

INSPECTION REPORT

HUNDON COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Sudbury, Suffolk

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 124538

Headteacher: Mrs M Nicholls

Reporting inspector: Mrs J'Anne Goodman
013158

Dates of inspection: 26 June 2000 – 28 June 2000

Inspection number: 189955

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First School
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	North Street Hundon Sudbury Suffolk
Postcode:	CO10 8EE
Telephone number:	01440 786217
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs S Philpot
Date of previous inspection:	14 June 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
J'Anne Goodman	Registered inspector	English	What sort of school is it?
		Science	How well are pupils taught?
		Information Communications Technology	How well is the school led and managed?
		Music	What should the school do to improve further?
		Physical Education	
		Religious Education	
		Special Educational Needs	
Roy Kitson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development.
			How well does the school care for its pupils?
			How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Marie Allan	Team inspector	Mathematics	The school's results and pupils' achievements.
		Art	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
		Design and Technology	
		Geography	
		History	
		Under Fives	
		Equal Opportunities	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hundon Community Primary school is a first school situated in the village of Hundon, Suffolk. The school was founded in 1875 and, currently, there are 53 pupils on roll. Most pupils come from the surrounding rural area but some come from neighbouring villages or the local town of Haverhill. Pupils come from a wide range of backgrounds with an above national average proportion of parents with professional or skilled qualifications. Suffolk baseline information shows that the school has a broadly average to above average intake on entry to the school. Standards on intake are above average in mathematics and personal and social development, average in reading and below average in letter knowledge, regarding sounds and letter names. Boys on entry are seen to be more confident speakers than girls. Nearly all pupils have received pre-school education. There are currently 32 boys to 21 girls on the school's roll. There are ten pupils on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) register, and currently there are no pupils with statements. Less than eight percent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, in relation to national figures, this is well below national average. The school's population is that of a mono-white culture.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Hundon primary school is a school with many strengths and no serious weaknesses. By the time pupils are seven they achieve average standards in writing, above average standards in reading and below in spelling. In mathematics and science they achieve consistently above average standards. By the time pupils leave the school aged nine they consistently achieve above average standards for English, mathematics and science. Progress for those with special educational needs is invariably very good. There is good teaching in all classes with no unsatisfactory lessons seen. The school has good strategies for improvement in place. There is a whole school focus on raising standards of pupils' attainment through monitoring, evaluation and target setting. There is good educational direction provided by the head and governors. The school is a good school providing good value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards are above average with mathematical standards a strength of the school
- Overall, teaching is good, with 65% deemed to be good to very good
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and they make good progress in their learning.
- Pupils enjoy coming to school and they have very good attitudes; this makes a positive contribution to their learning.
- Personal and social development is very good and supports learning and behaviour.
- Pupils behave very well around the school and within lessons.
- The school cares very well for its pupils' academic and personal development.
- The headteacher, staff and governors of the school have a good understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and what needs to be done to improve.
- Extra curricular provision is a strength
- Partnership with parents and the community is very good
- Liaison with partner institutions is very good providing further support for educational development.

What could be improved

- There is a need to improve the teaching and learning of phonics and spelling in order to raise already high standards in English further.
- Medium term planning needs to include a focus on the key skills within subjects to ensure progression.
- Learning objectives in planning need to focus more on the desired outcomes for learning rather than the tasks.
- The school needs to seek where possible a reduction in the number of authorised absences.
- Governors need to extend their use of strategic planning.

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

The strengths of the school far outweigh the areas for improvement.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made good progress in addressing the key issues identified in the October 1996 report. The main improvements are in teaching where there are now no weaknesses, a systematic approach to monitoring teaching and learning is now in place, planning, assessment and record keeping has a cohesiveness previously lacking and standards in art and information communication technology (ICT) have been improved. Resources are now adequate for the taught curriculum. Leadership and management has become a strength of the school and governors are fully involved in the life of the school. New appointments including that of the headteacher have brought about a strong and effective staff team. Data analysis is used well and teachers share and discuss with individual pupils their targets for improvement. Reports to parents are clear and include the next targets for improvement. The school demonstrates that it has good capacity for further improvement.

STANDARDS

The standards achieved by the seven year-olds in the 1999 National Curriculum tests are not published in this report.¹

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They enjoy coming to school, try hard and are eager to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour in and around the school is good
Personal development and relationships.	Personal development is good. The pupils are well mannered and polite. Relationships among pupils and between pupils and adults are good throughout the school.
Attendance	Attendance figures are adversely affected by authorised absences. These are mainly related to annual family holidays. Pupils arrive on time.

Overall the above aspects are strengths of the school.

¹ Where there are less than ten pupils taking Standard Assessment Tests, the Department for Education and Employment recognises that the confidentiality of individual pupils' attainment may be breached by publication of results.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

Teaching is good overall with more than half of all lessons seen (65%) being good or better. There are instances of good to very good teaching across the school. The teaching of English, including reading and writing is satisfactory at the end of Key Stage 1 (5-7 year-olds) and good at Key Stage 2 (7-9 year-olds). In mathematics, including numeracy, the quality of teaching is good. In science the quality of teaching is good throughout the school. The great majority of lessons are carefully planned and successfully sustain pupils' interest. In the very good lessons teachers share with pupils what they are intended to learn and encourage pupils to reflect on what they have learned and the ways in which they learn. In the best lessons there is a keen focus on targets for all pupils as individuals which are shared fully with them. There was no unsatisfactory teaching seen in any subject.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is appropriately broad and balanced. Extra-curricular opportunities are a strength of the school. Both literacy and numeracy strategies have been introduced but there is further work to be done in some specific aspects of English, and planning for key skills across the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for SEN is very good with pupils well supported and integrated well in classes.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral development is good both within lessons and other school activities. Provision for social development is very good leading to high quality relationships. Spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory overall.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Systems for evaluating pupils' academic performance and personal development are well established and effective. Teachers and other staff know their pupils' well.

Pupils are expected to be responsible and are given opportunities to show reliability. Within lessons they are provided with some good opportunities for making decisions and planning how to do their work. This is especially so in Y3/4 Key Stage 2. Pupils clearly understand right from wrong and behaviour is managed well by all teachers. Attention to equality of opportunity is good and this is particularly important given the gender imbalance of the school's population. The partnership with parents is good. There are good levels of communication through newsletters and other school documentation. Parents are highly supportive of the school and have confidence in the head and her staff.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides clear educational direction for the school. There is a good focus on raising standards whilst maintaining respect, confidence and trust. There is a very real and shared commitment to school improvement and success.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors fulfil their responsibilities well. They know the school and can identify successfully its strengths and weaknesses. They play a full part in the life of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	All within the school, staff and governors, have a clear understanding of the school's performance from careful analysis of available data and regular classroom monitoring of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. All resources are effectively used.

After an unsettled period with changes of headteacher and staff the school is now establishing a common sense of purpose. The strengths of the leadership and management are the systematic approaches to evaluating teaching and learning, assessing pupils' progress and achievements and the identification of suitable targets for improvement which are shared with the pupils. The school is aware of the principles of best value and is beginning to apply these to evaluating many aspects of the school's work. This could further improve with the governors developing a clearer focus on strategic planning over time. The aims of the school are met in all its work and promote a climate of improvement. Staff and governors are fully involved in the school improvement and development process which means they have a good understanding of their individual roles in enabling improvement. Spending is matched to key priorities for improvement. Staffing, resources and accommodation are adequate. The new extension has enhanced the teaching resources available for Key Stage 1.

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 • the quality of teaching • behaviour in the school • the approachable nature of the school • the expectations set with regards to their children achieving well • the leadership and management of the school 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a few parents felt that the levels of homework could improve and that communication on their child's progress could be better

The view expressed in the questionnaires with regards to homework and communication were not supported by the views expressed at the meeting with parents. The inspection evidence reveals that children receive adequate levels of homework in comparison to other schools of the same type and phase. Communication with parents is good.

