

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **BAWDSEY CEVC PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bawdsey, Woodbridge

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique Reference Number: 124719

Headteacher: Mrs Judith Steventon

Reporting inspector: Philip J H O'Neill  
3162

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> January 2000

Inspection number: 188566

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Bawdsey VCP School School Lane Bawdsey Woodbridge Suffolk
Postcode:	IP12 3AR
Telephone number:	01394 411365
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
Name of Chair of Governors:	Mr T Owles
Date of previous inspection:	June 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Philip J H O'Neill	Registered Inspector	English Design and technology Physical education Equal opportunities	Information about the school The school's results and achievements Teaching and learning Leadership and management School improvement
Phiroze Daruwala	Lay Inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour Provision for the care of pupils Partnership with parents
Peter J Scott	Team Inspector	Mathematics Geography History Religious education	Staffing, accommodation and learning resources
Lynne Thorogood	Team Inspector	Science Information and communications technology Art Music Special educational needs Provision for under-fives	Curricular provision

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The Registrar  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Bawdsey School is a small primary school situated in a remote rural area. It is a voluntary controlled Church of England school. The original Victorian school building has been extended and adapted and the present temporary classrooms are due to be replaced by a new building in autumn 2000. The school serves three small communities and pupils come from a range of social backgrounds; about ten per cent are eligible for free school meals. The school has hard surfaced playing areas, an adventure play structure and a large playing field which is surrounded by open farmland. There are 79 pupils on roll aged between four and 11 years. At the time of the inspection there were three children under five years of age attending part-time. Pupils are taught in four classes grouped by age. Five pupils come from ethnic minority backgrounds; all pupils speak English as their first language. Twelve children have special educational needs, but no pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Needs. Few pupils have pre-school nursery education experience and generally they enter the school with standards of attainment that are below average.

### **HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS**

This is a very effective school, achieving good standards of attainment overall and steadily improving. It provides good teaching, is excellently led and managed and provides good value for money.

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

- It achieves good standards of attainment overall.
- It provides a high proportion of good and very good teaching.
- It makes very good provision for the higher attaining pupils.
- It enriches the curriculum through a very good range of extra-curricular activities.
- Given its size, it has a very good record of achievement in competitive sport and games.
- It is excellently managed and led.
- It makes very good provision for the moral and social development of the pupils.
- There are excellent procedures for monitoring pupils' academic progress.
- There are very good relationships with parents and with the local community.

#### **What could be improved**

- The teaching of handwriting in Key Stage 1.
- Standards of attainment in mathematics in Key Stage 1, particularly in the practical applications of mathematics.
- The rate of authorised absence.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The governors and the school confronted, in detail, the issues raised at the last inspection and used the report on the inspection very effectively as a lever to further development. The response to the issue related to the lack of challenge for the higher attaining pupils has been exemplary. The higher attaining pupils now reach very high standards of achievement. The involvement of the governors in the management of the school has been strengthened to the point where they are now closely involved in the effective monitoring of the school's work. They form a strong team and are very aware of their responsibilities. They have had difficulty recruiting but now have a good range of expertise. There has been much good work since the last inspection in the development and implementation of an effective behaviour policy and clearly the school has moved forward in this area. The teaching of mathematics has been addressed and the National Numeracy Strategy is bearing fruit but more needs to be done in this area. The limitations imposed by the accommodation have been confronted radically and a much improved set of classrooms is due to appear in autumn 2000. The quality of teaching has improved and is more clearly directed towards meeting specific needs. Standards of attainment have risen over the years. Clearly the school is moving forward on all fronts and this is due in many ways to the excellent management and the commitment and dedication of the teachers. This is a very effective school in very safe hands.

## STANDARDS

With such very small numbers taking the tests at age seven and comparisons with national figures must be treated with caution as one pupil may represent over ten per cent of the cohort. This also accounts for the seemingly radical fluctuations in attainment, year-on-year, in the tests. Boys and girls reach comparable standards in lessons. The better performance of boys in the tests must also be treated with caution, due to the small number of pupils entered. The pattern changes from year to year.

Overall, the main strengths lie in the standards of reading across the school and the good standards attained in science. The main weaknesses are in mathematics in Key Stage 1, particularly in the practical applications of mathematics, and in the standard of handwriting throughout Key Stage 1. Overall standards of attainment for seven year olds have remained stable since the previous inspection, whilst the standards achieved by 11 year olds have improved. There has been a marked improvement in standards of reading. The school has tackled the development of literacy and numeracy successfully through the effective implementation of the National literacy hour and the National Numeracy Strategy.

Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This is due to the quality of support they receive in lessons and the good quality of teaching they receive when withdrawn from lessons for special help. The school's very good initiatives to raise the achievement of the higher attaining pupils has resulted in some outstanding work, particularly in English and mathematics.

The school sets and meets challenging and realistic targets for the raising of standards.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very good attitudes to their work. They are keen to succeed and persevere in their work even when experiencing difficulties.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in lessons and around the school. The school's positive behaviour policy works well in preserving an orderly environment for all the pupils.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils form good relationships with one another and with the teachers, showing respect for each other's beliefs and opinions.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory overall. Unauthorised absence is almost non-existent, whilst authorised absence is above average; pupils are occasionally removed from school to join their parents on holidays. The school has worked hard to redress this trend.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall 32	good	Satisfactory	good

*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.*

The quality of teaching is good overall and is matched by the pupils' enthusiasm for learning. The pupils who are under five are taught well and provided with a stimulating and supportive environment for learning. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory with good teaching in one in every three lessons. In Key Stage 2 teaching is good with one in every three lessons being very good. At the start of Key Stage 1 there are

strengths in the quality of planning, which ensures that pupils are generally provided with work that is sufficiently demanding. There are some weaknesses in the teaching of handwriting in Key Stage 1: the pupils are not always provided with sufficient help to guide them in the consistent formation of their letter shapes.

The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, with several examples of good teaching. In Key Stage 2, English and mathematics are taught well because the lessons dedicated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy are more deeply embedded. Science is taught well at both key stages. In other subjects the quality of teaching is generally good, particularly in Key Stage 2.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provided is good and is enriched by a very good level of extra-curricular provision.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	These pupils are well provided for through the additional literacy support, through other well-targeted work in lessons and through some effective group work during withdrawal from lessons for special help.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	N/A
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school provides well for the personal development of pupils by offering many good opportunities for the exercise of responsibility. There are good opportunities for pupils to reflect on the spiritual dimension of their lives. Moral and social awareness are cultivated very effectively. Provision for the pupils' cultural development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school provides a very safe and secure environment in which the pupils thrive. The monitoring of the pupils' progress in their work is particularly good. The school works very well in partnership with parents.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is excellently led through the vision and imagination of the headteacher, the support she receives from her deputy and the other teachers and the positive direction provided by the governing body. The school is careful to analyse its costs and to seek the best value in what it spends.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have formed themselves into a cohesive group and work very effectively with the school in monitoring the quality of provision and in supporting the headteacher in the day-to-day running of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	There is some excellent work on this front. The analysis of attainment is rigorous and helpful in setting targets for development and in determining where the school's strengths and relative weaknesses lie.

