

INSPECTION REPORT

COLBY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Colby, Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120798

Headteacher: Mrs Y Reynolds

Reporting inspector: Mr G D Timms
21038

Dates of inspection: 8-11 January 2001

Inspection number: 188737

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:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 - 11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Kershaw
Date of previous inspection:	23rd March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21038	Mr G Timms	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology Music Physical education Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
12708	Mrs J Buncher	Lay inspector		Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents and carers?
23453	Mrs C Cressey	Team inspector	English Religious education Art and design Design and technology Geography History Special educational needs Provision for children under five	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Colby Primary School serves a rural area of North-East Norfolk. It takes most of its pupils from the surrounding villages. They come from a wide variety of backgrounds. The school is smaller than most primary schools. It takes children on a part time basis when they are four; after one term they become full time pupils. At present, there are 110 on roll, 13 of whom are under five. They attend the school until they are 11 when the vast majority transfer to a local high school. The classes are organised so that there are two year groups in each class with Year 1 pupils split between two classes. Attainment on entry to the reception class varies from year to year but is broadly in line with that expected; by the time they start statutory schooling, children are attaining standards broadly in line with those expected.

A below average proportion of pupils are eligible for free school meals. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs, 28 per cent, is above average, as is the proportion with statements of special educational need. The pattern of mobility of pupils, revealed by the number who join or leave the school at times other than when it is normal, shows that very few join or leave except to go to secondary school, so this has little impact on standards. The school's current priorities are the continued improvement of standards, with a particular focus on English, mathematics, science, and information and communication technology (ICT).

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Colby Primary School is very effective school, where standards are rising sharply and the quality of education is very good. The overall quality of teaching is very good in comparison with the national picture, as is pupils' learning. The pupils have very good attitudes towards school and towards their work. The leadership and management demonstrated by the headteacher, key staff and governing body are excellent. The school provides very good value for money. This represents outstanding improvement since the school's first inspection in 1996.

What the school does well

- Standards in English, mathematics and science are good and improving.
- All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make very good progress by the time they leave the school.
- The leadership and management demonstrated by the headteacher, key staff and the governing body are excellent.
- The quality of teaching is very good overall, with a high proportion that is excellent.
- Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. Their behaviour is very good and their personal development is excellent.
- The quality and range of the curriculum provided, including some excellent opportunities for enrichment, are very good.
- Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good; their social development is excellent.

What could be improved

- The planning for and deployment of staff for children who are under five does not provide enough opportunities for children to make choices and work independently.
- Pupils' skills in information and communication technology (ICT) are under-developed.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected in July 1996 when it was found to be in need of special measures. It was then re-inspected by Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI) in March 1998, and was removed from special measures. This report said that the school had made exceptional improvement. The findings of this inspection are that since that time further exceptional progress has been made, and the issues raised in both previous inspections have, in most cases, been fully and successfully addressed. The key issues raised at the first inspection have been fully addressed. Of the issues raised at the HMI inspection, the work of subject coordinators has continued to develop and is now very good. The governing body's role in the strategic planning and in monitoring the work of the school is excellent and the development of the assessment policy is well under way; the plans for its future development are appropriate. This has been achieved with largely the same staff who were inspected in 1996.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	C	B	C
mathematics	B	B	A*	A
science	C	A*	A*	A

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

The overall standards of work among eleven-year-olds are above those expected for their ages in English, mathematics and science. Standards in ICT are below average, largely due to the lack of previous experiences the older pupils have had. Standards in history, music and physical education are broadly in line with expectations while in religious education, and in art and design, standards are higher than those expected. In design and technology and geography, not enough work was seen to make a secure judgement about standards. This picture of attainment represents a very good improvement since the school's first inspection, when standards were often below average. Children who are under five reach a satisfactory standard in their personal and social development, communication, language and literacy, mathematical development and creative development. Standards in their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical development are good. The pupils in the infants are getting a very good grounding in the basic skills, especially literacy and numeracy. In reading standards in 2000 were below average nationally. The inspection findings are that standards in reading among seven-year-olds have risen further and they are now above the national average in the present Year 2. In writing, which was criticised heavily during the last inspection, standards at age seven have risen and are now well above the national average. In mathematics, standards in 2000 were very high and in the top five per cent nationally; current standards at age seven are well above average.

Pupils' achievement, which is a measure of the progress they have made, is good in the infant classes and very good in the juniors. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls or between any other groups of pupils in the school. The school's results at age eleven have improved over the past four years at a faster rate than that found nationally. This is true in all the core subjects. Standards in English in 1996 were below average and they are now above average. In mathematics and science, standards were broadly in line with the average four years ago and they are now very high and in the top five per cent of results nationally. The school has set challenging and appropriate targets for its results by 2002. The school has also worked hard to provide for the higher attaining pupils. For example, in 2000, 70 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 gained the higher level in science and 50 per cent in mathematics. These results represent very high levels of achievement when compared to the same pupils' results when they were aged seven; the achievement increases in significance when account is taken of the fact that 30 per cent of this year group were on the register of special educational needs. In English, the progress made when compared to pupils' prior attainment was above average. When they are compared with the results of pupils from similar backgrounds, standards in mathematics and science are well above average, and are satisfactory in English. In addition to the successful improvements in the core subjects, a notable feature of the school is the way it has retained and even extended the time available for an enriched provision in other subjects and extra-curricular activities that have had a direct impact on the high standards evident.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy school and are enthusiastic about their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Behaviour is enhanced by the way older pupils look after younger ones, and by the system of playground 'angels' who ensure all those who want to be are included in activities and games.
Personal development and relationships	Excellent. Personal development and relationships are enhanced by the class and school councils, and the high priority given to developing pupils' independence and confidence.
Attendance	Very good. This is well above the national average.

The success of this aspect of the school's work has been achieved through very hard work on the part of staff, with the support of the parents, and the introduction of a variety of measures that have helped improve pupils' personal development

and relationships to an excellent level. A particular strength is the collaborative work undertaken when groups of pupils work together maturely and sensibly to achieve a given task. Their interest and involvement in activities, such as extra-curricular clubs and trips, is outstanding. All of the parents who responded to the questionnaire said that their children liked school and this is evident when talking to the children. For example, one Year 6 girl responded to being asked what was best about the school by saying 'being here'. Relationships between pupils are very good, reflecting the school motto about treating others as you wish to be treated. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and show respect for other people's feeling, values and beliefs. Personal development is excellent. The major strength in this area is the school council. Meetings are run and recorded completely by the pupils, who demonstrate an outstanding level of maturity. Older pupils act as 'buddies' to children when they start school, helping to further extend the exceptional family ethos found in the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	Satisfactory	Good	Very 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 the teaching is very good in comparison with the national picture. All of the teaching is at least satisfactory. Eighty-six per cent of the teaching is good or better and 40 per cent is very good or better. Twenty-three per cent of the lessons observed contained excellent teaching. In the infant classes the teaching is good or better in 77 per cent of lessons and very good in 8 per cent. In the junior classes 91 per cent of the lessons are good or better, 59 per cent very good or better and 36 per cent excellent. The teaching of the under fives is satisfactory but more needs to be done to provide them with opportunities to make choices and work independently. These very positive figures represent a dramatic improvement since the school's first inspection and this is true in all subjects, although in ICT there is still a need for further training.

The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been very effectively introduced and have helped lead to the steep increases in standards of attainment over the past four years. The teaching of the basic skills is very good. Although the teaching is very good overall, there are some aspects of some lessons that could be improved. For example, the deployment and use of the support staff does not benefit the youngest children sufficiently; and marking does not always provide pupils with a clear enough idea of how they can improve their work. Teachers' expectations of all pupils are very high. However, in ICT, the school's planning is at an early stage and the work does not yet fully extend the abilities of the more able pupils. The pupils' learning is good for the infants and very good in the junior classes. A major strength in the pupils' developing learning skills is the independence they develop and their interest and concentration on tasks. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good and the teaching meets the needs of all pupils well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good. The curriculum is broad and balanced, and its major strengths include the use of outside expertise and the provision of a wide range of enrichment activities to extend pupils' thinking skills.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Well-structured support is provided in small withdrawal groups, individual support or in class support.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Excellent. The provision for pupils' personal and social development is outstanding. The provision for their spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. The procedures for monitoring pupils' personal development, behaviour and attendance are exceptional.

The partnership with parents is very good, as is the impact of parents' involvement with the work of the school. The school very effectively meets the needs of all of its pupils, helping them to flourish through the provision of a very good range of high quality learning opportunities. The curriculum has been reviewed to take account of recent changes and policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. All statutory requirements are met and the literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented with enthusiasm and rigour. The school places considerable emphasis on nurturing high quality personal and social skills and this has very positive effect on pupils' standards of achievements and their attitudes to learning. A particular strength is the teaching of philosophy and thinking skills. Arrangements for pupils' personal, health and sex education are outstanding. The development of citizenship and the responsibilities of the individual and the group are apparent throughout

the curriculum and in the sensitive way the school is organised. The school's links with the community are exceptionally strong. Systems for monitoring academic performance and personal development and the educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are good. The HMI report in 1998 recommended that the school should further develop its assessment and recording procedures and this has been done effectively, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school is reviewing methods of assessing progress in other subjects and this is part of the management plan for the next year.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Excellent. The headteacher and key staff provide a very clear educational direction to the work of the school. This is evident in the outstanding improvements made since 1996.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Excellent. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities effectively but also offers the school much more in the way of support and challenge.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. This aspect of the school's work is improving.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The planning of spending is effectively linked to the school's priorities.

The headteacher provides inspirational leadership through her management skills and also through her teaching skills. Initiatives such as the teaching of philosophy, and the introduction of nationally recognised school and class councils, have forged a solid foundation on which the clear improvements in standards have been created. Together with the governing body, the senior management have a very clear vision of the school they are working to create. They have focused on improvements in the social, moral and personal development of pupils and this has enabled them to improve pupils' attitudes and expectations, and this has, in turn, led to the steep increases in standards shown by the test results. The response to the major issues arising at the previous inspection, and to those from the interim HMI inspection, has been very effective. The work of the governing body, led by a very effective, knowledgeable and hard-working chair, provides excellent strategic support for the school and has been instrumental in turning the school around. The governors play an important role in setting high expectations for the work of the school, and holding the staff to account; for example, the installation of a school effectiveness committee has contributed to raising standards.