The extra-curricular provision made by the school is exceptionally good and covers a wide spread of activities. These include pre and post school provision for working parents and carers.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

Standards for seven year-olds in 1999 national assessments were well above the national average in writing and mathematics and average in reading. When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds standards in mathematics remain well above average; in writing standards are above average and in reading they drop to well below average. However, these results have to be treated with due caution as the cohorts of pupils are small and fall below reporting figures. Any dips in standards are well explained by the school's own analysis and bear a direct correlation to the school's special needs register. These pupils consistently make good progress against prior attainment.

National assessment results over the last three years, 1997-1999, have always been above the national average, with a slight fall in 1998.

Standards of attainment on entry to the reception class are generally above average when baseline assessment results are compared with those from other schools in Suffolk. However, in detail baseline demonstrates that pupils access books at above average levels but have below average levels in distinguishing letter names and sounds and overall letter knowledge is insecure. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average with boys identified as more confident than girls. Mathematical attainment is revealed as being generally above that compared with other schools in Suffolk.

Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work and from lesson observations during the inspection shows that by the end of Key Stage 1 standards in speaking and listening are above average. In reading they are average. Whilst pupils develop a good sight vocabulary they are less proficient at using other strategies, especially phonics, to assist them in word building. Standards in writing are average, but in spelling they are below this. This aspect of writing is partly linked with the lack of a systematic and rigorous phonics programme and also with staff not having a shared understanding of this aspect of the National Literacy Strategy for teaching spellings in context. Handwriting throughout the school is generally above average in terms of being able to produce suitable amounts of work and speedwriting is a strength. However, although styles of handwriting are legible and joined up, presentation occasionally needs greater attention.

By the time the pupils leave the school at nine years of age the good standards in speaking and listening have been maintained, whilst they have risen to above average in reading. Standards in writing are above average. However, spelling is still a weakness.

Pupils have recently been set their own individual literacy targets, and this is helping them to concentrate on what they need to do to improve their work.

Good opportunities are provided in other subjects for pupils to use and apply their literacy skills and knowledge. Pupils regularly contribute to debate and discussion times either drawing upon their personal experience as in Y1/2's work on electricity or developing the ability to use persuasive argument as in Y3/4 discussions regarding a local geography project that involved evaluating the local amenities for children. During discussion times pupils demonstrate clearly that they value the views of others even when these are different to their own. In Y3/4 Key Stage 2 particularly good attention is given to speedwriting and note taking. This is challenging pupils to consider information received and to select and prioritise the relevant parts to record. This was demonstrated well in the science lesson on light and shadows and in ICT work in simulation.

Standards in mathematics are above average throughout the school. In number work they are high. Children in the reception class have developed good addition and subtraction skills with numbers to ten. By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils read and write numbers at least to 1000 with confidence and higher attaining pupils demonstrate a good understanding of this aspect of number up to 10,000. They have a good mental recall of number bonds at least to 20 and many pupils achieve beyond this. By the end of Y4 pupils are good at exploring and identifying number patterns. They use their knowledge of number facts such as multiples, halving and doubling to develop a range of strategies for solving mental problems.

Opportunities for the pupils to use mathematics across the curriculum are well provided for. They use their data handling skills in science to record the growth of plants and make effective use of IT to produce graphs from this data. In art work pupils have used their knowledge of symmetry and shape to produce work in the style of Mondrian and Pollock.

Standards in science are above average by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the end of Y4. In Y1/2 the pupils understand the need and function of switches when making electrical circuits and make good use technical vocabulary. In Y4 the pupils are able to make good prediction for experiments based on previous knowledge. For instance when investigating the effect of light and shadow on coloured card.

Pupils attain above average standards in information technology throughout the school. This is due in part to a clear scheme of work for the teaching of this subject and the high quality of teaching.

In religious education the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus are met. In both key stages 1 and 2 religious education is linked to the personal and social curriculum where pupils have opportunities to discuss matters of importance to them. Lessons centre on the importance of special events and celebrations within their own families and on caring for friends and families. Assemblies are used to promote a Christian attitude and to build upon personal responsibility through themes such as the need to be honest and why. The school meets the requirements for the act of collective worship.

In other subjects standards are broadly average. However, in geography, history and music at Key Stage 1 and in physical education and music in Key Stage 2 there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement in relations to standards.

Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress. Good teaching contributes effectively to the achievements of all pupils. Pupils are provided with equality of opportunity and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enhanced by the team work between teachers and support staff. Feedback to pupils on how they are succeeding is effective in maintaining high self-esteem and also helps pupils to know how they need to improve.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

Pupils have a very good attitude to work and school. They are enthusiastic and like coming to school. Pupils relate well to each other and to their teachers and other adults in the school. They show high levels of concentration, listen carefully to instructions and take pride in their work.

The behaviour of pupils throughout the school is good in most lessons, when moving around the school and in the playground. At lunchtime in the hall they are polite and display good table manners and appear to enjoy the pleasant community atmosphere that prevails.

The school has clear guidelines on what is acceptable behaviour and what are unacceptable types of behaviour. At the commencement of the school year each class sets up its own rules that will operate in their own classrooms and involves the whole class. Behaviour management of pupils throughout the school is of a high standard and is consistently applied. There is little evidence of oppressive conduct, such as bullying, but if incidents do occur they are quickly and effectively dealt with. The parents' questionnaire indicated that all the parents felt that behaviour in school is good.

No pupils have been excluded from the school.

In the Reception class pupils were enthusiastic in sharing their ideas and knowledge about writing and spelling. In science, for example, they concentrated well and enjoyed the experiment of making an electric circuit and showed a high level of understanding for pupils of their years. They also responded well to questions, using the correct technical language in their replies when predicting the result in work on circuits and conductors.

In the other classes, they generally behaved very well and, for example, in a geography lesson they were keen to express their ideas on paper and to make sensible suggestions. Again, in an English lesson, the pupils were on task, able to share work and confidently read poems to each other. Generally, they showed patience when doing non-practical recording work, shared equipment and resources well. They also appear to enjoy books and read together willingly.

In the whole school assemblies, the pupils listen attentively, sing with enthusiasm and follow the words and rhythm well

Pupils willingly carry out daily routines such as tidying their classrooms, acting as register monitors and the older pupils help set up equipment for assemblies. The older pupils also help in the Reception area and office at lunchtimes. When given the opportunity, they also display initiative in the classrooms by selecting their own resources and equipment in subjects such as design technology and science.

The level of attendance is below the national average. There is no unauthorised absence but the rate of authorised absence is above the national average for primary schools. This is in the main is caused by a significant number of parents taking their children on holiday during the school term. This does interfere with the continuity of their education. The school should therefore seek ways to discourage parents from this practice.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection where 17% was deemed unsatisfactory. Overall the quality of teaching is good, with more than half of all lessons (65% per cent) being good or very good. Consistently good teaching was seen in the teaching of under-fives. In Key Stage 1 the pattern was more variable with satisfactory to good teaching seen. In Key Stage 2 the quality of teaching was invariably very good with excellent teaching seen in science. At no time during the inspection was there any unsatisfactory teaching observed.

There are common features to the most successful teaching observed throughout the school. Where teaching is good or better the strengths include good subject knowledge and understanding which leads to effective teaching methods and careful planning for the continuity of subject knowledge as pupils progress through the school. Planning follows a cohesive pattern, which promotes liaison between the two key stages within the school and with the middle school to which Y4 pupils transfer. Where planning is less cohesive is in the identification of the progression of the basic skills required for each subject. The school should improve this aspect in order to make already careful planning of a higher quality.