The strategic use of resources	This small school works wonders with the accommodation and resources at its disposal. It has been particularly effective in deploying essential resources in the development of literacy and numeracy. There is a good level of appropriately experienced and qualified staff and support staff. Accommodation is very limited but will soon be improved through the new building programme.
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## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• all pupils are valued and included in the work of the school and have equal access to the curriculum.</li> <li>• there are very good relationships.</li> <li>• the work that is provided for pupils to do at home.</li> <li>• the quality of the general information that is sent home and the academic reports.</li> <li>• teachers are available for discussion and attend to what is said.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the support given to lower attaining pupils.</li> </ul>

The inspection evidence confirms the parents' very positive view of the school but does not justify the view of some parents that the lower attaining pupils are not well supported. The school has taken advantage of the additional literacy initiative which is specifically targeted at the lower attaining pupils and this works well.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

### **HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?**

1. With such very small numbers taking the tests at age seven and 11, comparisons with national figures must be treated with caution as one pupil may represent over ten per cent of the cohort. This also accounts for the seemingly radical fluctuations in attainment year on year in the tests. Boys and girls reach comparable standards in lessons. The better performance of boys in the tests must also be treated with caution due to the small number of pupils entered. The pattern changes from year to year.
2. In the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in English in 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was close to the national average in reading and above average in writing. A well above average proportion of pupils reached the higher levels in reading, whilst the higher levels in writing were reached by an average proportion of pupils. In the tests in mathematics, attainment of the expected level was below average and the proportion of pupils reaching the higher levels was above average. The teachers' assessments in English and mathematics reveal a broadly similar pattern of attainment. Whilst a high proportion of seven year olds reached higher levels in science, teachers' assessment of attainment was well below average. Boys outperformed girls in reading and mathematics.
3. Taking the average performance of pupils aged seven, standards in relation to all schools were above average in reading and in writing and average in mathematics. In relation to schools in similar circumstances, standards are average in reading, below average in writing and well below average in mathematics. Overall standards of attainment, at this age, have remained stable since the previous inspection, with a marked improvement in standards of reading. The school has tackled the development of literacy and numeracy successfully.
4. The inspection of lessons and work and the sample of pupils' reading towards the end of Key Stage 1 reveal good standards of speaking and listening. Pupils are encouraged to use a good range of language and to talk and write about the books they read. Pupils read fluently and confidently, reading a wide range of texts for pleasure and interest. The effective use of reading records and the involvement of parents have done much to improve the standards of reading. A minority of pupils shows weaknesses in handwriting. Pupils attempt a satisfactory range of writing, including poetry; for example, there is some well-organised work in comparing and contrasting features of different stories. Spelling is improving steadily and is around average for seven year olds. In mathematics, the emphasis in pupils' work on the understanding and use of number improves accuracy in measuring and computation and leads to average standards overall. However, pupils' understanding of the applications of mathematics is below the level expected for seven year olds. The work seen in science reveals above average standards with evidence, for example, of a good understanding of the growth of organisms and of how to conduct a fair test. Seven year olds reach satisfactory standards in art, design and technology, history and physical education. At this age, very good standards are achieved in music.
5. In the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was above the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards of attainment at the higher levels were above average in English, mathematics and science. Boys and girls reached comparable standards. The trend in the school's overall attainment for English, mathematics and science taken together is broadly in line with the national trend. Significant comparisons cannot be made with similar schools as the numbers of pupils involved are too small.

6. Evidence from the analysis of work and the observation of lessons towards the end of Key Stage 2 bears clear witness to considerable advances in learning as pupils move through Years 3 and 4. The older pupils in Year 6 reach above average standards in their work in English, mathematics and science. Pupils' speaking is developed through the good use of literacy across the subjects. Writing also reaches high and occasionally very high standards, as pupils are encouraged to extend their writing and embrace a wide-ranging vocabulary. Pupils are enthusiastic about books. They have developed a level of fluency and confidence, in some cases, that reaches far beyond what is expected at the age of 11. Pupils quickly extend their knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of mathematics. The understanding of number operations continues to be emphasised and pupils' use of number is increasingly confident in all aspects of the subject as they move through the key stage. Eleven year olds achieve satisfactory standards in art and design and technology. High standards are achieved in geography, history and physical education, whilst standards are very high in music. Achievement in competitive sport and games is high for a school of its size.
7. Children who are under five are set to achieve the early learning goals for this age. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This is due to the quality of support they receive in lessons and the good quality of teaching they experience when withdrawn from lessons for special help. The school's very good initiatives to raise the achievement of the higher attaining pupils have resulted in some outstanding work, particularly in English and mathematics. The few pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds achieve well in all subjects.

#### **PUPILS' ATTITUDES, VALUES AND PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT**

8. The great majority of parents expressed satisfaction with these aspects of achievement. Views expressed at the parents' meeting and their separate responses to questionnaires were overwhelmingly positive. Inspection findings confirm the parents' view that pupils' attitudes to learning, their values and personal development are very good. Pupils are keen to learn and show positive attitudes towards the school. They enjoy school and strongly identify with it. They are happy and safe in the school where harmony and friendship pervade.
9. Behaviour of pupils in classrooms and in the playground is generally good. This represents an improvement on what was noted in the previous inspection when there was a significant minority of disruptive pupils. This is a result of the effective implementation of a policy of positive behaviour management. At the start of the school day, pupils set to work quickly, behave well and carry out the teachers' instructions. The atmosphere in the classrooms is orderly, and pupils move around the school in a disciplined and orderly fashion. Behaviour in the dining room during meals is also good. Pupils play well together in the school playground. There were no incidents of bullying observed during the period of inspection. No pupil has been excluded from the school during the last two years. Pupils get on well with staff and with one another. They are courteous, trustworthy and helpful to teachers, other staff and to each other. Boys and girls mix well together and a distinct sense of purpose and harmony exists throughout the school.
10. As they progress through the school, pupils are given good opportunities to help and take responsibility. They carry out their tasks diligently. A group of Year 4 pupils, for example, helps in the school library. At the start of the morning and afternoon sessions, pupils take attendance registers to the secretary's office. Pupils are courteous, and give way to visitors in the school corridors and doorways. They listen carefully to teachers, concentrate during lessons and persevere with their work, even when they experience difficulties. They show pride in their work and their presentation is generally neat. They show care for learning resources, such as books and equipment. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of people in less

favourable circumstances than themselves and contribute willingly to various charities; for instance, they made a cash donation to a national charity to buy a dairy goat for a village in Africa. Pupils' attitudes, interest and good behaviour have a positive impact on standards of attainment, especially at Key Stage 2.

11. Overall, the rate of attendance for the last reporting year is broadly in line with the national average. The rate of unauthorised absence is well below the national average. The rate of authorised absence has been above the national figure. This trend is attributed to the tendency of some parents to take family holidays, especially during the summer term. The school has taken effective measures to redress this trend. Pupils are mostly punctual in arriving at school each morning and in returning to classrooms after the morning and lunch breaks.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT**

12. The quality of teaching is good overall and is matched by the pupils' enthusiasm for learning. Children under five are taught well and are provided with a stimulating and supportive environment for learning. Teaching in Key Stage 1 is satisfactory with good teaching in one out of every three lessons. In Key Stage 2 teaching is good, with one in every three lessons being very good. At the start of Key Stage 1 there are strengths in the quality of planning, which ensure that pupils are generally provided with work that is sufficiently demanding. They engage in their work and show considerable independence when working on even the most demanding tasks. There are some minor weaknesses in the teaching of handwriting: the pupils are not always provided with sufficient help to guide them in the consistent formation of their letter shapes.
13. The most marked feature of the good teaching is the care taken by teachers to ensure that what they teach is progressively developed across the years. Pupils respond to the challenge provided by seeking to refine and improve their first efforts. Another strength is the imaginative use of worksheets prepared by the teachers; these are based on a good knowledge of the pupils' attainment levels. The management of pupils, through well-targeted praise and acknowledgement of good work and effort, is a striking feature of many lessons. Also teachers are generally good at helping pupils to identify how well they are achieving. They also provide clear guidance, including personal targets, to encourage further improvement. Teachers make very good use of the resources available to them, including information and communications technology. Homework is used satisfactorily to support pupils' learning.
14. The teachers know the pupils well, including their little quirks of behaviour, and communicate a feeling of affection and care even when seriously tempted to feel less positive. The pupils respond through a real desire to learn. There were no unsatisfactory lessons seen during the inspection and this is a tribute to the quality of monitoring and support provided by the headteacher. Minor weaknesses occur in some of the literacy hours when the end of a lesson is not used to best effect to bring together the pupils' work and ideas. Occasionally feedback to pupils is too general in nature or insufficient direction is given, as happens sometimes in art. On the other hand, too much direction in some physical education lessons tends to impede more creative work.
15. The teaching of English and mathematics is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, with many examples of good teaching. In Key Stage 2, English and mathematics are taught well as the lessons dedicated to the teaching of literacy and numeracy are more deeply embedded. Science is well taught at both key stages. In other subjects the quality of teaching is generally good, particularly in Key Stage 2.

