

INSPECTION REPORT

**WETHERINGSETT CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY CONTROLLED PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Wetheringsett, Stowmarket

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124746

Head teacher: Mrs Linda Berry

Reporting inspector: Mrs Barbara E Doughty
22261

Dates of inspection: 30th April – 2nd May 2001

Inspection number: 189987

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	Voluntary Controlled Church of England
Age range of pupils:	4-11
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Church Street Wetheringsett Stowmarket Suffolk
Postcode:	IP14 5PJ
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Melanie Stevens
Date of previous inspection:	21 st October 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Barbara E Doughty Registered inspector 22261	The Foundation Stage curriculum English Art and design Design and technology Music	What sort of school it is and what it should do to improve further The school's results and achievements How well pupils are taught How well the school is led and managed
Mr Ernie Marshall Lay inspector 14141		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well the school cares for its pupils How well the school works in partnership with parents
John Evans Team inspector 20404	Equal opportunities Special educational needs Mathematics Science Information and communication technology History Geography Physical education	How good the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils are

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a small Church of England Voluntary Controlled primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven. There are 67 pupils on roll. Nearly all of the pupils are from white English speaking families, with just under two per cent from ethnic minority backgrounds. There are no pupils with English as an additional language. The school serves a mainly rural community and pupils come from broadly average backgrounds, with a few from advantaged homes. Six per cent are known to be eligible for free school meals. This figure varies from year to year, but is usually below the national average. However, a quarter of the pupils have special educational needs and three per cent have statements of special need. This is above the figure found in most other schools, and is rising. Most of the pupils attend a private pre-school playgroup which is housed in a building within the school grounds, but there is no nursery education at the school. Children start the reception class at the beginning of the term in which they reach five years of age. This means that they spend one, two, or three terms in reception depending on their age. Their attainment on entry is broadly typical of that found in most other schools. The school has undergone some recent changes in staffing, the most significant being three different head teachers in the space of six months.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils and is effective in most aspects of its work. It has some important areas for improvement, which, because of the good leadership and management of its new head teacher and commitment of its governing body, it is beginning to deal with. Most pupils manage to attain expected levels in English and mathematics by the time they leave the school, which broadly reflects their attainment on entry and at the end of Key Stage 1. The teaching is satisfactory overall. It is good in Key Stage 2, where pupils are being challenged to attain improved standards in lessons. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils throughout the school are confident, fluent and articulate speakers. They listen well to what others have to say and offer opinions freely.
- Teaching in the Key Stage 2 classes is good, particularly in Years 5 and 6 where it is lively and interesting.
- Very effective specialist support for the teaching and learning of information and communication technology (ICT) in Years 3 to 6 is rapidly bringing about better standards in this subject.
- Pupils with special needs learn well because of effective support from teachers and teaching assistants.
- Pupils of all ages behave well in lessons because teachers manage their behaviour effectively. Staff know the pupils well and take good care of them. Relationships are very good.
- Effective leadership and management are bringing about rapid changes to raise standards.

What could be improved

- Teaching and learning for the reception children in the Key Stage 1 class do not promote high enough standards.
- Pupils' learning in science is unsatisfactory by the ages of seven and eleven.
- Key Stage 1 pupils' ICT skills are under-developed because these pupils are given too narrow a range of things to do.
- More able pupils do not do well enough in Key Stages 1 and 2.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection in October 1996 because, although the most able pupils and children in the reception class still do not do as well as they could, some significant improvements have taken place, making the school better than it was. National Curriculum statutory requirements are being met; standards in ICT have improved significantly; and the introduction of subject teaching guidelines has brought about more systematic teaching and learning, although the geography curriculum is still fragmented. The involvement of the governing body in the leadership and management of the school is significantly better than it was: a new head teacher has been appointed, and the school is well placed to improve further.

STANDARDS

Very few pupils take the national tests each year and, therefore, it is not possible to make reliable comparisons of this school's test results with those of other schools. In addition, trends in results over time are difficult to plot because cohort sizes vary considerably from year to year, and school target setting is often inaccurate because sometimes one pupil missing their target level can mean that the targets are out by as much as 20 per cent. Nevertheless, the school's data shows that the great majority of pupils usually reach at least the expected levels in reading, writing, and mathematics by the end of Key Stage 1. The percentage of pupils attaining the expected level in the Key Stage 2 tests has risen over the last three years in reading, writing and mathematics. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards their individual learning targets, and most other pupils make satisfactory progress by time they leave the school at the age of eleven.

This year, most of the pupils in Years 2 and 6 are likely to attain the expected level in English and mathematics by the end of Key Stages 1 and 2. However, the more able pupils do not do well enough, particularly in writing and mathematics, and very few pupils reach the higher levels. There is convincing evidence from talking with pupils and looking at their past work that shows that insufficiently high standards of work have been praised in the past in writing and mathematics and, because of this, casual work habits have been established. Standards in science are not high enough and pupils' achievements are unsatisfactory by the ages of seven and eleven because, although pupils usually attain at least the expected level in the tests, their scientific knowledge is incomplete, their understanding is insecure, and their investigation skills are weak. By the end of the reception year, most children attain the early learning goals in mathematics, and physical and creative development, but do not achieve as well as they could in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Key Stage 2 pupils achieve satisfactory standards in ICT, but do not use their skills to support their work in other subjects; Key Stage 1 pupils' learning is below expected levels. Standards in art and design, design and technology, history, and music are satisfactory by the end Key Stages 1 and 2 and are below in geography. No judgement is made about standards in physical education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. The majority of pupils are happy to come to school and enjoy their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils behave well in lessons and around the school.
Personal development and relationships	Good; relationships are very good. Pupils are polite and courteous and get on very well together.
Attendance	Good. Above the national average.

There is evidence to show that some pupils, the more able in particular, have not always worked hard enough in lessons and have produced some unacceptably untidy work in the past. This is improving however, because teaching is making more demands on all pupils to take care with the presentation of the work, in particular their handwriting and spelling. Pupils show respect for others and their talents and achievements, such as their friends' ability to draw well.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching was satisfactory in 50 per cent of the lessons seen. It was good in 22 per cent and very good in 17 per cent. Two of the 18 lessons seen had more weaknesses than strengths and were judged unsatisfactory overall. These were in the reception year, where three year groups and two key stages are taught together in cramped conditions, which means that, often, the youngest children are taught by teaching assistants outside the classroom. Teaching does not build effectively on the skills the youngest children in the class already have when they start school because too little regard is given to the new curriculum for children of this age.

The teaching of literacy and numeracy is sound, although too often in the past, insufficiently high standards in writing and mathematics have been accepted from some pupils, particularly the more able. Teachers are unsure about what they can expect these pupils to achieve because they do not take account of their previous learning and consequently set them work which is insufficiently demanding. This slows their learning and stops them attaining the higher levels, although their achievement by the end of Key Stage 1 shows that they could reasonably be expected to attain such levels. Nevertheless, the school meets the needs of most of its pupils effectively and, because of this, learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well because teaching takes good account of what these pupils already know and need to learn next. Teaching in ICT in Key Stage 2 is very good because it is supported effectively by a parent who is an ICT specialist. Teachers throughout the school manage pupils well and establish good relationships with them. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is particularly effective because good demands are starting to be made on pupils to work hard and produce work of a sufficiently high enough standard. However, teaching elsewhere models poor examples of handwriting, often praises pupils undeservedly for work of insufficient quantity and quality, and gives imprecise comments in pupils' workbooks about how pupils can improve their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. Statutory requirements are met. A good range of extra-curricular activities, including clubs and visits to places of educational interest, enhances the curriculum.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	This is good. These pupils are supported well by teachers and teaching assistants and achieve well.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	There are no pupils with English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Satisfactory overall. Good provision for pupils' moral and social development, sound for their spiritual and cultural development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school. Behaviour is managed well and attendance is monitored systematically. Procedures for recording pupils' attainment are satisfactory overall, but inconsistent from class to class.

The school works well with parents. It meets National Curriculum statutory requirements, but the geography curriculum is fragmented and not taught systematically to ensure progressive learning. No one keeps a track of pupils' progress or analyses their attainments at the end of each year to make sure that they all achieve as well as could be expected and, because of this, the more able do not make the progress they could.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Good. The new head teacher, supported effectively by the previous acting head, already has a good idea of what needs doing to deal with the school's weaknesses and is busy planning future developments. The co-ordination of English, mathematics, and ICT is sound, but unsatisfactory for other subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. They take an interest in the life of the school and hold the staff accountable for standards and the quality of educational provision.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory, but very much in its infancy. Whilst the school has a good idea of what is happening in English, mathematics and ICT, no one checks on the quality of learning and standards achieved in other subjects.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Special educational needs funding is used very effectively. Developments are financed through careful planning. Best value principles are achieved through effective tendering procedures and 'an eye for a bargain'!

There is adequate staff to meet the requirements of the school's curriculum. However, there is insufficient experience and expertise to teach reception-aged children and weak teacher subject knowledge in some aspects of ICT. Learning resources are adequate. Accommodation is poor. Space is limited and learning is sometimes interrupted, particularly for the youngest children in school, because pupils have to pass through learning areas and classrooms to get to other classrooms, the library and toilets.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The standards that their children achieve and the progress they make. · The leadership and management of the school. · The way the school helps their children to become mature and responsible and encourages them to work hard. · The standard of teaching and the approachability of the staff. · The range of activities outside lessons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> · The behaviour of some of the pupils during after-school clubs. · The insufficient amount of homework that the older pupils, in particular, are given. · The poor quality of their children's handwriting.

