accurately completed and comply with the appropriate requirements.
52. Pupils have no formal lessons in personal, social and health education, but many of these issues, like sex education, smoking and social behaviour, are covered in subject lessons and assemblies. The police provide useful guidance about drugs and solvent abuse by working with pupils during a two day visit in the summer term. Although there is no awards system, pupils' achievements, particularly in music and sport, are regularly celebrated in assemblies where they so choose. Ministers from two local churches are regular visitors to the school, providing moral and spiritual guidance in assemblies and other pastoral events.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

53. Parents responding to the questionnaire were very positive about the school. They believe that their children are making good progress, the teaching is good and they feel comfortable approaching the school to discuss difficulties. In particular, standards and the ability of the school to promote pupils' confidence are recognised as strengths. The high number of responses to the questionnaire indicates a strong level of parental involvement and support for the school.
54. The school has good links with parents. Communications are regular and of good quality; the head teacher's newsletters provide information about school activities, the governors' newsletters address policy and performance, and the Ormesby Havamal provides a vehicle for pupils' work and a view of the school from the pupils' perspective. Teachers are available to meet parents by appointment after school. An open day is held at the end of each academic year to enable parents to visit the school during a normal working day. The governors' annual meeting is organised each October to provide parents with an opportunity to explore the governance of the school, which attracts a representative group of parents following an initiative by the head teacher.
55. There is a comprehensive parents' consultation evening every term, organised over two days on an appointment basis, which almost all parents attend. The school is flexible in accommodating the needs of parents who cannot attend these meetings. There is a high level of attendance by parents of pupils with special educational needs at annual review meetings. The annual reports to parents are sound and include grades for effort and attainment by subject, and teachers' comments for English, mathematics and science. However, many lack specific information about pupils' progress and targets to help parents understand what their children know and are able to do. These reports contain the pupils' self-evaluation of their performance, which is frequently thoughtful and illuminating for both the parents and the school.
56. Although there is no parent teacher association, parents are generally supportive of the school. Almost all parents or carers sign the home school agreement, which identifies each party's responsibilities, reinforces parental support and engenders positive attitudes in their children. The homework policy is actively supported by parents and ensures that most pupils meet their commitments. A few parents listen

to pupils read in school, and there is no shortage of volunteers to accompany day trips and music group performances. Fund raising activities are generally well supported. The school has been successful in fostering a beneficial partnership with parents.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. The school is well led. The headteacher and his deputy work closely together to provide the school with a clear sense of purpose and direction. A very positive ethos has been established in which all pupils are made to feel valued and secure. This contributes to the high degree of confidence that parents express in the school. In the questionnaires sent to them, ninety-seven percent of parents reported that their children liked school, and 96% felt that it was led well. Management was described in the last inspection report as effective. It continues to be so.
58. Senior staff monitor pupils' progress closely. Their systems for checking performance have improved significantly since the last inspection and they are now able to make use of an extensive range of data in deciding on priorities for improvement. Information from assessments, including the results in tests, are analysed thoroughly and this is used to determine priorities for future improvement. A monitoring group, comprising the headteacher, deputy and assessment co-ordinator, regularly reviews samples of work across the school. They are joined in this exercise by the co-ordinator responsible for the subject under review. Their findings are then fed back to all teachers in order to highlight ways in which improvements can be introduced.
59. Responsibility for leading developments in the curriculum is held by the deputy, under whose leadership there have been major improvements in planning and - in response to the poor results in 1999 - standards in writing. Teaching and learning in classrooms has not been as closely monitored. Although some monitoring has been carried out by senior staff, it has not been sufficiently systematic to identify weaknesses such as the inefficient use of time in some lessons. Co-ordinators charged with overseeing developments in individual subjects have been instrumental in revising policies and schemes of work, and providing advice to teachers on the subject. However, they do not routinely monitor teaching and learning. This reduces their capacity to influence improvements in the subject. The lack of rigorous monitoring was commented on in the last inspection and is now an issue requiring urgent attention.
60. Governors are effective in setting an appropriate tone for the school. They work closely with staff in moving the school forward. They are kept very well informed, and have a good understanding of how the school works. They are clear about the direction they wish the school to take and about how it should achieve the aims they have established for it. By means of a regular newsletter, governors keep parents well informed about their work and about the school's successes. The school development plan is used effectively by staff and governors to map out the way forward and for ensuring that changes are manageable. The plan is comprehensive and provides a useful instrument for evaluating different priorities. Responsibilities and time-scales are clear, but there is a lack of measurable criteria by which improvements can be judged.
61. A significant strength of the school is the level of co-operation between staff and their willingness to work as a team. Relationships are good, and staff provide pupils with good models of friendly but effective co-operation. This willingness to work together and to share ideas has been a major factor in the successful introduction of new ways of planning what is to be taught and of teaching writing. There is a commitment - shared by all staff, including learning support staff - to ensure that all pupils make the most of the opportunities provided for them.

62. Finances are managed prudently. This is illustrated by the foresight shown by governors in building up a reserve to minimise the potential impact on staffing of a temporary reduction in the number of pupils as one small year group passes through the school. The system by which co-ordinators bid for resources for their subjects, and how these are compared with priorities in the development plan, ensures that there is little wastage. The day-to-day management of finances by the headteacher and school secretary is very efficient. Governors and senior staff are conscious of the need to ensure that they receive best value for the funds that they have at their disposal. To this end, alternative sources of services, materials and equipment are compared and appropriate consideration given to competing priorities.
63. Targets have been set for pupils to achieve in the next three years. Those for the current year are appropriate, but those for subsequent years are relatively unambitious. They rely too heavily on the standards pupils are predicted to achieve and not enough on what they might achieve given appropriately targeted and enhanced support. Senior staff have carried out a detailed analysis of past performance. More use could be made of this information to set more demanding targets for individual pupils and groups of pupils.
64. The school receives substantial additional funding for the support of pupils with statements of special educational needs. This is used efficiently to provide additional support in the classroom. This support makes a major contribution to the progress made by these pupils.
65. There are, however, weaknesses in the management of the provision for other pupils with special educational needs. The co-ordinator for special educational needs sees her role as essentially administrative, involving the oversight of the individual education plans prepared by teachers and attendance at reviews. Some of the targets identified in the individual plans are very general, and do not provide an adequate enough programme for meeting needs. The co-ordinator is not involved in teaching pupils with special needs other than those in her own class, and does not herself assess progress. The policy for meeting needs is detailed, but omits reference to arrangements for the training of staff or for ensuring that pupils have access to the full curriculum. Links with other agencies from outside the school are good. Regular meetings are held to discuss the provision being made. These result in a report being produced on the effectiveness of the provision, and recommendations made on the next stage in learning. The recommendations are usually – but not always – acted upon.
66. All legal requirements are met, with one minor exception. The governors' annual report to parents is required to include an evaluation of the implementation of the policy for special educational needs. This has been omitted.
67. The school makes reasonably efficient use of the resources it has available to it. There are sufficient staff to keep the size of classes down to a modest level. The availability of a teacher who has no specific class responsibility gives some flexibility in providing the opportunity for smaller classes for work in literacy and numeracy. It also enables senior staff to have time to carry out their management responsibilities. The current arrangement does, however, mean that the teacher is occasionally required to teach subjects and age groups for which her expertise is limited.
68. Teachers have appropriate opportunities to receive further training. A teacher has been given the responsibility for co-ordinating the training, and this she does effectively. Highest priority is given to enhancing teaching in those subjects identified in the school development plan as requiring improvement.