The management of the finances and resources is good. The setting of priorities for spending is clearly based on recognised needs and the raising of standards. Spending decisions are made appropriately, based on the priorities identified in the development plan. All additional grants have been purposefully used to improve staffing and resources. Good monitoring arrangements exist to ensure the budget is used efficiently over the year and the principles of best value are adhered to. There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum, and the deployment of the support staff is generally very effective, although the provision for the children under five is in need of improvement. The accommodation has improved recently, by, for example, building the hall and having the new extension opened, and it is now good. The professional development of the staff is well managed and the requirements of performance management are being fully met.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and they make good progress. • The school is well led and managed. • The teaching is good. • They feel comfortable about approaching the school. • The school works closely with parents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The provision of homework is inconsistent, although some parents feel it is too much while others feel there is not enough.

The returns from the parent questionnaires and the comments made at the meeting with inspectors were largely very supportive of the school and its work. The findings of the inspection endorse the parents' very positive views. The homework provision is good in all classes and the support of the parents helps create a positive impact on standards.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The overall standards of work among eleven-year-olds are above those expected for their ages in English, mathematics and science. Due to the lack of enough prior experiences, standards in ICT are below those expected. Standards in history, music and physical education are broadly in line with expectations while in religious education, and in art and design, standards are higher than those expected. In design and technology and geography, not enough work was seen to make a secure judgement about standards. This picture of attainment represents a very good improvement since the school's first inspection, when standards were often below average.

2. The small size of each year's intake of pupils means that it is difficult accurately to compare year groups. Over the past few years children have started school with broadly average attainment, although a significant number have poorly developed personal and social skills. They make satisfactory progress and the majority are attaining levels in line with those expected by the time they start statutory schooling. They reach a satisfactory standard in their personal and social development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and creative development. Standards in their knowledge and understanding of the world and their physical development are good.

3. Pupils' achievement, which is a measure of the progress they have made, is good in the infant classes and very good in the juniors. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls or between any other groups of pupils in the school. Some year groups have a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs and this can affect test results significantly due to the small cohort sizes. For example, the present Year 6 contains more pupils receiving extra support than was the case last year and this may affect the overall test results attained by the school. There is high quality support from teachers and learning support assistants for pupils with special educational needs. This enables them to make very good progress against the targets set for them in their individual education plans and to achieve standards that are often in line with those expected nationally. Where pupils are taught in small groups, they make very good progress as a result of carefully planned lessons focusing very clearly on specific targets to move their learning on.

4. The school's results at age eleven have improved over the past four years and at a faster rate than that found nationally. This is true in all the core subjects. Standards in English in 1996 were below average and they are now above average. In mathematics and science standards were broadly in line with the average four years ago and they are now very high and in the top five per cent of results nationally. There are a number of reasons for these improvements since the first inspection, and also since the interim inspection made by HMI in 1998 when standards in English and mathematics were in line with expectations, and in science they were above average. The changes to the management of the school and of the curriculum; the focus on raising standards through increased support and the monitoring of the teaching and learning; improved resources and the successful introduction of the literacy and numeracy strategies, have all played a part. So also has the focus on improving pupils' thinking, speaking and listening skills, self esteem and maturity, through ideas such as class and school councils, personal, social and moral education, and the teaching of philosophy.

5. The school's results at age seven have also improved, although the differences between cohorts have been more noticeable recently. The pupils in the infants are getting a very good grounding in the basic skills, especially literacy and numeracy, which enables the junior teachers to develop the breadth and depth of learning evident by the time pupils leave the school. In reading, standards at age seven fell between 1996 and 1998, before rising again. In 2000, results were still below the national average. The inspection findings are that standards in reading at age seven have risen further and they are now above the national average. In writing, which was criticised heavily during the last inspection, standards among seven-year-olds have risen and are now well above the national average. In mathematics, standards in 2000 were very high and in the top five per cent nationally; the standard of current work at age seven is consistent with the 2000 results.

6. The school has set challenging and appropriate targets for its results by 2002. In addition, individual children's achievements are now being tracked in more detail and individual targets are set to encourage improvement. The school has also worked hard to provide for the higher attaining pupils. For example, in 2000, 70 per cent of the pupils in Year 6 gained the higher level in science and 50 per cent did so in mathematics. These results represent very high levels of achievement when compared to the same pupils' results when they were seven. In English, the progress made when compared to pupils' prior attainment was above average. When they are compared with the results of pupils from similar backgrounds standards in mathematics and science are well above average, and are satisfactory in English.

7. In addition to the improvements in the core subjects, a notable feature of the school is the way it has retained and even extended the time available for an enriched provision in other subjects, and extra-curricular activities, that have had a direct impact on the high standards evident. A recent art week enabled children of different ages to work together and experience a

variety of techniques, which resulted in some very good, imaginative and expressive work. In science, the excellent use of the grounds for the study of life and living processes has clearly developed pupils' knowledge and understanding of the environment and of the wider natural world to an exceptional level. The introduction of opportunities for pupils to work alongside architects and scientists has resulted in the extension of their understanding of buildings and of the world around them. This has also happened in history through the study of Egypt, linked to the local university and art, where pupils worked with local artists. In addition, the direct teaching of thinking skills through personal and social development lessons and philosophy has given pupils greater confidence to attempt tasks and activities with a positive frame of mind, resulting in a much improved attitude to learning and a willingness to discuss difficulties openly. This makes it easier for teachers to diagnose any learning problems and to address them on an individual basis.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. Children's attitudes and behaviour are very good. This represents a dramatic improvement since the school was first inspected, and since 1998, when HMI found that attitudes and behaviour were good. This turn around has been achieved through very hard work on the part of staff, with the support of the parents, and the introduction of a variety of measures that have helped improve pupils' personal development and the relationships to an excellent level.

9. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They concentrate when in class and work well individually and in groups. A particular strength is the collaborative work undertaken, for example in science, when groups of pupils work together maturely and sensibly to complete the given task. Their interest and involvement in activities, such as extra curricular clubs and trips, is outstanding. Those given responsibility to work quietly in small groups outside the classroom, to research work in the library or to work with support staff in small groups, do so very effectively and thus make real gains in their learning. Parents say their children are very happy and positive about school. All the parents who responded to the questionnaire said that their children liked school and this is evident when talking to the children. For example, one Year 6 girl responded to being asked what was best about the school by saying 'being here'.

10. The pupils' behaviour is very good and there are no incidents of disruptive or discourteous pupils. There has been one exclusion this year and this was handled appropriately. Behaviour at lunchtimes and in the playground is very good. The school operates a 'buddy' system so that older pupils look after younger ones, which helps them to feel secure. Parents say this, together with the school council, has given pupils extra confidence and improved their speaking and listening skills. In addition, there are pupils who act as playground 'angels' and whose role is to look after any unhappy children and to sort out any problems. This represents a big improvement since the last inspection. In lessons, they respond to the teachers' instructions quickly and follow the class rules. Relationships between pupils are very good, reflecting the school motto about treating others as you wish to be treated. There is no evidence of oppressive behaviour, bullying, sexism or racism. Pupils have a good understanding of the impact of their actions on others and show respect for other people's feeling, values and beliefs.

11. Personal development and relationships are excellent. The excellent range of extra-curricular activities provides many opportunities to give pupils responsibility, such as, for example, when looking after the school pets or in taking part in agricultural shows. Pupils sponsor the education of a child in Africa, and they regularly organise and hold cake sales and run a tuck shop to raise money for this. This is just one example of their excellent awareness of those less fortunate than themselves. The systems of school 'houses', playground 'angels', and 'buddies', all provide excellent opportunities for extending pupils' personal development. However, the major strength in this area is the school council. Each class has a council and this sends representatives to the school council through a system of elections. In addition, older pupils are elected by the school to be chair, treasurer and secretary of the council. Meetings are attended by the headteacher but run and recorded completely by the pupils who demonstrate an outstanding level of maturity. This has been recognised nationally and pupils have attended conferences and appeared on television to show how the council is organised and run. This exceptional feature of the school's work enables pupils of all ages to make significant gains in their understanding of democracy and other citizenship issues. Pupils have a clear understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

12. Attendance is well above the national average. Registers are marked in the morning and retained in the classroom. They are well kept and correctly marked. The education welfare officer has good links with the school. The school secretary telephones home the same day if a child is unexpectedly absent. The majority of the pupils arrive punctually and movement around the school is efficient with little time wasted.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. The quality of the teaching is very good in comparison with the national picture. All of the teaching is at least satisfactory. Eighty-six per cent of the teaching is good or better and 40 per cent is very good or better. Twenty-three per cent of the lessons observed contained excellent teaching. For the under fives and infants the teaching is good or better in 77 per cent of lessons and very good in 8 per cent. In the junior classes 91 per cent of the lessons are good or better, 59 per cent very good or better and 36 per cent excellent. These very positive figures represent a dramatic improvement since the school's first inspection and this is true in all subjects, although in ICT there is still a need for further training. This has been achieved with the majority of the same staff and represents a great deal of hard work on their part, and on the part of the headteacher who has spent a lot of time and effort on raising expectations and improving teaching skills.

14. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been very effectively introduced and these have helped lead to the steep increases in standards of attainment over the past four years. The teaching of the basic skills is very good. Teachers use a wide range of methods as appropriate for the purpose of the lessons and they plan for mixed age classes largely effectively, although that for the under fives is unsatisfactory; this has been picked up and addressed by senior management. Teachers' subject knowledge is very good in most subjects and their effective teamwork provides a mutually supportive environment in which they help each other. This has helped raise standards, particularly in science and religious education. There is a lack of a teacher with musical ability, although this is addressed through a commercial scheme and good teaching skills, and in ICT, where further training is planned for later this term.

15. Although the teaching is very good overall, there are some aspects of some lessons that could be improved. For example, the deployment and use of the support staff does not benefit the youngest children sufficiently, although in most classes the support provided is of very good quality. The marking does not always provide pupils with a clear enough idea of how they can improve their work.