Teachers have a good understanding of their pupils and from this understanding of individuals they set high expectations. These expectations are shared with pupils through the teachers' target setting process. This leads to pupils being well informed of where they need to improve and what they need to do. This good practice positively supports the progress of all pupils within lessons, and over time, and is leading to the raising of standards. Through the planning and target setting in place teachers show good attention to meeting the needs of all pupils across the range of attainment. In the best teaching higher attaining pupils are challenged to fully extend themselves. This was particularly so in ICT where more able pupils supported others with the note taking required for key pieces of information to plan, as a group, how to resolve an adventure based problem. These pupils demonstrated higher levels of writing and comprehension linked with sensitivity for others in the group who required their support.

In the very good lessons teachers share the learning objectives with the pupils and provide opportunities to reflect on how and what they have learned. This approach is particularly well used within Literacy and numeracy sessions. Teachers regularly check pupils' understanding through the use of skilful questioning and this leads to pupils being challenged in their thinking and to consider whether there is room for improvement in their work. Classroom routines are well established and these coupled with the very good relationships seen throughout the school generate a positive and enjoyable learning environment; often humour is used to good effect to enhance this further. For example, in reception's discussion on the story 'Handa's Surprise' in the Y1/2 lesson in riddles and the discussion that took place regarding 'The Professor's Diary' in ICT in Y3/4 KS2. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour very effectively throughout the school. Praise is used to motivate and encourage pupils and they respond by trying hard. Most lessons proceed at a good pace and are well structured to sustain pupils' interest. Pace is particularly focussed on for the older pupils where expectations are set for minimum levels of work within timed sections of the lessons. This is leading to the pupils being skilled in the recording of findings, evaluation of outcomes and consideration of improvements within the course of a lesson. As in science where they predicted what would occur within the work on light and shadows, recorded these predictions, tested them and then evaluated not only the outcomes but also whether or not they had used the correct language in order to provide for accuracy.

Teachers generally ensure that classroom assistants are fully aware of the aims of the lesson and their role in supporting groups. This works well and provides the right levels of support in most cases. Where it is less effective is when there is insufficient understanding of the detail of the subject as in the use of phonological awareness to support reading and spelling in English. Time is used efficiently except where very occasionally time is allocated to the review of what has been learned is overly long. This is due to the desire for all to have a turn rather than a focus on recall of key points learned.

The quality of teaching in literacy ranges from satisfactory to very good across the school. It is good overall. In half the lessons observed teaching was very good. In the good and very good lessons teachers have good general subject knowledge and are confident in their use of the National Literacy Strategy. Where it is satisfactory this is a result of less of a focus on the specifics which would raise standards further in reading and spelling, and work is insufficiently well linked regarding the timing of introducing new elements and their rehearsal to enable pupils to be confident users. For example the idea of 'ai' and 'ay' sounding alike was introduced in a session but was not followed through with any practice of using these within words or sentences.

In numeracy, the quality of teaching is good at both key stages. It is good or very good in 80 per cent of all the lessons seen. Teachers have good knowledge of the subject. This knowledge is supported by high quality coordination where the subject leader has promoted the subject with detailed cross referencing of the school's scheme of work, the newly

introduced National Numeracy Strategy and resources available. Teaching successfully focuses on the achievement of all pupils. This makes a significant contribution to pupils' attainments and achievements.

In science the quality of teaching is good at Key Stage 1 and excellent at Key Stage 2. Where previously there were weaknesses in the teaching of physical processes this is no longer so. There is a sharp focus on developing pupils' scientific understanding, skills and thinking through practical investigation and activity. In ICT, design and technology and geography teaching overall is good. In physical education Key Stage 1 is satisfactory, but no lessons were seen for Y3/4 Key Stage 2 but provision is appropriate. No lessons were seen for art, history and music but throughout the school adequate provision is made for these subjects.

Good teaching contributes effectively to the achievements of all pupils. Pupils are provided with equality of opportunity and the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and enhanced by the team work between teachers and support staff. Feedback to pupils on how they are succeeding is effective in maintaining high self-esteem and also helps pupils to know how they need to improve. Classroom assistants provide good levels of support for teaching and learning. Similarly, volunteer parents help with a variety of tasks in and out of classrooms. This enables teachers to focus on small groups in some lessons, with consequent benefits to pupils' progress.

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

The school provides a curriculum that is appropriately broad and balanced, which meets the statutory requirements. Planning for the youngest children in the reception class is well matched to ability and needs of the individuals, most of whom are achieving beyond the desirable learning outcomes expected for their age. Appropriate use is made of both local and national guidance materials for planning the curriculum throughout the school. Whilst this aspect has improved since the last inspection further work is needed to ensure that there is a much clearer emphasis in the development of key skills in each of the subject areas throughout each year group. In the foundation subjects more work is needed to ensure that learning objectives are consistently relevant to the subject being taught. For example in geography they should concentrate on geographical skills such as mapping and knowledge as opposed to developing writing skills.

There is good planning for personal and social education throughout the school. For instance the Y4 pupils are being supported in discussing their anxieties and expectations about transferring to the middle school in September and the Y3 pupils are reflecting on being the oldest pupils in the school. Provision for sex and drug education is appropriate.

The Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been implemented successfully. Planning for numeracy throughout the school is very good. The subject leader has a very good understanding of the subject and has developed a good scheme of work that is being effectively delivered. Number in particular is very well planned for. In literacy basic skills are planned for satisfactorily. Further work is needed to put into place a coherent framework for the teaching of phonics throughout the school.

Although there are currently more boys than girls attending the school all pupils have equal access to the curriculum being provided.

The new team of teachers at the school is working well together to share the curriculum leadership responsibilities effectively and efficiently for a small school. The monitoring of curriculum plans has been systematically implemented and the rolling programme of reviewing subjects has a clear and appropriate timescale for the small number of staff to cope with.

The school provides an excellent range of extra-curricular opportunities for a school of this size. These include sports such as swimming, an art club and various music clubs such as recorders and choir. There is also provision for parents to drop their children off at school from 7.45am and on three days a week there is also after school care until 5.15pm.

Links with partner schools and playgroup are very good. This effectively ensures that the pupils make a smooth transition from one stage of their education to another. Children from the playgroup make use of the school swimming pool and make regular visits to the reception class prior to transfer and throughout the year. An effective programme of liaison with the middle school staff is in place and there is a good system for sharing information about pupils and for regular visits by staff and by pupils.

The school provides well for pupils with special educational needs. They are well supported within normal lessons and the teachers' plans show how activities are adapted or set to meet particular special needs. Learning support assistants are well briefed. The individual education plans are produced by the special needs coordinator with class teachers in order that they support progression in learning. These clearly identify small, achievable steps in learning and often take account of the pupils' different learning styles. A strength of these is that they do not focus on literacy development alone but also identify where support is required in other subjects. Particular attention is given to supporting pupils with literacy and numeracy difficulties.

The school's provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory. Opportunities for reflection are provided during assemblies and collective acts of worship. In RE the pupils in Key Stage 1 have been considering Christianity and the symbols associated with it. They are taught to show respect and to value these beliefs well. In the Y3/4 Key Stage 2 class during a lesson on local geography the pupils were asked to reflect upon the impact on the village if a leisure park were to be built in the vicinity. Pupils in Key Stage 1 are able to talk about the main elements of the style of artists such as Pollock, Mondrian and Constable. They are also aware of the different life styles of people in other countries to that of their own. Collective worship meets statutory requirements.

Provision for pupil's moral development is good. Here pupils are actively encouraged and supported to understand right from wrong and the implications of their actions on others. The youngest pupils in the school show good levels of awareness of what is considered appropriate behaviour in school such as not arguing or fighting. Staff are considerate and respectful towards each other and expect pupils to behave in a similar manner.

There are plentiful opportunities for pupils to extend their social skills. Here provision is very good. The youngest pupils are provided with opportunities to work in pairs and to share their news with each other. There is a good range of opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and to show initiative. For instance older pupils in the school assist with getting the hall ready for assemblies. All pupils are very good at tidying up and caring for their classrooms and the equipment in them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

The school is very successful in providing a safe, caring environment in which all the pupils can learn. All the children and parents are well known to the staff.