Parents are clearly very happy with the work of this school. The inspection team agrees with parents that school leadership and management are good, pupils' social skills are promoted well, teaching is effective overall, staff are very friendly and approachable, and there is a good range of after-school clubs. The quality of pupils' handwriting is poor, and whilst homework is satisfactory overall, more could be set in the older classes to help pupils with their work in school. However, the inspectors do not share some of the views of parents. The more able pupils do not make as much progress as they could and there is convincing evidence that shows that the school has not always, until very recently, encouraged pupils to achieve as well as they could, particularly in writing. Pupils are well behaved in and out of lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Reliable comparisons with the test results for seven and eleven year olds in other schools nationally cannot be made because a very low number of pupils at Wetheringsett Primary School take the tests each year. It is also impossible to establish a pattern in results over time and compare these with trends nationally because class sizes vary from year to year. Target setting is also unreliable. For example, last year, the school exceeded its target in mathematics by 33 per cent, but failed to reach its English target by seven per cent. However, one pupil represented 20 per cent of the total number taking the tests. This means that if just one more had reached the expected level in English, the school would have exceeded its target by 13 per cent – a big difference. Nevertheless, the school's data shows that, by the end of Key Stage 2, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level in reading, writing and mathematics has increased over the last three years. Last year, all pupils attained the expected level in mathematics and reading and all except those with special educational needs attained it in writing. However, there are some ongoing weaknesses in writing, which the school is dealing with, and pupils do not do as well in this aspect of English as they do in reading. Nevertheless, most pupils currently in Years 2 and 6 are likely to attain the expected levels in reading, writing and mathematics by the age of seven and by the time they leave the school at the age of eleven.
2. Very few pupils at this school, however, attain the higher level, and no pupils in Years 2 and 6 are currently working above expected levels in writing or mathematics. Although none of the pupils in the current Year 6 attained the higher levels in these subjects at the end of Key Stage 1 in 1997, some of them did reach the higher-average level. It is not unreasonable to expect at least some of these pupils to be attaining above expected levels now. Clearly, as at the time of the last inspection, the school is not challenging its more able pupils sufficiently and these pupils do not do well enough. In contrast, pupils with special educational needs achieve well because they are effectively supported by teaching assistants and, most importantly, the work they are given to do is suitably challenging because it is usually based on what they have achieved and need to do next.
3. Children in the reception class attain the early learning goals in mathematics, and physical and creative development by the time they are ready to start Year 1. Too few of them, however, attain the nationally expected goals in their personal, social and emotional development, communication, literacy and language, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Their achievement is slowed because the skills that they already have when they start school are not developed systematically during their first year in school. This is because staff have insufficient expertise to teach them, and lack a secure enough understanding of the nationally agreed curriculum for these young children.
4. Standards in speaking and listening have improved. They are good, and pupils achieve well as they move through the school. Pupils of all ages are confident speakers and eagerly talk about the work they have done in the past, such as their artwork and things that they have made in design and technology. They talk clearly and audibly when openly discussing issues such as the advantages and disadvantages of wearing school uniform, or how their behaviour affects others. Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils listen to classmates carefully and give opinions confidently, not afraid to disagree with what others are saying. Reading skills are satisfactory, and often good. Older pupils, for example, have opinions about different authors and their styles of writing. They sometimes use phrases that they have read in books in their own writing, adding to the quality of their work. They use the library successfully to find out about, for example, Ancient Egypt and the Second World War.

5. In writing, however, although convincing evidence shows that most pupils are capable of achieving at least acceptable standards and some higher, there is convincing evidence that pupils have established fairly relaxed attitudes towards their class work over time, and have not always produced their best efforts. When discussing with Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils what they need to think about and take into account before and whilst they are writing, their responses show that they are capable of better work in their books. However, except in their test work and 'best work' samples, standards in some workbooks are not as good as they could be, particularly those of the more able pupils. But, this is changing. The new head teacher is adamant that all pupils will always work hard and challenges them well to produce good work all of the time. This is already resulting in better standards being achieved in lessons.
6. Most pupils achieve standards in mathematics broadly as expected for their age, and these are showing signs of rapid improvement, particularly in Years 5 and 6. This is because the newly appointed head teacher has brought a high level of mathematical teaching expertise to the school. Pupils of all ages achieve satisfactorily and have a secure grasp of numeracy for their age. Calculation skills are securely developed and the older pupils work confidently with fractions and percentages. Measuring skills are satisfactory and the oldest pupils use, for example, a protractor to measure angles accurately. In comparison, however, pupils in both Key Stages 1 and 2 have a relatively under-developed knowledge and understanding of how to use their mathematical skills to solve problems.
7. Standards in science are below expected levels in Key Stages 1 and 2 and pupils do not achieve well enough. Although the school anticipates that most of its Year 6 pupils will attain at least the expected level in the national tests again this year, inspection evidence shows that they are unlikely to achieve satisfactory standards in all aspects of science because their learning is insecure. For example, pupils in Year 6 have an insecure scientific knowledge of plant and animal life and lack sufficient understanding of electricity and forces for their age. Although Key Stage 1 pupils have some awareness of the dangers of electricity and how sounds become fainter the further away they get from the source, their knowledge in these scientific aspects, and others, is limited for pupils of their age. Although better in Years 3 and 4, skills in investigating and experimenting are under-developed in Key Stage 1 and Years 5 and 6. For example, discussions with the older pupils in school show that these pupils are unable to think and plan scientifically. They could not say, for example, how they would organise an experiment to test whether the bounce of a ball is dependent on the height that it is dropped from. They have no understanding of the meaning of 'hypotheses' or what a 'fair test' is, and are clearly not used to working independently. Their written work is unsatisfactory. It is often unlabelled and comments are brief, making it difficult to understand what has been done or what conclusions, if any, have been drawn and why.
8. Standards have risen in ICT since the time of the last inspection because of rapid improvements to the teaching of this subject and better learning resources. Key Stage 2 pupils achieve well, and by the time they leave the school, their attainment is broadly in line with expected levels. This is mainly due to specialist support for teaching and learning from a parent with ICT expertise. Pupils use computers confidently to produce, for example, multimedia presentations by combining text, images, animation and sound. They know how to get information from a CD-ROM and the Internet and are acquiring a subject vocabulary. Key Stage 1 pupils, in contrast and similarly to the time of the last inspection, do not get a broad enough range of ICT experiences and their standards and achievement over time are unsatisfactory.
9. Standards and achievement in art and design, design and technology, history, and music are satisfactory overall and pupils attain levels expected for their age in all of these subjects by the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils in Year 6 make reasonable drawings of, for example, landscapes and use shading successfully to add depth to their pictures. They are not influenced by the work of famous artists, however, because they have a limited knowledge of

the different styles and techniques these people use. Pupils of all ages design and make things such as moving puppets in Year 6, and evaluate how successful they have been in making them fit for a given purpose. Whereas pupils' knowledge of historical events is secure, their ability to place them in the order in which they happened is not as well developed. In music, pupils sing tunefully and enjoy listening to and talking about how music makes them feel, an improvement since the last inspection. They enjoy composing music, using different percussion instruments, and performing it to their classmates. They know about different styles of music, but their knowledge of famous composers and their works is insecure.

10. As at the time of the last inspection, standards and achievement in geography are unsatisfactory. Although some improvements have been made to the geography curriculum, pupils still have limited skills, knowledge and understanding by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school at the end of Key Stage 2. The subject is not taught in sufficient depth for the pupils to attain levels expected for their age, mainly because teachers have low expectations about the standard of work these pupils should be able to achieve. For example, Key Stage 2 pupils draw simple maps showing their route to school, but the level of their drawings are similar to those found in most Key Stage 1 classes nationally. No judgement is made about standards in physical education as not enough lessons were seen, although the school's records show that by the time they leave the school most pupils can swim at least 25 metres.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Most pupils are happy to come to school. The reception children have settled to the school routines well and are generally happy in their work. They usually concentrate well when working in the classroom with their Year 1 and 2 classmates and under the direct supervision of the class teacher. However, these children are often asked to work outside the classroom with a teaching assistant. They often lose concentration at these times and are too noisy. They find it hard to listen to others, partly because they are usually taught in the entrance hall, which is a thoroughfare for other pupils going outside or to the toilet.
12. Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils, including those with special educational needs, have satisfactory attitudes towards learning and usually settle to work without too much fuss. However, some pupils do not always work hard enough and at times their standards are lower than could be reasonably expected given their achievements at other times. For example, in the first Year 5/6 physical education lesson of this term, some of the pupils applied minimal physical and mental effort to their work. In literacy, past written work is often untidy, simple words are too often spelt inaccurately, and stories are not often completed. The new head teacher is bringing about rapid change, however, and the pupils responded positively to the effective teaching seen in school and showed an ability to maintain interest and concentration.
13. Behaviour is good. Some parents are not happy with the behaviour of some of the pupils during the after-school clubs. The inspection team found that, although some pupils were a little over-exuberant at the circus skills after-school club, they did not behave badly. There are no recorded exclusions, and there is no evidence of bullying or any other form of harassment. Pupils show respect for the premises and the school's equipment and there is no vandalism or litter. Pupils are polite to visiting adults and respectful to each other. Problems are generally resolved by children themselves in 'circle time', when pupils are given the opportunity to share something with their classmates without interruption. Girls and boys, older and younger pupils play together well. Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils work collaboratively in pairs or groups, wait turns, and share resources. Staff and pupils relate very well to each other, and pupils have the confidence to ask questions and initiate discussion.
14. Personal development is good. Key Stages 1 and 2 pupils have well-developed social skills and are keen to engage in conversation with each other and adults. They are happy to show and discuss their work and express their likes and dislikes. Each year group elects two classmates to represent their views on the school council and the range of agenda items seen

illustrates a mature approach to changing school rules and routines, and improving conditions and behaviour. Pupils carry out a variety of additional tasks such as library, computer, playground, and register monitors, which is an improvement on the last report, but they must apply for the particular task of their choice. Pupils adopt very mature attitudes towards this approach, their writing is of an acceptable standard, and there is no shortage of applicants!

