

INSPECTION REPORT

QUEENSWAY INFANT SCHOOL AND NURSERY

THETFORD

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120897

Headteacher: Mrs D Talbot

Reporting inspector: Peter Sudworth - 2700

Dates of inspection: March 19th-22nd, 2001

Inspection number: 190366

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3-7 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Queensway,
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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Peter Brindley

Date of previous inspection: November, 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Subject responsibilities			Aspect responsibilities
Peter Sudworth 2700	Registered inspector	Mathematics; Science; Information and communication technology; Geography; Physical education; Equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Christine Laverock 15527	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development; How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Gay Wilkinson 2749	Team inspector	English; Foundation Stage; Religious education; Music; History.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
Brian Emery 2512	Team inspector	Design and technology; Art; Special educational needs.	How well does the school care for its pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Queensway Infant and Nursery serves an area of mainly rented accommodation about one mile from the centre of Thetford. The school re-organised in September, 2000. Formerly it was a first school including Nursery, which took pupils up to the age of eight. It became an Infant and Nursery school six months before the inspection began. The school is in an education action zone (EAZ), set up two years ago. It has 200 FTE (full-time equivalent) pupils on roll, including 52 part-time Nursery children. The number on roll had been at about the same level for several years but following re-organisation pupil numbers reduced by 60. The school has very few pupils from ethnic minorities. It has one pupil for whom English is an additional language but the pupil is sufficiently proficient in English. The area suffers from a significant mobility factor. During the last academic year, 34 pupils left the school and 16 joined. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is above the national average. A higher than average percentage of pupils is on the special needs register, amounting to 41 per cent of the school population. Of these, six have statements of special educational need. Attainment on entry is well below average. The inspection of this school included a detailed inspection of its provision for pupils with special educational needs.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The quality of teaching is occasionally excellent, although satisfactory overall. It is good in the Nursery and Year 1 enabling the children to make good progress in those year groups. Standards have been improving in the past three years, particularly in mathematics but there is room for further improvement, particularly in pupils' written work. The DfEE recently made the school an award for improving pupils' levels of attainment. The governors, headteacher and staff work well together to develop the school. Overall the leadership and management of the school are sound. Value for money is satisfactory.

What the school does well

- The teaching in the Nursery and Year 1 enables the children to progress well in those year groups;
- The provision for moral and social development is good;
- Pupils enjoy school and they are well cared for;
- Records of pupils' progress are maintained well in English and mathematics, helping the teachers to plan the learning to meet pupils' needs;
- Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good and pupils relate well to one another; they usually persevere with their work in lessons;
- The governing body is very effective and is led well by the chair of governors; they are familiar with the school and are involved in its improvements;
- Parents hold very positive views of the school and they are well informed of their children's progress.

What could be improved

- Expectations in written work are not high enough and presentation of work often lacks care;
- The use of the headteacher's time and the work of the senior management team should be reviewed against the need to improve standards further;
- Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently across the curriculum and there is not a record of what pupils can do in this subject;
- Many parents could be more involved in supporting their children's progress and ensure their children attend school regularly.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection in addressing the issues raised at that time. The quality of teaching is much better. Curriculum planning has improved and pupils' progress is tracked to better effect in mathematics and English but there is still room for improvement in the recording of pupils' progress in information and communication technology. Monitoring of teaching and standards are better, although these arrangements still lack consistency. Generally subject co-ordinators are managing their responsibilities to better effect and there is better guidance for staff about curriculum intentions. Resources for history, geography, design and technology and information and communication technology have improved. The problem with toilets has been resolved; their cleanliness is now exemplary. Standards in English are not as high as those previously reported, particularly in spelling, punctuation and handwriting. Pupils often struggle with their written work. Pupils still have limited opportunities to show initiative. Attendance has slipped from good to well below average. Following the recent re-organisation of the age of transfer, provision for special educational needs is no longer at its previously strong level but remains satisfactory. This provision can no longer be regarded as a strength. The range of extra-curricular activities is much reduced.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	E	E	E	D	well above average A above average B Average C below average D well below average E
Writing	E	E	E	D	
Mathematics	E	D	D	C	

By the end of the Foundation Stage, the children's personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development are in line with expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage. Their knowledge and understanding of the world, skills in communication, language and literacy, creative and physical development are below expectations, despite making at least satisfactory progress and often good progress in the Nursery. Many children have difficulties in their finer movements, such as control of brushes and pencils and drawings are often immature for their age. Several children have difficulties in speech and in expressing meaning.