Class teachers have the responsibility for monitoring academic and personal development. The last inspection report indicated that the monitoring arrangements were unsystematic and as a result support and advice were untargeted. This criticism has now been addressed and a formal coherent system is now in place. The teachers carry out this task in a careful and organised manner. However, whilst the school is good at assessing pupil's knowledge and understanding it is less secure in assessing their progress, particularly, in phonics for reading and word building for spelling.

Generally, the assessment data is used by teachers successfully to advance pupil's learning and to help them plan their lessons more effectively.

Parent's consultation evenings are held on a termly basis where pupil's progress and targets for improvement are discussed. Annual reports are discussed at the Summer meeting. The pupils are also involved in the target setting which helps them to understand how they can improve their performance. Each pupil is provided with a target card which they keep in their books to remind them of their targets. The majority of parents are satisfied that they are kept well informed about how their children are progressing.

Parents have indicated at the parents' meeting and through the questionnaire that they are comfortable in approaching the school with questions or problems. Teachers make themselves available to parents at the beginning and end of the school day to discuss matters of mutual concern about the children. During the inspection parents were observed using this facility to good effect.

Pupil are very well supervised whilst in school and when playing in the school grounds. The mid-day supervisors carry out their responsibilities in a caring and responsible manner.

The school has adopted the local education authority policy on child protection. Whilst the written policy gives guidance on disclosure it does not indicate to staff what to look for. The headteacher is the designated member of staff responsible for child protection and has received the appropriate training. All staff have been briefed on the arrangements. The nominated governor and alternative designated member of staff are to receive formal training in due course.

Effective measures are in place for monitoring and promoting attendance. The registration procedures are diligently carried out and the registers are maintained in accordance with legal requirements. The administrative assistant follows up unexplained absences on a daily basis. The school prospectus gives guidance to parents about the procedure to be followed if their child can not attend school. The relationship with the educational welfare officer is good.

The school has very effective measures to promote good behaviour and to ensure the school is free from any form of harassment. Incidents of bullying in this small school are rare and if they do occur they are effectively dealt with by staff. Pupils indicate that they would immediately go to their class teacher if they were bullied. Teachers regularly praise pupils for good work and behaviour. A 'Best Efforts' assembly is also held every Friday afternoon when parents, carers and governors are invited to attend and celebrate in the children's achievements.

The school has effective procedures for promoting the health and safety of the school community. Regular checks are carried out by the staff and nominated governors and the results reported to the governing body. Most staff are trained in first aid and swimming safety together with some parent helpers. The school is in good decorative order, is very clean and provides a very pleasant environment conducive to learning.

The school works well with the School Health Service and regular health checks of pupils take place.

Overall, the school's educational and personal support and guidance to pupils is very effective in raising standards and their personal achievement.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

Most parents and carers are well satisfied with what the school provides and achieves. They state that their children like coming to school, make good progress and behave well. Teaching is considered by them to be good. They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions and problems which was not the case in the recent past. The current headteacher has played a significant part in improving relationships with parents, carers and governors.

Parents consider that the school expects pupils to work hard and achieve their best. In their view the school works closely with them and that the school is well led and managed. Again they feel that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. They are also most satisfied that the school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.

These views of parents and carers are broadly in line with findings of the inspection.

The range of information provided to parents and carers, such as the school prospectus, governors' annual report to parents and regular newsletters are well prepared and informative. They provide good information on the life and work of the school. Pupils annual assessment reports provide appropriate information on their progress and contain agreed targets on how they can improve their academic and personal development. Most parents are satisfied with the information they receive from the school.

The school does work hard and is very successful in providing effective links with parents and carers. The school is seen by parents, governors and staff as playing a key role in the community. A significant number of parents and carers do help in school on a regular planned basis and with extra curricular activities e.g. maintaining the swimming pool, running the swimming and football clubs. Parents have signed the home-school agreement and assist with their children's work at home, particularly with reading and spelling. The pupil's reading diary also helps parents to assist and monitor their progress. It is also used by parents as a good communication link between them and the school. However, to be more effective the school should provide further guidance to parents on how they can help their children with reading, particularly, on the use of phonics and word building and how to help the fluent reader further.

The school has a very active Hundon School Association which raises a considerable sums of money for the school. This has been used to purchase books for the library, for the up-keep of the swimming pool and visits of educational value. The Association also arranges social activities for parents and children. Parents are very supportive and proud of the school and all events arranged by the school and the Hundon School Association are well attended. Pupils take part in village activities such as the local pancake race and by entertaining senior citizens at Christmas. They also raise money for charities such 'Help The Aged'. Open and Sports days are also supported by people from the village. A local trust,

the Hundon Educational Trust, has provided funds for educational technology. School activities are well publicised with reports to the local parish council and the local village newspaper 'The Hundon Herald'.

Very good links have been established with other schools in the Haverhill pyramid of schools and this provides an additional range of cultural, sporting and academic opportunities for pupils from this small school. The arrangements for pupils moving to the middle school are well established including the transfer of appropriate records. The school also has a good working arrangement with the village pre-school group which visits the school on a regular basis.

The effective links and support the school gets from parents and carers, governors, the community and other schools in the area does contribute in a very positive way to pupil's learning at school and at home. This is strength of the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

The leadership of the school ensures clear educational direction. After an unsettled period of leadership the school has established a common sense of purpose under the new head. There is a very real and shared commitment to school improvement and success. The school is successful in reflecting and meeting its aims within all aspects of its life. The headteacher provides high levels of motivation for staff, governors and pupils and leads by example through her own good teaching. From this style of leadership there is emerging a good focus on raising standards whilst maintaining high levels of respect, confidence and trust. The head together with the staff, her management team in this a small school, has effectively identified the strengths and weaknesses of the school. These are reflected in the school development plan and are endorsed by the governing body's own understanding of the key issues for development and the strengths of the school.

The school development plan reflects the areas which have been identified for improvement and shows a focus on raising standards. However, the five-year plan is too close a reflection of the one-year plan to fully promote strategic planning. As a result it is not clear how important developments such as ICT and the use of National Grid for Learning (NGFL) funding or performance management and appraisal, for example, will be consolidated and built on in the longer term.

Teachers work well together as a team and help one another to review and moderate pupils' work to inform on progress and attainment levels, plan for the whole curriculum and monitor teaching and learning within lessons for their subject responsibilities. This results in a growing understanding of how each key stage supports and develops learning for individual pupils. The monitoring of teaching and learning is a strength of the school. Staff understand their management roles on a day to day basis and their regular monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning is comprehensive and supports raising of standards. Lesson planning is checked by staff and the headteacher to ensure that it includes tasks matched to the differing needs of the pupils and the scrutiny of written work has resulted in high expectations of the pupils' attainment. However, the monitoring role has not led to effective improvement in all areas of the curriculum. In some subjects, teachers have an insufficient understanding of the methods needed to enable pupils to do their best. For example, pupils do not have a well developed range of strategies for reading new words and accessing their meaning and for spelling less common words.

Governors are fully supportive of the school and fulfil all their statutory requirements. They are able to define the strengths and weaknesses of the school well. They are well informed about the work of the school through regular and detailed reports from the staff and first hand observation during their visits to classrooms. Governors' observations are not

currently recorded in written form which does preclude opportunities for reflection on these and follow up on any issues that may have been discussed at the time of a visit.

The school is developing a good system for evaluating and improving teaching based on a useful teaching and learning policy. This has helped to improve teaching since the last inspection. Peer observation is effectively used to share teaching approaches and this is providing good opportunities for teachers to evaluate their own performance, draw on the strengths of colleagues and set targets for improvement. The head as a teacher takes a full part in this process as well as carrying out her own observations to develop an overview of any emerging issues. This is a strength of the school.