69. Resources for learning are adequate for most subjects. For some subjects, including French, design and technology, religious education and music, they are good. Although the numbers of computers is not significantly different from the numbers in many schools, many are relatively old and unsuitable for some of the more advanced applications that pupils wish to make with them. The present timetabling arrangements mean that some pupils' experience of working with computers is too spasmodic. It also means that the computers remain idle for much of the time. The number of non-fiction books for use by older pupils is low and there are too few resources for history.
70. There is sufficient space for teaching, but the organisation of the space leads to some difficulties of access. Two classrooms can only be approached through other teaching areas. This is disruptive. There are two temporary classrooms, one of which is used primarily as a music room, and is sometimes cramped for the numbers of pupils using it. A third temporary classroom is due to be delivered in time for the new school year. The school is maintained to a high standard of cleanliness and is kept in good decorative order.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

71. The governors, headteacher and staff should now:
- (a) Improve standards in information technology by:
- providing pupils with more frequent and regular opportunities to use the computers and other equipment;
 - ensuring that skills are taught more systematically through the school;
 - implementing in full the revised scheme of work to ensure that there is full coverage of the programmes of study for the subject;
 - providing further training for those teachers who are less confident in the subject;
 - improving the quality of the equipment and making it more readily available to pupils who wish to use information technology as part of their everyday studies in other subjects.
- (See paragraphs 9,13,27,35,69,137-148)
- (b) Ensure that more efficient use is made of time by:
- reviewing the length of some of the lessons so that they more closely match the teacher's intentions for the lesson;
 - keeping the introductions to lessons and teachers' explanations sufficiently long that the main points are made, but not so long that pupils' powers of concentration are stretched to the extent that they become bored;
 - reviewing the timetable to check that pupils do not spend too much time over the day engaged in just one type of activity, for example, listening or engaged in discussions.
- (paragraphs 29,37,59,107,127,131,171)
- (c) Further develop pupils' reasoning skills by:
- providing more activities that require them to carry out their own investigations of research;
 - asking more of the type of question that has more than one answer and requires pupils to think more deeply and to offer an opinion;
 - ensuring that there are more planned opportunities for pupils to engage in activities that improve their speaking and listening eg drama, presentations and debate.
- (paragraphs 6,7,15,17,26,34,83,94,101,106,169)

- (d) Ensure that teaching and learning are monitored more closely and effectively by:
- providing senior staff and those teachers with responsibility for managing subjects with greater opportunities to observe the work in classrooms;
 - ensuring that those involved in monitoring are trained in the skills to enable them to make the most effective use of the process.
- (paragraphs 59,109,128,135,147)
- (e) Review the planning of the curriculum to incorporate more opportunities for pupils to learn more about cultural traditions that are different to their own.
(paragraph 44)

Other aspects of the work of the school that should also be considered for inclusion in the action plan are:

- make sure that the targets in individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are specified more clearly (paragraphs 33,65);
- provide further planned opportunities for pupils to improve their speaking skills (paragraphs 6,34,83);
- broaden the range of activities, particularly sport, for pupils to undertake out of school hours (paragraphs 39,163);
- further develop teachers' skills and expertise in teaching art (paragraphs 10,27,112).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	81
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	21

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
2	9	43	40	6	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	N/A	228
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	N/A	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	N/A	9
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	N/A	35

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	16

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
National comparative data	5.7

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	28	29	57

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	15	20	25
	Girls	21	16	26
	Total	36	36	51
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	63 (69)	63 (56)	89 (76)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	24	24
	Girls	22	24	26
	Total	39	48	50
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	68 (68)	84 (63)	88(75)
	National	68 (64)	69 (64)	75 (70)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	228
Any other minority ethnic group	

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y4 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	28

Education support staff: Y4 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	8
Total aggregate hours worked per week	154

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	N/A
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	N/A

Total number of education support staff	N/A
Total aggregate hours worked per week	N/A

Number of pupils per FTE adult	N/A
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
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	£
Total income	460648
Total expenditure	441814
Expenditure per pupil	1938
Balance brought forward from previous year	25856
Balance carried forward to next year	44690

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	228
Number of questionnaires returned	141

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	45	3	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	43	4	0	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	49	45	2	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	49	11	4	1
The teaching is good.	55	40	2	1	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	42	12	1	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	22	2	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	28	4	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	35	51	12	1	1
The school is well led and managed.	55	41	2	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	45	4	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	23	38	26	4	8

Other issues raised by parents

There was strong support expressed for the school, particularly the ethos that has been established and the provision it makes for children with profound special educational needs. The only concern expressed by several parents was the narrow range of activities for pupils to take part in outside normal school hours. The major exception is music.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

72. The evidence available during the inspection indicates that the standards currently being achieved by eleven and twelve year-olds are about average. Whereas in writing they are of the standard generally expected, in reading they are above. This is a marked improvement on the position revealed by the results in the 1999 national tests in which performance was well below both the national average and that of similar schools. In 1999, the percentage of pupils gaining Level 5 – the higher level – was very low. This was due, in part, to the significant difference between pupils' reading and writing performance, with standards in writing being particularly low. Prior to 1999 the improvement in standards in English was following the national trend. Standards in English were below those in mathematics and science.
73. The provisional results for 2000 confirm that there has been a substantial improvement, particularly in writing. There is no difference between the achievement of boys and girls, both of whom show similar strengths and weaknesses across all aspects of the subject.
74. The inspection confirms the school's view that reading is a stronger feature of pupils' English than writing. The measures the school is currently pursuing to improve the quality of pupils' writing are having a positive impact. Current standards in writing in Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, are satisfactory and improving. For Year 7 pupils, standards are rapidly improving because of the greater emphasis given to writing. These improvements are reflected in the provisional results for 2000 which show a marked increase in the numbers of pupils achieving Level 4, the expected level, and Level 5, the higher level.
75. Pupils across the school make good progress in reading. Most pupils in Year 4 have a broad range of reading strategies, and are able to identify unfamiliar words using their knowledge of letter sounds and the context of the word in a sentence. They understand well that reading is a process of gleaning meaning from a text and, in this regard, they check for meaning by reading ahead to understand the context of any difficult words. However, when words are broken down into their smaller parts in order to work out what they are, some pupils, especially those who are less fluent, tend to do this by individual sound only and find it difficult to blend the sounds to make up the whole word.
76. All pupils have a good understanding of the texts they are reading independently. They can speak knowledgeably about the plot and the characters and their understanding of events. Their ability to recall and retell the story is good. While most pupils are willing to make predictions about likely outcomes in the stories they are reading, it is mainly higher achieving pupils who have the capacity to make inferences from the text, and refer to the text to justify their point of view. However, all pupils are able to express preferences in their reading, and willingly indicate why some parts are more entertaining than others. This involvement, and willingness to discuss texts, is a result of the clear focus the school has given to reading, including the prominence to particular children's authors. The range of favourites expressed by pupils - Jacqueline Wilson, Dick King-Smith, Roald Dahl, R.L. Stine, J.K. Rowling, Lucy Daniels - shows a catholic taste, and a good combination of school and private reading.
77. All pupils are positive about reading, and understand its importance. A few Year 7 pupils are discriminating and mature in their reading habits, and are able to talk