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

16. The quality and range of learning opportunities for the children who are under five are good. Children are offered a range of experiences in all areas of learning, relevant and appropriate to their age and prior attainment. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the curriculum is generally good, with very good opportunities for extra-curricular activities in Key Stage 2. There is a high level of participation in football and netball clubs and the lunch-time birdwatching club makes very good use of opportunities offered by the local environment. Recorders and music clubs are also very popular and well-attended.
17. Provision for personal, social and health education is good. Children are encouraged to be aware of the needs of others and are given responsibilities such as acting as library monitors. Health education is supported by a well-structured science curriculum, which includes coverage of human nutrition, life processes and reproduction. In Key Stage 2 children learn about the dangers and harmful effects of tobacco, alcohol and other drugs.
18. Upper Key Stage 2 children and staff visit the local secondary school and good links are developed with other schools through e-mail. There is no longer a local playgroup and few children enter the school with nursery education experience.
19. The school meets all the requirements for curriculum provision, including religious education and collective worship, in both key stages. The curriculum is broad and balanced, with particularly good coverage available for children under five, who benefit from a programme which includes elements drawn from the Key Stage 1 curriculum as well as full coverage of the early learning goals set out for this age. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good across the whole school. A well-structured policy is in place, and appropriate individual education plans, which are revised frequently, have been drawn up as necessary. Assessment is undertaken regularly. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported by a learning support assistant. Provision for development of the higher attaining pupils is very good, and is a strength of the school. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.
20. The teaching of literacy is good throughout the school. Literacy hours take place every day in all classes and literacy skills are promoted in other subjects such as science, geography, history and religious education. Pupils search for information in books, using contents and index pages and write descriptively and analytically about what they have learned. Provision for the teaching of handwriting in Key Stage 1 is barely satisfactory and presentation of work occasionally suffers as a result. Strategies for teaching numeracy are satisfactory, with an hour dedicated to numeracy provided for each class every day. Pupils are encouraged to use mathematical skills independently, for instance, in making a decision to present science results in a graphical form.
21. A commitment to equality of access and opportunity is made in the school prospectus, and is reflected in policies and plans. Daily lesson plans reflect the needs of all the children in each class, with individual activities outlined for the range of ages and attainments.
22. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. There are many opportunities for spiritual development in thoughtful reflection, including the daily assembly, where pupils are encouraged to develop a sense of responsibility and conscience, and sometimes to be silent and reflective. In assemblies, pupils have opportunities to listen to music, join in with prayers and hymns and explore moral and social issues. Pupils are encouraged to reflect upon books they have read and share their feelings with others. Key Stage 2 pupils display a fascination for numbers and profound interest in mathematics.
23. The provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. All school staff take opportunities to promote good conduct and encourage pupils to take personal responsibility for their behaviour. The school as a whole encourages pupils to show consideration for others and is consistent in its application of a clear moral code. Pupils are expected to work and play

co-operatively in groups and they respond by offering support and friendship to peers. All adults in the school provide good role models for the children.

24. The provision for pupils' cultural development is good. The school organises a range of activities to enrich the curriculum. Pupils make a variety of visits, including a French trip. Theatre groups visit the school. They have experienced percussion instruments in Indonesian music. There is satisfactory provision for children to experience and learn about the customs and traditions of other ethnic and cultural groups.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?**

25. The school is well aware of its statutory responsibility to make suitable provision for pupils' welfare and for monitoring their academic performance. Positive attitudes and values are integrated in all aspects of the curriculum and in various extra-curricular activities.
26. Teaching and all other staff are approachable, welcoming and equally accessible to parents and pupils alike. Consideration for others, respect for individuals and good behaviour are encouraged throughout the school. With the small number of pupils on the school roll, both the teaching and non-teaching staff get to know each individual pupil well. The school gathers information on attainment as pupils join the school. This information is shared with parents and used in setting targets for attainment. Clear records of attainment in the National Curriculum subjects, as well as personal records, are maintained by the school for all pupils and eventually transferred to the receiving school when pupils leave. This kind of co-operation is well established and supports a smooth transfer of pupils from the primary to secondary stage. This initiative is highly valued by the parents.
27. There are effective procedures for monitoring pupils' behaviour and personal development. Appropriate sanctions are imposed in the case of unacceptable behaviour. The main purpose of the school's approach is to emphasis the recognition and praise of good and positive attitudes to learning; for example, the school has established a weekly achievement scheme, in which an individual pupil or a group of pupils or year group is congratulated for good behaviour or achievement.
28. The school has established clear and pertinent procedures for tracking the progress of individual pupils. Such information on pupils' attainment and achievement is used effectively to identify the needs of individuals and to adjust and adapt provision accordingly. Thus, pupils with special educational needs receive effective support and guidance, have full access to the curriculum and are fully integrated in the mainstream lessons. Another significant benefit derived from an efficient tracking system is the identification of pupils of higher ability and the setting of correspondingly high expectations. Special attention is focused on these pupils so that they are fully challenged in terms of their academic abilities; for instance, arrangements are made for Year 6 pupils who attain high standards in mathematics to be included in a group working towards the very high levels in Key Stage 2 tests.
29. The information relating to the school's expectations and parental responsibilities concerning uninterrupted attendance and punctuality are made explicit in the school prospectus. The school's guidelines and procedures for marking attendance registers are carried out meticulously by class teachers. There is good supervision during the morning breaks and at lunch-times on the playgrounds. All support staff are friendly, helpful and consistent in their approach to all pupils in the school.
30. The headteacher is responsible for implementing child protection procedures and appropriate links with outside agencies are well established. The school is very successful in promoting the health and safety and well being of the pupils. It has been particularly effective in promoting self-esteem and self-awareness amongst the pupils in its care.

## **HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?**

31. Although the school is situated in an isolated rural area, it has been very successful in establishing a strong, positive and purposeful partnership with parents. Parents attending the pre-inspection meeting and those responding to the questionnaire expressed a high level of satisfaction about the headteacher's astute and perceptive leadership in raising the expectations and achievements of all the pupils attending the school.
32. Parents feel welcome in the school. They play an important part in supporting their children's work at home and this approach has a positive impact upon pupils' progress. The home/school agreement is well established. Regular consultations, both formal and informal, are available to parents to discuss their children's progress and life in the school. The school provides clear information on what is taught. At the beginning of each term, the school provides parents with details about the curriculum matters to be covered by each class. The school prospectus is a clear and comprehensive document. Its contents cover the school's aims and policies as well as a brief account of the curriculum and various extra-curricular activities offered.
33. The school encourages a regular and effective communication with parents; for example, each pupil has a home/school logbook, in which comments and observations are encouraged on a two-way basis. Parents are clearly informed about the life of the school community through monthly newsletters and formal and informal meetings. All parents receive a comprehensive annual report towards the end of the academic year that they are able to discuss with teachers. They also receive a summary report in February. Parents feel free to approach the school for discussion with the headteacher or other teachers. Any issue raised by parents is looked at with care, sympathy and sensitivity and is promptly resolved.
34. The school receives strong support from the parent and teacher association, which provides a good range of resources for the school. A variety of social events is organised by the association to develop positive relationships amongst parents. They raised sufficient funds to purchase the necessary equipment for the adventure playground.
35. The school is equally successful in establishing positive links with large commercial companies in the surrounding areas, who, in turn, assist the school by providing funds; for example, a company donated a cash sum towards the purchase of football kits for the school's football team. An independent service provider has facilitated access to the Internet, so that pupils can exchange messages with their peers in the local schools. Pupils have made good use of this facility. At present, parents, in collaboration with the local craft group, are assisting pupils in the creation of a millennium quilt.
36. Enrichment of the curriculum is further achieved through educational and cultural visits; for example, the school, in conjunction with other local primary schools, arranges a six-day visit to France for Year 6 pupils each year. Visits to concerts, local museums and places of interest are also organised by the school. The local church provides a special and beneficial link to the community. From time to time, one of the foundation governors takes assembly for the whole school. All these initiatives have a very positive impact on pupils' learning.

## **HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?**

37. A significant strength of the school is the excellent leadership and management of the headteacher, who is ably supported in the day-to-day running of the school by her deputy. The headteacher provides clear educational direction to the work of the school through very effective planning, comprehensive documentation and the implementation of policies that challenge but support the teachers. Most significantly, she combines her responsibility for management with a good level of classroom teaching. She ensures that the school's aims and values are reflected in its work, particularly its commitment to caring for all pupils and the provision of a challenging curriculum for all. Responsibilities are delegated sensibly by ensuring that those who carry responsibility for managing subjects are sufficiently skilled and

effectively supported as they develop their role.