15. Attendance at the school is good; it is above the national average for primary schools. Holidays taken in term time are few. Both authorised and unauthorised rates of absence are below the national average. There is no truancy, no pattern of persistent lateness, and the school day starts and ends punctually. School registration complies with statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16. The teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory in 50 per cent of lessons, and good or better in 39 per cent. One of the 18 lessons seen was unsatisfactory and one was poor; both were in the reception year.
17. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. They are unsatisfactory in the Foundation Stage, sound in Key Stage 1, and good overall in Key Stage. They are particularly effective in Years 5 and 6 where lively and inspirational teaching holds pupils' interest successfully, whilst making good demands on pupils to work hard and always try to improve on their work from last time. This shows that pupils' casual work habits, established over time, are being modified and some pupils are putting much more physical and intellectual effort into their work. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 insists that all pupils take care with the presentation of their work and this is resulting in better standards of work being achieved in lessons than seen in pupils' past workbooks, particularly in writing. Teachers' mathematical subject knowledge is very good in these years and is resulting in rapidly improving standards in this subject in particular. Lessons move at a brisk pace, holding pupils' attention well, and resources, such as overhead projectors and calculators, are used effectively.
18. Teachers throughout the school have very good relationships with the pupils and manage their behaviour well. They often make learning fun, such as in a Year 3/4 literacy lesson when pupils took great delight in finding rhyming words in a shared text, and in the Key Stage 1 class when the teacher deliberately missed out capital letters and full stops in a story she was writing on the board. Pupils generally want to please their teachers, particularly in the Key Stage 2 classes, because a good rapport between them and the teacher is established, and an atmosphere created in which pupils feel secure to ask questions and challenge the views of others. For example, exclamations of "Hold on ... I don't agree with that ..." were heard in one literacy lesson when Year 5/6 pupils were discussing whether it was more costly for pupils to wear a school uniform or their 'everyday' clothes.
19. Teaching is most effective when pupils find the work interesting and relevant and they understand why they are doing it. For example, when Year 5/6 pupils discussed how watching television could turn children into 'couch potatoes', they related it to their own experiences, declaring that it can also make an adult into one! Sometimes teachers share with pupils what they want them to learn by the end of the lesson. At these times, pupils concentrate well and put more effort into their work because they understand why they are doing it, for example, when writing out their applications to become job monitors around the school.
20. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well and, because of this, make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. Teachers have good regard to the learning needs of these pupils and support them well in lessons. They give them work which is not too difficult but which challenges them to achieve more. Teaching assistants help the pupils in lessons by repeating the teachers' instructions and explanations or putting them in a simpler way, if necessary, so that these pupils understand what to do and how to do it.

21. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory overall. The school is implementing the National Strategies for these subjects effectively and the weekly lesson plans show how teaching builds pupils' basic numeracy and literacy skills systematically from day to day. However, teachers do not always model good examples of handwriting, either on the classroom teaching boards or in pupils' books. Their handwriting is often untidy and scribbled. This exacerbates the untidy handwriting styles of the pupils and does little to show pupils how to take a pride in the presentation of their work. Teachers' written comments in pupils' books serve little purpose because they do not give precise guidance to pupils about what they are doing wrong and how they can make improvements to their work next time. Although not as evident in lessons as it is in the pupils' workbooks, work is often praised when it does not deserve it. For example, pupils, particularly the more able, are too often congratulated on what they have achieved when it is clearly not of a high enough standard or sufficient in quantity.
22. The teaching and learning of the more able pupils is not good enough. In addition to the above weaknesses, which affect the standards of these pupils the most, teachers are not entirely sure about what they can reasonably expect these pupils to achieve, and do not give them enough work from the higher levels. They do not use their assessments of what these pupils can already do to identify what individuals should learn next. This is particularly true in mathematics and science, but has become less so in English recently because the school has introduced writing evaluation sessions, where teachers look at individuals' work with them and talk about what they do and do not do well. This makes pupils aware of their own learning needs and an agreement is reached on what they need to work on next to achieve better standards. These procedures are in their infancy, however, and it is too early yet to judge their impact on standards or learning.
23. Teaching and learning in ICT are very good in Key Stage 2. The two ICT lessons seen were very effective and good learning took place. This is a marked improvement since the last inspection when teaching in this subject was unsatisfactory and statutory requirements were not being met. Subject planning is better than it was and good regard is taken of the national teaching guidelines for ICT. Resources are much improved and are used very effectively to support teaching and learning. One of the parents helps to teach ICT and, because of his excellent subject knowledge, standards are improving rapidly. Class teachers, however, particularly in Key Stage 1, still lack sufficient subject knowledge to teach the full range of ICT skills.
24. No overall judgement is made about the quality of teaching in science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education because insufficient lessons were seen in these subjects. However, indications from pupils' work and discussions with Year 2 and Year 6 pupils are that the provision for science and geography is unsatisfactory and pupils' learning is insecure because of this. Skills in both subjects are not taught in sufficient depth and teachers' expectations about what pupils can be expected to do are too low. Scientific investigation skills are not taught well and pupils are unable to formulate hypotheses, develop their ideas, or test them. Teaching does not build effectively on pupils' previous learning because teachers make insufficient use of what they know pupils can already do and need to learn next.
25. Whereas the inspection team acknowledges the challenges involved in teaching three year groups and two key stages together in one class, the teaching of the youngest children in the Key Stage 1 class is ineffective overall and their learning is unsatisfactory. The expertise in teaching reception-aged children is limited in this school and support and training for the implementation of the new curriculum for children of this age has been minimal. The reception children's skills are not developed effectively over time in the most relevant and meaningful way because not enough use is made of the national guidelines for teaching these children. Teaching does not make sufficient use of the information gained from the children's entrance assessments and, because of this, the demands made on some children are too great, whilst for others they are too low. For example, although some cannot form letters or draw recognisable pictures when they start school, they are expected to trace either over or under

adult writing, which is usually small and written on lines. Others who are able to write numbers, count up to at least 10, and already have an understanding of addition, spend their time practising writing numbers that they can already write and matching sets of objects to numbers, which they can already do. Whilst much of it is different, some of the work these young children are given to do is the same as that of the Year 1 and 2 pupils, such as interpreting maps of Surrey and identifying holiday destinations abroad which they would like to visit. Whilst the teacher focuses mainly on the Year 1 and 2 pupils in the class, the youngest are taught for a large percentage of the time outside the classroom by unqualified teaching assistants, one of whom is new to the school. Without experience of the new curriculum and expertise in how young children learn through exploration and observation, this is expecting too much of untrained and unqualified staff.

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

26. The school curriculum provides a satisfactory range of learning opportunities and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum. The weaknesses in provision identified in the last report have largely been remedied. In particular, suitably planned programmes of work for ICT and physical education are now in place and the requirements of the National Curriculum are met in these subjects.
27. Some weaknesses remain in the planning of science and geography, however. These result in below average standards in these subjects. The right balance has yet to be struck between teaching the different aspects of some subjects. For example, in mathematics, there is good emphasis on number work but too little time is given to problem solving and mathematical investigation. The curriculum for ICT has made rapid progress, especially in the Key Stage 2 classes, so that standards have markedly improved. But the skills pupils gain in this subject are not yet applied enough in other subjects.
28. The National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy have been successfully introduced and teachers give these aspects of pupils' learning high priority. Teachers have drawn on the national teaching guidelines to inform the planning of teaching and learning in most other subjects. This is proving helpful in clarifying what is to be taught and the order in which skills and knowledge are to be developed over time. However, in some subjects, for example history and geography, the new guidance has not yet been effectively integrated with the school's own curriculum arrangements. This results in uneven coverage and unsystematic progress in some skills.
29. Although the curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, there are times when it is based inappropriately on the work of Years 1 and 2 and sometimes the activities the children are expected to do are beyond their understanding. This is because not enough regard is taken of the national teaching guidelines for children of this age.
30. The school's arrangements for the teaching of pupils with special educational needs are good and meet the requirements of the national Code of Practice. Teaching and support arrangements are well organised, thoughtfully planned, and effective. As a result, pupils with special educational needs make good progress. However, too little is done to plan and provide for the needs of the more able pupils. As a result, many of these pupils are insufficiently challenged and do not achieve as well as they could in English, mathematics and science.
31. There is a good range of extra-curricular provision, suitably matched to the needs of pupils of all ages and including sports clubs and events, music, and other activities. These are enthusiastically supported by teachers, pupils and parents, and make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning and social development. Organised visits, for example to the British Museum, stimulate pupils' interest and greatly enhance their learning.