Standards have been rising in the school's results in national tests for seven-year-olds in the past three years and the trend of improvement has been greater than the national trend. Nevertheless, pupils' overall attainment in English by the end of Key Stage 1 is still generally below expectations. Currently, standards in listening meet expectations but those in speaking are below. The attainment of most pupils in reading is in line with the national standard for seven-year-olds. Standards in writing are well below average and not enough attention is paid to spelling, handwriting and punctuation. In science and information and communication technology, standards are appropriate but, overall, they

are below expectations in mathematics. In other subjects, most pupils reach the nationally expected standards by age seven. In religious education, pupils' attainment meets the expectations of the Local Agreed Syllabus. The school exceeded its pupils' predicted attainment levels in the last academic year for both mathematics and writing but did not meet them in reading. Pupils' achievements are good in the Nursery and satisfactory in Key Stage 1 in most subjects.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school and have good attitudes to their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils' behaviour is good overall both in the classrooms and when out at play.
Personal development and relationships	Good overall. Pupils' relationships with one another and with their teachers are good. Pupils have limited opportunity to make decisions and to take responsibility.
Attendance	Poor. Well below the national average. A few parents are not sending their children to school regularly enough and this is impeding their progress and affecting the attendance statistics.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Almost all lessons observed were satisfactory or better. Only two lessons were unsatisfactory. Ninety-six per cent of lessons were satisfactory or better and of these nine per cent were very good or better. Teaching is strongest in the Nursery and in Year 1. Overall, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory but it is slightly stronger in numeracy. It is occasionally excellent in both in Year 1. Proportionately more good teaching was observed in science and in physical education than in other subjects. In all other subjects the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons begin promptly and time is used well. All teachers have good relationships with the pupils and they manage them effectively. As a result, pupils use their time well during lessons and show much interest in their work. Teachers provide secure and caring classroom environments, which are well organised. Resources are ready to hand. Teachers have a good knowledge of the content they teach. A particular strength in teaching is the way in which teachers match the challenge of the work to pupils' individual needs. Pupils are able to understand their work at appropriate levels for their needs. In some lessons the learning objectives for free choice activities are not clear. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently in lessons. The school does not have good enough whole-school systems to teach spelling, punctuation and handwriting.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum meets statutory requirements and the Local Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Information and communication technology is not used enough across the curriculum. Provision for children's learning is good in the Nursery and Year 1. The school has a clear plan of what it teaches in different year groups but there is a need for improvement in approaches to spelling, handwriting and punctuation. There is very little provision for extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Following re-organisation in September, the school's special educational needs co-ordinator now has a class responsibility and cannot support pupils with learning difficulties to the same extent. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school caters for pupils with English as an additional language but their levels of spoken English and understanding do not require additional support beyond normal; classroom teaching.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision is satisfactory overall. It is good for the pupils' social and moral development and sound for their cultural and spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a good feature. Procedures for child protection are good. Teachers track pupils' progress in English and mathematics to good effect and use the information to plan work.

The school has tried to involve the parents in understanding the curriculum and has had some success. Parents attend family assemblies. Reports to parents are of good quality and arrangements to inform them of their children's progress during the year are good. Some parents do not, however, support the school enough in what it is trying to do for their children.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher sets a good tone in the school but could check the quality of pupils' work more frequently to draw conclusions about where improvements are needed. Co-ordinators could monitor standards to better effect throughout the school and be more incisive when monitoring lessons. The role of the senior management team is not sufficiently clear and it does not meet sufficiently frequently.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is led well and the governing body is active in monitoring the school's work. It fulfils its statutory requirements.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school development plan is monitored regularly. Test results are analysed to identify strengths and any weaknesses in provision.
The strategic use of resources	Priorities are costed and money is targeted well for equipment and consumables. Staff share a range of responsibilities.

Accommodation is satisfactory overall with some good features, such as the Nursery play area and the hall, although it lacks storage space for physical education equipment. However, Reception classrooms are limited in size, the office is inconveniently located and the school has no field space of its own. Staffing levels are satisfactory. Learning resources are adequate. The school applies the principles of best value and makes good use of Local Education Authority services in this respect. Value for money is satisfactory.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school, make good progress; the school expects the pupils to work hard and do their best; • The teaching is good; • They are kept well informed about how their children are getting on; • They feel comfortable about approaching the school with any concerns. 	<p><i>A very few parents indicate that:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school does not provide an interesting range of activities outside lessons; • The school does not work closely with parents; • The school is not well led and managed.