38. The high quality of the overall leadership and management of the school has supported the raising of standards of attainment, particularly in English, through the effective introduction of the literacy hour and the National Numeracy Strategy.
39. The school is very well served by its governing body which has steadily formed itself into a cohesive group, supporting the school and monitoring its effectiveness, whilst respecting the professionalism of the teachers. This represents a very significant improvement since the previous inspection, when governors were not in a strong position to support the work of the school. The governors have a good understanding of the school's strengths and are aware of where it needs to go forward in its development. They have ensured that all statutory requirements are met. Their energies have been rightly focused on the improvement of the school's accommodation, which is limited. Their efforts have borne fruit in the planned radical development of the site. The new classrooms will be in use in autumn 2000. The interests of the pupils with special educational needs are well served by the designation of an experienced governor with responsibility for the oversight of this area. His involvement has sharpened awareness of the school's responsibilities towards these children. The governors fulfil all their responsibilities related to provision for pupils with special educational needs, including those for reporting to parents about how the relevant resources have been deployed. The designation of a governor with responsibility for the development of numeracy has been an effective initiative.
40. There have been significant improvements in the quality of teaching since the last inspection and this, in turn, has improved the pupils' learning and raised standards of attainment. This is due to the systematic monitoring of teaching, whereby good practice is identified and disseminated. Teachers who experience difficulties are provided with the appropriate level of support. Teachers are helped to identify their own needs and to draw on the experience of other staff. The headteacher and her deputy have a detailed knowledge of what is happening in classrooms. The newly-qualified teacher receives a very good level of support. In cases where it is appropriate, performance targets are set for teachers; these are used positively to encourage improvement in particular aspects of teaching. Staff who are new to the school receive very good support from colleagues. Learning support assistants work effectively with class teachers in managing the provision of special help for pupils. Voluntary helpers receive an appropriate induction before joining teachers in the classroom.
41. A striking feature of the school is the teachers' shared commitment to the improvement of their own professional skills and to the raising of standards of attainment. This ensures that the school has the clarity of vision, the drive and enthusiasm required to sustain continued development of its work. There are very effective procedures in place for identifying teachers' levels of competence and addressing weaknesses. Planning for the future development of the school is excellent. Appropriate, challenging but feasible targets are set and met. After the last inspection, the school set its sights on raising the achievement of the higher attaining pupils, as weaknesses had been identified in this area. The effectiveness of its work has received national attention. There is clear evidence of the success of the approach adopted. Other matters raised throughout the previous report have been successfully tackled. There has been much detailed and effective planning related to the development of literacy and numeracy. Such work has been more effective in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1 where there is less experience amongst the staff. For this reason the school now needs to focus its efforts more sharply in Key Stage 1, where there remain some minor weaknesses in the teaching of literacy, particularly handwriting and some aspects of mathematics. Financial planning is tightly linked to the school's development plan and is very effective in ensuring that expenditure is directed towards agreed priorities.

42. The school's satisfactory level of resources is well managed. Though accommodation is limited, the school manages it well. The main weakness lies in the provision for indoor physical education: the hall is very small for the number of children it is intended to serve.
43. The school makes good use of information and communications technology and has steadily improved the level of the teachers' expertise. All subjects provide opportunities for the use and application of information and communications technology. This is particularly true of Key Stage 2 where pupils make use of the Internet and e-mail as a matter of routine.
44. Information and communications technology is also used well to support financial planning and management. The computerised system in use gives easy access to accounts for monitoring purposes. The most recent auditor's report on the systems used by the school found all systems in order, apart from a few minor procedural items, which have been addressed effectively.
45. Additional funds have been used appropriately; for example, funding for the improvement of the school's security has been directed towards the security of the main entrance. Funding for books has been correctly directed towards the development of the school's initiatives in raising standards of literacy and numeracy. There is a good match of teachers' qualifications and experience to the needs of the curriculum. This is also true of support staff. There is also sufficient appropriate expertise to identify and support pupils with special educational needs.
46. The governing body has managed to recruit some members with sufficient financial expertise to ensure that the school applies best value principles. With the support of the local education authority, the school compares its costs to that of similar schools. Though the cost of educating each pupil is higher than that found nationally in all primary schools, it is around average for a small school and lower than some similar small schools in the area.
47. The school provides as wide a curriculum as its resources and accommodation will allow. The local area is very well used, particularly in activities related to bird watching. In this respect, the school has won the county bird watching competition. The school seeks the views of parents and relevant professionals before taking major decisions. This is evident, for instance, in the way the planning for the new building has been managed.

#### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

48. **Further raise standards of attainment in mathematics by:**  
placing greater emphasis on the practical applications of mathematics **(see paras 4 and 68)**  
  
**Improve the teaching of handwriting in Key Stage 1 by:**  
providing the pupils with sufficient help to guide them in the consistent formation of their letter shapes. **(see paras 12 and 58)**  
  
**In the context of the school's many strengths the governors and teachers should also include in their action plan the following in order to address less significant weaknesses.**  
  
**Improve the teaching of the literacy hour by:**  
using the plenary session more effectively for harvesting pupils ideas and celebrating their achievements in lessons. **(see paras 14 and 64)**

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

### Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	32
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
0	22	44	34	0	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	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	n/a	77
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	n/a	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Needs	n/a	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	n/a	12

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	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.7

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.03
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 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	9	4	13

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	8
	Girls	3	4	2
	Total	11	12	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (83)	92 (92)	77 (83)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (84)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	8	8	7
	Girls	3	2	3
	Total	11	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	85 (89)	77 (83)	77 (100)
	National	82 (81)	86 (86)	87 (85)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest 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	4	5	9

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	4
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	7	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (80)	78 (80)	89 (80)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	3	3	4
	Girls	4	4	4
	Total	7	7	8
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	78 (80)	78 (80)	89 (80)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	4
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	72
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***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.*

### ***Teachers and classes***

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.3
Average class size	17.5

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	22

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	165310
Total expenditure	162826
Expenditure per pupil	1939
Balance brought forward from previous year	10092
Balance carried forward to next year	12576

## RESULTS OF THE SURVEY OF PARENTS AND CARERS

### Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	76
Number of questionnaires returned	23

### Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	52	48	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	48	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	26	74	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	26	70	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	52	48	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	43	52	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	57	39	0	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	70	30	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	52	43	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	43	48	9	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	48	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	48	43	9	0	0

### OTHER ISSUES RAISED BY PARENTS

The quality of support given to the lower attaining pupils was seen by some parents as inadequate.

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

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

49. Most pupils enter the reception class with levels of attainment slightly below average as revealed by the Suffolk Education Authority test for this age. A few have attainment levels well below or somewhat above national expectations. The majority have had little or no nursery education, due to lack of local provision. During the year, their attainment in reading, writing and numeracy is regularly monitored and assessed and careful individual records are maintained. Individual targets are set for each child, and regularly revised as a result of assessment. At the time of inspection, attainment was satisfactory in all areas of learning and all these children are on target to achieve the early learning goals by the time they are five. Some pupils had begun to read, could count up to ten, showed confidence in handling a range of resources and were developing a range of social skills. These achievements are due to the quality of teaching these children experience, particularly the good emphasis on early language development.
50. Teaching in the under fives group was never less than satisfactory and often good in all areas of provision. Good teaching was characterised by careful and detailed planning, high expectations and good use of praise and the positive acknowledgement of attainment. Teaching is based on a well-structured curriculum plan that includes all areas of the early learning goals, supplemented by elements drawn from the early stages of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. Planning shows good cross-curricular links and regular assessment opportunities that are consistently used. The teaching of letter formation and basic number work is satisfactory.
51. Personal and social development is satisfactory, with pupils showing enthusiasm for activities and working and playing co-operatively. They handle books and equipment well and most are open and communicate confidently with adults. Generally, behaviour is good, with pupils staying on task for sustained periods.
52. In language and literacy, attainment is satisfactory for most pupils, who have begun to look at books, handling them well and sometimes recognising simple words. The pupils talk confidently about books. They explain how to start a book and how stories begin and end. The higher attaining pupils write some words, and most children write their names with correct use of upper and lower case letters. Lower attaining pupils have less well-developed handwriting skills. All pupils make satisfactory progress in relation to prior attainment.
53. In mathematics, attainment is satisfactory. Some pupils count beyond ten, and higher attaining pupils have started to understand simple addition. A comprehensive range of practical equipment enables the children to sort objects, for example, according to size or colour and to count and recognise numbers. Practical art activities prepare children for early work on shape and space. Number songs and rhymes help them to count forwards and backwards. They explore numbers in play situations and learn the appropriate mathematical language. When involved in sand and water play they learn the beginnings of capacity. Pupils enjoy participating in cutting out shapes and sequencing patterns. They learn to refer to items such as first, second and third and learn about pairs of objects.
54. Knowledge and understanding of the world is demonstrated in discussions about homes, school, families and pets. Pupils discuss and compare familiar environments such as home, school and church. All under-fives are beginning to use information and communications technology equipment with support, in a variety of curricular areas, including literacy and art.
55. Physical development is satisfactory, with most under-fives showing appropriate co-ordination.