The headteacher and the governing body are aware of best value principles, for example in comparing its performance with national benchmarks and in careful consideration of the maintenance and development costs of the accommodation, including the swimming pool. The school's spending is targeted on the priorities identified in the school development plan. Most action plans include budget allocation. Some plans do not set out clear timescales and indicators of success to enable the school to judge effectiveness of spending in some priorities. This is especially so where the five-year plan is too similar to the one-year plan to gauge time scales for action and long term spending.

The latest auditors' report of 26/6/00 recommended only minor issues for action. The time between the report and the inspection is such that the governors have not been able to respond to the recommendations made. However, the school's administration assistant has done so and has already rectified some of the issues and responded to others. The systems for day-to-day financial administration are efficient and take up minimal amount of teachers' and pupils' time. The administrative assistant is conscientious and makes good use of information technology to keep the headteacher and governors well informed about spending patterns.

The school makes good use of specific grants such as those for special educational needs where the governors have decided to enhance this aspect through main budget spending to good effect. The school is due for the National Grid for Learning grant in the near future and in the meantime has made appropriate spending decisions with regards to hardware and software which will enable their taking the subject further from a secure foundation. This together with some effective staff training, is helping to raise standards in information technology.

The school is adequately staffed with teachers whose experiences and expertise meet the needs of the primary curriculum. Recent appointments have brought new expertise and fresh ideas and approaches to teaching and learning in the school. This has continued to strengthen mathematics. However, some staff have an insufficient understanding of the strategies which enable pupils to make the best possible progress in some areas of the curriculum, for example, in literacy sessions. Support staff make a valuable contribution to the provision for pupils with special educational needs. The older pupils are taught in temporary accommodation but, overall, the accommodation enables the teaching for all subjects and is good for the younger pupils and Key Stage 1. The remodelling of the main building and an extension to form a new classroom, a library and office/reception space is a good example of the imaginative development of accommodation to improve the learning environment.

Resources are generally adequate to meet the needs of the planned curriculum. Resources for most subjects are held in the classrooms for each key stage. These are well managed and effectively used. The new library is adequately stocked and there are plans to build up the number and range of books to extend opportunities for pupils to develop their personal study skills and to read for pleasure.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- (1) To improve further, standards in English by:-
 - i) implementing a progressive and focussed programme of improvement for the teaching and learning of phonics and spelling.
 - ii) providing appropriate training for all staff specific to phonological development and spelling development.
 - iii) using literacy strategy materials as a whole staff to promote a shared understanding and cohesive practice with regards to phonics and spelling.
 - iv) reviewing resources for appropriateness and effectiveness for the support of spelling and phonics.
 - v) involving parents further through providing information on how to become more effective in supporting reading.

- (2) Improve medium term plans further by
 - i) including the key skills relevant to each subject in a manner that enables these to be tracked in pupils' work.
 - ii) consistency in identification of objectives that focus on learning rather than tasks.

- (3) Governors to establish a longer term view of strategic planning by
 - i) developing a three-year spending profile.
 - ii) developing a three-year school development plan in which year one is in detail and years two and three outline given and possible priorities.

Other minor issues to consider are:-

- 1) Governors to record visits in writing to add to the depth and effectiveness of monitoring and evaluation for teaching and learning.
And

- 2) To seek where possible an understanding from parents that absences, including holidays, during term time have an adverse impact on learning.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

23

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

7

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
4%	13%	48%	35%	0%	0%	0%

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	53
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	10

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.4
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.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	39
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	17.7 :1
Average class size	17.7

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	20

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
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	£
Total income	143128
Total expenditure	137096
Expenditure per pupil	2798
Balance brought forward from previous year	5018
Balance carried forward to next year	11050

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out

55

Number of questionnaires returned

28

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	54	43	0	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	50	43	4	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	50	50	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	54	11	0	0
The teaching is good.	54	43	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	36	7	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	75	25	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	39	4	0	4
The school is well led and managed.	57	43	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	36	4	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	61	39	0	0	0

Summary of parents' and carers' responses

The view expressed in the questionnaires with regards to homework and communication were not supported by the views expressed at the meeting with parents. The inspection evidence reveals that children receive adequate levels of homework in comparison to other schools of the same type and phase. Communication with parents is good.

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE UNDER 5'S

Children are admitted to the reception class on a full-time basis the term in which they have their fifth birthday. Part-time places are offered to children in the Autumn and Spring term until they reach their rising-five term.

The accommodation is adequate and well organised for different areas of learning. There is no secure outdoor area for these children. However, there is planned provision for physical education lessons (PE) that takes place in the hall and in the playground.

Attainment on entry shows that the children are attaining generally above the average levels found in other Suffolk schools. The children make good progress during their time in the reception class and achieve beyond the expected levels of attainment for their age by Y1.

The quality of teaching is consistently good. The staff know the children well and generally match activities to their needs and abilities. Whilst good use is made of practical activities in supporting the children's learning, the inclusion of all areas of the classroom could be more effectively used for setting tasks involving play activities. Currently planning does not indicate the intended learning outcomes for the independent practical tasks the children have access to.

Personal and social development

Children make good progress in this area of learning. Staff act as good role models for behaviour and relationships in the class are positive. The children behave well and are good at taking turns and sharing with one another. They are developing a good sense of right and wrong and remember the school rules about appropriate behaviour in classes. They are given responsibilities such as returning the register to the office and tidying up. These duties are effectively carried out.

Language and literacy development

The children's speaking and listening skills are well developed. The teacher provides planned opportunities for the children to develop these skills such as telling their news to a partner who then has to report this back to the large group. They are able to express their ideas well and listen with enjoyment to stories and rhymes. Progress here is good. In reading they know how to handle books with care and can talk about the pictures and recall favourite stories effectively. They are developing a good range of sight words. Their phonological skills are less well developed and planned for. Whilst most children know many single letter sounds they are less well skilled at word building with these. This has an impact on their writing and spelling skills also. Here progress in learning is satisfactory. All children can write their own name and show a keen interest in writing. A role play area has been set up in the classroom in the form of a travel agents. This is providing effective support for developing the children's writing skills and also it is effectively supporting their understanding of the purpose of writing.

Mathematical development

Children make good progress in this area of the curriculum. Many children enter with good levels of attainment in mathematics and this is effectively built upon with tasks that are set in a meaningful learning context for the children. For example, in developing the notion of

counting in 2's the teacher set out a 'washing line' with pairs of socks hanging from it for the children to count from zero to twenty. A good foundation in number operations such as addition and subtraction to 10 has been developed and built upon effectively. The children can recognise simple 2D shapes such a square and circle and show an understanding of symmetry in shape. They enjoy number songs and rhymes and join in with enthusiasm.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

The older children have made good progress in their knowledge of other countries such as Kenya. They can recall what they have learnt about a family of farmers and make simple comparisons with this life style and that of their own. The development of scientific skills and knowledge is effectively provided for. In work on electricity the children used their knowledge from a previous lesson on making simple circuits to predict the outcomes of an experiment to find out about which materials are good conductors. The children make good progress in this area of learning. Appropriate opportunities are provided for the children to use a range of tools for cutting and joining. Although at these times they are currently working in the same class as Y1/2 pupils. This has a limiting effect on the amount of direct teaching time they have access to and although progress is satisfactory it could be better. Computer skills are being developed well. The children use the key board and mouse to carry out simple word processing such as when writing about what they like about school.

Physical development

The children's physical development is good. Provision for this aspect of learning is through planned PE lessons and through some classroom lessons that concentrate on fine movement control. During PE they show good levels of coordination for example when throwing and catching balls and moving around hoops and cones. They are effectively encouraged to think of ways for improving their performance at these times. In the classroom they have access to a suitable range of equipment and resources to develop their manipulative skills such as dough play and model building with Lego.

Creative development

The range of opportunities for promoting this aspect of development is satisfactory. The role play area has been set up as a travel agents but access to this is restricted to certain times of the day. There is access to an easel in the classroom for painting but planned art lessons are carried out once a week in another class. This restricts the time that the children have to explore and experiment. In this aspect of learning they make satisfactory progress. They enjoy singing simple songs and nursery rhymes. Due to the inspection timetable it was not possible to see them in a planned music lesson.