extensively about what they are reading currently. Such pupils are working comfortably at Level 5 of the National Curriculum, with several approaching Level 6.

78. The school has placed an increasing emphasis on the ability of pupils to read for information, and this, coupled with the strong emphasis on teachers demonstrating the reading and writing process, is helping pupils of all abilities to develop their skills in studying by themselves. Most pupils, from Year 4 onwards, know and understand the purpose of contents and index pages, and are able to use these to find information rapidly. Equally, they access dictionaries and glossaries effectively. By the time that they leave, many pupils are able to skim a text to ascertain the overall meaning, or to search for general points. They can also scan a text for specific information and, where that text is challenging, fluent readers in Years 6 and 7 can deduce meaning through the context and through drawing upon their wider knowledge. For example, a Year 6 pupil could explain the term 'aerobica' – meaning fast wind – as a suitable description of a sports car, because of its speed. Despite these developing skills, pupils have infrequent opportunities to use the library for independent research or to apply their skills in context. There are also too few opportunities for pupils to use information technology in seeking and recording information, and this is inhibiting more rapid progress.
79. The school has identified weaknesses in pupils' writing, and has introduced a programme to address these weaknesses. This programme, which the school has entitled 'New Directions', is well focused and is already having a beneficial impact.
80. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils' writing shows good coverage of the range of writing required by the National Curriculum with reports, book reviews, poetry, stories, and a range of non-narratives evident. The teaching of the different forms and structures of the language is clearly apparent in pupils' work. Writing is frequently well presented, with final pieces of work, which have undergone drafting and revision, of a good quality. Pieces of sustained writing, from the highest attaining pupils, show excellent command of the particular genre in question, with good use of paragraphs, accurate punctuation and a sensitivity to the impact of linking words together. A good example of this was the use of 'shallow' and 'voices', as in 'shallow American voices' in a Year 6 pupil's story. Most pupils spell complex words with a fair degree of accuracy, although those who are of lower ability have limited strategies for tackling difficulties, beyond 'sounding out'. This lack of a range of strategies is a weakness which is preventing some pupils from making swifter progress with their writing.
81. The teaching of writing has placed an appropriate emphasis upon using the writing for a specific purpose and identified audience. There are few examples of random exercises in pupils' work. This is a strength of recent developments, and is significantly helping all pupils to understand the role and function of writing. The skills which pupils are developing in their literacy lessons are being usefully transferred into their writing in other subjects, and, reciprocally, other subjects sometimes provide the focus for writing in English. This practice is making an important contribution to raising standards.
82. A very good example of this was found in Year 7, where the focus on persuasive writing was enabling pupils to write with power and imagination for the purpose of swaying a target audience to raise funds for Ethiopia. Aspects of geography, as well as personal and social education, had become part of the substance of the writing. The greater emphasis on teaching grammar and how good writing is structured is leading to considerable improvements in the writing of pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs.
83. Pupils enjoy their English lessons. When given the opportunity they are keen to discuss and offer points of view. Pupils speak with confidence and clarity, but the

provision for developing their skills in speaking is unsatisfactory. There has been little development in this aspect of the work since it was identified as a weakness in the last inspection. Pupils rarely have the opportunity in lessons to take part in drama or more formal debate. In question and answer sessions, because most questions call mainly upon pupils' recall of knowledge, there is limited opportunity to give more than the briefest of answers. When pupils are working independently, they are usually engaged in individual tasks which, while worked at diligently, do not require pupils to investigate and seek for patterns in language as part of a collaborative group. Spoken language for learning is thus diminished. Where pupils do have this opportunity, as in Year 5 when investigating the rules behind the prefixes 'in' and 'im', pupils work eagerly and with good effect.

84. On balance, the teaching of English is satisfactory. None of the lessons observed was unsatisfactory, and over half were good or very good. There is good teaching in all year groups. All lessons are well planned, with clear teaching objectives. In the best lessons, these objectives are made clear to pupils who have a good understanding of what they are trying to achieve. All classes are well organised, with appropriate resources and seating arrangements which are sensibly adjusted to the focus of the learning. Pupils are used to the routines and move within classrooms – some of which are quite cramped – with the minimum of fuss.
85. Most lessons begin with an effective recapitulation of previous learning. This helps to check on and secure the understanding of pupils as they encounter new knowledge. In some lessons introductions last too long, with a detrimental impact on the amount of time available to pupils to work on the main task of the lesson. In the best lessons, teachers judge the timing accurately, and stimulate pupils by quick re-call and a sequence of both closed and open questions which lead directly into the main activity. Where such pace is lacking, important learning opportunities are lost. Teachers know their pupils well, and relationships, behaviour and the ethos for learning are very good indeed.
86. The subject knowledge of all teachers is good, and strenuous efforts have been made to secure improvements in pupils' writing through an emphasis on the teaching of language structures. This is clearly having an impact upon standards. Teachers use appropriate texts to illustrate the kind of language required to write in a particular genre, and analyse the features of texts well, in order to draw out the salient features. Not all teachers are yet confident in the process of demonstrating the writing process, but this is the next stage of development.
87. The use of homework is very good. The quality of work produced at home as an extension of the work in class is of a high standard and is often well-presented. Pupils take pride in their work, and the quality of information about the objectives and outcomes - which are included within the exercise book - provide an excellent means of linking the work at school with that to be done at home. There is even greater commitment to the work when it is used as a starting point for the next lesson.
88. The marking of pupils' work is satisfactory, but there are shortcomings. Work is marked regularly. Pupils are encouraged by positive comments, and the best marking relates praise to the objectives of the task. However, in some classes, few comments identify the next steps in learning for pupils or indicate precisely how they might improve. There is lack of clarity, for example, in terms of how pupils should correct spelling errors or what strategies they might employ to help them overcome difficulties the next time.
89. Resources for English are satisfactory; there is a good range of fiction in each classroom. The library provides suitable non-fiction materials, though the range and quantity of stock is small, and insufficiently meets the needs of Key Stage 3 pupils.