32. There are good links with other schools and the local community. For example, pupils in Year 6 share a residential visit with those from other local primary schools. This builds their confidence and helps to prepare them for the transition to secondary school. There are constructive links with the local church and with a local missionary centre based in the village.
33. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Pupils follow a carefully planned and wide ranging programme, which covers topics such as sharing, managing feelings, keeping safe, honesty, and kindness, as well as environmental issues. Pupils learn about healthy living and the structure and workings of the human body, for example, in science and physical education lessons. Well-planned attention is given to the dangers of drug misuse, and there is a suitable policy for sex education.
34. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory. The provision for spiritual education is sound. Some effective opportunities for reflection are provided during assemblies. For example, an assembly about Martin Luther King offered an interesting relevant context for pupils to consider their own feelings and those of others. However, in other assemblies, the opportunity for reflection is brief and consequently undervalued. Studies of the work of artists, including Andy Goldsworthy, stir the imagination of pupils and there are increasing opportunities for pupils to gain insight into a range of music, including pieces by Grieg and Holst. Generally, however, too few such opportunities are provided.
35. The provision for moral development is good. Teachers successfully promote among pupils a clear sense of right and wrong. They provide opportunities during assemblies and in lessons for pupils to consider issues relating to consideration for others. In the day-to-day life of the school, they ensure that pupils think carefully about their actions and consider the consequences. The effective role models that teachers and support staff present are a powerful, positive influence on pupils' individual behaviour and relationships with others. In the older Key Stage 2 class, the teacher and pupils have framed an agreed code of conduct and mutual expectation. This is a very effective way of engendering a sense of responsibility among pupils.
36. The provision for social development is good. The school's inclusive and supportive ethos makes a strong contribution to pupils' social awareness and progress. This is borne out by the very good relationships seen at all levels. The school council, which includes representative from all year groups, valuably extends pupils' experience of civic responsibility. Visits, such as the residential trip to Sheringham, are very effective in broadening pupils' social experiences. Teachers provide many constructive opportunities in lessons for pupils to work co-operatively. For example, in ICT, there is some very useful skills sharing in Year 5 and 6, while in Years 1 and 2, pupils are given planned and appropriate opportunities to work together. These arrangements help pupils to understand the different needs and approaches of their classmates, encourage pupils to support one another, and develop their social competence.
37. The provision for cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils gain some experience of their own culture, for example, through studies of dance and famous artists and composers from the European tradition. Pupils learn about cultures other than their own, for example, by studying dances from different traditions. An African week, organised by a local missionary centre, enabled pupils to investigate artefacts, including costumes and masks, and to learn about different cultures within Africa. Pupils also improved their understanding of the circumstances in which people in different parts of Africa live. Pupils learned about Indian food and some other aspects of Hindu culture, including festivals and dance. They gain some further knowledge of other cultures, for example of the Hebrew tradition, through their studies in religious education. .

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. The school has satisfactorily dealt with the health and safety issues raised at the time of the last inspection. The governing body takes an active involvement in this aspect of school life.

Effective measures are in place for child protection, and staff are familiar with their roles and responsibilities in this matter. Satisfactory procedures for regular inspection and testing of school equipment, including large physical education apparatus, are implemented. First aid arrangements are satisfactory and fire drills are regularly carried out.

39. Pupils' personal development is satisfactorily monitored and teachers' comments are included in pupils' annual reports. Typical comments relate to the pupils' general behaviour, co-operation with others, and attitudes to school life. The staff meet once a term to discuss the academic and personal development of all pupils. These arrangements are satisfactory because they are effective and result in staff knowing the pupils well and taking good care of them by responding to their needs.
40. The school operates a well-planned induction procedure for children starting in the reception class, allowing them five accompanied visits in order to enable them to become familiar with the classroom and get to know some of the other children. Visits to secondary schools by Year 6 pupils prior to changing school aims to smooth the transition into the next phase of their education. The good level of pastoral care for pupils is maintained throughout all age groups and is exemplified by the strict safety code observed by the staff when dispersing the children to the bus or to waiting parents at the end of the school day.
41. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The small number of pupils on roll means that reasons for absence are usually known by friends in class, and parents are aware of the need to notify the school when their children are unable to attend. Teachers raise concern over any unexplained absence with the school secretary, who checks the attendance registers three times a week. Parents are asked to acknowledge their responsibility for ensuring their children's attendance and punctual arrival at school by signing and returning the home/school agreement.
42. The school's procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are very effective. Parents and their children are made aware of the school's expectations through the prospectus and the home/school agreement. A code of behaviour is prepared on the basis of these expectations and pupils are involved in its drafting. This code is displayed throughout the school in appropriate locations. The teaching staff show high expectations of behaviour and reward and praise good behaviour, thus setting a good standard for others to follow. Children showing inappropriate behaviour are confronted with a range of consequences that vary according to the nature of their actions. Procedures for monitoring and eliminating oppressive behaviour are also good. Persistent misbehaviour is discussed amongst the staff and, where necessary, an individual support plan is prepared and implemented. Parents are involved.
43. The monitoring of pupils' academic performance is unsatisfactory overall, affecting, in particular, the progress and learning of reception-aged children and the more able pupils in Key Stages 1 and 2. Whilst there are satisfactory procedures in place for assessing and recording what pupils can do in literacy and numeracy, this information is not collated and then used, along with national test results and other test data, to track pupils' progress through school. No one ensures that the more able pupils in particular are making as much progress as they should, based on their previous learning and attainment. In addition, the variety of format and approach to recording attainment from teacher to teacher makes it difficult to provide a coherent overview of individual pupils' learning and as a result, the use of this information to guide curricular planning is not as effective as it could be.
44. In contrast, the assessment of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. These pupils are assessed regularly and their needs reviewed. Individual educational plans, which are agreed with parents, are sufficiently detailed to give adults a clear idea of what the pupils need to learn next. Pupils' learning and progress are continually monitored through recorded observations. The school calls upon the services of a range of specialists to assist and support staff in the assessment and support work for these pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. Parents are strongly supportive of the school and appreciative of the quality of learning their children receive. The school is regarded as a caring and friendly place, which children like to attend and where they enjoy the lessons and extra-curricular activities provided. There is some concern over the amount of homework pupils in Years 5 and 6, in particular, are given. Some parents feel that it does not prepare their children well enough for the secondary school, or help them sufficiently with their learning at this school. The inspection team supports these views. The school is aware of these concerns and has already started to issue more homework to its oldest pupils.
46. Parents have effective links with the school. There is a parent/teacher association that is both active and enthusiastic in raising funds through a programme of social events that are supported well by parents and staff. This association has provided funding and practical help in the construction of an outdoor work area for reception children and an environmental area.
47. A small number of parents provide effective help in the classrooms on a regular basis, and some organise and supervise after-school club activities. Parent governors play an effective role in the school's strategic development planning. There is regular parental involvement in support of homework. Reading, spelling and mathematics are the main activities involved. Assistance with topic research is provided when required.
48. The school provides a satisfactory range of information for parents. Parent evenings are arranged in the summer term to provide parents with an opportunity to look at and discuss children's work and plan, with the teacher, their children's individual learning targets for the coming year. Parents of children with special educational needs have regular interviews to discuss progress and agree targets. Newsletters are regular and informative. The home/school agreement documentation contains detailed information about the school's expectations with regard to pupils' behaviour. The school prospectus is comprehensive and covers all statutory requirements. The governing body report requires minor review. Pupils' annual reports cover all subjects of the National Curriculum and contain comments on pupils' personal development. Pupils prepare a self-assessment summary to add to the reports, helping them to become involved in their own learning and taking some responsibility for how well they do in school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. Leadership and management are good overall. The school has had three different head teachers in the space of six months and has coped well with this. As at the time of the last inspection, there is a newly appointed head teacher, who is already influencing and bringing about changes to the school's educational provision and standards. She and the governing body have very good direction for the future of the school because they are fully aware of what is working well and what needs improving. They are well placed, because of this, to bring about the improvements needed and are busy planning how to go about it. They know that pupils' attainment in writing could be higher and that the more able pupils could do better. Standards are already starting to rise in the Year 5/6 class, which is currently being taught by the head teacher. There is evidence of recent improvements to the teaching and learning in this class, in particular, because greater demands are being made on pupils to work hard and take more pride in the presentation of their work, particularly in writing. Pupils are being reminded to spell carefully and write neatly, for example, and their work is praised only when it deserves to be. The head teacher brings with her, considerable expertise in the teaching of mathematics in particular and this is impacting on raising standards in this subject as well.
50. At the time of the last inspection, the school development plan had an unrealistically high number of improvement targets. These are much more manageable now, with effective targets for improving literacy, numeracy and ICT. Curriculum leaders scrutinise planning,

observe and evaluate teaching, and look at pupils' work. Although these procedures are not as rigorous and effective as they might be, provision for these subjects is getting better because of them, and standards are rising, particularly in ICT. The school has been less successful, however, in bringing about improvements to the teaching and learning of other subjects because staff do not monitor and evaluate the school's performance in them. No one, other than the class teacher, checks on the quality of work pupils produce in science, art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education or on how effectively these subjects are taught. As a result, staff are insecure about what does and does not work in their teaching of these subjects and how effectively pupils are learning. Consequently, they think standards, for example pupils' mapping skills in geography, are better than they actually are.

51. The governing body has improved its procedures since the last inspection and is now very effective in its work and fulfils its statutory duties well. It takes its responsibilities very seriously and has dealt with all of the key issues and most of the less important weaknesses identified in the last report. Governors are fully involved in leading and managing the school and committed to improving provision. Many of them help in school, for example supporting pupils with their ICT and design and technology work. They have greatly improved their involvement in school development planning and financial control, key issues in the last inspection report. They take part in reviewing standards through looking at test results, and know what is happening in school because they ask questions and think carefully about the logic of what they are told. They talk with staff and pupils, and are very clear about their role in the leadership and management of the school. Their financial management and planning are sound. The school finances developments well. Grants for special educational needs and other additional funding are used effectively and as they should be, and the school ensures that it gets value for its money through competitive tendering and searching for 'bargains'.
52. Overall, there is an adequate number of staff with suitable experience and expertise to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum. However, recent teaching experience of children in the reception class is limited, and training is needed to ensure that all aspects of the ICT curriculum are taught in sufficient depth. Learning resources are adequate in quality and quantity.
53. The accommodation is poor. It is unsuitable to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum effectively. There is inadequate classroom space for the youngest children in school, which means that they are often taught by teaching assistants in the school's entrance hall, away from the direct supervision of the class teacher. Pupils, staff and visitors have to walk through the Year 5/6 classroom to get to the Year 3/4 classroom and the school library, which is now satisfactory, having improved significantly since the time of the last inspection. The head teacher's 'office' is a small and totally inadequate mobile unit in the playground and is shared with the staff and school secretary, making private conversations a virtual impossibility. However, things are set to get better. During the inspection, the school learned that a new extension is to be built and plans are now being drawn up to provide a new classroom and separate rooms for the head teacher, staff, and secretary.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