Gross motor skills are developing well, and most of the pupils' fine motor skills are improving at a good rate.

56. Within the area of creative development, pupils' learning is good. They sing and make music regularly, and produce a range of artwork in a suitable variety of media. Good provision for imaginative play include a 'vet's surgery', where children engage in dressing up and role-play.
57. Resources are generally satisfactory, with books and equipment well-maintained and cared for. The classroom is spacious and has generous display space. The use of the classroom assistant's time and that of parent helpers is well-managed and, overall, the resources are efficiently deployed for the benefit of this age group.

## **ENGLISH**

58. The overall attainment of seven year olds in English is at the level expected. However, at this age, pupils reach above average standards in reading. In the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in English in 1999, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 2 was close to the national average in reading and above average in writing. A well above average proportion of pupils reached the higher levels in reading, whilst the higher levels in writing were reached by an average proportion of pupils. Pupils read fluently and confidently, showing a good awareness of their audience. The relatively good standards in reading are due to the effective way the school encourages pupils to read for pleasure and interest. Pupils experience a good range of authors, including information and communications technology texts. The attainment of pupils is further supported by the effective use of reading records and the involvement of parents. To ensure that pupils develop reading skills progressively, teachers encourage them to tackle increasingly demanding books and to persevere in sounding out unfamiliar words when reading aloud.
59. Pupils are confident in talking about their work, using a growing vocabulary. A minority of pupils are weaker in handwriting skills than would normally be expected for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1. These pupils are not always directed appropriately to ways of developing consistency in letter shapes. Overall, handwriting develops progressively through Key Stage 1 through regular practice and careful feedback by the teachers. Pupils attempt a good range of writing, including poetry; for example, there is some good work achieved in comparing and contrasting features of different stories. Spelling is steadily improving and is above average for seven year olds. The school has exceeded its targets for accuracy in spelling at the age of seven.
60. The standards of attainment seen in lessons and in the pupils' work are reflected in the attainment of pupils in the most recent National Curriculum tests for seven year olds, where overall standards in reading in relation to all schools were above average and average for schools in similar circumstances. The tests reveal average standards in writing in relation to all schools nationally and below average standards for similar schools. Overall standards of attainment, at this age, have remained stable since the previous inspection, with a marked improvement in standards of reading. The school has tackled the development of literacy successfully: there is further planned development in Key Stage 1.
61. Attainment of eleven year olds exceeds the national expectation. In the 1999 national tests for 11 year olds the proportion of pupils reaching the expected standard was above the national average. Standards of attainment at the higher levels were above average. Boys and girls reached comparable standards. The trend in the school's overall attainment has been broadly in line with the national trend. Significant comparisons cannot be made with similar schools as the numbers of pupils involved are too small.
62. The very good work on the analysis of attainment directed by the headteacher is having a clear impact on standards of attainment. The accurate identification of pupils' levels of attainment is

evident in much of the marking of the pupils' work. Clear targets for improvement are provided and the pupils respond readily to these. Pupils take a real pride in their work particularly when the teachers acknowledge their efforts through praise and encouragement. Some particularly good work in Year 6 on the analysis of an anti-smoking leaflet leads the pupils to a sophisticated awareness of the way the language of persuasion works. This in turn leads to some good discussion when the pupils become increasingly aware of the structure of rational argument. Standards of writing are above the level usually found at the age of 11. This is evident in the pupils' poetry and story writing. Handwriting develops rapidly as pupils move through Key Stage 2. This is due to the attention to detail encouraged by the teachers and through the regular practice of letter shapes. Some very effective class discussion encourages the use of a wide range of language. Teachers insist on the use of technical vocabulary in other subjects and pupils respond enthusiastically to the stimulating climate for learning provided by the teachers.

63. Pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils achieve well in relation to their previous attainments. The school has done much to support improved achievement of the higher attaining pupils and has been successful in providing them with work that is sufficiently challenging. There is evidence of some outstanding attainment across the school. Pupils in Year 2, for instance, are reading some very challenging books and are confident and fluent when talking about them. In Year 6, there is some excellent narrative writing. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support in the identification of words and make rapid strides in their reading. They are encouraged to write and many pupils, who would otherwise feel insecure in expressing themselves in writing, produce some well-formed sentences. This was particularly evident in the Year 3 and 4 class when pupils were withdrawn for special help or received additional literacy support in lessons.
64. Pupils use language to good effect in most other subjects; for example, in science they use the appropriate technical vocabulary to describe their experiments. They produce some good written evaluations of work in art and design and technology. Overall the use of literacy across the school has done much to encourage different kinds of writing.
65. The quality of teaching is satisfactory in Key Stage 1, with a significant proportion of good teaching. The strengths of teaching at this stage lie in the quality of planning, the management of pupils and the good use made of resources. Planning is effective in that teachers are adept at providing a progressively challenging series of language activities. They have engaged with the considerable demands of the literacy hour in classes of pupils of different ages and wide-ranging levels of attainment. The pupils, too, have made considerable strides in extending their concentration spans. They persevere with books they find demanding and are willing to explore ideas independently. The teachers at this stage are good at directing pupils into productive activity through the appropriate use of praise. In teaching that is just satisfactory, teachers' knowledge of how to support handwriting has weaknesses and the teacher does not organise the pupils appropriately for group activity. Occasionally, the end of the lesson is not used as well as it could be to harvest pupils' ideas and provide an opportunity to celebrate their work. Homework is used well to support pupils' learning and teachers are careful to mark and assess it appropriately.
66. Teaching in Key Stage 2 is good, with a significant proportion of very good teaching. The key to effective teaching lies in the quality of the organisation of the literacy hour. Very good use is made of the whole class work at the start of the lesson; for instance, in Years 3 and 4 the pupils were taught to use adjectives to colour their imaginative writing. Through skilful questioning the teacher generated real interest and enthusiasm for language. The pupils went on to improve their writing by searching for more elegant description through the use of adverbs and adjectives. The pride they took in their work was palpable. They were eager to show their best efforts to the inspectors and were keen to take their writing to even greater levels of achievement. There is much evidence of pupils' careful drafting and redrafting of work.

67. Since the previous inspection the well-managed introduction of the literacy hour has had a significant impact on standards of attainment across the school. Teachers have adapted what they already do well to the requirements of the more structured demands of the literacy hour. Good use is made of the national framework in planning. The teachers are steadily becoming more skilled in managing the required mixture of whole-class teaching and group work. The leadership and management of the subject are very good and characterised by a clear sense of purpose and direction. The school now needs to raise further the quality of teaching of literacy in Key Stage 1 by sharing some of the good practice already established in Key Stage 2.