Very limited use is made of information technology resources. Year 7 pupils help to run and organise the library, under the guidance of the co-ordinator, and this is done efficiently and conscientiously.

90. The subject is well led. The senior management and subject co-ordinator have a clear view of current priorities. Monitoring and evaluation of pupils' work has been carried out and this, together with information from tests - both internal and external - has helped to give focus to the writing. The school does not yet have a standardised portfolio of work by pupils which, while not statutory, would provide a valuable resource for moderating national curriculum levels, as well as celebrating pupils' writing.

MATHEMATICS

91. Standards in mathematics at the age of eleven are broadly average. This attainment was reflected in the 1999 test results. The performance was marginally lower than that of similar schools. Evidence from this inspection suggests that there have been measurable improvements since 1999, particularly in the proportion of pupils achieving the nationally expected standard of Level 4. The provisional results for 2000 indicate that the numbers achieving Level 4 has increased by 15% since last year, and there has been a slight increase in the proportion achieving Level 5, the higher standard. Standards at the age of twelve are also about average, but improving.
92. For the last four years, the performance of boys in the national tests has been consistently higher than that of girls. The difference between the two has been greater than that found nationally. Standards were above those in English but below those in science.
93. There are a number of areas of common strength across the school. By the age of eleven, pupils are able to calculate accurately using addition, subtraction, multiplication and division. They have a good grasp of fractions, decimals and percentages and know the names and basic properties of common two- and three-dimensional shapes. In representing data they select the most appropriate graph for the information gathered, and talk confidently about many of the complexities of probability. By twelve many have acquired a good understanding of simple formulae, including the value and meaning of pi, and more advanced functions such as square roots and measures such as speed. They can manage statistical data well and standards in this aspect of the work are above what might be typically expected.
94. Across the school, the investigational side of mathematics is under-developed. Pupils find it difficult to identify relationships within the mathematics and to express these connections in algebraic terms. As a result, pupils' ability to generalise findings is lower than that normally found. The progress of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory.
95. On balance, teaching is sound. It was at least good in two thirds of the lessons observed. Only two unsatisfactory lessons were observed, both at Key Stage 3. Teaching is most consistently good in Year 4. Teachers are working well to the recommendations of the National Numeracy Strategy with an appropriate emphasis on developing pupils' mental skills.
96. Across the school, pupils are taught in groups with others of similar ability. This arrangement works well for two reasons. Firstly, the school uses it to provide smaller groups, particularly for the lower attaining pupils. Secondly, teachers in the same year groups plan their work thoroughly, ensuring that similar topics are covered at

varying depths, dependent on the group being taught. Occasionally, not enough account is taken of the breadth of ability that remains even within these groups. This leads to work that is either too hard for some – as was the case in one lesson on calculating speed with Year 7 pupils – or, more often, too easy.

97. Some of the teaching is very challenging. Such was the case in one particularly successful lesson on the theme of area, which involved the sub-division of an L-shaped grid into 3 differently proportioned rectangles of equal area. In this session, the pupils demonstrated a capacity to collaborate, persevere and apply logic. They found the task and the challenge it presented, enjoyable.
98. New ideas are sometimes presented in a stimulating and imaginative way and pupils respond well to the challenge. This was the case in one lesson with the more able pupils in Year 6, in which they were asked to select different combinations of numbers from a given set to make targeted numbers. They approached the task enthusiastically and came up with several solutions to the problem, some of which revealed considerable inventiveness and enterprise. Pupils show positive attitudes to their work.
99. Effective links are made between mathematics and other subject areas. In one lesson, a group of Year 6 pupils was involved in a simulation of a European visit, involving factors such as travel, currency and accommodation. Not only did this have the more obvious links with geography, but the use of computers also offered the potential for pupils to begin to improve their information technology skills.
100. Teachers' subject knowledge is generally good. The use of precise mathematical vocabulary is particularly well defined throughout the school. There were only a couple of occasions where content was delivered in a way that could potentially lead to pupils making errors or developing misconceptions. The planning within year groups has had a positive effect on the lower attaining pupils where, in some lessons, they are able to cope with content that is not dissimilar from that given to others in the year group.
101. The major weakness in some of the teaching is the failure to engage pupils in discussion or written activities that require them to think more deeply about the work. When this happens, question and answer sessions are dominated by the kind of question for which there is only one answer, and there is little probing of the ideas that underpin the work. This is sometimes compounded by written tasks that do not stretch pupils sufficiently or require them to merely practise work for which they already have good skills.
102. Written work is marked regularly. Pupils take care with their work, although the near-exclusive use of squared paper does little to support the quality of presentation. Homework is set and this is developed well across the school. Pupils take a dedicated exercise book home, and a homework log enables useful liaison between the home and school. The tasks set for homework are often challenging, and are of a type that pupils find interesting.
103. The curriculum is well supported by the subject leader. Procedures for monitoring progress are being revised and staff are currently trialling the use of different types of assessment for this purpose. By this means they have been successfully identifying those areas of the work that need further improvement.
104. In response to the previous report, the school introduced a more structured programme for the teaching of mathematics. This has been enhanced by the subsequent adoption of the National Numeracy Strategy, so that learning now builds continuously on what pupils have achieved previously.

SCIENCE

105. Standards in science across the school are above average. In the 1999 National Curriculum tests for eleven year-olds the performance of pupils was above the national average and above that of schools with a similar intake. Provisional results in the 2000 tests indicate that these standards have been maintained. After a dip in performance in 1997, standards have improved and are once again similar to those at the time of the last inspection in 1996. Standards in science were above those in English and mathematics. Teaching is generally better than it was four years ago.
106. By the time that they leave the school at twelve, pupils have had a firm grounding in the subject. They have a good recall of the different aspects of science that they have studied and are aware of how to carry out simple experiments successfully. In terms of what they know, they can, for example, identify the different parts of a plant and they understand the functions of parts such as the sepal and the stamen. They can describe some of the ways in which animals adapt to their habitats and can explain why creatures prefer to live in one place rather than another. In working with alkalis and acids, they know what happens when the two are mixed and are aware of the uses and benefits of the process. In carrying out experiments they understand the need for safe handling of materials. They usually conduct experiments carefully, and measure and record their findings accurately. There is little opportunity to devise their own experiments or to consider the wider implications of developments in science.
107. There is considerable enthusiasm among pupils for their work in science, particularly for investigating new ideas through experiment. Learning is most effective where this enthusiasm is captured by the teacher and used creatively to introduce new ideas. Such was the case in a lesson with Year 4, in which an understanding of food chains was introduced through a game involving the selection and ordering of creatures in a particular sequence. There was sufficient challenge in the activity to make pupils think about the process and to propose their own solutions to the problems that the task posed. Pupils were able to organise themselves and to work collaboratively. Interest wanes when the follow-up tasks are too easy and stimulating or when the teacher spends too long introducing the lesson or merely transmitting information.
108. Science is taught well. Of the lessons observed, all were at least satisfactory and over half were good. Some of the teaching is very good. Teaching was most effective in the classes with older pupils that were taught by a teacher with specialist knowledge of the subject. The programme of work has been divided up into separate teaching units. For each unit a series of key learning objectives have been identified. Teachers who have classes with pupils of the same age co-operate closely on the detailed planning of lessons to ensure that there is consistency in what is taught. Older pupils are taught in groups with others of similar ability. The work in these groups is generally better matched to pupils' abilities than in those lessons where all pupils are taught together, irrespective of ability. An example of very effective teaching was a lesson on acids and alkalis with the more able pupils in Year 7. The teacher usefully began the lesson by revisiting some of the earlier work on the topic to ensure that pupils had fully understood what they had been taught. Most of the lesson was then devoted to enabling pupils to observe and record the effects of mixing solutions of acids and alkalis. In his introduction to the work, the teacher was carefully to emphasise the need for safety, and for accuracy and care in carrying out the investigation. In his discussion with pupils he made effective use of questions of the 'why', 'what if' and 'how' type that required pupils to think deeply and to speculate on possible outcomes. All the materials that pupils required were to hand, avoiding the need for pupils to move around unnecessarily. In summarising the lesson, the teacher skilfully drew on pupils' observations to underline the main messages that he had wanted them to acquire.