16. Teachers' expectations are very high, especially in the junior classes. The key objectives for each lesson are shared with the pupils and returned to at the end to assess how much learning has occurred. In most lessons, particularly in English, mathematics, and science, the work is well matched to pupils' abilities, including those who are higher attainers. In one science lesson, for example, two pupils who had a good understanding of the work being covered were given an extension task that took their knowledge and understanding a stage further, through research into gases. In ICT, however, the school's planning is at an early stage and the work does not yet fully extend the abilities of the more able pupils.

17. For the reception pupils, relationships are good and this helps children settle into the routines of school life. Praise and encouragement are used well to promote positive behaviour and personal, social and emotional development. Medium term plans provide an appropriate framework for learning covering the six areas of learning. Short-term plans, however, do not always contain sufficient detail about what children need to learn in relation to the nationally agreed early learning goals. Activities are sometimes too adult directed and staff miss opportunities to extend learning through appropriate interaction in quality activities which children have chosen for themselves. Sufficiently well trained support staff are not always available to support the children and help the class teacher effectively plan a learning environment for two key stages within one class. As a result, when the lesson is more focused on learning for the older children, for example in the literacy hour, the younger children become bored and inattentive. This has a limiting effect on the progress children make. Where teaching is good, practical activities are focused well on specific learning intentions and good adult questions and comments extend children's thinking. Baseline assessment is shared with parents and is used to identify children's strengths and weaknesses. Staff maintain a useful record system, which records children's progress towards the early learning goals.

18. The older pupils' learning is good in the infants and very good in the junior classes. It improves throughout the school as pupils are taught and expected to learn, to have high expectations of themselves, and to deal with all new learning with confidence. Much of this comes about through the development of pupils' thinking skills and the self-esteem they develop through their involvement in the class and school councils, the systems for supporting younger pupils and the responsibilities given to them routinely in a variety of areas. The major strength in the pupils' developing learning skills is the independence they develop and their interest and concentration on tasks. For example, in one excellent history lesson, the teacher had given a group of pupils the responsibility of running the lesson from start to finish. They taught the rest of the class about the topic they had studied as part of an exercise in independent and collaborative learning, taking and answering questions and dealing with a large group in a mature and responsible manner. The teachers' role was very much one of support when needed.

19. The quality of teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. Individual education plans show a very good awareness of individual needs. Plans accurately include strategies for supporting pupils' progress towards their stated targets. Targets are reviewed regularly and modified to match pupil's progress. When teaching of pupils with special educational needs takes place in small withdrawal groups, an appropriate strategy in this instance, the work is very well matched to the pupil's individual plans. Pupils respond very positively to the high expectations the adults have of them. This has a very positive effect on their rate of learning and the standards of work they produce in these sessions. Staff manage

pupils in a calm and sensitive manner which helps them to feel secure. This instils confidence and assists them in settling to their tasks and achieving a feeling of success and self esteem.

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

20. Since the previous inspection, the curricular provision has improved significantly. The school now very effectively meets the needs of all its pupils, helping them to flourish through the provision of a very good range of high quality learning opportunities. The well-planned curriculum now ensures that all aspects of all subjects are taught and a two-year framework ensures that skills, knowledge and understanding are effectively developed across the school. Careful curriculum planning now makes a very good contribution to pupils' learning by identifying clearly how the learning will be continuous and progressive in classes that cater for mixed age ranges. This is stronger in Key Stages 1 and 2 than in the Foundation Stage, where there are still some weaknesses in addressing the needs of the two age groups. The curriculum has been reviewed to take account of recent changes and policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects. All statutory requirements are met and the literacy and numeracy strategies have been implemented with enthusiasm and rigour. The requirements of the Locally Agreed Syllabus for religious education are fully met.

21. The school has a very broad and balanced curriculum, which is stimulating and challenging. It places considerable emphasis on nurturing high quality personal and social skills and this has very positive effect on pupils' standards of achievements and their attitudes to learning. A particular strength is the teaching of philosophy and thinking skills. In these lessons pupils learn to listen, consider and respond in a mature way to the ideas of others. This work is taken to a high level and clearly has a very positive impact on pupils' work across the curriculum, giving them confidence to speak and discuss ideas to a high level. For example, in one excellent lesson, older pupils discussed themes about imagination and the thoughts they have following the reading of a poem about the ideas existing in a boy's head. Each individual pupil had specific targets to do with the amount of time they joined in and responded to others. This work is developing a mature, self confident and deep-thinking group of pupils.

22. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory. Although planning is based on the six areas of learning, the presence of Year 1 children, and a lack of experienced support staff, means that the curriculum is often focused more on the needs of the older children. The younger children do not have sufficient high quality opportunities to choose their own activities and develop their learning through appropriate first hand activities and well structured imaginative play. Appropriate emphasis is placed on the pupils' personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development.

23. Arrangements for pupils' personal, health and sex education are outstanding. The development of citizenship and the responsibilities of the individual and the group are apparent throughout the curriculum and in the sensitive way the school is organised. Pupils have many opportunities to work together as a whole school, in year and class groups, in 'houses' and the school council. Pupils' rights are highly respected and their integrity is effectively fostered along with their responsibilities as young citizens.

24. There are agreed policies for health, sex and drugs education in place. Time is made available each week to develop these areas in ways which are appropriate for the age of the pupils. The school has a very clear commitment to equality of opportunity and this is very apparent in the way all pupils, from the youngest to the oldest, are fully included in the teaching and learning and in making decisions on all aspects of school life. The individual needs of both the lower attaining and the more able pupils are recognised and all pupils' contributions are valued. This has a positive effect on the self-esteem of all pupils and impacts on the progress they all make. The curriculum prepares pupils very well for the next stage of their education.

25. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. The school maintains an appropriate register for special educational needs, complies with the national code of practice and meets statutory obligations. Early identification of individual needs ensures that work is well matched to needs and additional support is provided where required. Well-structured support is provided in small withdrawal groups, individual support or in class support. Detailed individual education plans, which describe the school's strategies for supporting pupils' progress towards clearly stated, specific and appropriate targets, are drawn up for all pupils requiring them. Pupils with statements and those with complex needs are provided with high quality support and experiences that match the requirements of the statements. Reviews of individual educational plans are carried out and the parents are invited to attend these. This very good provision has a positive impact on the pupils' progress.

26. The school involves parents, the community, professional sports people, scientists and staff in providing an excellent range of extra-curricular and sporting activities to enrich the curriculum and enhance personal and social skills. Clubs include football, short tennis, hand bell ringing, ballet, recorders, nature study, mathematics, English and French. Clubs are available at lunchtimes or after school to ensure all pupils have a chance to take part.

27. The school's links with the community are exceptionally strong. The use of visitors and visits to museums, concerts, theatres, galleries and eco-centres promote pupils' interest and extend their knowledge and understanding. Links with Egyptian staff from the local university have captured pupils' imaginations and developed further their fascination with ancient Egypt. A local business has provided the materials for stage curtains and continues to provide financial help for projects. There are very good links with the local farming community, artists, authors and actors. The school has been very successful mounting a bid to gain considerable funding from local architects. Pupils and staff are working with them to provide a field study centre in the school grounds. Links with local schools are used effectively to enhance pupils' learning in a range of subjects such as ICT, music, art and drama and an awareness of other cultures. Before pupils transfer to the high school information on pupils' progress is exchanged. Teachers from the receiving school visit pupils in their class and pupils are able to enjoy time at their new school to familiarise themselves with routines and staff to ensure a happy and secure transfer.

28. The school's provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development has improved dramatically since the last inspection. The school's values and principles are very apparent throughout the whole school and have a very positive effect on the quality of the teaching and learning. Provision for spiritual development is very good. Assemblies provide pupils with very good opportunities for reflection and prayer. However, there is no focal point for worship to create a more reverent atmosphere for the sharing of special moments. Successes in both academic and personal achievements are recognised and valued by all. For example, one very brave and quick thinking young man reported how he had literally saved the life of his mother by applying pressure to a severed artery until the paramedics arrived. Through philosophy lessons, pupils are encouraged to think about what it is within them that enables them to make choices and subjects such as creation and the existence of life after death are discussed with openness and sensitivity. The whole school is encouraged to share personal tragedies such as the loss by staff or pupils of a family member. The planting of trees in their memory and an annual celebration of their lives helps pupils to understand and value each others feelings and contributions, as well as helping all concerned to come to terms with the sadness and loss that death brings.

29. Provision for moral development is exceptionally good. There is now a general expectation that pupils will behave well and will follow the school motto 'treat others as you wish to be treated'. Pupils are encouraged to think about the choices they have and the implications on themselves and others. The system of 'buddies' and 'playground angels' very effectively places the responsibility for appropriate behaviour on the pupils themselves and they respond to this with maturity and dependability. In assemblies, issues such as kindness, friendship and caring are taught well through bible stories and fables.

30. Provision for social development is similarly outstanding. The pupils are made very aware of their responsibilities to the school and their local community. Pupils have excellent opportunities to develop responsibility, self-confidence and independence through well-planned lessons and the routines and structures in place, such as the school council and house system. The excellent relationships apparent in lessons ensure that pupils feel comfortable discussing sensitive issues that concern them. The organisation of lessons provides many opportunities for pupils to work together and to compete fairly. A sense of citizenship is developed as pupils take part in local sport and arts festivals and raise money to support good causes. An excellent example of this is the adoption by the school of a child in Africa. Pupils' financial contributions have enabled the child to attend school for the very first time. Initiative is shown as the school council organises its own fundraising events such as a Valentine's dance or running a bank.

31. Provision for cultural development has also improved and is now very good. Pupils have opportunities to learn and appreciate the richness of their own and other people's culture through music, art, geography and history. Traditional playground games are encouraged and local artists and craftsmen are invited into school to bring culture alive for the pupils and stimulate their interest in traditions, skills and events. Through religious education lessons, pupils study the major world religions and all pupils are made aware of each other's important festivals such as Christmas, Thanksgiving Day, Diwali, Eid and the Chinese New Year. The school also has links with a school in Colby, Kansas.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. There are very good procedures for ensuring pupils' welfare. The HMI report in 1998 said that the headteacher had a strong concern for the welfare and progress of the pupils and the evidence from the inspection is that this continues to be a strength of the school. The first aid provision is good and all members of the school community are aware of issues such as peanut allergies and which pupils they affect. The provision for child protection is good. The headteacher is the trained and nominated person responsible for child protection. All other staff have been trained in child protection procedures and are aware of the procedures. Health and safety risk assessments of the premises are regularly carried out.