## **MATHEMATICS**

68. At the end of Key Stage 1, standards are broadly in line with national expectations. This is confirmed by the end of key stage tests in 1999 when standards were close to the national average. The small number of pupils taking the national tests showed a wide range of attainment. Higher attaining pupils achieved high standards whilst standards achieved by low attaining pupils were very low. The standards achieved by the boys were significantly better than those of the girls but one must not read too much into this in the context of the small numbers taking the tests. Reliable comparisons cannot be made with similar schools. At the end of Key Stage 2, standards achieved in national tests in 1999 reached levels that were above the average for all other primary schools. This is consistent with the standards of attainment observed in lessons and in the pupils' work. Higher attaining pupils achieved well in relation to their prior high levels of attainment. There was no significant difference between the performance of girls and boys. Pupils make progress as expected at Key Stage 1 and good progress at Key Stage 2. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well in relation to their prior attainment.
69. At Key Stage 1, emphasis on the understanding and use of number assists pupils in developing skills in computation, interpreting data, solving problems and measuring with increasing accuracy. Opportunities for using and applying knowledge, understanding and skills to new situations are provided. However, pupils' progress in this aspect of mathematics is slower than in number, space and measures in which, by the end of the key stage, nearly four out of five pupils reach the level expected. Higher attaining pupils reach well above average levels in the understanding and use of number, which they apply successfully in solving problems.
70. At Key Stage 2, pupils quickly extend their knowledge, understanding and skills in all aspects of mathematics. They employ technical language appropriately to help them to deduce, predict and reason when applying their knowledge to new situations. The understanding of number operations continues to be emphasised and pupils' use is firmly consolidated in all aspects of the subject. Pupils learn to measure with increasing accuracy, and new ideas, for example, algebraic relationships, are introduced and extended. By the end of the key stage, one in three pupils is achieving standards that are well above the level expected. A small number of higher attaining pupils, with appropriate teaching, are reaching levels in aspects of mathematics which meet the expectations of older pupils approaching the end of the next key stage. This points to the success of the school's policy in addressing the needs of pupils with special talents in mathematics. Pupils' attainment and progress within Key Stage 2 are assisted significantly by the school's monitoring and evaluation procedures, which allow for specific targets for year groups and individual pupils to achieve.
71. Since the last inspection, when mathematics was judged to have weaknesses and pupils' performance in mathematics to be the weakest when compared with English and science, the school has addressed the issues with rigour and determination. As a consequence, improvements in the planning, teaching and learning of mathematics have been significant,

particularly at Key Stage 2. Through a well-structured action plan issues were linked closely to the school development plan and to the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy. The curriculum and planning now show improvements in the provision for pupils' learning in the use and application of mathematics. Teaching methods include a wider range of strategies with an increased emphasis on direct teaching. The needs of the higher attaining pupils have been addressed at Key Stage 2 with remarkable success. However, there remains some room for further improvement, particularly at Key Stage 1, in the teaching of the practical applications of mathematics.

72. Numeracy is developed well in all aspects of the curriculum and teachers seize opportunities to use number skills; for example, display within the classrooms shows that pupils prepare block graphs of their favourite foods by tallying responses and depict the results pictorially in a frequency table. In science and geography at Key Stage 2, pupils used pictograms, bar charts and graphs to represent relationships between numbers. Data obtained in information and communications technology is used in other subjects; for example, in a good lesson in literacy, a pupil obtained statistical data from a website related to the use and abuse of alcohol for preparing a booklet on alcoholism. In design and technology pupils measure accurately and cut shapes. Timelines are used in history and mathematics. At Key Stage 2, pupils used their numerical skills to plot co-ordinates and read maps.
73. Overall teaching is good. It is better at Key Stage 2 than at Key Stage 1, where it remains satisfactory. Pupils have a mature attitude to learning; relationships and behaviour are very good and pupils' interest in mathematics allows the teachers to exercise fully their professional skills. Teachers' knowledge and understanding are secure and are put to effective use when explaining and questioning pupils and extending their use of writing and language. Expectations are high and this is reflected in the quality and presentation of pupils' work. Detailed lesson plans are well-matched to the pupils' levels of attainment. Individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs are well-constructed and used. The use of time and resources is a strength of the teaching. At Key Stage 2, pupils' attitudes to learning and the teachers' very good classroom management are factors that contribute markedly to good progress. At Key Stage 1, teachers are quick to re-engage pupils when attention and concentration drifts.
74. Pupils are assessed regularly and feedback, including marking of work, is constructive and effective. Results of assessment are used well to support pupils' learning. One good lesson observed at Key Stage 2, in which pupils were learning the inverse nature of addition and subtraction, captured most of the strengths associated with teaching. Relationships were friendly and pupils were well-motivated, showing a strong commitment to learning. The teacher's planning was thorough. Learning objectives were shared with, and understood by, the pupils. Initially teaching was deliberately slow to engage all pupils' attention, including those with special educational needs. As pupils showed they were secure the pace was increased, only lessening if a point was proving difficult to understand. The teacher created a calm classroom, which was conducive to effective learning. The plenary session showed clearly that the objectives had been met and that the pupils were well-prepared to embark upon the objectives for the next lesson.
75. The subject benefits from effective leadership. The subject co-ordinator, appointed since the last inspection, works closely with the headteacher and they monitor attainment, planning and teaching carefully. The school's aims are fully met in the teaching and the requirements of the National Curriculum are satisfied.

## SCIENCE

76. On the basis of the 1999 teachers' assessment, Key Stage 1 pupils' attainment was below the average for similar schools. In the 1999 national tests for Key Stage 2, pupils attained standards above national expectations. Teachers' assessment indicated that pupils were attaining at a level above national expectations. Results over the past three years show a steady improvement in the end of Key Stage 2 attainment. This represents an improvement in standards at both key stages since the last inspection. This improvement has resulted from the drawing up of an effective policy, which sets out a clear basis on which to plan units of work. The policy has also supported the setting of clear objectives for the different levels of attainment in the mixed-age classes. On the basis of lessons observed, analysis of work and discussions with pupils and teachers, attainment by the end of each key stage exceeds the national expectation for the pupils' ages.
77. The quality of teaching is predominantly good. The best lessons are very well-planned; teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject matter and transmit their enthusiasm to pupils. The teachers consistently use appropriate scientific vocabulary and children are expected to do likewise. Teachers frequently question children to assess their understanding. The questioning works well in establishing how pupils are achieving and where they experience difficulties. It also supports effective target-setting. In a Year 5 and 6 lesson pupils were asked to design a suitable experiment using a fair test and to answer a scientific question about materials and their properties. Higher attaining pupils are extended through the use of the Internet and in a Year 5 and 6 lesson the teacher used the Science Explorer information and communications technology package to supplement teaching. Teachers assess pupils' work very thoroughly and provide supportive and evaluative comments that contribute to pupils' progress.
78. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have a good understanding of what different organisms need in order to grow. They understand the properties of different materials and how they can be changed, for example, by heat. They have a good grasp of how simple forces can act in terms of pushing, pulling, balancing and floating. Their powers of observation are good, and they record their observations and findings in a variety of ways, including drawing. By the age of 11 pupils can confidently plan and carry out investigations, giving clear explanations of how to conduct a fair test and improve its accuracy. They develop good questioning skills and occasionally challenge their own results. Higher attaining pupils achieve good results in science through having a high level of challenge. They are sometimes given a significant level of responsibility for their own learning and respond well to this. Pupils with special educational needs develop their knowledge and skill at a good rate in relation to their prior levels of attainment.
79. Across both key stages pupils show a lively interest in their work. Generally they behave well during lessons and, when performing practical tasks, treat apparatus and materials sensibly. They relate well to each other and show respect for the contributions of others. Occasionally a very small number of pupils show discourtesy to each other during practical work, but these incidents are short-lived and dealt with quickly.
80. The management of the subject is good. The science co-ordinator has drawn up detailed medium-term plans that have been tried out by other teachers and revised and refined after evaluation. Time is allocated for the management and development of the subject, which is used well in observing and evaluating practice in other classes.
81. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and is well-planned to provide breadth and balance across all attainment targets. A suitable range of resources is available, and there are plans to further develop information technology provision in science. The co-ordinator is well qualified, and provides very effective and enthusiastic leadership that has contributed to the improvements since the last inspection. Standards of attainment have risen and the quality of

teaching has improved.