ENGLISH

Standards of attainment on entry to the reception class are generally above average when baseline assessment results are compared with those from other schools in Suffolk. However, in detail baseline demonstrates that pupils access books at above average levels but have below average levels in distinguishing letter names and sounds and overall letter knowledge is insecure. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are above average with boys identified as more confident than girls.

Standards for seven year-olds in 1999 national assessments were well above the national average in writing and average in reading. When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds standards in writing are above average and in reading they drop to well below average. However, these results have to be treated with due caution as the cohorts of pupils are small and fall below reporting figures. Any dips in standards are well explained by

the school's own analysis and bear a direct correlation to the school's special needs register. These pupils consistently make good progress against prior attainment.

By the time pupils leave the school at age nine the good standards in speaking and listening have been maintained, whilst they have risen to above average in reading. Standards in writing are above average. However, spelling is still a weakness.

National assessment results over the last three years, 1997-1999, have always been above the national average, with a slight fall in 1998.

Evidence from the scrutiny of pupils' work and from lesson observations during the inspection shows that by the end of Key Stage 1 standards in speaking and listening are above average. In reading they are average. Whilst pupils develop a good sight vocabulary they are less well proficient at using other strategies, especially phonics, to assist them in word building. Standards in writing are average, but in spelling they are below this. This aspect of writing is partly linked with the lack of a systematic and rigorous phonics programme and also with staff not having a full shared understanding of this aspect of the National Literacy Strategy for teaching spellings in context. Handwriting throughout the school is generally above average in terms of being able to produce suitable amounts of work and speedwriting is a strength. However, although styles of handwriting are legible and joined up, presentation occasionally needs greater attention.

Attainment in speaking and listening is above average in and by the end of Key Stage 1 and Y3/4 Key Stage 2. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers in lessons, respond readily to questions and use precise words to explain their meaning. The regular use of plenaries in lessons, both literacy and other subjects, as teaching and learning opportunities strongly support attainment in speaking and listening. Pupils regularly contribute to debate and discussion times either drawing upon their personal experience as in Y1/2's work on electricity or developing the ability to use persuasive argument as in Y3/4 Key Stage 2 discussions regarding a local geography project that involved evaluating the local amenities for children. During discussion times pupils demonstrate clearly that they value the views of others even when these are different to their own.

Attainment in reading is average and above, particularly in the access of more difficult pieces of text. However, within reading interviews and other opportunities to hear reading it is clear that pupils do not use a sufficient range of skills for decoding such as the use of picture cues, phonic cues or meaning/sense of the context to assess new words. They are particularly not clear on or secure in initial sounds, blends or diagraphs. Phonological awareness is limited and impacts on attainment in reading which although average could be higher. A particular example of where teachers need to have a clearer focus on this aspect is in accessing new words in large text as a class activity, eg the teacher focussed on the initial sound as 'w' for what but did not explain that it is the blend 'wh' that makes the sound. In another lesson good focus was given to the blends 'ai', 'ay' etc that make the same sound, but this was not followed up with sufficient rehearsal to reinforce this for pupils. The end result of this is that above average pupils are overly reliant on a sight vocabulary and require support with any new words and their meaning.

Higher attaining pupils read with assurance, fluency and expression. Average readers also read with a reasonable level of fluency and know how to use the contents page of an information book. Lower attaining readers recognise simple words in text.

All pupils express their responses to poems, stories and non-fiction using appropriate terms matched to the genre. This was demonstrated in Y1/2 work on riddles and in Y3/4 Key Stage 2 analysis of styles of writing used by well known authors and their own preferred writing styles. Library skills are beginning to be promoted through the development of the

new school library. Pupils are particularly appreciative of the increased range of library books they are able to choose from. They successfully use skimming and scanning techniques to find relevant text and use indices, contents and glossaries to find information efficiently.

Standards in writing are above average. In and by the end of Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to be aware of the needs of their readers and identify key elements of presentation and style to attract readers. This was particularly evident in their humorous riddles about cats. Older pupils understand the purpose of structure within writing using captions, titles and lists. They are aware of the importance of editing skills when writing narrative and non-narrative scripts. In Y3/4 Key Stage 2 particularly good attention is given to speedwriting and note taking. This is challenging pupils to consider information received and to select and prioritise the relevant parts to record. This was demonstrated well in the science lesson on light and shadows and in ICT work in simulation. Throughout the school pupils have opportunities to apply literacy skills and produce sustained pieces of work demonstrating an appreciation of the conventions required such as the use of punctuation for expression, the use of prefixes and suffixes and how these change meaning and by using a growing range of adverbs and adjectives.

Attainment in spelling is below the national averages and does not match the higher attaining profiles of reading and writing. In part this is linked to their lack of proficiency in the use of phonics and staff not having a full shared understanding of the teaching of spellings in context. Pupils, therefore, convey meaning within their writing because of their strong sight vocabulary skills and make good use of dictionaries to spell correctly new words but do not freely construct words independently and accurately.

The curriculum for English is broad and well balanced. Many aspects of the literacy strategy are already assimilated into the teachers' weekly plans. The quality of teaching overall is very good. Within literacy sessions teachers provide a clear focus on the use of language to promote expression and clarity. Pupils are taught to recognise and use a structure of different genre and practice conventions of grammar and punctuation. However, there is insufficient understanding and attention given to phonological awareness and approaches to spelling. There is a lack of a progressive and focussed programme of improvement in phonological development and spelling development.

The needs of pupils with special educational needs are very well met. They have individual education plans which set out clear achievable targets. The support they are offered by all staff enables them to take a full part in all aspects of English. However, classroom assistants, whilst making good contributions and being well briefed on most aspects of English, also lack direction with regards to the promotion of phonics and spelling within group work.

Assessment of pupils' progress is used by teachers to inform the next stage of planning. Teachers know their pupils well and there is a good focus on the use of individual targets for all which are perceptive and of high quality. Formal assessment procedures are effective and practice is secure. There are some instances of excellent practice, for example, annotated pieces of work in childrens' books and observation notes within marking which if shared could generate a highly cohesive assessment programme informing on pupils' progress at the best level.

The school regularly uses the results of end of Key Stage 1 national tests and other optional tests for Y3/4 Key Stage 2 to identify appropriate targets for improvement. This results in a clear focus on standards and ways in which to achieve the best from and for pupils. The school is currently targeting spelling and as an aspect for improvement for all pupils from such an analysis. The subject is well led by the subject leader. Regular monitoring takes

place involving the headteacher, staff and governors. All staff are involved in the development of English through regular monitoring, moderation of pupils' work, discussion and debate. Governors visits support monitoring but are not formalised through written reports.

Resources are of good quality and of a suitable range to support pupils' learning. The library is well stocked and appropriately organised to support pupils' reading and research skills from the earliest stage onwards. All subjects are represented in book stocks and the head has identified further development of book stocks as a priority. Classroom book corners are resourced adequately and used effectively. Information technology is used successfully to support writing where appropriate.

MATHEMATICS

National test results for seven year-olds over the last three years, 1997-1999, indicate a higher than average attainment overall, with a slight dip in 1998. The number of pupils achieving higher than average in 1999 was well above that found nationally. Evidence gathered during the inspection from lesson observations and the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that standards are generally above average for Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. Standards in number work are especially good. There has been an improvement in standards and progress in mathematics since the last inspection, particularly in relation to the higher attaining pupils.

The mathematical attainment of pupils on entry to the reception class is generally above that compared with other schools in Suffolk. The older reception pupils have a good understanding of number operations involving addition and subtraction at least to ten. They are developing good mental and oral number skills and knowledge and in this aspect they are making good progress.