33. Systems for monitoring academic performance and personal development and the educational and personal support and guidance for pupils are good. The HMI report in 1998 recommended that the school should further develop its assessment and recording procedures and this has been done effectively, especially in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science. The school is reviewing methods of assessing progress in other subjects and this is part of the management plan for the next

year. The curriculum leader for mathematics is devising a method of tracking individual pupils' progress as they move through the school. If successful, this should enable even more accurate information about achievement to be available for teachers when they plan their lessons, although they already take some note of assessment information when planning. The headteacher now uses assessment data, including that from national tests, to analyse how successful the school is, for example, as measured by pupils' achievements. The marking of pupils' work is at least satisfactory and, especially for the older lower attaining pupils, it is often very good. It enables pupils to clearly see where they were correct and when they make errors what they have done wrong and how to remedy it.

34. Procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are excellent. The 'buddy' system works well in supporting younger children. The procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are outstanding. Pupils understand the reasons for rules and procedures and have written their own behaviour rules. The work of the school council also promotes pupils' personal development very effectively.

35. Standardised school tests and quality teacher assessments are used to help in the early identification of pupils with special educational needs and to monitor the progress and development of these pupils. Individual records are carefully kept and these procedures effectively identify future learning needs. Pupils are involved in their own reviews giving them ownership of their targets and knowledge of their own strengths and weaknesses. The school effectively supports pupils with special educational needs through early, well-established procedures for the identification, monitoring and evaluation of pupils' educational needs. The staff's support for pupils with special educational needs ensures that most pupils make good progress and many successfully achieve their specific learning objectives, which enables the school to remove them from the register. The school has appropriate links with outside agencies and keeps parents well informed through out the process.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

36. From the responses of those parents who returned questionnaires and attended a meeting with the inspectors it is clear that there is a high degree of satisfaction with the work of the school and the improvement it has made since the first inspection. Parents and carers speak very highly of the school. There were no significant negative responses to any of the questions. All of the responses say that their children like attending the school. The findings of the inspection support the parents' positive views about the improvement since the first inspection, and about the many strong aspects of the school's work.

37. The school's links with parents and carers are very good and effective in enabling pupils to make very good progress. School and parents work together as a team to ensure the best provision possible for the children. Some 20 parents help in the school in a variety of ways such as with trips, in lessons and other external activities. The school has held meetings to discuss new curriculum developments such as the literacy and numeracy strategies. Parents who attended these meetings found them positive and helpful, enabling them to understand better what their child was doing at school.

38. Parents say they are kept fully informed about their child's progress. School reports are carefully written and are based clearly and specifically on the individual pupil's progress. They report effectively on what the pupil can do. Useful newsletters are sent out at the beginning of each term and other letters as required. The school prospectus meets all statutory requirements, as does the governors' annual report to parents. In addition, the governors keep parents informed through a newsletter after every full governing body meeting, which explains more about the governors' work and the decisions being made about the school. In addition to helping with homework, parents give considerable help to the school by showing that they are interested in the pupils' work and all parents have signed the home/school agreement. The contribution by parents to children's learning is very good. The school ensures that parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved discussing the provision for their children, and in statutory annual reviews. The majority of the parents are very happy with their links with the school staff.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

39. The headteacher and key staff provide excellent leadership and management and a very clear educational direction to the work of the school. This is best illustrated by the outstanding improvements made since the school's first inspection, which resulted in special measures being required. The visit in 1998 by HMI noted enough improvement for the school to be removed from requiring special measures. The school has continued to develop in all areas since that time. Improvement since the previous inspection has been very good.

40. The headteacher provides inspirational leadership, through her management skills and also through her teaching skills. Initiatives such as the teaching of philosophy, and the introduction of nationally recognised school and class councils, have forged a solid foundation on which the clear improvements in standards have been created. Together with the governing body,

the senior management have a very clear vision of the school they are working to create. They have focused on improvements in the social, moral and personal development of pupils and this has enabled them to improve pupils' attitudes and expectations, and this has, in turn, led to the steep increases in standards shown by the test results. Of particular note is the fact that this has been managed at the same time as introducing the national literacy and numeracy strategies, changes to the National Curriculum, and improvements to ICT resources. Despite the changes, the school has been able to keep a clear, strong focus on other subjects such as art and design and music, alongside finding time to teach philosophy and thinking skills.

41. The response to the major issues arising at the previous inspection, and to those from the interim HMI inspection, has been very effective. The issues raised when the school was requiring special measures have been addressed successfully. Those which needed further improvement, as noted by HMI, have also been addressed and the school's development planning indicates how these are to be taken further.

42. The work of the governing body, led by a very effective, knowledgeable and hard-working chair, provides excellent strategic support for the school and has been instrumental in turning the school around. The governors all play an important role in setting high expectations for the work of the school, and holding the school to account. For example, staff attend meetings to present new policies; governors with particular responsibilities visit the classrooms and add to the open nature of discussions about the teachers' work. Other committees enable the governors' work to be dealt with in a manageable way. The governors are very supportive of the school locally and have worked hard and successfully to help the school improve. In particular, they use their own strengths in supporting the school's work. For example, one governor who spends a lot of time at the school utilises his knowledge of birds to support the pupils' efforts in showing their finches and chickens.

43. The arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the work of the school are very good. More use is now made of assessment data, locally and nationally produced, in assessing the school's strengths and weaknesses, deciding on priorities and forming appropriate and practical action plans. The curriculum leaders role has been improved and extended and they are now clear about the need for good accurate assessments of progress and how these can be used for further improvement. Lessons are monitored by headteacher, curriculum leaders and governors, and there are appropriate methods for feeding back. There is an ethos in the school that opens the way for effective professional discussions between staff. Recent improvements in the tracking of individual pupils' progress will provide yet more detailed information, which will enable the further development of the curriculum and raise expectations of the levels pupils are capable of attaining.

44. The management of the finances and resources are good. The finance committee works closely with the headteacher to set the annual budget. The setting of priorities for spending is clearly based on recognised needs and the raising of standards. Spending decisions are made appropriately, based on the priorities identified in the development plan. All additional grants have been purposefully used to improve staffing and resources. Good monitoring arrangements exist to ensure the budget is used efficiently over the year and the principles of best value are adhered to. There is a very good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum, and the deployment of the support staff is very effective. The accommodation has improved recently, by, for example, creating the hall and having the new extension opened, and it is now good. The professional development of the staff is well managed and the requirements of performance management are being fully met. Resources have improved since the last inspection and now enable teachers to provide effective and meaningful lessons.

45. The special educational needs co-ordinator gives very good leadership to ensure the identification of pupils with special educational needs and to ensure that resources are efficiently and effectively targeted at those pupils with the greatest needs. Administrative procedures for special educational needs are good and comply with statutory requirements. The classroom support assistants who provide additional support for children with special educational needs are very effectively deployed and make a positive contribution to the quality of the provision. They have a good understanding of their role and are effective in ensuring that pupils make good progress with their learning. They work very closely with the class teachers and special needs co-ordinator to ensure that pupils' individual targets are well met. Staff are well qualified and have undertaken additional training to improve their skills.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

46. Since the last inspection the school has worked extremely hard to improve and be removed from the need for special measures. The work of the headteacher and her staff has ensured that progress has been very effective and that there are only two issues remaining that need to be addressed. The observations made during the inspection indicate that the provision for the children in the Foundation Stage needs to be reviewed and that the standards in ICT are not high enough. The school has recognised this and has plans in place for the further training of staff in using computers more effectively.

47. In order to improve further, the governing body, headteacher and staff should:

□ improve the provision for pupils under five by:

- raising the quality of medium and short term planning in the Foundation Stage so that the learning needs of pupils under five are specifically identified when they are taught in a mixed age class with older pupils;
- increasing the opportunities that pupils in the Foundation Stage have for appropriate practical and first hand learning, independent learning, and for well-structured imaginative play;
- review and reorganise the deployment of support staff for children who are under five, to ensure enough opportunities are provided for children to make choices about their activities and to work independently;
(Paragraphs 15, 20, 22, 48)

□ improve the pupils' skills in ICT by:

- complete the planned training for teachers to develop their skills;
- ensure that better use is made of computers across the curriculum;
- improve the planning to make effective use of the Internet access;
- ensure the planning identifies other uses of ICT, in addition to computers.

(Paragraphs 1, 14, 101-105)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	37
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	15

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
23	17	46	14	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

YR – Y6

Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	110
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	4

Special educational needs

YR – Y6

Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	31

English as an additional language

No of pupils

Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
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Pupil mobility in the last school year

No of pupils

Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	0

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
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
	2000	5	3	8

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>
	Girls	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>
	Total	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	63 (79)	100 (74)	100 (79)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>
	Girls	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>
	Total	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	50 (79)	100 (79)	100 (84)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

Results can vary widely from year to year when cohort sizes are small. For reasons of confidentiality, numbers of pupils are not included in the tables when the cohort size is below 10 or the number of boys or girls separately is below 10.

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
	2000	5	5	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>
	Girls	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>
	Total	9	10	10
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (64)	100 (71)	100 (86)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>
	Girls	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>	<i>Not included</i>
	Total	9	9	9
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (50)	90 (64)	90 (86)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	80 (75)

Results can vary widely from year to year when cohort sizes are small. For reasons of confidentiality, numbers of pupils are not included in the tables when the cohort size is below 10 or the number of boys or girls separately is below 10.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	94
Any other minority ethnic group	2

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	1	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)	4.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20.9
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	105

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
	£
Total income	233867
Total expenditure	219555
Expenditure per pupil (92 NOR)	2392
Balance brought forward from previous year	-2569
Balance carried forward to next year	11743

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	110
Number of questionnaires returned	37

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	76	24	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	35	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	32	3	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	54	27	11	0	8
The teaching is good.	81	14	0	0	5
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	43	3	0	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	86	14	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	73	22	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	68	32	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	84	16	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	84	14	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	35	5	0	9

Other issues raised by parents

Parents were very supportive of the present governing body, headteacher and staff, and appreciative of the work done to improve the school since the last inspection.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

48. The school's provision for children in the Foundation Stage is in a mixed age class of reception and Year 1 children. At the time of the inspection a significant number of children had only been in full time schooling for three days and were still settling into the routines of school life. Although the curriculum is based on the six areas of learning, activities and tasks are often more suited to the needs of the older Year 1 children. This results in some missed opportunities to extend children's learning and limits their progress. Overall, the school provides an appropriate range of experiences to promote the early learning goals in personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematics; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development.