## **ART**

82. Work completed by pupils in both key stages is generally of a higher quality than that found in most schools. This is broadly in line with the findings of the previous inspection. Standards have been maintained through effective monitoring of teaching and learning and the good use of additional help from parents and classroom assistants.
83. Only two lessons were observed, one of which was satisfactory and the other very good. The very good teaching was characterised by the systematic teaching of skills, through demonstration and discussion, and careful questioning of children when analysing an artist's work. The satisfactory teaching included the setting of clear objectives for the pupils and the development of useful cross-curricular links with mathematics.
84. By the time they are 11 years old, pupils are able to work competently in a variety of media including pastels, charcoal and watercolour. They draw accurately with a sense of perspective and mix colours effectively. Pupils are able to produce good observational drawings, and in Years 3 and 4, produced some well-observed portraits in the manner of Edward Munch, developing their skill with pastels and colour blending. Pupils in Key Stage 1 have produced some worthwhile pencil portraits, which are displayed in 'frames' produced with an information and communications technology package. Year 1 and 2 pupils are able to print successfully, using cut potato printing blocks; they discuss and evaluate their work well.
85. In Key Stage 2, progress with knowledge and understanding is good and pupils are introduced to the work of a variety of artists and craftspeople. They are able to discuss the work of established artists thoughtfully, using a range of suitable vocabulary, describing colours as 'merging' and 'blending' and the artist as 'inspired' and 'moved'. In Key Stage 1 opportunities for introducing the work of established artists and designers are not always used to the full. A detailed scheme of work is available and includes, at some points in the year, the use of art and artefacts from other cultures.
86. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour in art lessons are generally good. They concentrate well, work hard and are interested in discussing and evaluating their own work and that of other class members.
87. Resources for art are satisfactory with a suitable range of materials and artefacts provided for each key stage. A variety of information and communications technology packages to support art work is available and evidence of their use was present in the children's sketchbooks and in a Key Stage 1 display. This represents a positive development since the last inspection. Over the last four years overall provision for art in the school has improved.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

88. Judgements are made from the three lessons seen, from additional evidence gathered during discussions with the teachers and pupils, from the teachers' planning and from an analysis of the pupils' work. Overall, the standards reached by pupils at the age of seven and 11 are similar to those found in most schools nationally. Good planning and pupils' interest in designing and making ensure that the pupils experience a good range of stimulating activities resulting in pieces of work in which they take pride.
89. As one enters the school hall one is struck by the impressive work by the younger pupils who have created and continue to embellish an imaginative millennium quilt. This has required some sophisticated design work that envisaged the finished product. The pupils designed fish to their own specification and arranged them on an attractive backdrop. In other work, higher attaining pupils extend their skills effectively when using stencils to produce refined colour patterns. Lower attaining pupils improve their manipulative skills as they work with needle and

thread and carry out some simple plain stitching. Pupils measure, mark and cut shapes accurately and are eager to discuss, evaluate and improve their work. Lessons observed communicate a feeling of enjoyment and commitment, where teachers and pupils create a good working environment. The contribution of parents to this work is a strength.

90. In Years 3 and 4, pupils extend their designing and making skills when they construct bridges, exploring a range of techniques and materials. Pupils show a good understanding of some of the faults in the structures they create. Higher attaining pupils see the implications for construction of testing models. Lower attaining pupils, though they have weaker manipulative skills, show a good awareness of the basic principles of design. In Year 6, pupils draw on their knowledge of electrical circuits to produce models with moving parts, demonstrating a sound knowledge of gears and cams.
91. The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school. The teachers ensure that skills and knowledge are developed progressively through the years by joint planning and a helpful scheme of work. Pupils, at all levels of attainment, are encouraged to produce work of which they can be justly proud. Lessons are busy and focused. Pupils feel free to seek help when they need it. Their positive attitudes to their work and their enthusiasm for designing and making result from the care teachers take to engage their interests in activities that are creative and challenging. This was clearly the case as pupils worked eagerly on the creation of the millennium quilt. The good range of resources is supplemented with contributions by parents who work very effectively with the teachers in sustaining a good pace to lessons.
92. The subject is well led and managed. The teachers are supported in their work through appropriate documentation and resources. The questions about the inclusion in the documentation of reference to relevant matters of health and safety that were raised in the previous inspection have been addressed appropriately.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

93. During the week of the inspection no lessons were observed in history. One lesson of geography at each key stage was observed. Analysing and observing pupils' work and discussions provided evidence of standards being achieved in both subjects.
94. Standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 are satisfactory and similar to the standards of attainment noted in the previous inspection. At the end of Key Stage 2 standards are high. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection. In the Reception and Key Stage 1 class, the standards achieved by the three children under five fell below those expected, due to some unsatisfactory behaviour, although this was successfully brought under control by the teacher. At Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to understand the relationship between distance and time taken to travel to school, the differing journeys they have and the features they observe. They begin to develop maps of their journey. Their progress in learning is dependent upon their acquisition of skills in literacy. Higher attaining pupils make good progress by the end of the key stage because their skills in reading, writing, listening and speaking help them to achieve at levels above national expectations. Their presentation of work is very good. Average and lower attaining pupils are developing the use of literacy but handwriting and spellings are weak. Concepts, for example, 'old and new' in history and 'near and far' in geography, are understood by all pupils, including those of lower attainment and those with special educational needs. For the youngest pupils in the Key Stage 1 class, assimilation and understanding of new words proves difficult. The introduction of the word 'landmark' as an identification of features seen when travelling to school, was not understood initially by most pupils and this proved to be an impediment to further learning until skilful explanation and repetition by the teacher enabled progress in learning to be continued. The wide spread of age and attainment in the reception and Key Stage 1 class places great demands upon the class teacher. However, the efficient use of the classroom assistant helps

to reduce the challenges. Older higher attaining pupils at Key Stage 1 reached good standards in explaining pictorially how a visitor could find the way to school from their house.

95. At Key Stage 2 teaching is very good and this is a significant factor in the positive effects there are on pupils' learning. Pupils quickly learn new skills, develop new ideas and with the use of associated technical language, improve their understanding and increase their knowledge. By the end of the key stage they can read maps correctly, compare and contrast their environment with an urban environment and have a good understanding of wider communities, in particular those to be found in Europe. At Key Stage 2, classroom display is very good and gives secure evidence of progress in learning and standards achieved by pupils of different levels of attainment. A well-presented display, using word processing skills in one classroom, shows in detail the comparison of the village served by the school with a nearby village serving a very different community. In another classroom, work which celebrates the best efforts of pupils provides an informative display on the life of the Henry VIII. This work is supported by a timeline showing events in the Tudor period. It indicates that pupils are able to place events in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century in context with those of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century. Pupils' skills in the use of writing show that punctuation and the use of grammar are at expected levels for average attaining pupils. The written work of higher attaining pupils shows that creative writing and writing for wider audiences are well-developed. In work carried out at the end of the previous term, Year 3 and 4 pupils, made good progress in their knowledge and understanding of Ancient Greece and its associated mythology. The standard of presentation of projects carried out by higher attaining pupils is very high, with attention to detail being particularly prominent.
96. Since the previous inspection both the geography and history policies and long-term plans have been reviewed and revised. Influenced by the introduction of the National Literacy Strategy they now begin to make appropriate reference to aspects of literacy to support pupils' learning. In history, standards achieved at both key stages remain as expected, whilst in geography attention to issues related to weaknesses in planning and in pupils' mapping skills have been addressed. Pupils' attainment has improved and the requirements of the National Curriculum are now met fully at both key stages.
97. Overall the teaching of geography is good; at Key Stage 2 it is very good. At Key Stage 1 teachers' knowledge is secure whilst at Key Stage 2 it is very good because teachers' depth of knowledge, understanding of technical language and use of practical skills are high. At both key stages, the use of basic skills in literacy and numeracy is good and this supports pupils' progress in learning. The quality of teachers' planning is very good. In a good lesson at Key Stage 2, when the teacher's planning played an important part in effective learning, a wide variety of resources had been collected to help pupils compare and contrast two dissimilar geographical areas. Enthusiasm and interest were high as pupils worked assiduously. Lower attaining pupils, and those with special educational needs, were expected to meet the same learning objectives as those with higher attainments. They made good progress in learning. The management of pupils is a strength of the teaching. This is helped, at Key Stage 2 in particular, by most pupils wanting to learn and enjoying the relationships with the teacher and other pupils. The use of materials, books and equipment is good, as is the quality of assessment. Marking is thorough and constructive with some teachers helpfully informing parents and pupils of the National Curriculum level reached in a piece of work. Questioning of individual pupils in class and the marking of homework is used extensively to judge pupils' understanding and to meet their needs.