By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils read and write numbers at least to 1000 with confidence and higher attaining pupils demonstrate a good understanding of this aspect of number up to 10,000. They have a good mental recall of number bonds at least to 20 and many pupils achieve beyond this. The pupils are developing a sound understanding of interpreting data from graphs they have drawn up in relation to toys and pets.

By Y4 pupils are good at exploring and identifying number patterns. They use their knowledge of number facts such as multiples, halving and doubling to develop a range of strategies for solving mental problems. Pupils have developed a good understanding of multiplication and division. They collect data, represent this in the form of graphs and interpret the results to an appropriate level.

Progress in learning is good throughout the school. In number it is very good. The subject leader has made effective use of the National Numeracy Strategy to draw up a scheme of work that matches the needs and abilities of the pupils in the school. Staff have recognised that more opportunities are needed for pupils to raise their skills from average to above in relation to using and applying their mathematics knowledge across all aspects of the subject.

The quality of teaching in mathematics is good throughout the school. Teachers have good subject knowledge and know the pupils' needs and abilities well. This knowledge is supported by high quality coordination where the subject leader has promoted the subject with detailed cross referencing of the school's scheme of work, the newly introduced National Numeracy Strategy and resources available. They make good use of this information to plan well matched tasks for pupils that provide a good level of challenge with good pace and high expectations. This ensures that pupils are kept interested and have developed a good level of concentration and enthusiasm for the subject.

There are effective monitoring systems in place for checking the quality of teaching and the standards of attainment. The information teachers gather from their assessments of the pupils is used effectively in planning to meet the needs of individuals. This subject is a strength of the school.

SCIENCE

Overall, the pupils achieve standards in science, which are about average. At Key Stage 1, most pupils are working at the expected level for seven year-olds and in some aspects of their work on electricity they are achieving well. They can make electrical circuits using bulbs, buzzers and motors and explain why some of the circuits do not work. In Y3/4 Key Stage 2 pupils are beginning to understand the importance of accurate use of language to record their findings, as in their work on light and shadows. The previous report showed standards as being in line with national standards for both Key Stage 1 and Y3/4 Key Stage 2 with the drawback that above average pupils were achieving no more than average standards at the end of Y4. Standards have remained broadly the same though higher attainers now make good progress against prior attainment.

Much of the work in science is appropriately of a practical nature and covers a wide range of science topics. The issue of coverage for physical processes raised by the 1999 data is being successfully addressed. In Y3/4 Key Stage 2 there is effective attention given to literacy within the subject and the importance of language to convey meaning. This is less evident in Key Stage 1.

Throughout the school pupils are developing the skill of framing questions that can be investigated and use their understanding of simple everyday scientific phenomena to make predictions. For example predicting why you need a switch in a circuit that contains a buzzer and what will happen when an object blocks light. Teachers build on this early experience and begin to challenge understanding by ensuring that they experience the unusual such as what happens when an object that is transparent or translucent blocks the light.

The teaching of science is good overall. Teachers are effective at introducing and emphasising the correct scientific vocabulary. They pay attention to relevant safety aspects. Older pupils are extended in their planning, predicting and recording skills and are asked to justify their predictions before testing. Younger pupils are aided in their planning and recording with useful worksheets. This level of attention to subject specific skills is good practice. Good use is made of assessment to inform planning and to identify targets for improvement. These targets are shared effectively with the pupils leading to their understanding of how they can improve. These approaches are beginning to improve standards and demonstrate that teachers have identified accurately where improvement needs to occur within the subject to raise standards further. Lessons are carried out at a brisk pace and consequently motivate and challenge pupils. Where pupils with special educational needs require support this is done unobtrusively and with an emphasis on independence where possible. Pace was particularly good in Y3/4 Key Stage 2 where pupils were given short manageable tasks with a set timescale. This maintains their interest throughout the lesson. There is no time wastage.

The previous lack of policy and scheme of work has been tackled and this is leading to a cohesiveness for scientific content and knowledge. Assessment procedures are used well. Regular assessments of pupils' knowledge and understanding are used throughout the school. Some teachers ensure that the focus of written or recorded work is apparent and use this as a basis for their marking. They identify what has been done well and make suggestions for improvement. However, this good practice is not consistent across the school.

Resources are adequate for the subject and teachers make good use of every day objects for practical exploration as well the more specialist equipment required for some aspects.

ART

It was not possible to see any teaching of art during the inspection in the Key Stage 1 or the Key Stage 2 class. Discussions with pupils and through the observations of the work around the school demonstrate that standards of attainment are average and pupils are making satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of art. This is an improvement on the last inspection findings in 1996 when standards were judged to be below average.

Pupils at both key stages have a sound knowledge of the work of other artists such as Van Gogh, Mondrian and Pollock. At Key Stage 1 they describe the main features of the style of these artists. All pupils have satisfactory access to use and explore a range of different media such as pastels, pencil, paint and collage materials. In these areas the pupils are developing satisfactory observational skills. Through discussion with the pupils they indicate a good level of enthusiasm for the subject.

A basic scheme of work has been established since the last inspection. This is being updated appropriately in line with the changes to the curriculum requirements. Medium term plans are linked satisfactorily to this scheme of work, but more rigour is needed in planning for the progressive development of key skills and techniques in art over the period of time the pupils attend the school. For instance, in relation to the development of drawing and sketching skills.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

By the end of Key Stage 1 pupils achieve average standards. By the time they leave the school attainment rises to above what is expected for pupils of this age.

The older pupils in the reception class are effectively encouraged to plan their models in some detail and to try and think through what materials they will need to make their model. In Key Stage 1 the pupils are encouraged to explore and select appropriate methods, for instance when joining their puppets together. Here pupils showed good levels of pride in their work when they had experienced sewing with a simple running stitch for the first time.

At Key Stage 2 the teacher made good use of time by allowing the pupils to make errors from which they were able to effectively evaluate their ideas and make suggestions for improvements. Previous work in design and technology involved the pupils in designing and making models of playground equipment they would like to see in the local park.

Teaching at Key Stage 2 is good and at Key Stage 1 it is satisfactory. The good aspects relate to the way in which tasks are presented and selected in order to gain the interest and enthusiasm of the pupils; a good pace to the lesson involving a variety of appropriate tasks; and the way in which pupils are effectively supported to make detailed evaluations and suggestions for improvements to their work.

Medium term planning is satisfactory overall, but further consideration needs to be given to allowing sufficient time for pupils to progressively develop the skills aspect of this subject.

GEOGRAPHY

Standards in geography are average by the time the pupils leave the school. At Key Stage 2 the pupils were working on a local geography project that involved evaluating the local amenities for children in the village. The lesson observed was well thought through to

engage and maintain the interests of the pupils in developing their skills as geographers. Here the teaching is good. The pupils are good at identifying the key issues and justifying their views to others. For instance, some pupils would like to see the development of a leisure park in the village whilst others were concerned at the noise levels and increase in visitors to such a small village. During these discussions pupils demonstrated clearly that they valued the views of others, even when the expressed views were different to their own.

The older pupils in the reception class demonstrated good levels of knowledge about Kenya. They know some of the differences between the life style of a farming family there and their own lifestyles in this country. In this aspect they are making good progress in their learning.

No lessons were seen in Key Stage 1 and there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement regarding standards by the end of Y2.

Resources for this subject are generally adequate. The staff have identified a rolling programme to increase resources as each topic comes up. However, there is a lack of up-to-date atlases, especially ones that are suitable for the younger pupils in the school.

Planning at medium term is inconsistent in identifying well focused learning outcomes for the pupils. Further work is needed in this area and to ensure that key geographical skills, such as using maps and appropriate geographical vocabulary, are systematically and progressively identified and built upon.

Planning for continuity and progression in this subject was identified as an issue in the last inspection. Although satisfactory progress has been made in this area further work is still needed.

HISTORY

During the inspection no lessons in history were observed. However, pupils' work was looked at and discussed with them and the planning for history lessons was examined.