54. The school should now:

- (1) Improve the teaching and learning of reception-aged children by:
 - increasing staff's knowledge of the curriculum for these children by making more use of the national teaching guidance for children of this age;
 - building on what individual children can already do when they start school;
 - reviewing the way that these children are taught within a mixed-age class. (Paragraphs 3, 11, 25, 43, 52, 55-61)

- (2) Raise standards in science by:
 - improving the range of work in Key Stage 1 and the depth of pupils' studies in Key Stage 2;
 - improving pupils' investigation skills and their ability to record their findings;
 - improving teachers' recording of pupils' attainments in science and using the information to adapt work for the different attaining pupils. (Paragraphs 7, 24, 27, 81-84)

- (3) Raise standards in ICT by:
 - increasing and broadening the range of Key Stage 1 pupils' experiences;
 - improving teachers' ability to teach all aspects of the ICT curriculum. (Paragraphs 8, 23, 102, 106)

- (4) Improve the teaching and learning of the more able pupils by:
 - raising teachers' expectation about what these pupils can be expected to do in each subject by the end of each year and making better use of work from the higher levels in the national teaching guidelines;
 - demanding that these pupils in particular always do their best, and ensuring that praise is always justified by sufficient intellectual and physical effort;
 - using what is known about these pupils' previous learning to build on their achievements systematically over time and ensure that they always achieve the standard that they can reasonably be expected to achieve;
 - developing pupils' pride in their written work by ensuring teachers model good handwriting, insist on high standards at all times, and remind pupils to take care with handwriting and spelling;
 - pointing out to individual pupils how improvements to their work can be brought about. (Paragraphs 2, 5, 21, 22, 30, 43, 66-68, 71, 74, 79)

In addition to the above issues for improvement, there are less important issues which the governors should have regard to when writing their action plan:

1. Improve the leadership and management of the foundation subjects so that the school is clear about what improvements are needed and how to bring them about. (Paragraph 50).
2. Improve the use of ICT to support work in other subjects and the promotion of writing through work in other subjects. (Paragraphs 7, 27, 65, 66, 79, 87, 90).
3. Improve pupils' problem-solving skills in mathematics. (Paragraphs 6, 27, 75, 77).
4. Raise standards in geography throughout the school. (Paragraphs 10, 24, 27-28, 93-94, 96).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

18

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

25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	17	22	50	6	6	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	67
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	4

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	17

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

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	9	6	15

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	12	12	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (78)	80 (78)	87 (89)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	12	10	13
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (78)	67 (78)	87 (89)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

* Data is excluded where year groups of boys and girls separately are ten or fewer.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Because there are ten or fewer pupils in the year group, the table showing attainment at Key Stage 2 has been omitted. This is consistent with the guidance given by the DfEE regarding the publication of test and examination (Circular 7/99 and 8/99).

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	67
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.16
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.2
Average class size	22.3

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	55

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
	£
Total income	158065
Total expenditure	160334
Expenditure per pupil	2587
Balance brought forward from previous year	4750
Balance carried forward to next year	2481

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	70
Number of questionnaires returned	47

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	48	48	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	34	57	4	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	53	13	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	11	57	30	2	0
The teaching is good.	49	40	2	0	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	36	47	15	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	64	30	4	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	43	51	4	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	47	43	11	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	38	53	0	6	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	37	59	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	51	47	2	0	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

55. The eight children currently in the Foundation Stage are taught with a class of Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. The teaching of the youngest children in this class does not always enable these children to learn as effectively as they could. However, teaching the wide age and maturity range found in this class of three different year groups and two key stages, in a classroom which is small, and therefore cramped, is extremely challenging. These children, because of the limited space in the classroom, are often taught outside the classroom by teaching assistants and away from the direct supervision of the teacher. Teaching is unsatisfactory at promoting their personal, social and emotional development, communication, language, literacy and mathematics skills, and their knowledge and understanding of the world. This is because staff have insufficient expertise in teaching children of this age, as at the time of the last inspection, and make too little use of the national guidelines for the Foundation Stage curriculum. Although they have undergone some in-service training, they have an insecure knowledge and understanding of the stages of learning that lead up to the early learning goals and the kinds of activities that these children should be given to do.

Personal, social and emotional development

56. Children do not make enough progress in this area of learning. Whilst most enjoy, and sustain good concentration, playing, for example in the sand and water, they do not show sufficient interest or excitement in their work. Although they are sometimes expected to work together as a group, they do not know how to and because of this, group activities are often disorganised and too little learning takes place. For example, when working without adult support in a mathematics lesson, the children were given two or three cards each with pictures on and asked to hang them up in order from zero to 10. The teacher did not explain how they were to go about this, the importance of someone taking the lead, or how group members needed to work together. After a lot of initial confusion, one child attempted to 'take charge' by instructing his classmates, but only one or two of them did what he asked. Little mathematical or social learning took place. By the time the teacher came to see what had been achieved, some of the children had managed to order some of the cards and the group was praised, even though what they had achieved was not enough and some of the children had done nothing. This misdirected praise happens too often and does little to encourage children to work hard.

57. During class discussions, teaching involves the reception children well. These children, because of this, are confident when talking in well-controlled situations, explaining for example, in one lesson, what they enjoy doing and what they are most interested in. However, they do not always show sensitivity towards each other or willingly take turns and share fairly during more general less well-controlled activities, and teaching does too little to encourage these skills. During one session led by one of the teaching assistants for example, after listening to a story, the children grabbed at the character models the assistant emptied from a bag, snatching the ones that they particularly wanted. Several children, unsurprisingly, wanted the same models and some arguments ensued. Whilst this is not a particularly unusual reaction from such young children, instead of talking with them about how they should behave at times like this and why, the assistant immediately put the models back in the bag. She then gave them out one by one, missing the opportunity to talk about what the children had done and why such behaviour was inappropriate.

Communication, language and literacy

58. Children's communication, language and literacy learning is unsatisfactory and few children are on course to attain the early learning goals by the end of their first year in school. The majority of children talk enthusiastically, clearly, and audibly when asked about things that interest them, such as their families and pets. However, they do not speak well in turn, nor do they always listen to others. They listen to class stories with interest, but once the story is over and an activity begins, their interest starts to wane. Most children are still in the early stages of learning to read and their skills are under-developed for this time of the year compared with those of most other children in most other reception classes. Whilst the children show a great interest in books and pretend to read them, they make little attempt to read the words by saying, for example, the sound of the first letter, although most of them know some letter sounds. Teaching does not build children's writing skills successfully over time and children are given insufficient opportunities to write on their own. There are too few opportunities in, for example, role-play areas, for children to practise their writing skills. Adults set poor examples of handwriting, often writing untidily and using joined script when writing on the teaching board or in children's books. Even though entrance assessment tests show that most children can form letter shapes correctly when they start school, many of them are still tracing over adults' writing. Even the more able children are still copying under adults' writing.

Mathematical development

59. Most children attain the early learning goals in mathematics by the end of the reception year. However, teaching and learning are unsatisfactory and the children could do much better based on their attainment in the entrance assessment tests. The work they are given is insufficiently demanding and does not build on the skills that they already have. For example, when they start school, some children already recognise and write numbers one to 10, draw sets with a given number of objects in them, and show an awareness of addition. However, instead of developing these skills further, these children have spent their time in school writing numbers from one to 10 and drawing sets of objects. During the introductory session of one mathematics lesson seen, teaching paid good regard to the different aged children in the class. However, because the children were grouped according to age and not ability, some of the work was too easy for the more able younger children and too difficult for the less able older pupils. In addition, because the teacher was asking each year group in turn a question and then returning later for an answer, out of the 12 questions asked in total, each year group was required to answer only four of them and valuable time was lost.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. This is unsatisfactorily taught and children's learning is too slow. Most children use computers confidently to write, draw pictures, and play games, but they do not have regular access to programmable toys and robots. They have too few opportunities to record events and findings through drawing, writing, photographing or using a tape recorder. For example, in one lesson seen, the intention was for the children to learn how to use a tape recorder to listen to a taped story. However, the adult operated the machine, which was placed on a cupboard top away from where the children were sitting. She did not explain to the children what she was doing, nor did she let them have a go. There is too little opportunity for the children to investigate living or growing things and talk about changes taking place over time. Children did, however, identify a range of sounds heard during a 'listening walk' and recognised, for example, that the volume of a sound decreases as its source moves further away.
61. Nevertheless, much of the work that the children are given to do is similar to the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils' work. For example, in one geography lesson seen, whilst the opening discussion allowed the reception children to talk about their holiday experiences, which they did confidently, the map of Suffolk they went on to study covered too large an area, far beyond most of these children's understanding. These children would have been better placed to learn

about 'mapping' if they had been shown a bird's eye view of, for example, their classroom or their own village. They then went on to complete, with some success, the same activity as the Year 1 and 2 pupils, looking at photographs of different holiday destinations abroad and saying which they preferred "because the sea is two different colours". It would have been more relevant and meaningful for them to look at simple maps and photographs of their immediate environment to identify similarities and differences and pick out local well-known features.

Physical development

62. The provision for this area of learning is satisfactory and children's learning is appropriate for their age. Most children hold pencils and small equipment with developing co-ordination and control, for example, to write well-formed letters. Help with buttons and laces is all that is needed as they change into tee-shirts and shorts for physical education lessons. Aware of the space that they need to move freely, children avoid bumping into others when, for example, running around the playground. They enjoy their physical education lessons and listen carefully to instructions, for example, to run in an easterly, westerly, southerly and northerly direction, and 'freeze' immediately on command. Choosing small equipment sensibly, they throw and catch balls and quoits with increasing skill. Teaching is satisfactory. Children who are good at particular skills are asked to demonstrate what they do well to their classmates and this gives added incentive to others to do well.