Less than one-quarter of the parents returned the parent questionnaire. Only eight parents attended the parents' meeting with the registered inspector. The views expressed therefore may not be fully representative of all parents.

The inspection team agrees with most of the positive views expressed by parents. However, the pupils do not make enough progress in their written work and they could do better in spelling, punctuation, handwriting and in the presentation of their work. The team agrees with parents that the provision of extra-curricular activities is not a strength. However, the school tries hard to work with parents and to keep them informed but there is room for a closer partnership. Much will depend on a greater willingness on the part of many parents to support their children to better effect and take a greater interest in what the school offers. The headteacher sets a pleasant tone in the school and the leadership of the school is sound.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry is well below average. During the Foundation Stage, the children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and their attainment is in line with expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage. Children make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world, in communication, language and literacy and mathematics in the Nursery and satisfactory progress in these areas of learning in the Reception classes. Nevertheless, their attainment is below expectations in communication, language and literacy and in their knowledge and understanding of the world by the end of the Foundation Stage, although it meets expectations in mathematics. They make satisfactory progress in their physical and creative development in the Foundation Stage but because of limited provision in the Reception class and difficulties in their finer movements, such as control of brushes and pencils, their overall attainment is below expectations in their physical development. They do not reach expectations in their creative development and their drawings are often immature.

2. Pupils' attainment in English by the end of Key Stage 1 is generally below expectations. The attainment of most pupils is in line with expectations for seven-year-olds in reading and pupils often make good progress. However, a significant number of pupils do not understand the meaning of words they read, which limits their understanding of the text. Standards are below expectations in writing in which their progress is unsatisfactory. Whilst the pupils are gaining in confidence in writing, their spelling is often inconsistent, punctuation skills are not applied and handwriting and presentation are often immature. The pupils make good progress in their listening skills from a low base. Whilst their listening skills are in line with expectations, speaking skills are below expectations, although progress is satisfactory. A significant number of pupils do not join in discussion and several do not speak with an appropriate grammatical structure.

3. Standards in mathematics have slowly been improving in recent years. In the 2000 national tests, pupils' results were similar to those schools in areas of similar economic circumstances, although below average against all schools nationally. Reading and writing results remained well below the national average and below average against similar schools. Nevertheless, in both subjects there has been a slowly rising trend of improvement, particularly in the proportions of pupils gaining the expected level. Few pupils have been gaining the higher levels in reading, writing or in mathematics. Furthermore, boys have been doing less well than the girls in these subjects and the difference in performance between the school's boys and girls is more marked than national differences. Results in science in 2000 were well below the national average teacher assessed results. However, the percentage of pupils gaining the higher level was similar to the national average and above the average for similar schools. Current standards in science are in line with expectations.

4. Standards of attainment are in line with expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education. They correspond to the expectations in the Local Agreed Syllabus for religious education. Whilst standards have risen in information and communication technology and design and technology since the last inspection, they have fallen in English, mathematics and science, despite the slow rise since 1997 which have been nevertheless at rates above the national trend.

5. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. At the time of the last inspection progress was good. Assessment arrangements are good and attitudes of staff very supportive. However, large classes, the lack of a full-time special needs co-ordinator, insufficient special needs learning support assistants and limited outside support are all inhibiting pupil progress.

6. Higher attaining pupils make satisfactory progress overall.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

7. As in the last inspection, pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are equally good in the Foundation Stage. Pupils enjoy school and respond positively in lessons showing good levels of perseverance with their work. They join in with question and answer sessions, despite their limited expressive vocabulary. They show interest in lessons, as when Reception children plant seeds in individual pots. However, pupils' written work is often untidy in their books and they do not always take pride in presenting their work.

8. Behaviour is good. The majority of pupils are well behaved around the school, in lessons, in the playground and in the dining room. They take care of one another and their surroundings. Pupils are very aware of school and classroom rules and rarely have to be reminded of them. They are aware of the impact of their actions on others and discuss the effect on others in circle times. They respect one another's feelings, values and beliefs. Pupils with disabilities are integrated well into the life of the school.

9. From the Nursery upwards, pupils take responsibility for tidying their classrooms. Year 2 pupils have particular responsibilities around the school, such as dinner monitors and assisting with the book club. Pupils from Reception to Year 2 work to specific targets in mathematics and English and monitor their own progress against these. However, apart from the Nursery, pupils do not often work independently. They have limited opportunities to carry out research, although they are taught study skills. The library is not accessible for pupils on their own because of its location in an external mobile classroom.