By the time they leave the school pupils achieve average standards. This is an improvement from the last inspection where standards overall were seen to be uneven. The youngest pupils can effectively express the knowledge they have gained for instance when discussing the topic of castles. They know that castles were built a long time ago and can identify some of the reasons for this. A recent visit to a local castle supported the pupils' enthusiasm and interest for the topic. In this aspect they are developing a satisfactory sense of time that is appropriate for their age.

At Key Stage 2 the pupils make satisfactory progress with their use and understanding of collecting evidence from a range of sources such as books, documents and photographs. Work on a local history topic related to the development of the school swimming pool and through their writing and research of documents and letters helped the pupils to develop informed views on how the school functioned at that time in its history.

The teachers have drawn on a range of guidance materials to develop their own scheme of work for teaching history. Whilst this is appropriate in its knowledge content the teaching of key skills such as using a range of sources of information to support historical enquiry, or developing a sense of chronology, is not consistently and progressively planned for. Planning for continuity and progression in this subject was identified as an issue in the last inspection. Although satisfactory progress has been made in this area further work is still needed.

Resources for this subject are being developed over time as each topic is taught. Overall, resourcing is adequate but there is a lack of artefacts especially for the younger pupils.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Standards of attainment in information technology are above average at both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2. This represents a significant improvement on standards from the time of the last inspection. The subject is led well and a programme of INSET for staff has been successful in ensuring that teachers' expertise and confidence have been enhanced. This has resulted in a greater awareness of how the subject can support activities across the curriculum and where the skills for information technology require discrete teaching to the whole class or groups.

All pupils have regular opportunities to use computers in class and to develop their skills. The school is looking forward to when they will receive their National Grid for Learning funds and can develop the additional skills linked to the internet and e-mail. In Y1/2 Key Stage 1 pupils use a mouse to control the cursor on the screen with confidence, they are beginning to present information using graphs well and know how to print their work. They can decide where the computer can help with work rather than just a piece of equipment to present work in printed form. They understand how to enter, retrieve and interrogate data. In their work on ways of travelling to school they demonstrated a keen understanding of the difference between pictograms and block graphs, they could label vertices correctly and knew that a block graph presented in vertical or horizontal form did not alter the basic data. They explored pie-graphs and could discuss the proportions using the terms half and quarter or section. In their individual work the same high standards were seen as in the whole class work modelled by the teacher. Other work seen showed that they could use the computer for mathematical activities, word processing and art and design work. Work produced is of a good quality.

In Y3/4 Key Stage 2 pupils regularly use the computer for design work, writing and editing and supporting work in other subjects literacy and numeracy in particular. They are confident users and can load and access programs independently. They successfully build on the skills learned in Key Stage 1, enhancing their understanding of data interrogation. This was demonstrated well in their work on simulation where they analysed how the computer can simulate real life activities and be used to make fantasy style games interactive. They demonstrate high levels of collaboration when working in groups, as when they plan and take notes for a simulation exercise. In this work the older more able pupils were particularly sensitive to those with special educational needs, they listened to instructions in turn and then patiently repeated these so that these pupils could join in fully with the recording of notes. This level of collaboration means that those with special needs are fully integrated and make significant progress.

In all the lessons seen throughout the school pupils were highly motivated and responded well to the provision made for the subject. Indeed lessons frequently ended in a groan from pupils who had become so engrossed they did not wish to stop.

Throughout the school teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan well structured lessons. Activities are well chosen to engage the pupils' interest and develop understanding progressively. This was a weakness in the previous inspection which has been successfully addressed. However, there is a need to now focus on systematically tracking pupils progress in these core skills. The school is aware of this and plans to review its medium term plans for the subject accordingly.

Coordination of the subject is now secure and the resources for the subject have been enhanced through the support of a local trust fund. The school has rightly set ICT as a

continuing priority in its development plan in order to develop what has become a secure subject further through the use of National Grid for Learning (NGFL). Decisions regarding resources have been made effectively enabling the school to move forward with the next stage of funding with the appropriate equipment in place.

MUSIC

There were no opportunities during the inspection to observe music lessons. It is therefore not possible to make a secure judgement in terms of teaching and learning nor to make comparisons between the standards of the last inspection and standards to date. Within other opportunities observed the provision for music is good with pupils involved in a choir and recorder playing as well as regular music lessons. Music is used well to support whole school activities especially assemblies.

During assembly times the pupils demonstrate the ability to sing songs from memory and also from the use of musical scores. They can sing in tune and where they have developed specialist singing as with the choir they are able to sing in simple and more complicated two part harmony well. They can sing repeated verses against a choral background maintaining tone and musical elements to good effect. Those who play the recorder are able to support the whole school in singing of songs and hymns, providing a confident accompaniment.

Currently the school is reviewing both the policy and planning for music and has adopted the QCA guidance with a view to further detailed planning to be established. All staff bring enthusiasm to the promotion of music as is seen in the outcomes for the pupils in terms of confidence and achievement.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

During the inspection only games lessons were observed for Key Stage 1, it was not possible to observe Key Stage 2 within the inspection timetable. Teachers' plans for all aspects of the subject were seen and provision is made for the full curriculum. Standards of attainment are similar to those of the last inspection with pupils achieving overall the standards expected for their age and in some lessons standards are good. Teachers place a suitable emphasis on warming up prior to the main task of a lesson. They are effective in getting the pupils to think of ways in which they can improve their performance and thus support individual progress within lessons.

Key Stage 1 pupils make satisfactory progress overall in games, developing their catching and throwing skills. Links are successfully established between the skills and different sporting games such as over-arm bowling in cricket and chest passes in basket ball. Pupils show good levels of enthusiasm for their tasks especially where the tasks were chosen to promote individual achievement. Pupils are well behaved and listen carefully to instructions, due to the high teacher expectations.

Teachers demonstrate a good knowledge of the subject and are aware of health and safety issues. There is a strong emphasis on basic skills and accommodation is used well. The school has its own swimming pool which promotes attainment in swimming. Very few pupils leave the school without achieving a basic prowess in swimming. The majority achieve their certificate for 25 metres. This is further supported by the organisation of after school swimming arranged and run by parents as friends of the school. The school arranges a good variety of extra-curricular activities related to physical education which include rounders, cricket and football. The older pupils link with other schools in the local cluster for team sports and a "be smart keep fit" day.

Although the school has its own field this is less convenient for use than the local recreation ground and is not well drained leading to some difficulties in usage.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Standards in religious education are in line with the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 2 and only one was seen in Key Stage 1. Judgements take into account the standards seen in pupils' books, information provided by staff and evidence drawn from the school's policy and plans.

Teaching and learning is directly linked to the locally agreed syllabus and pupils make sound progress in developing their knowledge of different faiths, symbols and festivals. During the time of the inspection there was a planned focus on Christian symbols and artefacts were used effectively to promote discussion and understanding of the similarities and differences in religion. Most of the teaching and learning is discussion and first hand experience based which is suitable for the age range of the pupils. The school has sustained its satisfactory provision since the last inspection.

In both Key Stage 1 and 2 religious education is linked to the personal and social curriculum where pupils have opportunities to discuss matters of importance to them. Lessons centre on the importance of special events and celebrations within their own families and on caring for friends and families. Assemblies are used to promote a Christian attitude and to build upon personal responsibility through themes such as the need to be honest and why.

In the lesson seen and assemblies pupils demonstrate positive attitudes to learning in religious education. They listen carefully and respond thoughtfully to their teachers' questions. Teachers strive to bring the subject to life and approaches to teaching are carefully thought through. Overall teaching is satisfactory. Teachers give clear explanations and use stories effectively to demonstrate difficult points. Artefacts are used to develop pupils' thinking about their immediate experience and develop understanding of other religions. There are adequate resources in place to support the syllabus. Teachers are good role models, demonstrating positive attitudes through sensitive handling of issues and artefacts and in their relationships towards one another and pupils.

[primary template must have the facility to delete and combine subject headings, as well as add additional headings such as that immediately above]