49. The overall attainment levels of most children entering the school are in line with those expected nationally but with a significant number of children having less well-developed personal and social skills. This is confirmed by baseline assessment. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is never less than satisfactory and in half the lessons seen it was good. As a result, most children make satisfactory progress and by the end of the reception year are on target to reach the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Improvement since the last inspection is satisfactory.

Personal, social and emotional development

50. Standards are satisfactory; the substantial majority of children are on course to attain the nationally agreed level for their age by the time they enter Year 1. Children's personal, social and emotional development is given a high priority. They enjoy coming to school and quickly learn to respond well to the rules and routines of school life. Emphasis is placed on helping children to develop an understanding of appropriate behaviour and of what is right and wrong. Children are learning to share and work together in a variety of situations, such as when playing games or working in the sand. Relationships are very positive and children are encouraged to be polite and kind to each other, and reflect on their feelings, actions and experiences. There are well-planned opportunities for children to develop a sensitivity and awareness of other people, their different religions, cultures and ways of life.

Communication, language and literacy

51. Standards are satisfactory. The school provides an appropriate range of experiences and activities to develop children's language and literacy skills. However, the implementation of the literacy hour is not always suitable for the younger children and as a result a number of them become bored and inattentive. Children are encouraged to become good listeners and enjoy stories and rhymes, joining in familiar ones, such as Cinderella, with enthusiasm. Thinking skills are developed as children are encouraged to offer suggestions for what 'Cinderella might be thinking'. They are encouraged to share conversations with adults and are given very good role models to develop their spoken language. Clearly labelled displays, alphabet and sound friezes and individual name cards help children develop early reading and writing skills. Children are encouraged to join their letters from an early age and higher attaining children are beginning to write their own simple sentences joining their letters easily. Formal teacher-directed activities help children to recognise familiar letters, sounds and words. However, staff sometimes miss opportunities to develop children's understanding of sounds and letters through play and routines and planned activities are not always suitable for the age and attainment levels of the children. Children are learning to recognise their own names and older children are able to write their names with accuracy using capital and small letters. A comfortable book corner promotes a love of books and children are learning to handle books with care. Older children in the reception class are beginning to read simple sentences with confidence using letters and sounds to read unfamiliar words.

Mathematical development

52. Standards are satisfactory. Children have opportunities to compare, match, sort, order, sequence and count using a range of games, routines and experiences. Through topic work they explore number, pattern, shape and measurement. With help from the teacher, children are learning to count forwards and backwards to and from twenty. Number lines are used effectively to develop an understanding of order and position. Children further consider size, shape and position when playing with small world toys or emptying and filling containers in the sand play area or sorting objects into heavy and light. Children are encouraged to solve simple problems as they complete jigsaws or make interesting models. Elements of the numeracy strategy are implemented for children in the reception class but at times these sessions are too long and children become bored and lose interest.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

53. Standards are good and nearly all children are likely to attain the expected national level by the end of the school year. Children are developing a good understanding of the world around them. Staff encourage children to talk about their discoveries and experiences, to ask questions and to explore made and natural materials. The celebration of festivals such as harvest and Christmas encourage children to develop an understanding of their own community and culture. They learn about the passage of time through celebrating birthdays, talking about the days of the week and the changing seasons and weather. The original home of a member of staff was used well to develop children's understanding of how people live in other countries and climates. Children are becoming confident and competent in using the 'mouse' and different programs are available to support their learning. Construction toys encourage children to design and make their own models and to discover how things work.

Physical development

54. Standards are good. Provision for children's physical development has improved since the last inspection. In addition to regular outdoor play children now have structured physical education lessons to promote their development. In these lessons children are developing good spatial awareness, control and imagination as they respond to music and ideas. They are learning to run, hop, skip, jump and balance with increasing co-ordination and confidence. Children are developing confidence when handling pencils, crayons, modelling tools, construction toys and malleable materials.

Creative development

55. Standards are satisfactory. Children enjoy an appropriate range of experiences in art, music and story. However, imaginative play situations are not always suitable for younger children and there are insufficient activities to develop role play and dramatic situations that are within their understanding. A range of musical instruments, songs and rhymes helps to develop children's understanding of sound and rhythm and pattern. There are suitable activities available for children to develop their senses through investigating texture, shape and colour. Staff provide materials with interesting real and made textures. However, tasks are often too teacher directed and children do not have sufficient opportunities the opportunity to choose materials and activities for themselves. Malleable materials such as sand and water are available for children to explore on a regular basis.

ENGLISH

56. Attainment among eleven-year-olds has improved considerable since the inspection in 1996 when standards were below those expected nationally. When HMI visited the school in 1998 standards had moved closer to the national average. Since then standards have improved further and by the time pupils reach the age of eleven standards are above the national average. The great majority of pupils are on course to meet, and a significant number to exceed, the national standard. This is also reflected in the 2000 national test results, which showed the performance of pupils at the age of eleven to be above the national average and in line with the average for similar schools. This represents very good progress over time for the school. When standards are compared with pupils' prior attainment, they are above average.

57. By the age of seven, standards overall are above those expected nationally. This is an improvement on the previous inspection findings where standards were in line with the national average. Inspection evidence indicates that the great majority of pupils in Year 2 are on course to reach the expected Level 2, with a significant number on course to reach the next highest Level 3. The most recent national tests indicate an improvement in the number of pupils achieving the higher levels in writing, which was highlighted as a weakness at the last inspection. National tests indicate that standards in reading at age seven were still not as high as in writing and speaking and listening. However, observations during the inspection show that standards in reading are rising and poised to move above the national average by the end of the school year.

58. The subject is now given a very high priority throughout the school and in relation to their prior attainment most pupils make good and often very good progress in developing the skills of literacy. All areas of weakness highlighted at the last inspection have been addressed with considerable rigour and enthusiasm. Emphasis is now placed on reading, writing and speaking and listening in a variety of contexts and for a wide range of purposes. Pupils of all attainment levels are developing a very rich and appropriate vocabulary. They use their reading and writing skills well in other areas of the curriculum. For example, when recording their investigations in science lessons or researching the Jewish religion. However, the school is aware that explicit reference to improving literacy through other subjects is not always included in lesson plans and as a result there are some missed opportunities for these skills to be fully developed.

59. The school has enthusiastically implemented the National Literacy Strategy and this is having a very positive effect on raising standards. Teachers and pupils are very aware of the skills they are teaching and learning; and lessons have an

atmosphere of hard work and commitment to high standards. The school is also providing additional literacy support for those pupils needing extra help to reach the higher standards. The pupils with special educational needs receive very good support and most pupils achieve the standard expected by the ages of seven and eleven.

60. Speaking and listening skills are now developed exceptionally well and are a strength of the school. By the age of eleven, standards are very high when compared with those nationally. In assemblies, lessons and through the school council, even the youngest pupils have opportunities to express their ideas and opinions, confident that they will be listened to and taken seriously. Older pupils express opinions and ideas clearly and use interesting and grammatically accurate language. They are always eager to engage adults and each other in mature conversations, listening with interest to each other's contributions. Speaking and listening skills make a positive contribution to the good behaviour and orderly running of the school. For example, during a history lesson, a group of Year 5 and 6 pupils not only presented factual information about the Tudors but also, for a lengthy period, took control of the discipline and class management. Pupils readily accepted authoritative comments from their group leaders to 'speak up' or 'pay attention'.

61. By the end of the infants, attainment in reading is above the national average. Pupils are aware of authors and illustrators and are able to identify the main characters and events in their favourite books. Younger pupils read simple books with increasing accuracy and understanding. An understanding of phonics, word families and spellings now give pupils confidence in tackling unfamiliar words and this has a very positive effect on the progress they make in becoming fluent and confident readers. Dictionary and glossary skills are taught well to extend pupils' confidence in becoming independent readers and writers. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 read aloud with confidence and appropriate expression and understanding. Pupils take books home regularly and family members hear their children read. This has a very positive effect on pupils' standards and progress.

62. In the junior classes, the good progress made by the age of seven is built on and often accelerated. Most are able to read a range of texts fluently and accurately. Books are now very well matched to pupils' attainment and interest levels and pupils are very enthusiastic and fluent readers of a wide range of texts. Older pupils have favourite authors and they choose books because of particular interests such as animals or adventure stories. Higher attaining and average attaining pupils understand plot, setting and characterisation. They show a mature understanding of different writers' styles and accounts and are able to make deductions and inferences from their reading. Lower attaining pupils use a variety of strategies to help them recognise unfamiliar words, such as letter patterns and sounds, context and pictures and look forward to being able to read 'difficult books' such as the 'Harry Potter' series. Pupils are developing good independent research skills as they use dictionaries, thesaurus and encyclopaedias, and are beginning to use CD ROM and the Internet to extend their learning.

63. Standards in writing at both key stages are now above the national average and improvements since the last inspection are significant. By the age of seven the majority of pupils are spelling common words correctly and making good attempts to spell more complex words. They write for a variety of purposes, such as recording science experiments, using appropriate layout and vocabulary and writing very interesting stories and accounts. Pupils observe the rules of punctuation, using full stops and capital letters. Higher attaining pupils use question marks and apostrophes and some are beginning to use speech marks to add interest to their stories. Handwriting is usually very neat and well formed with the youngest pupils learning to join their letters.