10. Pupils' personal development is good overall. Whilst pupils have limited opportunities for responsibility, relationships between pupils are generally good. Pupils sometimes select their own equipment in mathematics, as for example, when pupils decided which apparatus they needed to help them with their addition and subtraction work. Some decided to use their hundred squares, others number lines and some chose small cubes. Some Year 1 pupils used beads on a string made by their teacher so that the pupils could slide them along and make the various combinations of numbers which added to ten. In the past, pupils have been on residential visits, which have developed their social skills. The majority get on well, are polite to one another and to adults. They usually work co-operatively together in small groups as in a Year 2 design and technology lesson when groups of pupils constructed wheeled vehicles. Very occasionally pupils are unkind to one another. In a Year 2 mathematics lesson, several pupils excluded a girl from the activities and would not let her share resources.

11. Attendance is poor when compared with the national average. This has deteriorated since the last inspection when attendance was described as good. A quarter of pupils have lower than 90 per cent attendance and their progress is inevitably impeded as a result. Several parents take their children on holiday during term-time and parents condone absence. The number of unauthorised absences has reduced this year, because of the way late arrivals are now categorised and the improved systems of following up unexplained absences.

12. As in the last inspection, the majority of pupils arrive punctually. A small number of pupils regularly arrive late.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

13. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Almost all lessons observed were satisfactory or better. Only four per cent, two lessons were unsatisfactory. These were counterbalanced by two excellent lessons. Five per cent of lessons were very good and 40 per cent were good. The bulk of the lessons, 47 per cent, were satisfactory. Teaching is strongest in the Nursery and in Year 1. Overall, the teaching of literacy and numeracy is satisfactory but slightly stronger in numeracy. It is occasionally excellent in both in Year 1. The quality of teaching is best in science and in physical education. In all other subjects the overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. The quality of teaching observed represents a significant improvement since the last inspection.

14. In the excellent teaching, pupils' interest is held throughout by stimulating lesson presentation and execution. Pace is excellent and the pupils' make very good progress in both skills and knowledge. In a Year 1 mathematics lesson, one of two excellent lessons, various types of equipment were used to help pupils estimate to 20 and this was excellently combined with counting and ordering activities. The teacher skilfully used a range of interesting equipment, such as estimating the number of small squares which would fit into a rectangle. The activities held the pupils' interest, engaged their thinking and helped their understanding of number. In a second excellent lesson in English, the same teacher demonstrated very clear explanations to pupils and showed excellent understanding of each child's particular needs. She used good vocal intonation, clearly expressive language, which gripped the pupils' attention, and used a lovely sense of humour. 'I've got a frog in my throat-good job it's not an elephant.' Her response to the pictures in the shared text promoted pupils' sense of awe and wonder. She asked probing questions and challenged and helped their own deductions. Her own example of writing on the board was an excellent example for the pupils to follow. The final part of the lesson took their learning further forward.

15. In the two unsatisfactory lessons the pupils made unsatisfactory progress. In the one, the pupils were too noisy and there was a lack of intervention in their work. Skills were not taught and they were left to their own devices for too long. In the other, a small group setting, the learning support assistant had not pitched the level of interest appropriately in getting two special needs pupils to write independently and the targets did not meet those on their individual education plans.

16. There are some common strengths in teaching. Lessons begin promptly and time is used well. All teachers have good relationships with the pupils and they manage them effectively and avoid confrontations, almost always adopting a calm approach. Pupils who have the potential to behave badly are dealt with effectively. Teachers provide secure and caring classroom environments, which are well organised. Resources are ready to hand enabling the pupils to select them independently when required.

17. Teachers have a good knowledge of the content they teach and research it well, enabling them to teach it effectively and to answer pupils' questions confidently. They know the pupils well and also their capabilities through careful tracking of their progress. They use their knowledge of pupils' capabilities effectively to match the work to the pupils' needs. This is particularly apparent in mathematics lessons in Year 2 in which the pupils are set into classes by prior attainment. The sets are then divided further into five sub-groups according to their previous progress. This arrangement is helping the staff to meet pupils' individual needs more precisely and is allowing them to concentrate on common needs through group teaching and discussion, relevant activity and the focused use of resources. In English lessons, they group the pupils by ability in their own classes and this arrangement has similar benefits for learning. Pupils can manage the work, which is appropriately challenging and developmental and this boosts their confidence and enables them to persevere and make progress.