109. The subject is soundly managed. The co-ordinator has had the responsibility for the subject for only a year. She has been instrumental in revising the policy and in ensuring that the scheme of work is implemented. Standards have been evaluated through an analysis of pupils' written work, but there has been little formal monitoring of teaching and learning.

ART

110. Standards in art are broadly those expected. As they progress through the school, pupils experience a suitably broad range of techniques and acquire reasonable skills. There are individual examples of work of high quality, but there is not the expertise among the staff to be able to take the work of talented pupils further.
111. By the time that they leave the school, pupils have good skills in drawing from close observation. Some of the sketches of plants and still life compositions show a good eye for detail and an ability to record faithfully what is seen. Pupils are also confident working with fabrics for appliqué pictures and torn materials in collage. Early work in clay – as revealed by models created by pupils in Year 4 – is good, but is not developed well enough. Similarly, pupils' ability to use paint as a medium is not as good as it might be. This is partly because of the materials that they use. Pupils in Year 7, for example, were attempting to blend and apply colours using brushes that were too broad for the task.
112. On balance, teaching at both key stages is satisfactory. It was good in one of the lessons observed and unsatisfactory in another, but satisfactory in the rest. Teachers generally organise lessons well. They are clear in their planning about what they want pupils to achieve, and ensure that all the materials and equipment they require are to hand. Techniques are explained using the correct terms. Teachers capitalise on pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. In most lessons pupils are very well-behaved and anxious to do their best. They co-operate well in sharing ideas and materials. However, they rarely have the opportunity to make their own decisions on the media to use in translating their ideas into pictures or models. Most are well-disciplined when it comes to tidying away. Pupils are encouraged to continually appraise their work, and to be self-critical. There are some opportunities for them to study the work of other recognised artists – including Picasso and William Morris – but this aspect of the work is limited. Teachers have sufficient confidence to explain techniques and to demonstrate what they require, but lack the greater expertise needed to extend the work further.
113. Resources are adequate. Pupils' work is attractively displayed around the school and there are examples of the work of other artists. There is very little evidence of non-European work available for pupils to familiarise themselves with and appreciate.
114. Standards are similar to those reported in 1996. As a result of the action taken by the school in response to the previous report, there is better progression in the way that pupils acquire new skills.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

115. Standards at eleven and twelve are above those expected. This is similar to the position in 1996 when standards were reported to be good and sometimes very good. Because of close curriculum links specified in the policy and the scheme of work, design and technology is combined with science on the timetable, although specific time is set aside for each subject to ensure that the stated time allocation for each is achieved. Practical tasks are increasingly challenging and there is good progression

in the use of tools. Priority in the policy is given to the development of practical skills. While this ensures that skills are acquired and reinforced, the range of opportunities to design, to compare designs to other similar products, to account for the needs of a consumer and to disassemble and evaluate a product's constituent parts, are limited.

116. By Year 6 pupils are evaluating their work and using this to make improvements to their practical projects and this is extended further in Year 7. Written accounts and designs are neatly recorded, with appropriately labelled drawings, in exercise books. Work is always completed with less detail expected of pupils with special educational needs. Pupils receive positive feedback when their work is assessed.
117. Pupils' attitudes are very good. They listen carefully to the instructions they are given and take careful note of the skills that are being demonstrated. They work very well in collaboration with others, providing support for each other and demonstrating their personal development. They have a very good awareness of the need for safety when working with tools. Pupils enjoy applying their practical skills and show good perseverance in completing the many tasks required to produce a finished product.
118. Across the school, teaching is good. In none of the lessons observed was it unsatisfactory, and in two thirds it was good. Lesson plans were detailed and well prepared. Thorough, step-by-step procedures and instructions are prepared in advance, and the sequence of tasks is demonstrated to pupils with safety issues always in the forefront of what they are told. Raw materials and tools are prepared in advance of the lesson and marked with the individual pupil's name. This enables practical work to start promptly once the teacher's explanation and demonstration are complete; this is a significant factor in the maintenance of the calm atmosphere of the lessons. The requirements for practical skills are always demonstrated and explained clearly, using the correct technical vocabulary. Pupils are then questioned carefully in order to ensure that they understand what they are expected to do. Although the lessons are well organised, the level of organisation sometimes means that the activities pupils are engaged in are too prescriptive, allowing them too few opportunities to consider alternatives or to modify their designs.
119. As a result of the practical activities, pupils in Year 4 are making suitable gains in applying skills of measuring, marking and drilling, Year 5 pupils are cutting materials, using appropriate tools for different purposes, gluing wood using jigs to make structures and reinforcing corners with card. Pupils with special educational needs, including those with physical difficulties, are able to take a full part in all lessons and make good progress.
120. The management of the subject by the co-ordinator is good. A very clear policy is linked to a comprehensive scheme of work that specifies learning objectives that are linked to previous experiences. The criteria by which achievement will be assessed are also set out and safety considerations are highlighted. There is also a section that provides hints and tips to use in supporting pupils when they encounter difficulties.
121. Resources for the subject are good. There is a comprehensive range of tools which matches the requirements of the scheme of work, and there are sufficient raw materials to ensure that each product can be completed by each pupil. These resources are stored carefully and safely in the school's 'Technology Room' where there is also an annexe that houses large tools including a mechanical drill and a saw, and consumable items which are easily accessible.