64. In the junior classes, pupils now progressively develop their ability to write for different purposes using a wide range of styles. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A study of different versions of the story of Little Red Riding Hood developed an awareness of the use of different presentation skills, vocabulary and style. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils were able to recreate their own imaginative version where Red Riding Hood was 'on a mission as an evil scientist'. Creative writing is considerably enhanced by the good use of grammar, alliteration, adverbs and adjectives. Very well chosen vocabulary and complex structures captures the imagination of the reader, transporting them to the exciting world of 'The silent room' or providing a fresh look at the Christmas story. Mature and thought provoking poems on subjects such as the crucifixion, poverty and war are worthy of an adult audience. Writing is very well organised. Higher attaining pupils use bullet points, lists, paragraphs and notes to add interest and speed to their work. Information technology is used effectively to support knowledge and understanding.

65. Behaviour is now very good. Pupils enjoy English lessons and show pride in producing work of a high standard. They show very favourable attitudes to learning and enjoy very positive relationships with their teachers. Most pupils are very eager to learn, stay on task and show very good levels of independence and concentration. This makes a considerable contribution to their rate of progress and the high standards of attainment they achieve. Opportunities to work collaboratively and to develop personal skills are well used. Groups of pupils work in the library or hall, with the minimum of adult support, completing their tasks in a quiet and purposeful atmosphere.

66. Teaching throughout the school has improved since the last inspection and is now very effective in helping pupils achieve well in their learning. Lessons are well planned and all the programmes of study are covered well. The teaching is never less than satisfactory and is often very good with consistently excellent teaching occurring at the end of the juniors. In the infant

classes, 50 per cent of lessons seen were satisfactory and 50 per cent were very good. In the junior classes, all lessons seen were never less than good with 75 per cent being excellent. All teachers are confidently implementing the National Literacy Strategy. Teaching is carefully structured and well planned to meet the needs of pupils of all attainment levels. Teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils and ensure that pupils are very clear about what it is they are expected to learn. Class, group and individual targets provide focus for learning and move learning on. Plenary sessions effectively check that pupils have understood the lesson, are ready to move on to the next stage of learning or need further help to reinforce their learning. Speaking and listening is given a very high profile and all staff ensure that pupils are listened to carefully and encouraged to express their views. Spelling, punctuation and grammar are given a particularly high priority and the pupils' knowledge and understanding of basic skills are apparent in their extended writing. Teachers use praise, comments and questions effectively to check understanding and extend thinking. When teaching is very good or outstanding, expectations are particularly high and the teacher's enthusiasm, explanations and knowledge have a very positive effect on attainment and progress. In excellent lessons, teaching is imaginative, lively and exciting and there is a presumption that learning is fun and that pupils want to succeed. This moves pupils learning on at a fast pace and encourages very positive attitudes to the subject. For example, in one outstanding lesson the teacher's understanding of what is needed to motivate learning was evident as pupils were encouraged to write imaginatively about Red Riding Hood by comments such as 'perhaps grandma was a tough dude and rode a motor bike'.

67. Teachers and pupils share the same purpose and there is an expectation on both parts that learning is an enjoyable all-consuming activity. Pupils confidently offer answers to teachers probing and difficult questions knowing that even if their answers are incorrect the teacher will help them to discover for themselves the right answer. Relationships are very good and teachers have high expectations of their pupils' behaviour and attainment resulting in very good discipline and high standards. Pupils are encouraged to believe in their own ability to succeed. Teachers use a range of appropriate and high quality resources to support the teaching of literacy. Some teachers are very proficient in their use of information technology and produce individual templates, work sheets and tasks. This has a very positive effect on the quality of the provision, making the teaching and learning of English challenging and interesting.

68. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and tasks are always well matched to pupils' individual needs. Support staff are used very effectively to give additional help to designated individuals and groups of pupils. Their contribution greatly enhances the learning opportunities for the pupils.

69. Assessment and record keeping are very good. National tests are used very effectively to set individual targets for pupils, to raise standards and to identify areas for school development. Teachers mark work on a regular basis and there are some excellent examples of how comments help pupils to improve their work. However, this is not always implemented consistently across the school. Homework is set to extend work done in lessons and to check that pupils have fully understood new learning.

70. The curriculum meets statutory requirements. The curriculum leader is very enthusiastic and knowledgeable about the subject. Monitoring of lessons and planning has had a very good impact on the quality of the teaching and learning. National test results and teacher assessments are carefully scrutinised to improve standards, track pupils' progress and to set targets for the school and individual pupils.

MATHEMATICS

71. The standard of work among eleven-year-olds is above average overall. Their level of knowledge is ahead of that expected for this time in the school year. A sizeable proportion are already achieving the level expected of them and these pupils are on line to exceed expectations in the national tests. However, the overall results may be slightly below those in the Year 2000 as the present cohort contains a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs. When compared to their attainment when aged seven, the standard achieved in the 2000 tests puts the school in the top five per cent nationally. The seven-year-olds standards of work are also above average and a significant proportion are on line to reach the higher levels. They make good progress against the attainment demonstrated in their mathematical development when they began school.

72. The small cohort sizes make accurate comparisons between different years results unreliable. However, the trend in the national tests for eleven-year-olds between 1996 and 2000 is one of steep improvement at a rate that is faster than the improvement found nationally. In 1996, standards were broadly in line with the national average. The improvement since then has varied from year to year but standards rose particularly sharply in 2000 to a very high level when compared with the national average. In 2000, 100 per cent of the pupils taking the test reached the expected level, and 50 per cent attained a higher level than that expected for their age. This represents a dramatic improvement since the previous inspection when standards were broadly in line with the national average. When the school was re-visited by HMI in 1998, standards were improving but the oral development of mental mathematics was slower. This has now improved much further, largely due to the introduction

of the numeracy strategy, for which the school was a pilot, and further training for staff. When compared with similar schools, standards attained by eleven-year-olds are well above average.

73. The test results for seven-year-olds show more inconsistency between cohorts but standards were in line with the top five per cent of schools nationally in 2000. One hundred per cent of the pupils attained the expected level and 50 per cent attained a level higher than that expected. This provides a very strong base on which teachers can build in the junior classes. When compared with similar schools, pupils attain standards that are well above average. All aspects of the subject have equally strong results and there are no weak areas.

74. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls, especially given the small cohort sizes. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support from class teachers and support staff. This support enables them to take a full part in mathematics lessons, to be provided with appropriately challenging work, and to make good progress towards appropriate levels of attainment and the targets set in their individual education plans.

75. By the time they are eleven, pupils of all abilities have a good grasp of the basic addition, subtraction, multiplication and division rules as well as an understanding of place value to tens of thousands. Higher attaining pupils can use these skills to solve problems involving money. They can round numbers up and down and have a good grasp of equivalent fractions. Most pupils understand the use of negative numbers and have a developing understanding of percentages. In Year 5, pupils can use partitioning methods well to multiply large numbers and they can measure and classify angles. In lessons, Year 5 and 6 pupils demonstrate a good understanding of factors and multiples. Less able pupils also reach a good level of attainment due to the support offered through extra staffing and practical resources. Younger junior pupils in Years 3 and 4 show a sound awareness of fractions and regular and irregular two and three-dimensional shapes. Numeracy skills are used effectively to create a good bar chart. In one lesson, pupils demonstrated a good understanding of how to add three single digit numbers such as $7+5+3$. In their mental work they can count accurately in multiples of two or three.

76. Seven-year-old pupils are able to add and subtract to 100, count in groups of ten and accurately work with analogue clocks, using halves and quarters. They work with numbers to 100, ordering and making given numbers by using their place value knowledge to add tens to units. Over three-quarters of the pupils can recognise which is larger, 81 or 68. Year 1 pupils use hand-spans and feet to measure distance. They can add and subtract money to 10 pence accurately. Less able pupils are learning to write numerals correctly but a number still reverse the digits.

77. Throughout the school, pupils' attitudes towards the subject are very good. Younger pupils work for extended lengths of time on tasks without becoming distracted. Older pupils take on challenging tasks with confidence and interest. They work well collaboratively and listen when others are answering questions. In all lessons good relationships between pupils and adults helped maintain a purposeful and effective working ethos.

78. The quality of teaching is good overall and much improved since the last inspection. In the infant classes, the teaching is always good. In the junior classes, half of the teaching is very good or excellent, while the rest is good. The teachers have worked very hard to introduce the numeracy strategy effectively and they have adapted it appropriately for their mixed age classes. They use a variety of methods to teach mathematical skills, including very good whole class mental sessions and very good question and answer sessions, where teachers target questions appropriately for the ages and abilities of the pupils. The very best lessons have very good pace and challenge the pupils to complete the work in good time. Relationships are so good that pupils admit that they made errors, confident in knowing why they made them and how they can improve in the future. The good and very good teaching is an important factor in developing the evident enthusiasm that pupils have for the subject. Teachers set good individual targets for pupils, so they are clear about what the focus of their work should be. The marking in the juniors is very good and, especially for the less able, provides clear guidance on how to improve their work. Computers are occasionally used, especially with younger children to consolidate counting skills, but the full potential of the use of computers and other ICT is not yet exploited.

79. The management of the subject is very good. The curriculum leader has overseen the very good improvements since the last inspection and has supported and worked with other staff very effectively. She has had the opportunity to work alongside colleagues and to monitor aspects of the teaching and learning. Good links are established with the governing body through a nominated governor who has also attended training and visited lessons in every class. Reports on progress are fed back to the governors' school effectiveness committee and this enables all governors to become aware of strengths and weaknesses in provision. Future plans include more tracking of individual pupils, and particularly to monitor those few pupils who still underachieve.

SCIENCE

80. The standard of work among eleven-year-olds is above average overall. Their level of knowledge and understanding at the start of the spring term is already that expected by the end of the year. A larger than typical proportion of the pupils are on course to exceed expectations in the national tests. When compared to their attainment when aged seven, the standard achieved in 2000 puts the school in the top five per cent nationally. The seven-year-olds' standard of work is at least satisfactory and nearly all are on course to attain the expected level for their age group although few are likely to reach the higher levels. They make good progress from their attainment demonstrated when they begin school.