Creative development

63. This is another area of learning in which children's learning is satisfactory and teaching is sound. Children know how to mix colours to create, for example, green and pink. Part of one art lesson was seen in which the children were creating interesting three-dimensional patterns in the style of Andy Goldsworthy by arranging shells and seaweed in water. They sing simple songs from memory and listen to sounds in the environment when on a 'sound walk'. Although children have regular access to the role-play area, this is situated in the entrance hall, which is used by the rest of the school as a thoroughfare to the playground and toilets. This means that children's imaginative play is often interrupted. Nevertheless, children are encouraged to act out stories at other times, such as after looking at a book together or talking about a picture of the seaside. At the end of one of their literacy lessons, for example, the children 'performed' to an inspector who was passing through the entrance hall. Each child assumed the role of one of the characters from the picture and acted the movements of that character.

ENGLISH

64. Any comparison with test results and average standards in other schools is unreliable due to the small number of pupils in Years 2 and 6. Nevertheless, the great majority of pupils reach at least the expected level in reading and writing by the end of Key Stage 1. The percentage of pupils reaching the expected level in the Key Stage 2 tests has risen in reading and writing since 1998. Last year, all Year 6 pupils reached this level in reading and all except those with special educational needs reached it in writing. This year, although there are some ongoing weaknesses in writing, the school is dealing with them and most pupils are likely to attain the expected level in English by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school at the age of eleven. Too few pupils, however, are working at the higher levels in writing.
65. Pupils' speaking and listening skills are good and their reading is at least satisfactory and often better. Teachers' and inspectors' discussions with pupils, and the current teacher assessments of what levels pupils are expected to achieve by the end of Years 2 and 6 this year, show that very few pupils are likely to reach the higher level, but most of them are on course to achieve the nationally expected level in writing. Most importantly, unlike in their past work, what they achieve in lessons is starting to reflect this. Older Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2 pupils understand the need to plan stories carefully and think about characters and plot before putting pen to paper. Year 2 pupils eagerly suggested adding words to the teacher's

story, such as 'wild wood' to create more suspense and mystery. They enjoyed telling the teacher that she had missed out capital letters and full stops, and suggested that an exclamation mark might add to the effect. As the story was incomplete, one pupil suggested "dot, dot, dot" to show that it was not the end. Year 6 pupils know when to start a new paragraph and use computers sometimes, "but not often", to type out stories and use editing functions such as spell-check to correct their work. They use some interesting language to capture the attention of the reader and their punctuation is usually accurate. They use different letter sizes to create effect and upper case letters to stress particular words.

66. However, these standards are not reflected in the pupils' past workbooks in English, or in other subjects. The standards of the more able pupils in particular are not high enough. When the current Year 6 pupils left Key Stage 1, although none of them had attained above the expected level in writing, five of them attained the higher-average level. With challenge, it would not be unreasonable to expect at least some of these pupils to attain the higher level overall by the end of Key Stage 2. However, none of them are currently producing above average work. There is convincing evidence to show that, in the past, pupils have developed casual attitudes towards their work and that a culture of 'it'll do' has been established over time. In their English books, for example, pupils, including the more able, hardly ever complete their stories, even though they usually get off to an acceptable start. Many of their stories either end abruptly or have 'silly' conclusions, which have little to do with the plot. In addition, teachers' comments often praise the work undeservedly and their handwriting is a poor example for pupils to model. Pupils do not appear to take a pride in their work. Even the more able pupils carelessly misspell common words and their handwriting often appears rushed and untidy. Although, as in their discussions, most pupils show in their redrafts and 'neat copies' that they can produce work of at least an acceptable standard, there are too few examples of this in their workbooks, with pupils appearing not to have taken the same pride in their day-to-day work. It is a similar picture in their written work in other subjects because writing is not promoted well enough and poor standards are accepted. In their science books, for example, too many of their drawings are unlabelled and titles of experiments are often missed off. There is little evidence of sustained writing of historical events and pupils' writing is often untidy and clumsy and their ideas are not developed well.
67. Improvements are evident, however, and the teaching seen in both Key Stages 1 and 2 was at least satisfactory, due to the recent focus on improving teaching and raising standards in writing. Whilst there is still much to do to ensure that all pupils put good effort into all of their work all of the time, pupils' writing in the Key Stage 2 classes, in particular, is showing improvement already. This is because the new head teacher has a very clear idea about what needs to be done. She has a good understanding about what pupils should be able to do by the end of each year and insists on high standards during lessons, and is encouraging colleagues to do so too. Pupils are responding, although sometimes reluctantly, to these demands and are starting to produce better standards of work, although the more able pupils are still not doing well enough.
68. Similarly, very few pupils in Year 2 are working at the higher level in writing, mainly because the demands made on these pupils are too low. For example, in a Year 1/2 literacy lesson, teaching ensured, through very effective demonstration, that the pupils knew how to write a sustained story over time. The Year 1 pupils were reminded to take care with their handwriting and spelling in particular, and produced some good quality writing. In contrast, however, the more able Year 2 pupils, working independently, were not given any guidance about the amount to be done or the standard expected. These pupils did not start work quickly enough and wasted time. They produced low quality work, which was less in quantity than their Year 1 classmates. In addition, their efforts were undeservedly praised.
69. Pupils of all ages speak clearly and audibly; the teaching and learning of this aspect of English is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2. Pupils talk confidently about things that interest them. They convey their opinions, for example of books, clearly and openly. They listen to one another carefully and respond to what their classmates say. They use good Standard English

and correct grammar. Lessons usually start off well, with pupils of all ages talking about their writing tasks eagerly, showing most interest when it is relevant to their own circumstances and when they understand why they are doing it. For example, pupils in Years 5 and 6 debated well the advantages and disadvantages of school uniform, and the role television can play in turning adults and children into 'couch potatoes'. They understood what they were doing and why because the teacher shared with them what they were expected to learn from the task. They went on to produce secure persuasive arguments both for and against school uniform, but although the teaching encouraged them to think about handwriting, spellings and the quality of their work in general, they still put much more effort into their talking than they did their writing. They were reluctant to stop the discussion, asking if they could continue the debate about school uniform at the next school council meeting!

70. The teaching of reading is satisfactory in Key Stages 1 and 2 and standards are broadly as expected. Pupils use the library, which has been greatly improved since the last inspection, for research purposes, and locate information in books with ease. The older pupils have favourite authors, such as RL Stine and Roald Dahl, and favourite styles, such as mysteries and comedies. They enjoy non-fiction books, such as those about the Second World War, equally as much as fiction books. They talk about parts of books they particularly like, referring to the text to illustrate their point of view. They read aloud confidently, for example when pupils in Year 3 picked out rhyming words correctly from a shared text. Pupils in Year 6 were not afraid to ask what words such as 'uncensored' mean, and successfully picked out phrases from a given text that showed that an argument can be presented in different ways such as 'if...then they will...'. Good questions asked by the teacher, such as "What is passive?" made pupils think, and when no one replied correctly, "The opposite is active", prompted a better response. "What gives you the impression he's against TV?" was followed up with a request for pupils to support their replies with examples from the text.
71. All teachers manage pupils well and enjoy good relationships with them. However, their marking of pupils' work does little to encourage better standards or to pinpoint where pupils could improve their work next time. Teachers keep records that show what pupils can do, and are starting to use this information to plan, with pupils, what they need to work on next. However, this process has only just introduced and is at a very early stage. It is too soon to judge the impact it will have or is having on pupils' learning. As at the time of the last inspection, there is an appropriate range of writing undertaken by pupils in all years, including reports, stories and letters.
72. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in English. These pupils, including those with statements of special need, join in the lessons and good regard is given to their learning needs. They complete the work successfully because they are supported very effectively by teaching assistants in lessons, and qualified support teachers in withdrawal sessions.
73. Leadership and management of the subject are satisfactory. Governor involvement is good. The literacy governor asks a lot of questions about, for example, the difference between the test results in reading and writing and holds the school accountable for what is happening. The governor and subject co-ordinator have worked hard supporting staff in the successful implementation of the National Literacy Strategy and, along with the new head teacher and their findings from lesson observations, are developing an accurate picture of what works well and what is less effective. The development action plan identifies relevant areas for improvement such as raising standards in writing through making sure that teachers are sure about what they can expect pupils to achieve by the end of each year and in lessons, and involving pupils more in their own learning.

MATHEMATICS

74. The small number of pupils in each year group means that reliable comparisons of the overall performance of this school with that of other schools cannot be drawn from the results of

national tests. Information for individual pupils shows that, by the ages of seven and eleven, most reach the nationally expected standard, but very few exceed it. This is mainly because of teachers' low expectations of what they can expect the more able pupils to achieve and the unsystematic use of assessment to build on their previous learning. These pupils are not always sufficiently challenged because, too often, the work set is the same for all of the pupils in the class, and too little use is made of work from the higher levels in the teaching guidance. There is no distinction between the needs of the least and the most able and the work is nearly always more suitable for the average attaining pupils in the class. Whilst this challenges the least able pupils well, it slows the progress of the more able.