GEOGRAPHY

122. Pupils achieve good standards in geography. As they pass through the school, pupils acquire a good understanding of geographical ideas and relationships and become skilled at reading and interpreting maps. Their knowledge is considerably enhanced by the opportunities that they are given to study the landscape for themselves on visits to the local area and to places further afield such as Derbyshire and Cornwall. Standards at eleven are higher than they were in 1996. At twelve they are about the same as they were.
123. Progress is good at Key Stage 2 so that, by eleven, pupils can identify the major physical features in the landscape and know how they are formed. For example, they recognise the part played by erosion in shaping the coastline, using local features as illustrations. They have a good recall of geographical facts, and are beginning to understand relationships such as that between where people live and the climate and the nature of the land. Pupils who had been on a study trip could give well-reasoned explanations for the differences between the highland area that they had visited and their own local area, recognising the impact that the landscape has on human activity.
124. By twelve, they have developed a broader understanding of world geography. From their work on developing countries, for example, they were able to describe some of the factors that made it easier or more difficult for countries to develop, and could make well-reasoned comparisons between countries such as India and Brazil. In talking about the sizes and shapes of continents, they used correctly the technical terms associated with the process of the movement of land masses. They could use symbols such as contours to recognise features such as hills and valleys on maps, and could give accurate grid references to identify specific places.
125. Teaching is good at both key stages. A particular strength is the way that teachers use examples with which pupils are familiar in order to demonstrate particular points. As an example, in drawing pupils' attention to the ways in which the land is shaped by the sea, a teacher in Year 5 used the knowledge that they had gained from a visit to a nearby coastal resort. Introductions to lessons are good. Teachers often begin by outlining their intentions for the lesson and reminding pupils of previous work on the topic. Through questioning they assess how much has been understood. Question and answer sessions are often lively, but teachers have a tendency to ask only those pupils who put up their hands. Consequently a significant number of pupils are only marginally involved. This is rarely the case with pupils with special educational needs, however, whom teachers are usually careful to include in any discussion. There was a number of occasions on which questions were directed at pupils, and they were helped appropriately in their response by learning support assistants.
126. In developing a theme, teachers sometimes take the opportunity to broaden the discussion to other relevant issues raised by the topic. An example was in a lesson on the contrasting ways of life of the rich and the poor in Brazil that led to a consideration of the morality of the situation. Similarly, pupils in Year 7 who had been studying Brazil could account for some of the differences between developing and developed countries in terms of their location.
127. Some of the lessons are too long, extending on occasion to nearly two hours. This tempts teachers to spend an excessive amount of time talking and too much time being given to the completion of written tasks. This sometimes results in pupils losing interest in what they are doing and using their time unproductively. This was the case in a lesson in which comparisons were being drawn between two areas of the country. After a lively introduction that pupils found stimulating, the written task was relatively undemanding and they were given no idea of the amount of time allowed

for its completion. Consequently they became restless, and made poor use of the time.

128. Resources are satisfactory and teachers make good use of them. In the lesson with Year 5 on coastal erosion, the teacher demonstrated the process effectively using a model. There are sufficient maps for pupils to use, although the range is small, being mainly political or topographical maps. There are globes in many of the classrooms and the school has a reasonable selection of aerial photographs. The co-ordinator has been effective in leading developments in the subject and in advising other staff on the implementation of the scheme of work. She has had little opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in classes other than her own.

HISTORY

129. Standards in history at the end of Key Stage 2 and Year 7 are satisfactory and in line with national expectations. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have a good sense of chronology and use an appropriate vocabulary for discussing the past; they are acquiring knowledge of the characteristic features of the topic areas studied, sometimes through their own independent historical research. They can identify and describe differences between periods and have acquired skills in presenting historical information to others. In Year 7 they are beginning to acquire more advanced enquiry skills, for example making judgements about the value of the historical sources they are using.
130. Pupils' responses in lessons are good. They listen attentively to the class teacher and to other pupils when they are presenting their accounts of historical artefacts. They are also encouraged to make notes when other pupils are making presentations, and use these to construct questions that help them to clarify their perception and understanding of the information being presented.
131. Nine lessons were observed during the inspection. Teaching was at least satisfactory in all lessons and in three it was good. The teachers' knowledge was sound in all lessons and the use of good questioning skills allowed and encouraged pupils to find out more about the topic for themselves. Some lessons, especially those in the afternoon session, were too long, and pupils found it difficult to maintain concentration.
132. In four lessons, pupils were researching historical artefacts from the 1970s and earlier that they had brought from home. They used both primary and secondary sources to discover information about their artefacts and recorded this information in note form. These notes were then used to produce a summary which was presented to the class. Good links were therefore established to the development of writing.
133. In a Year 7 lesson, the teacher provided a very clear distinction between primary and secondary sources, and encouraged pupils to make judgements about a range of historical sources they had been given. Pupils' recorded work indicates a good level of the reporting and recording of historical information, revealing a good understanding of chronology, sound identification of the characteristic features of the periods studied, and the ability to combine material from a range of sources, recording in a way that demonstrates their understanding. In Year 7, evaluative writing has been undertaken where pupils consider the value of the historical sources they are using. They are also encouraged to express their own views and present their own interpretations. The work in books is always completed and generally well presented. Marking provides evaluative comments that are sometimes followed up by pupils.

134. Good provision is made for pupils with special educational needs. They were encouraged to take an active part in lessons and worksheets were adapted to help them record their work. In one lesson, a pupil with communication difficulties contributed to a task that required reading to the class while other pupils listened with interest, patience and sensitivity.
135. A sound policy exists. Together with lesson plans and a list of the topics covered, this provides a reasonable framework for the teaching of history. There is a need for a comprehensive scheme of work to ensure that all aspects of the subject and topic are accounted for in the planning. The co-ordinator has started compiling a detailed scheme, completing a draft for one year group. The work of both Year 6 classes is monitored but no other monitoring of the subject takes place by the co-ordinator, although an analysis of the work in books has been undertaken by the assessment co-ordinator. The subject co-ordinator is knowledgeable and enthusiastic about her subject.
136. Resources are limited. The books used are old and there are very few resources such as videotapes or CD-ROMs available that could illustrate and extend the subject. Some topics are enlivened by the use made of visiting historical drama teacher, who spends a day in the school as a character from the period currently being taught. The development of historical knowledge and understanding is a feature of the educational visits that take place.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