81. The small cohort sizes make accurate comparisons unreliable. However, the trend in the national tests for eleven-year-olds between 1996 and 2000 is one of steep improvement. In 1996, standards were broadly in line with the national average. Since then they have risen sharply and at a faster rate than that found nationally, to a high point in 1999, which was matched in 2000, when standards were very high. In 2000, 100 per cent of the pupils taking the test reached the expected level and 70 per cent attained a higher level than that expected for their age. This represents a dramatic improvement since the previous inspection when standards were broadly in line with the national average. When the school was re-visited by HMI in 1998, standards had improved and key concepts were being well learned and understood. When compared with similar schools, standards attained by eleven-year-olds are well above average.

82. Teacher assessments made of pupils at the age of seven show that 100 per cent of the 2000 cohort reached the expected level of attainment. However, a below average proportion reached the higher level. When compared with similar schools the proportion reaching the higher levels was well below average. This is true in all aspects of the subject except physical processes where attainment was broadly in line with the national average.

83. There are no significant differences between the attainment of boys and girls especially given the small cohort sizes and that all pupils are attaining the expected level. Pupils with special educational needs are given very good support, from class teachers and support staff, and this enables them to take a full part in science activities and to make good progress towards appropriate levels of attainment.

84. The study of life and living processes is given real and genuine meaning through the well kept animals, which have an important part to play in the life of the school. The school grounds have been effectively developed to provide garden areas for each house to maintain, and in which they grow flowers and vegetables. An environmental area has been developed including a well-stocked pond, enabling a good study of water creatures. In addition, the school keeps hens and chickens, both for show and for eggs, which are sold by the seven-year-old pupils. There is an aviary containing finches and cockatiels, which are again kept for show, with the expert help of a member of the governing body. The involvement of older pupils in maintaining and looking after these animals, the rearing of hens from eggs and the care and attention they clearly give to the birds results in the school winning a range of awards from local agricultural shows, but also provides an important link in the excellent personal and spiritual development evident in the school. Talking to the pupils demonstrates that they have a good understanding of the natural world and its wonders. The further development of this work is planned through a scheme involving a visiting architect with the Year 1 and 2 pupils to convert some old buildings into an outdoor classroom.

85. In lessons, ten and eleven-year-old pupils showed a very good understanding of the qualities of liquids and solids during experiments and activities designed to demonstrate the characteristics of materials. Higher attaining and older pupils extended this work into an understanding of how gases can show some characteristics of both of the other states. Pupils are comfortable using terms such as molecules and atoms. Eight and nine-year-old pupils are able to make appropriate predictions about the qualities of different materials, and whether or not they will prove to be opaque, translucent or transparent. They use the terms accurately. They can use CD-ROM to research facts about light and sound, but when using the Internet pupils do not have enough experience and understanding to focus the task closely enough on the information they want. They clearly understand the need for fair tests when carrying out experiments.

86. The six and seven-year-old pupils are able to discuss a variety of different materials and discuss their uses and which might be best for a specific job. Higher attaining pupils can also make links to their history work by describing the materials that were available to the Victorians and those that were not. Pupils appreciate the meaning of opposite characteristics such as dull and bright, and the higher attaining pupils are beginning to use terms such as opaque and translucent. This work was extended in another lesson when, together with an architect, children looked at the materials involved in the buildings and the patterns made by bricks and how they are bound together. The five-year-old pupils also use a developing level of vocabulary to describe smooth, sharp or bumpy materials after feeling them.

87. In all of the lessons observed, pupils were interested and enthusiastic about the work. They enjoy practical activities and their attitudes towards science are very good. Pupils respect the materials and equipment they are given to work with and a particular strength is the way groups collaborate and cooperate when they are working together. The pupils who look after the

hens and birds are particularly mature in their attitudes towards the role they have adopted. They use numeracy skills naturally to devise graphs and read charts, although the opportunities for this are not regularly identified in the teachers' planning.

88. The quality of teaching is at least good and in two thirds of lessons in the junior classes it is very good or excellent. Throughout the school, teachers plan the lessons well and ensure that the resources provided for experiments are appropriate. A strong emphasis is placed on practical work and on pupils describing their findings orally as well as in written form. However, photocopied worksheets are too often used for recording results and pupils do not have enough opportunity to devise their own methods of noting results. Whole class question and answer sessions help develop their understanding, as, for example, in Years 5 and 6 when the teacher extended the solids and liquids work by introducing the characteristics of gases. There is a good level of subject knowledge and expertise evident in all teachers, and they are very effectively supported by the non-teaching staff and by volunteers such as governors.

89. The subject is being well coordinated by the curriculum leader, who has a high degree of personal knowledge and understanding, as well as an interest in the subject. The management of the subject has improved since the last inspection. There is now more monitoring of teaching and learning, and this has enabled the curriculum leader to report on some of the subject's strengths and weaknesses to the governors. Each teacher makes regular assessments of pupils to monitor progress and good records are kept. The monitoring has resulted in improvements in resources. For example, there was a need to provide more resources to help develop pupils' scientific vocabulary. This ensures best value in using the available budget effectively. Good use is also made of visits to local wildfowl sanctuaries on the Broads, and of a nearby river, where owl boxes were placed and their settlement carefully studied and videoed.

ART AND DESIGN

90. Due to the timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements, there was insufficient evidence available to make a full evaluation of teaching and learning in the subject. However, a scrutiny of work produced by the pupils and an examination of schemes of work and teachers' planning indicates there have been significant improvements since the last inspection. There is now an effective scheme of work in place to ensure progress and continuity across the school. Emphasis is placed on developing pupils' skills, techniques, knowledge and understanding and work displayed around the school effectively demonstrates this.

91. The curriculum co-ordinator is very experienced, enthusiastic and innovative and this has a very positive effect on the standards and progress pupils make. She works closely with staff to raise their confidence and skills in the teaching of art. This is mainly done informally as there is little time available to monitor and evaluate the subject formally. The school's development plan includes time to update the schemes in light of Curriculum 2000 and to implement an assessment strategy for the subject.

92. Pupils' work indicates that standards are often above those expected for their age. The great majority of pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Throughout the school, pupils study a wide range of different artists and recreate their style with accuracy. Pupils are becoming very skilled at colour mixing to create mood and required effects in the style of Picasso, Matisse and Van Gogh. There is an excellent range of two and three-dimensional work showing that pupils are developing good skills using a variety of materials, techniques, and pattern. In the autumn term, an 'Art week' involved all pupils across the school working together to create sculptures using an exciting range of materials which included light bulbs, pans, fishing nets, wheels, screws and wire. This work was inspired by a local sculptor and resulted in pupils producing creative work of the very highest quality that continues to give pleasure to the whole school. An awareness of art in different cultures is developed as pupils create fabric printing in the style of native Americans. Skills and techniques such as marbling and paper-quilling are promoted well and pupils use their skills to produce high quality covers for notebooks and Christmas cards.

93. Art is effectively linked to other areas of the curriculum including mathematics, religious education, history and science. For example, pupils are looking at how the Bible has been portrayed through art and how information about a period in history can be gained from studying paintings and artist of the period. Through a well-planned curriculum, pupils' natural creativity is fostered well. Pupils work shows that they are capable of collaboration, sharing ideas and appreciating the work of others. Teachers provide a wide range of opportunities, resources and a variety of exciting stimuli to catch pupils' imagination and interest. Pupils' work is very well displayed, indicating the value teachers place on pupils' work and generally adding to the ambience and attractiveness of the building. Pupils' work has been displayed in the local library, church and at County Hall, indicating the high standard pupils achieve.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

94. Due to the timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements, there was insufficient evidence available to make an evaluation of standards in design technology. However, a scrutiny of a very limited sample of work produced by the pupils, and an examination of schemes of work and teachers' planning indicates there have been significant improvements since the last inspection. There is now an effective curriculum that places emphasis on developing pupils' design and technology skills, knowledge and understanding.

95. The curriculum co-ordinator is very experienced, enthusiastic and innovative and is working with the staff to improve their confidence and skill in teaching the subject. This is mainly done informally as there is little time available to monitor and evaluate the subject formally. The school's good development planning includes an appropriate amount of allocated time to update the schemes in line with recent curriculum changes and to implement an assessment strategy for the subject.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

96. Due to the timing of the inspection and the school's timetabling arrangements, there was insufficient evidence available to make any evaluation of work in geography, or a full evaluation of teaching and learning in history. However, a scrutiny of work produced by the pupils and an examination of schemes of work and teachers' planning indicates there have been significant improvements in both subjects since the last inspection and standards in history are now in line with those expected nationally at both key stages. There are effective schemes of work in place, which have been updated in line with Curriculum 2000. These effectively ensure there is progress and continuity across the school, taking into account the needs of the different age groups within each class. The school's development plan identifies the need to implement an assessment strategy for both subjects. The curriculum leaders are very enthusiastic and have been successful in implementing a good curriculum.

97. The curriculum for history is now imaginative and well planned in order to motivate pupils' interest in people and events of the past. Pupils are surrounded with reminders of the past and the contribution previous generations have made to the school and community. The original school bell has recently been restored by an ex-pupil and is displayed as a reminder of school life at the beginning of the last century. As pupils move through the school they are encouraged to think of themselves as historians as they consider the authenticity of evidence and use a range of artefacts, photographs, the Internet and books to gain knowledge and understanding of past times. For younger pupils role-play is used effectively to bring alive the lives of people in a bygone age. Pupils in Year 1 and 2 enthusiastically acted out the roles of characters in a Victorian house and compared their lives with their own. A wonderful array of Victorian memorabilia, loaned by a local historian, brought Victorian England to life for pupils. Shoes, muffs, christening gowns and an original invitation to the coronation of Queen Victoria provide pupils with first hand evidence of aspects Victorian England. These resources are respected by the pupils, who handle them carefully and with respect.

98. Pupils have a good understanding of history and know the significance and contribution of key periods, people and events such as the Egyptians, Tudor monarchs, the Armada, and Queen Victoria. There are good links with other subjects as pupils create their own Tudor houses and design Egyptian amulets and charms. An excellent two-hour presentation by Year 5 and 6 pupils on the Tudors indicated a very good understanding of different aspects of life in that period. Pupils work independently in small groups to research life in the town and country, crime and punishment and health and hygiene.

99. Pupils' attitudes to history are very good. They enjoy being challenged to think and the quality of their work reflects a pride in presentation. Pupils are interested in how people lived in past times. They are keen to explore new ideas and exchange these with each other.