75. However, the recently appointed head teacher brings a high level of expertise to the teaching of mathematics and there are already signs of rapid improvement. She is assuming responsibility for managing the subject and the extensive experience and high level of expertise that she brings, supported by very effective teaching skills, are already raising standards. In the upper Key Stage 2 class, for example, a marked difference was seen between the standards observed during the inspection and those reflected in pupils' past work. For example, past work shows an emphasis on learning facts and practising skills, sometimes when these skills are already well established, and insufficient emphasis on using them to solve problems. In this class, in particular, teaching sets high, well-informed expectations and ensures that pupils clearly understand them. This is already beginning to produce improvements in the quality of pupils' work and the standards achieved in lessons.
76. The successful implementation of the numeracy strategy has successfully contributed to improvements in lesson planning and the setting of more demanding learning targets in numeracy in particular. By the time they are seven years old, most pupils have a sound grasp of number facts. They add and subtract up to a suitable level and show a developing understanding of the value of digits in larger numbers. They recognise sequences of odd and even numbers and begin to solve simple money problems. More able pupils calculate multiples of single digit numbers and of 10. Most pupils gain suitable experience of measuring and acquire an appropriate mathematical vocabulary.
77. By the age of eleven, most show competence in calculating and choosing which process to apply in solving word problems. They have gained an appropriate range of number skills and can, for example, work competently with percentages and straightforward fractions and decimals, understanding the relationship between them. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of shapes and measures. For example, they draw and measure angles using a protractor. However, the attention paid to number work and to some aspects of measuring in both the Key Stages 1 and 2 classes is not balanced by suitable opportunity to apply mathematical skills to solve problems and this aspect of learning, although satisfactory overall, is relatively under-developed.
78. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory in Key Stage 1 and good overall in Key Stage 2. It was very good in the upper Key Stage 2 class. Here, the class teacher's excellent subject knowledge enables her to challenge pupils effectively. This results in rapid and secure progress being made during lessons. Evidence from pupils and their past work demonstrates that teaching has recently improved. A brisk pace and imaginative questioning encourage pupils to sharpen and diversify their thinking and extend their mathematical understanding. There is a clear determination to increase the range of pupils' knowledge and to raise standards. The modification of the level of difficulty and presentation of tasks ensure that pupils of differing attainments are challenged at the right level. This promotes optimum progress.
79. All teachers manage pupils well and relationships are very good in all classes. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because they receive sensitive and well-planned support from teachers and teaching assistants. However, some recurrent weaknesses in teaching are evident from pupils' earlier and recent work. Marking, though positive and supportive in tone, is sometimes untidy and rarely precise in analysing mistakes

and showing pupils how to improve. Teachers keep records that show what pupils have been taught, but do not assess pupils' knowledge and skills accurately enough to target future work with previous knowledge in mind. This slows the progress of the more able pupils and impacts significantly on the standards they attain. There is little evidence of numeracy skills being promoted through work in other subjects.

80. Pupils' attitudes to their work are satisfactory overall. Most pupils, in all year groups, work well alongside one another and co-operate effectively. They usually behave well in lessons. Most concentrate, listen carefully to the teacher, and are confident and articulate in discussing their work. However, many pupils take insufficient care in the presentation of their work and there is convincing evidence that they have become accustomed to working at an easy and undemanding pace.

SCIENCE

81. Reliable comparisons of overall performance with that of other schools cannot be made because of the small size of the year groups taking the national tests each year. However, school data shows that a similar percentage of Key Stage 1 pupils and more Key Stage 2 pupils than nationally usually attain the expected level in the national tests for seven and eleven year olds. However, evidence from the analysis of pupils' past work, discussions with pupils, and the observations of lessons shows that standards in science are below expected levels by the time pupils are seven and when they leave the school at the age of eleven. No pupil is currently exceeding the expected level.
82. Because of the school's timetable arrangements, only one science lesson was observed. This was in the upper Key Stage 2 class. An overall judgement on the quality of teaching cannot, therefore, be made. However, pupils' past work and discussions with pupils show that provision overall is unsatisfactory. The range of work taught in the Key Stage 1 class is very narrow. Pupils gain some knowledge of sound and learn about some aspects of electricity, such as the danger of touching switches with wet hands. A good classroom display, including pupils' work, encourages pupils by valuing what they have done and helps to consolidate their learning. Relevant scientific vocabulary is highlighted. Generally, however, the level of work planned is undemanding for average and more able pupils. Few opportunities were seen for pupils to develop appropriate skills in investigation and recording.
83. By the time they are eleven years old, pupils have been taught a wider range of knowledge and in greater depth. For example, they have studied magnetism and identified some of its everyday applications. They have learned about mixtures and carried out some adult-guided investigations to do with dissolving and evaporation. They distinguish between reversible and irreversible changes. They have a clear understanding of why the moon shows phases. However, in many aspects of science, pupils' knowledge is incomplete and insecure. For example, few pupils have sufficient knowledge of plant and animal life, electricity, or forces such as friction. In discussion, pupils are unable to plan a simple experiment without frequent prompting and support. They are insecure about many key features of investigations, such as the idea of fair testing. While pupils in the lower Key Stage 2 class are beginning to learn a systematic process for carrying out and recording investigations, pupils in the upper Key Stage 2 class are unable to do so at an age-appropriate level and have not learned to work independently. In the lesson seen, pupils' attitudes to learning were satisfactory. Most pupils were attentive and concentrated well. However, despite the teacher's clear explanations and encouragement, few pupils were able to give extended answers at an appropriate level. In discussion, pupils are generally enthusiastic and articulate, but have insufficient experience of thinking and planning scientifically and a narrow range of scientific knowledge.
84. The weaknesses identified in pupils' knowledge and skills result from a lack of systematic planning, ineffective assessment, and teachers' low expectations about what pupils can be expected to achieve. Subject curriculum planning is disjointed and does not ensure smooth progressive learning from year to year or succeed in systematically building the full, required range of scientific knowledge, skills and understanding over time. However, the school has

recently adopted the national teaching guidelines for science. Teachers keep records of pupils' attainments but because they are not kept in a coherent form, they are not used effectively to plan pupils' future learning. In most classes, low expectations about what pupils should be able to achieve have resulted in tasks being set that are too undemanding and take little account of pupils' potential, especially that of the more able. A more effective planning process, supported by more purposeful marking and assessments, should enable teachers to set more challenging targets and promote better learning and improved standards.

ART AND DESIGN

85. No art lessons were seen in Key Stages 1 and 2 during the inspection, so no judgement about the quality of teaching and learning could be made. From talking with staff and pupils and looking at the work in pupils' sketchbooks and around the school, the attainment of seven and eleven year olds is broadly in line with that expected for their age. This is similar to the last inspection findings. As at the time of the last inspection, pupils use a suitable range of materials and equipment, such as paint, charcoal and clay. Their skills are developed successfully over time because of the school's new teaching guidelines, effectively supported by the national teaching guidance for art.
86. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 make pencil drawings of landscapes, use oil paints, and experience tie dying and weaving. They have looked at some artwork from other countries such as Africa and India, and designed a new tie for the previous head teacher! Pupils of all ages mix colours successfully to create the desired effect in their paintings and use shade satisfactorily to add depth and perspective to their work. More three-dimensional work is being done, such as clay pots in Key Stage 1, and there is now a satisfactory range of observational artwork around the school. For example, pupils in Year 2 have drawn some very effective pictures of shells and plants, showing good proportion, line, and shape. Work in other subjects is supported successfully through art, such as the drawing of animals and their habitats in Key Stage 1 and illustrations of Ancient Egypt work in Year 3.
87. Pupils of all ages talk enthusiastically about their work in art. Pupils in Year 6 proudly show their sketchbooks and admire each other's work, pointing out who in the class is particularly good at art. However, their knowledge and understanding of famous artists and their works is extremely limited. Although Year 3 pupils have painted snails in the style of Matisse, there is very little evidence of pupils studying the work of artists, or of them using artists' different styles to influence their own work. For example, Year 2 pupils' comments are limited to talking about Van Gogh's famous picture of sunflowers, and Year 6's to the time Andy Goldsworthy visited them. Throughout the school, computers are sometimes used to create pictures, but pupils have no idea of the usefulness of being able to use them to alter their designs or pictures, try different colours or shapes, or correct their mistakes.
88. There are weaknesses in the leadership and management of the subject, which are unsatisfactory overall. The school has insecure knowledge of what works well and what is less effective in teaching and learning because no one looks systematically at what pupils can do, or observes lessons. This limits the identification and bringing about of improvements in the subject provision.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

89. Only one design and technology lesson was seen during the inspection. However, from talking with pupils and staff, looking at photographs and the limited amount of work available, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations by the age of seven and eleven and their achievement is satisfactory. As so few lessons were seen in this subject, it is not possible to make an overall judgement about the quality of teaching and learning. A suitable range of materials and equipment such as glue-guns, wood, nails, saws, and staples are used

throughout the school and pupils are well aware of how to use them safely. There were no areas for improvement identified in the previous inspection report.

90. Pupils of all ages enjoy the subject and talk enthusiastically about their work in design and technology. Key Stage 1 pupils describe vehicles they made from construction apparatus, and explain confidently and clearly how they designed and then made hats to fit. Year 3 and 4 pupils made bags to carry different objects such as coins, recorders and small gifts. They made vehicles with chassis and axles, and explored weaving when making Native American 'dream catchers' using twigs and wool. Pupils in Year 6 know that certain materials must be chosen to suit a particular purpose, such as "wood for strength". They talk knowledgeably about the need to make a prototype of, for example, their moving puppets and theatre designs so that they can be sure that they will work. They disassemble boxes and switches to see how they work, and to help them in their own designs, and "keep remaking things until they work". Whilst they talk in detail about what does and does not work, their written evaluations are very brief and, although they label their designs and write lists of things that they need, they do not practise or develop their writing skills sufficiently in this subject. For example, when evaluating bread shapes, they predictably respond to the closed question "Did it look attractive?" with a simple "Yes" or "No".
91. Design and technology promotes learning in other subjects satisfactorily, however. For example, ICT skills are promoted successfully when pupils complete charts of their reactions, for example, to the taste of different breads such as tortillas, focaccia, pitta, and chapati. One pupil in Year 6 was inspired to use the Internet at home to find information about how bread is made. Pupils' scientific understanding was developed when watching the reaction of yeast in bread making in a food technology lesson and when making greetings cards with a light that came on when it was opened to illuminate the picture.
92. There are weaknesses in the management of the subject, which is unsatisfactory overall. No one observes teaching and learning and this means that the school is unaware of what works well and what needs improving further.