137. Resources are inadequate to meet current requirements for information and communications technology (ICT), and pupils have insufficient opportunity to develop their knowledge and skills in the subject. Consequently, standards at eleven and twelve are below those expected. This is a reversal of the position in 1996 when standards were reported to be generally good.
138. Pupils were only observed using ICT on three occasions. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, pupils used a spreadsheet to construct a table of arrival and departure times. In science, Year 5 pupils used ICT to classify and sort data on the roots of plants. On the third occasion, two pupils with special educational needs, working with a learning support assistant, made use of a word processing program to improve their writing. Judgements on attainment are, therefore, made on the basis of the observations in these sessions, discussions with pupils, and a scrutiny of the work on display or in books
139. By the time that they leave the school, pupils have had experience of a broad range of ICT applications, including word processing, collecting and organising data, and working with spreadsheets. There is also evidence of them undertaking some use of desktop publishing programs to produce pieces of work that combined text with illustrations. They understand how information technology can be used for control, but have very little experience of modelling. Pupils do not have sufficient, regular opportunity to practise and improve their skills to the extent that they need in order to achieve the standards expected. For example, they are not always sure about how to access particular programs or how to resolve a difficulty when a program does not behave as they expect it to. Similarly, they are not always clear about the circumstances in which it is appropriate to use a database or a spreadsheet
140. A conscious decision has been taken by the school to teach ICT skills through other subjects. The intention is for teachers' planning in these other subjects to show the extent to which ICT is being incorporated. The stated aim is for each pupil to receive 45 hours time of 'hands-on' experience in each academic year - approximately one

hour a week. Teachers' records indicate that this aim is not being met. Pupils in Year 6, in particular, have not had sufficient access to the computers and other ICT equipment.

141. In the one lesson in which specific skills were taught - the science lesson with Year 5 on the classification of plants - teaching was good. The teacher had sufficient knowledge and expertise to give clear guidance on how to use the program. He ensured that pupils who were less confident received extra help, and set the task in a challenging and interesting way. Whereas most teachers have the necessary expertise to teach the subject, some have less confidence in their ability to do so effectively. This lack of self-assurance contributes to the limitations on the opportunities experienced by pupils in some classes.
142. Whenever pupils have the opportunity to use ICT, learning is generally good. Pupils are keen to use equipment such as the computers. They follow instructions carefully, and embark on tasks with considerable confidence. There is good collaboration between pupils sharing computers, and they work at a good pace.
143. Resources are inadequate for the current needs of the school. All the computers are housed in a separate ICT suite, and there are none in individual classrooms. This arrangement denies pupils working on specific projects in the classroom ready access to the equipment that might help them. The number of computers is low relative to other schools of a similar size and type. In addition, many of the computers are over five-years-old and unsuited to the demands made of them. Consequently, teachers and pupils become frustrated by the frequency with which systems break down.
144. One pupil, who has a statement of special educational needs, has recently been provided with a notebook personal computer to support his writing skills. However, the software available is inappropriate for his needs, so that the impact on his learning is limited. The school has one internet computer. It is kept in the staff room and is not currently accessible by pupils.
145. Software for supporting specific curriculum areas is also limited. For example, there are few CD-ROMs available for researching history topics, or specific programs for use with pupils with special educational needs. The school is aware of the need to improve its facilities. Some new equipment has been acquired using funds raised by parents, and further resources are to be acquired in 2001/02 through the National Grid for Learning scheme.
146. The current ICT policy was agreed in 1996 and is now in need of review. It states, for example, that pupils are being encouraged to use computers outside lesson times, either at lunch to continue with class work or after school. During the inspection this did not take place and it is clear from talking to pupils that such an option is unavailable.
147. The ICT co-ordinator has a clear vision for the future development of the subject, but so far he has been unable to fully address the current needs of pupils in developing ICT skills. There are good procedures for monitoring and recording the use made of the ICT suite and of ICT in other curriculum areas, but these have not as yet led to the more extensive experience that pupils require. A detailed and comprehensive scheme of work has been compiled by the co-ordinator that incorporates the nationally recommended scheme. The co-ordinator has also evaluated existing resources in the light of this scheme and identified gaps by matching what is now required to what is currently available. Information is also provided on ways of linking the use of ICT to other subjects and suggesting how these links can be best exploited. However, the scheme has yet to have sufficient impact on teaching and

learning in all classes.

148. The development of the subject is at present too slow. On one hand, this is because of the current arrangement for delegating the major responsibility for teaching ICT skills to class teachers through other curriculum areas and topics. On the other, it is because plans for further improvement cannot be implemented until new equipment is obtained.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

149. French is taught only at Key Stage 3. At the time of the inspection pupils in Year 7 had been learning French for approximately two and a half terms. The subject is taught well: standards are above those normally found and all pupils are making good progress. This position is similar to that reported in the previous inspection.
150. Lessons are conducted primarily in the French language and require all pupils to listen and respond in French. Pupils of all levels of ability respond to these lessons with enthusiasm. They listen carefully, and participate in oral exchanges with the confidence which comes from good understanding. This confidence is characteristic and it arises from calm and explicit teaching, underpinned by the expectation that all pupils will respond. As a result, pupils of all levels of attainment, including those with special educational need, contribute to the liveliness of each lesson.
151. Most pupils are able to respond to a range of oral questions around the first two aspects of the programme of study, everyday activities and personal and social life. Their knowledge of simple sentence structure is good, and many are able to adjust sentences from the affirmative into the negative, or from statements into questions. Many pupils understand the principle of agreement as it applies to masculine and feminine, and are able to use this understanding in their own writing. Their vocabulary is developing well, and this is enabling them to form questions, or reply with increasing confidence. French pronunciation for most pupils is accurate and many are developing a good style. The attainment of all pupils has reached Level 1, and many higher attaining pupils are working well within Level 2. Currently, and in accordance with the curriculum, pupils' strengths lie within speaking and listening, though all written work is accurate and very well presented.
152. The teaching of French is good. Lessons are well planned for consistency and coverage of the programme of study. The particular strength lies in the range of teaching and learning strategies within each lesson. Pupils are helped to make connections with previous learning through quick and effective recapitulations, and homework secures consolidation. Within lessons, the pace is maintained through a mix of teaching to the whole class, opportunities for pupils to work in pairs in response to the main teaching point, as well as games, songs, and reading and writing tasks. This variety contributes significantly to pupil's interest and motivation, as does the strong emphasis on oral participation.
153. Resources for teaching and learning are generally good, although currently there is no information technology software to further learning. The main textbook 'Spirale' is augmented by a good range of suitable dictionaries, posters, and activity cards. French is making an important contribution to the curriculum for Year 7 pupils, including the development of a wider cultural awareness.