100. Insufficient lessons in history and geography were seen during the inspection to form a judgement on teaching. However, a scrutiny of teachers planning and pupils' work indicates that teachers have secure subject knowledge and an understanding of the subjects. They use a variety of artefacts, archaeological finds, maps, photographs, the Internet, visits and books to bring the subject alive for the pupils. Pupils are encouraged to organise their own work and recording their findings in their own words and there is no longer an over reliance on commercially produced materials.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

101. The standards reached by the current pupils in the school have improved significantly since the last inspection but are still below those typically found in most schools. This is due to the recent improvements in resources not having had time to affect standards, and the need for further staff training, which has been recognised and is planned for later this term. Pupils are at the early stages of learning to use the Internet for research purposes and have had little experience of control technology or of using ICT for monitoring external changes, such as temperature. The progress made by pupils varies, and is still largely

dependent on their experience with computers at home. The pupils with special educational needs have equal access to computers as their peers, and there are no significant differences between the progress made by boys or girls.

102. Discussions with pupils in Year 6 shows that most of them have had a lot of experience of using a word processor, can type and alter their work and save it on disk. They can use a database and have entered their mental mathematics test results on a spreadsheet. A few of the higher attaining pupils have accessed the Internet to look for information about, for example, Henry VIII. Lower down the school they recall using a programmable floor robot to learn how to control its movements and the distance it can turn or travel. A number are familiar with the use of CD ROM for researching history topics. Younger pupils are able to use a range of computer software and activities to consolidate and revise their counting skills.

103. Only one lesson involving direct teaching was observed. This introduced the use of a CD ROM encyclopaedia for Year 1 and 2 pupils. By the end of the lesson, pupils knew how to click on a variety of icons to reach the topic they wanted and they could delve further into the program to find out more information. They knew how to quit the program correctly. Older pupils are beginning to use the Internet, but in one instance, they had not been given a specific enough focus for the task, or had enough experience of questioning the computer, for the task to have any lasting purpose or meaning.

104. Pupils express real interest in computers and have a very good attitude towards their work. They are enthusiastic when using the computer and they show appropriate respect and care for the hardware. The quality of teaching in the one lesson seen was good. The teacher had prepared the lesson well and had a clear idea of the focus of the demonstration she was giving. Good use was made of a member of the support staff who had good expertise when using the equipment.

105. The management of the subject is satisfactory, and has resulted in good improvements made since the last inspection. The evident weaker areas in the provision have been recognised and further training is planned. There is not enough thought given to other aspects of ICT apart from computers. Because of this pupils do not have a sound grasp of how ICT affects our lives outside school. Resources, both hardware and software, have been effectively improved since the last inspection. Good use of a video camera was made during an arts week and pupils use the CD players and cassette players with confidence. The school is following a commercial scheme and this helps ensure appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum. Future developments planned include the building of a web site and the further extension of e-mail use to contact other schools and pupils.

MUSIC

106. The school does not have a music specialist or keyboard player on the teaching staff, although use is made of a classroom assistant and a volunteer parent. The lack of a teacher with specialist knowledge limits the opportunities for the effective development, particularly of singing skills. However, in lessons, teachers make effective use of a commercial scheme, which enables them to provide a sound programme of work that meets the demands of the National Curriculum. In addition, staff run recorder clubs for both beginners and advanced players, and there is also a good team of Year 5 and 6 handbell ringers which regularly plays in public. The overall standards achieved by pupils are broadly in line with those found nationally, especially in composing. This is a good improvement on the unsatisfactory standards found at the last inspection.

107. The profile of music in the school is high. Much of the school's work is accompanied by music and there are good opportunities for pupils to listen to a variety of types and styles, especially of classical music. This positively helps in creating a pleasant, reflective and effective working ethos throughout the school. However, the music playing is not often discussed with pupils and this means it rarely becomes more than background music. For example, on entry to assemblies, although there is always music playing, staff do not discuss the composer, style, instruments used, or any other aspects of the music. The commercial scheme of work used provides opportunities for pupils to hear music from other countries and cultures.

108. Only two lessons, both in the junior classes, were observed during the inspection. The standards achieved by the oldest pupils in recognising and keeping to a 3/4 beat are satisfactory and their singing skills are also broadly appropriate for their ages. They are developing a good understanding of notation. The higher attaining pupils, who have extra music or dance lessons at home, have their skills effectively used by the teacher to illustrate aspects of the work. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 demonstrate a good level of skill in using tuned and un-tuned percussion instruments to compose pieces illustrating different weather patterns. Their learning is particularly enhanced by the effective use of support staff and by the pupils' positive attitudes towards the task. They remember hearing music by Elgar, Beethoven and Mendelssohn and how some of their music was composed to illustrate nature.

109. The quality of teaching is good or very good throughout the juniors. Although non-specialists the teachers make every effort to ensure that the full curriculum is offered to pupils and that they meet a wide range of musical activities in lessons. The resources have improved since the previous inspection and they are effectively used to offer good opportunities for pupils to make and listen to music. Teachers use the correct technical vocabulary, further extending the pupils' knowledge and

understanding of the subject. For example, in one lesson teacher and pupils were comfortable using terms such as duration, notation and volume.

110. During the inspection there was no whole school singing in an assembly or hymn practice. No instrumental teaching is available to pupils at present, although there have been guitar lessons in the recent past.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

111. It was only possible to observe a few lessons but from this evidence it is possible to say that the standards achieved among eleven-year-olds and seven-year-olds are broadly average. These standards have risen since the previous inspection, largely through the improvements in facilities. During the inspection, lessons in gymnastics and games were observed. In addition, the teachers' planning indicates that full coverage of the National Curriculum is provided, including swimming.

112. The current learning in lessons is broadly average in the infants but good in the juniors. This reflects the individual expertise of teachers and the way lessons are organised. For example, in one good lesson pupils in Years 3 and 4 were given good opportunities to use a variety of apparatus freely, rather than spending time queuing up and waiting for turns. The school makes good use of outside expertise where possible to extend the learning of those pupils with particular interests and skills. For example, during the inspection children took part in football club and dance lessons run by parents. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress due to the effective support offered to them which enables them to take a full part in the lessons.

113. Infant pupils respond to the teacher's instructions appropriately when taking part in warm up activities. They begin and stop quickly and move in a lively way, which ensures that they are active for a good period of time. The youngest children show an appropriate awareness of space and of other people as they move, and all pupils shake and jog using the available space well, immediately freezing when requested. They can vary the way they move, using large or 'giant' steps. Older pupils are very aware of the different ways they can balance on parts of their bodies. They use this to create effective sequences of movements and balances on the floor, and these they then modify to use on apparatus.

114. The attitudes of the pupils are very good throughout the school. They clearly enjoy the subject and work hard to improve their performance, especially when the teaching is good, and when there is enough time allowed for real improvement to be made. All dress appropriately and are aware of safety issues, such as when moving apparatus. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory for the infants and good for the juniors. Teachers begin lessons with warm up sessions and they discuss with pupils the need for and benefit of these for healthy bodies. The supervision of lessons is appropriate to ensure pupils' safety. However, the hall, although a great improvement on the previously available accommodation, is somewhat cluttered with displays, musical instruments and other items which reduce the space and freedom available for the pupils.

115. A very good range of sporting extra-curricular activities is available for pupils. Apart from the football and ballet seen during the inspection, other clubs, run by teachers, parents or other external experts, include rugby football, cricket, short tennis and netball. A very good residential visit enables older pupils to extend their skills through outdoor and adventurous activities such as canoeing, rafting, climbing, caving, abseiling and other problem solving tasks. In addition, the school makes good use of the local secondary school for swimming lessons. This enables the vast majority of pupils to achieve the appropriate level of skill expected by the National Curriculum. The school holds its own house sports day, involving all pupils in a variety of athletic competitions, and the higher attaining pupils take part in area sports with pupils from local schools.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

116. At the end of the infants, pupils' attainment is above the expectations of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus. No lessons were seen in the juniors. However, discussions with pupils and a scrutiny of pupils work indicates progress continues to be good and most pupils are achieving higher than expected standards. The school is now implementing the Locally Agreed Syllabus and is linking this with other national guidelines. Planning now gives emphasis to ensuring that pupils develop a deep understanding of other faiths. Personal, social and moral lessons are also used to develop pupils' understanding of different religions. These strategies have a positive impact on raising standards in the subject and the provision is much improved since the last inspection. The school has identified the need to implement an assessment strategy for the subject.

117. At the infant key stage, pupils are able to understand some of the important aspects of other faiths. They are aware of the place of special books in different religions and have a particularly good understanding of the Torah. By the end of the key stage, pupils are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of the significance of celebrations and rituals to Christians and other world faiths. A deeper understanding of baptism was developed as children took on the different roles of parents and

godparents and the local vicar helped them to recreate a 'real' christening. Pupils then compared a Christian baptism with a Sikh baptism.

118. By the end of the juniors, pupils are showing a mature understanding of other religions and can talk with confidence about how their knowledge helps them to respect different cultures and beliefs. They have discussed the customs, festivals, holy books and buildings of Islam with a Muslim visitor. They can relate religion and faith to world events, such as war and poverty, and discuss how a person's faith can help them come to terms with unanswered questions and problems. Pupils respond positively to lessons. They listen carefully and are interested and enthusiastic about their work. They enjoy contributing to discussion and work together collaboratively.

119. The quality of teaching is very good, and is largely the responsibility of one teacher who is very enthusiastic and experienced. This has a positive effect on pupils' progress and the standards they achieve. Teaching is particularly effective when resources are imaginatively used and activities challenge pupils thinking and build on their own experiences. For example, before embarking on the significance of the Torah to Jews, pupils were asked to talk and write about their own special books in order to give them an insight into what 'special book' might mean. The significance of art in religions is being taught which will give pupils a different dimension to their knowledge and understanding. Pupils in Year 3 have produced very interesting pictures of Moses and the burning bush in the style of Marc Chagall. Lessons are used well to develop moral teaching and pupils are encouraged to consider personal qualities and school rules. Pupils are taught to organise their own work and record their findings in their own words and there is no longer an over-reliance on commercially produced materials.