GEOGRAPHY

93. Pupils' attainment in geography by the ages of seven and eleven is below the expected levels for pupils of their age. This judgement is made from the analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils. The previous inspection identified weaknesses in planning which resulted in a lack of progress in pupils' learning. Though clear curriculum plans based on national subject guidelines are now in place, there is still uneven coverage and pupils make insufficient progress in their acquisition of geographical knowledge and skills.
94. By the age of seven, pupils recognise some differences in the characteristics of different countries, for example, in language, climate, and the food people eat. They learn about the location of different countries on the globe by studying the travels of Barnaby Bear'. They identify significant features in the local landscape and make simple maps and drawings. By the age of eleven, pupils have an increased knowledge of different countries. Their knowledge of some features of Africa is securely developed because of an effective 'focus week' devoted to studying this continent and its cultures. Studies of the locality enabled pupils to produce a village brochure highlighting features of interest. Generally, however, the range of work pupils do is narrow and their geographical knowledge and understanding are limited. Insufficient progress is made in developing pupils' map-work skills in the Key Stage 2 classes. The local maps drawn by older Key Stage 2 pupils are carefully made but reflect few of the map-work skills expected of their age group.
95. Because of the school's timetable arrangements, no lessons were observed during the inspection. No secure judgement on teaching can therefore be made. The work seen and discussions with pupils suggest that pupils enjoy the work they do in geography and complete it conscientiously. Many pupils enthusiastically recall geographical aspects of the African focus

week. This was clearly a stimulating and valuable learning experience. Attractive, well-organised displays, especially in the youngest Key Stage 2 class, gain pupils' interest and consolidate their knowledge of countries of the world.

96. The planning of pupils' geographical work over time is ineffective in ensuring systematic learning from year to year. In particular, it does not ensure proper coverage and progress in the required range of knowledge, understanding and skills.

HISTORY

97. By the ages of seven and eleven, pupils attain satisfactory standards in history for pupils of their age. This is in line with the findings of the previous inspection. Because of the school's timetable arrangements, no history lessons could be seen and so no judgement about the quality of teaching can be made. However, analysis of pupils' work and discussions with pupils show that pupils in the Key Stages 1 and 2 classes gain satisfactory historical knowledge and understanding as they move through the school.
98. By the age of seven, for example, pupils speak with suitable understanding about the Great Fire of London. They debate sensibly how it may have started and spread. They draw on some detailed factual knowledge, such as the closeness of buildings and the limitations of fire-fighting techniques. Most know some key dates and refer to historical accounts such as the diary of Samuel Pepys. By the age of eleven, pupils talk knowledgeably about life in Celtic and Roman times. They discuss, with a good sense of historical detail, the interaction of the two cultures. They show an understanding of the Romans' reasons for invading Britain and the consequences of their rule. They discuss key figures, such as Boudicca, referring to their motivation and personal attributes. Pupils' experience of evaluating different types of evidence is limited but they are perceptive in debating what could be learned from different artefacts and accounts. Pupils' sense of chronology remains relatively insecure.
99. Pupils show great enthusiasm for their work in history. Many vividly recall the 'Victorian week' and speak excitedly of the antiquities they saw at the British Museum. Both of these events were of great value in generating an interest in history and increasing pupils' historical knowledge and understanding. In some classes, clearly presented displays, for example, on Ancient Egypt, effectively highlight key historical facts and vocabulary.
100. The management and planning of the history curriculum have recently been re-organised. While much relevant work is effectively taught, some unevenness persists in the way topics are emphasised and skills developed. The current planning for the subject does not ensure full, balanced coverage of the required curriculum or smooth progressive learning from year to year.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

101. There have been significant improvements in provision for ICT since the last inspection. At that time, the requirements of the National Curriculum were not being met, very little ICT work was seen, and few pupils were using computers in the classrooms. Evidence from pupils' recent work, discussions with pupils and lesson observations confirm that National Curriculum requirements are now being met and subject curriculum planning is of sound quality because it draws extensively on national guidelines. There is a clear and relevant action plan for improving the subject provision, which rightly emphasises the need for teachers to increase and consolidate their subject knowledge. This was identified as a key need at the time of the last inspection and remains an area of weakness. Resources are sufficient and well chosen and have recently been improved by the purchase of up-to-date equipment. The school has just linked its computers to the Internet. So far little use has been made of this facility, but suitable plans are in place to do so.

102. Although there has been marked improvement in many aspects of provision for ICT, this has been more in Key Stage 2 than in Key Stage 1, where standards remain relatively low. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is below that found nationally. Despite improvements in planning, inspection evidence shows that pupils cover a relatively narrow range of work. This includes simple word processing, and drawing and presenting images. In discussion, pupils refer to the use of the CD-ROM to research natural history topics. Some pupils debate whether a computer would help with communication from a desert island. In doing so, more able pupils show some understanding of the limitations and applications of ICT.
103. By the time they are eleven, pupils attain standards that are in line with those expected for their age. The expert contribution, from a parent, to teaching in the upper Key Stage 2 class is an important factor in this. Pupils in Year 6 are generally adept in basic keyboard skills and are beginning to use ICT in more complex ways. Given support, they combine text, images, animation and sound in multimedia presentations. In doing so, they demonstrate suitable awareness of audience and purpose, and satisfactory attention to quality. In conversation, pupils contrast the CD-ROM and books as information sources and show a good sense of their fitness for different applications.
104. Because of the school's timetable arrangements, no teaching of ICT was observed in the Key Stage 1 class. Two lessons were seen in Key Stage 2 and both were of very good quality. In the Year 3/4 lesson, the teacher worked very effectively with a group of pupils collecting information, entering it onto the computer, and preparing it for presentation. Pupils learned the need for careful framing of questions. They gained a sense of method and secured some relevant technical vocabulary. The very constructive relationships and the teacher's thoughtful questioning and encouragement gave pupils the confidence to express their ideas and develop some independence. In a very good lesson in the upper Key Stage 2 class, pupils learned the different applications and limitations of particular software. This lesson was taught jointly by the class teacher and a parent, who brought a high level of ICT expertise into the classroom. Beyond learning how to select, flip, rotate and resize graphic elements, pupils gained some understanding of the processes involved. As a result, most pupils are competent in basic operations such as saving and printing and becoming rapidly more versatile in a suitable range of ICT knowledge and skills.
105. Pupils of all ages have good attitudes to learning. Pupils enjoy working with computers, discuss their work enthusiastically, and are keen to demonstrate their skills. In the lessons seen, pupils supported one another very well and shared their skills readily. They listened attentively and asked thoughtful questions. Most pupils behaved very well and were fully absorbed in their work.
106. From a low base of experience, pupils are now making good progress in ICT, especially in Key Stage 2. The curriculum has yet to be fully established and supported by effective assessment procedures. Parental expertise is greatly valued and very effectively employed. However, the skills of teaching staff urgently need to be extended in order to improve the teaching of the full range of required skills, and to enable teachers to make more effective use of ICT in other subjects, which remains under-developed and therefore is unsatisfactory.

MUSIC

107. Satisfactory standards in music have been maintained since the last inspection. By the end of Key Stages 1 and 2, most pupils attain the standards expected for their age. An insufficient number of lessons were seen during the inspection, and so no judgement can be made about the quality of teaching and learning. Opportunities for listening to different kinds of music and talking about it have improved, and the range of musical instruments is better than it was. Regular lunchtime choir practices further enhance pupils' singing skills, and the after-school guitar club successfully develops the performing skills of these pupils.

108. Key Stage 1 pupils sing tunefully and with a good sense of pitch and rhythm, showing an understanding of the shape of the melody and keeping a steady pulse, even without accompaniment. They distinguish high and low sounds from loud and quiet sounds when identifying everyday objects that make high-pitched loud sounds, such as a kettle, and contrasting them with those that make low-pitched quiet sounds such as “mum’s bread maker”.
109. Children enjoy their musical activities because teaching is made fun. For example, in the Key Stage 1 lesson seen, the teacher kept the interest of the pupils by moving quickly on to the next activity. This meant that pupils concentrated well and worked hard. Although no lessons were seen in Key Stage 2, Year 6 pupils talk very enthusiastically about their music activities, and have favourite music such as pop and classical. They explain, excitedly, that the band ‘Stomp’ plays “loud, bold music”. However, whilst they make up their own music, by putting their individual patterns together in a small group for example, they have no experience of writing their compositions down using musical notation or symbols. They use the tape recorder to record their music, but the teacher operates the machine, limiting the pupils’ independence.
110. Pupils of all ages and abilities experience a range of musical activities including moving to music, singing, and playing instruments. Although pupils in Year 6 listen to music and talk about how it makes them feel, their knowledge of famous composers and their works is under-developed. Dance routines, such as a sequenced robot dance, enthuse them to move to music and, from listening to music from other countries, they develop an understanding of music from other cultures. There are some links with other subjects. Pupils in Year 2, for example, have made sound makers in their science lessons and Year 6 pupils have composed music using the computer.
111. The new head teacher is to become the music co-ordinator and has some exciting plans for the development of the subject. Up to now, however, there has been no monitoring of teaching and learning and no action plan to bring about improvements to the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

112. Because of the school’s timetable arrangements only part of one physical education lesson could be observed. Therefore, secure judgements on standards, pupils’ attitudes towards their work, and the quality of teaching cannot be made.
113. In the Year 5/6 lesson seen, pupils showed suitable precision in controlling a ball with a hockey stick. Teaching set appropriately high standards and the teacher managed the pupils securely. However, many pupils seemed to have established casual work habits and appeared unaccustomed to the idea of quality performance. Through the lesson, although some pupils improved the fluency and control of their movements, others made little progress because of the limited effort they put into their work.
114. At the time of the previous inspection, the physical education curriculum did not meet statutory requirements. Planning documents show that the required curriculum is now in place and covers the full range of knowledge and activities. Most pupils swim at least 25 metres competently by the time they leave the school. A range of extra-curricular activities valuably enhances the physical education curriculum. These are planned to meet the requirements of different age groups. They are organised by parents and teachers, and are well supported by pupils. Pupils gain wider experience of competitive sport by participating in inter-school competitions.