MUSIC

154. Music is a strength of the school. The quality of teaching is at least good and often excellent, and the standards reached by pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 and in year 7, are high. The very good progress by pupils that was reported in the last inspection has been maintained.
155. The provision for pupils to take part in musical activities outside normal school lessons is exceptional. It takes the form of a large orchestra, ensemble playing and choir. Opportunities are open to all pupils and the contribution to the life of the school is outstanding.
156. The school acknowledges this contribution to pupils' musical and personal development. Each day, music makes an important contribution to the educational experience of most pupils. The orchestra, or smaller ensembles, play at school assemblies and their playing is of a very high standard. During the day, and apart from timetabled lessons, a range of specialist tuition and music clubs ensure that many children have opportunities to learn an instrument or join a singing group. The response to this provision is very good, and the choir alone has over 80 regular participants.
157. The high rates of participation in musical activities, together with the quality of specialist teaching, produce high standards. Most pupils are able to engage in lessons with an understanding of musical notation and scoring, which is in advance of many pupils of a similar age. Their appreciation of a range of music, and their capacity to discuss or analyse, using specialist terminology, is impressive. Pupils are able to use this knowledge and understanding, as well as the skills developed through playing instruments, to great effect when composing music within lessons. In this regard, the pupils work well together, listening to and appraising each other's efforts, and changing their joint compositions in the light of critical, but positive comments from their peers.
158. Singing across the school is very good. This applies not only to the large choir, but also to all pupils. It is consistently tuneful, strong and lively, with most pupils showing awareness of the pitch, dynamics and tempo of songs, whether sung in small groups in lessons or as a whole school in assembly.
159. The teaching of music is very good. The same teacher teaches all classes. This ensures not only very good continuity and progression in the programmes of study for music, but also consistency and high standards. The scheme of work is well structured, and this ensures that all pupils have equal access to the full requirements of The National Curriculum. It also ensures that they build well upon previous learning. Individual lessons provide opportunities for pupils to listen and appraise music, as well as compose and perform in front of the class. Currently, Year 6 pupils, for example, are composing Indian ragas and performing these with confidence and genuine appreciation of the style and contexts of the pieces. They compose and score the music, and this calls upon essential learning skills, such as selection, negotiation, investigation and synthesis. These skills are transferable across all subjects of the curriculum. Each lesson is lively, varied and high in its expectations of behaviour and independent work.
160. The teacher in charge of music is well supported by a number of peripatetic teachers who provide tuition on brass, percussion and woodwind, to add to the internal provision for strings. A total of eighty pupils currently receive individual tuition.

161. Musical performances by pupils are given to the local community in Ormesby and also further afield in other venues in Norfolk. A visit to Paris to perform in a different cultural setting, contributes significantly, not just to musical experience, but also to the personal and social development of all pupils taking part.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

162. By the age of eleven, standards in physical education are satisfactory. Satisfactory standards are also achieved by pupils in their final year at the school. Performance in gymnastics is at least satisfactory and, in many cases, is good. Pupils enjoy a range of team games, both in the hall and on the field, and standards are broadly satisfactory. However, pupils in the upper half of the school who show particular physical ability could be further encouraged to monitor and improve their performance. The national requirement for pupils to undertake outdoor and adventurous activity is met. Older pupils engage in a number of challenging activities and pursuits as part of their residential visits to Cornwall and Derbyshire. In recent years the school has provided well for pupils to learn to swim. Although there have recently been some difficulties with these arrangements, the vast majority of eleven year-olds reach or exceed the minimum standard of twenty-five metres set nationally.
163. Opportunities for competitive team sports are limited for the most physically able and enthusiastic pupils. With the exception of netball, there is little extra-curricular activity of a sporting nature. In the last report the range of opportunities in sport provided outside normal school hours was judged to be limited. Even though the nature of the activities has changed, this still remains the case.
164. Pupils' learning in gymnastics is often good. This is because teachers encourage pupils to work together, often in pairs, and to use this as a way of refining and extending skills through mutual support. Pupils respond well to these opportunities. They also demonstrate a capacity to report on their progress across lessons. In one such lesson, a Year 4 group, who had engaged in an assortment of gymnastic and athletic activities, was able to give detailed reasons why their performance had been improving. Pupils' awareness of how their bodies respond to challenging physical activity is a strong feature across the school.
165. Teaching is always at least satisfactory, and is often good. Lessons begin with a suitably vigorous opportunity to warm-up. Instructions are clear and control is good. There is a good balance between instruction and demonstration on the one hand and physical activity on the other. Teachers set a good example through their involvement in physical activity. All staff uphold the policy on pupils having appropriate dress and footwear, and this sets the tone for their lessons. There is a strong sense of inclusion where all pupils, including those with physical disability, are encouraged to participate. Very few pupils actively avoid participation in lessons. Several lessons on the field involve two or more members of staff with a double class. On some occasions only one adult is involved directly in teaching and, as such, this is relatively inefficient in developing individual pupils' skills.
166. The school makes efficient use of the available resources. These are well managed and accessible to all. Some recent purchases have broadened the range of summer sports activities. Great care is taken by all staff to ensure pupils are mindful of the need for safety in the way they perform. Although the school lacks adequate and purpose-built changing facilities, every effort is made to manage this as effectively as possible.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

167. By the age of eleven standards are satisfactory. This level of achievement is maintained in the pupils' final year. Pupils become increasingly knowledgeable about the similarities and differences between the principal religions represented in Great Britain. In some lessons, the standard of pupils' knowledge is good. In a Year 6 lesson on Christianity, for example, the pupils were able to talk about the origins of the different parts of the Bible, the basic order and structure of the chapters, and how different sections are written in particular ways.
168. Pupils in Year 7 handle appropriately challenging material, including matters of social responsibility, homelessness and corporal punishment. Although only one lesson was observed in this year group, evidence from talking to pupils and work in their books indicates that pupils respond well to tackling issues which rarely have simple solutions.
169. The good standards achieved in relation to pupils' knowledge are to some extent offset by insufficient attention to the aspect of learning that requires links to be made with their own lives. Pupils' ability to reflect on their own spiritual awareness is unsatisfactory. During the week of inspection, this element only arose incidentally, and there is limited evidence of such awareness in exercise books. Most pupils' recording of work involves merely a recount of ideas taught in the lesson, with some pictorial features to support these facts.
170. The teaching of religious education is satisfactory. Teachers have a secure knowledge of the subject and lessons are tightly planned in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The use of this guidance provides coherence to the school's programme, but the excessive focus on knowledge means that the implementation of the syllabus is only partially successful. The range of teaching methods and learning styles is too limited to develop pupils' potential fully in this area.
171. Some lessons are too long and place insufficient demands on pupils. This timing is currently dictated by the timetable and tends to result in teachers spending too long talking at the beginnings of lessons. Although pupils' attitudes and behaviour are never less than satisfactory, the tasks set are often little more than the reinforcement of facts presented by the teacher in the first half of the session.
172. When questioned, pupils often find it difficult to go beyond the factual, or to fully appreciate the power and importance of symbolic images across the major faiths. Pupils are able to identify the differences between the principal faiths, but the division of knowledge across the school does not readily enable them to identify those factors that unite religious endeavour.
173. The school has a good range of religious artefacts and these are well managed. In one lesson with Year 7, a topic on Judaism was usefully supported with an interesting and stimulating display, offering the opportunity for pupils to find out more for themselves.
174. The teaching of religious education is supported by a daily act of worship, organised across the week as year group and whole school gatherings. These are often delivered with a strong moral content and these sessions are typically well received by the pupils.