98. Planning in geography and history is good. The work of the co-ordinator in monitoring and evaluating teaching and planning plays an important part in the effectiveness of pupils' learning. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced to meet the requirements of the National Curriculum. The use of information and communications technology, for which a satisfactory amount of software is available, supports pupils' learning in geography and history.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATIONS TECHNOLOGY**

99. Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 is satisfactory and in line with national expectations. At the end of Key Stage 2 it is good. All strands of the National Curriculum are covered to a satisfactory standard or better. This represents an improvement in standards in Key Stage 2 and in provision overall since the last inspection.
100. Teaching is never less than satisfactory and sometimes good in both key stages. In the best lessons, teachers demonstrate good knowledge of the subject, have high expectations and maintain a good pace. Satisfactory teaching is characterised by careful planning and appropriate integration of information and communications technology into the different subjects. For instance in history and geography, pupils use the Internet to search for information and share it with their peers.
101. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils use the computer to reinforce number skills, showing competence in mouse control. They draft and revise written work using several fonts and use graphics packages to create pictures. The floor turtle is used to introduce control and reinforce concepts of turning. In Key Stage 2 there is progression in using word processing packages to combine text and graphics. Older pupils in Key Stage 2 construct and use spreadsheets, graphs and databases, which they analyse and interpret. Pupils suggest practical uses for spreadsheets such as the investigation of relationships between cause and effect. Younger pupils in Key Stage 2 exchange e-mail messages with children in another school in the locality.
102. Pupils make most progress where lessons are devoted to direct teaching of information and communications technology. They also make progress during independent work, acquiring knowledge and understanding as the need arises. Competence is improved by experience, discovery and collaboration with other pupils.
103. The subject is well-managed by the co-ordinator, who regularly attends courses and offers good support to colleagues.
104. Standards of information and communications technology resourcing have kept pace with developments in both software and hardware since the last inspection. The subject is well-resourced within the constraints of available funding.

## **MUSIC**

105. The very good attainment and provision for music reported in the last inspection continues. Under-fives sing and make music enthusiastically. Throughout both key stages, pupils respond well to music, listen sensitively and are good at taking turns. They perform their own compositions when it is time, and listen well to the performances of others in the class.
106. The quality of teaching is very good in both key stages. Among the strengths which contribute to the progress pupils make are a high level of subject knowledge, very good planning, a good knowledge of what pupils already know and a range of strategies for organising lessons. The school makes very good use of the experience of a part-time music teacher and a peripatetic brass instrument tutor. Music has a high profile in assemblies, when hymn singing is accompanied not only by the piano but also by woodwind instruments played by the pupils. The regular and well-planned use of music in assemblies has greatly enhanced pupils' ability to appreciate and make a response to the music they hear.
107. The school offers a wide, well-balanced and carefully planned curriculum that is effective in

giving pupils valuable experience in composing and performing, listening and appraising. There are many opportunities for pupils to listen to and experience music, including non-Western music such as percussion instruments from Indonesia. Pupils who wish to learn to play the recorder are encouraged to join the recorder club that offers both teacher support and peer teaching, as well as an opportunity to practice with a partner. All Year 5 and 6 pupils learn to play a brass instrument and several are sufficiently advanced to take the First Grade examination. The school participates regularly in local music events and puts on musical performances for parents and others.

108. The co-ordinator of the subject has provided a good policy and scheme of work. She has attended many in-service courses and runs in-service sessions for colleagues. She has ordered a good range of additional resources since the last inspection, and there is a good range of recorded music available for pupils to listen to. Music is managed very efficiently, with good use made of existing resources.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

109. There is insufficient evidence to judge the pupils' work across the full range of what is provided. Older pupils practice, improve and refine their efforts, reaching satisfactory standards in performing and in planning sequences but are less secure in evaluating and speaking about their work. They work well together in creating simple sequences in gymnastics. They sustain energetic activity over a good period of time and demonstrate a sound knowledge of what happens to their bodies during exercise. They know how to prepare for and recover from vigorous activity. In games, nearly all pupils practise good basic techniques such as moving their bodies to the ball and using their eyes carefully when aiming or receiving. A real strength is the high level of skill acquired by the pupils in football and netball. The level of success in inter-school competitive activities would suggest that a good standard is achieved for a school of this size. Records show that pupils are on target to swim unaided, competently and safely for at least 25 metres by the age of eleven.
110. The standards reached by seven year olds are average for their age across the range of activities offered. Pupils link and repeat their movements smoothly and imaginatively both on the floor and on small apparatus. As pupils move through the school they show enthusiasm for practising and refining their movements in gymnastics. From early in Year 1 pupils lift and handle apparatus safely. They show an increasing capacity for following instructions carefully and quickly improve the quality of balancing and landing. Pupils with special educational needs and those who attain at high levels make good progress in the quality of their work. Teachers do well to work effectively in a very small hall. Clear and consistent expectations for behaviour and working practices and the pupils' good attention to matters of safety ensure that satisfactory standards are achieved.
111. The quality of teaching is good in both key stages and is mirrored by the enthusiasm and application of the pupils to their work. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when teaching was judged to be satisfactory with an element of unsatisfactory teaching arising from a failure to manage poor behaviour. Lessons are planned carefully with a good structure that allows for warming up and a calm activity to recover at the end of the lesson. Pupils are kept active during the lesson with a variety of appropriately challenging activities. At times their creative work is over-directed. In nearly all lessons teachers have high expectations of pupils' attainment, revealed in the attention to the level of challenge in the sequence of activities. Good use is made of demonstrations to improve performance. In all lessons the management of behaviour is very good.

112. The provision for physical education is well-led. The co-ordinator provides good support to other teachers and offers a clear sense of direction for the subject. Resources have improved since the last inspection but accommodation remains a problem. The very small hall requires some imaginative class management to ensure safety and reasonable standards of attainment.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

113. In lessons and work seen, standards achieved at the end of Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This is similar to what was noted in the previous inspection. Pupils show a good knowledge and understanding of the different religions they study. In Year 4, for example, they are aware that Hindu and Christian moral values are similarly expressed in stories and parables. Pupils at Key Stage 1 know that an action is followed by a consequence. Most pupils at both key stages provide an informed and considered response to religious and moral issues. At the end of Key Stage 2, pupils understand that to accentuate the positive is more constructive than communication using negative statements. They know that necessary rules, laws and commandments are more effective when expressed in clear, unambiguous and positive terms. There are no significant differences between the attainment and progress made by boys and girls. Progress is steady at both key stages and pupils build upon previous learning that emphasises educating about religion rather than instructing in a particular faith. Pupils think about their own lives and express and understand the values, attitudes and beliefs of others. At Key Stage 2, pupils compare successfully their own religion with that of Islam and Judaism and begin to understand the beliefs, ideas and symbolism associated with these religions. The school's culture prominently emphasises the place of the individual within a family and this notion is reinforced through the messages communicated in well-conducted assemblies, where reverence and suitable music serve to help pupils to understand the need for quiet reflection. No pupils are withdrawn from religious education and all teachers are involved in teaching all aspects of the subject.

114. No issues relating to the quality of education and standards were reported at the last inspection. However, the school has continued to develop the subject in line with all other curriculum subjects. A revised syllabus has been introduced and assessment to measure pupils' progress has been developed. Monitoring and evaluation play a prominent part in the development of the subject, which has an equal status to all others in the curriculum.

115. Overall the teaching of religious education is good in both key stages. Teachers' planning, based appropriately on the locally agreed syllabus, is thorough. Preparation for lessons, through the use of resources that capture pupils' imagination, is very good; for example, in a very good lesson taught to Years 5 and 6 pupils, the teacher's attention to detail when preparing stimulating resources was a significant factor in improving pupils' learning. New ideas, introduced as the lesson progressed, served to maintain a good pace. The work produced by the pupils was of a good quality with much care and attention to detail in the presentation. In all lessons observed, pupils asked questions confidently; teachers used these advantageously to develop their language.

116. The management and organisation of the subject is very good. Effective planning, assessment, monitoring and evaluation are all factors that contribute to the successful teaching and learning of the subject.