18. Teachers often choose carefully thought through activities to excite the pupils and grip their enthusiasm. In a Year 2 science lesson, for example, the teacher used a 'Galaxy Ball', which contained an electric circuit and was powered by battery. She used this to demonstrate the idea of an electric circuit. All the pupils stood in a circle. They touched their finger tips together and joined the human circle to the terminals of the battery, enabling the electricity to pass around the circle through their bodies which caused the 'Galaxy Ball' to play a tune. One of the pupils was asked to disconnect their finger from the circle and the sound stopped, indicating clearly to the pupils the idea of a switch. In a Year 2 design and technology lesson, pupils were actively involved in their own design of a chassis, using their own choice of materials and solving the problem of making sure the wheels stayed on.

19. Some of the constituents of teaching are not so well developed. In some lessons the learning objectives for free choice activities are not clear and, as a result, similar activities were seen in both the Nursery and the Reception class, such as free play with dough. The Nursery children were gaining more from their learning with this material, as they were observing the effect of squeezing the dough through various tools, such as garlic crushers. Furthermore, there is often not enough intervention in the pupils' free-choice activities and insufficient adult support so that they might gain more from their self-chosen activities. Frequently the teachers have not determined the learning intentions for free play, particularly in the Reception classes.

20. Information and communication technology is not used sufficiently in lessons and most frequently pupils use the computers as a reward for finishing their work early. Too frequently the computers were idle and unused during lessons, except during specifically time-tabled lessons for information and communication technology.

21. A major weakness in the teaching of English is the lack of structure in practice in pupils' written work to help them make improvements in their spelling, punctuation and handwriting. As a result, pupils make the same mistakes in their work over a period of time and they make unsatisfactory progress in written work. Pupils, including the more capable, were not observed to proof read their work and correct spelling errors. Pupils do not take spellings home to learn on a regular basis.

22. Teachers give good support to pupils who have special educational needs within their lessons but they sometimes struggle with the large number of pupils with such needs. Where learning support assistants contribute their help, their work often lacks sufficient rigour and frequently consists of re-capping previous work, rather than targeting specific pupil weaknesses. Whilst there is an expectation that learning support assistants will give some proportion of their time to pupils with special educational needs, the arrangement is unsatisfactory because they are often fully involved with other pupils and the support they can give is insufficient and ineffective.

23. Usually the class teachers guide the work of teaching assistants to good effect but on occasions they are not given enough support and the content does not appeal to the pupils. Parent governors and other parent helpers help regularly in class and assist the teachers in supervising and working with groups to good effect.

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

24. The quality and range of the curriculum for the children in the Foundation Stage are satisfactory overall, whilst that in the Nursery is good. Provision in the Foundation Stage is based on national guidelines called Early Learning Goals with an appropriate emphasis upon personal, social and emotional development, literacy and numeracy. Activities in the Nursery are planned well. In the two Reception classes, planning is satisfactory. The Early Years policy, is currently under review in order to match new government guidance.

25. The curriculum for pupils in Key Stage 1 incorporates all National Curriculum subjects and religious education and a suitable amount of time is given to each. The content meets National Curriculum requirements and the Local Agreed Syllabus for religious education. The National Literacy Strategy is incorporated well into curriculum planning and is reflected in the structure of literacy lessons. It is increasing pupils' confidence and interest in reading. Pupils' literacy skills are appropriately developed in other subjects throughout the school, for example reading for information and writing for a range of purposes in religious education, science and history. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully implemented and has increased pupils' competence in numeracy. Pupils are systematically taught the basic skills satisfactorily overall and pupils' numeracy skills are developed in other subjects throughout the school. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy as part of the school's initiative to raise standards. Information and communication technology skills are not used sufficiently across the curriculum, however.

26. The curriculum includes satisfactory provision for personal, social and health education. Sex education, drugs awareness and health education are addressed through the science curriculum or informally, as opportunities arise. Assemblies, class discussions and discussion times when pupils sit together in a circle are used effectively to encourage pupils to think about issues, such as caring for, and sharing with, others and taking responsibility.

27. The curriculum is socially inclusive and provides equality of access and opportunity for all pupils to learn and make progress. Pupils with special educational needs have equal access to all aspects of the curriculum and the arrangements made for them in the classrooms, promote and maintain their interest in the work. As a result they make satisfactory progress.

28. At the time of the inspection, the school ran a Book Club that was open to all pupils but this was the only out-of-school activity available. The school makes good use of a range of visitors, including artists and performers and pupils make visits to museums and other places of interest both within the local community and further afield. Pupils have also had the opportunity to undertake residential visits. These activities broaden the pupils' experience and promote their personal development.

29. The school has developed links with the community, other schools and other forms of pre-school provision. Pupils visit the local churches as part of their work in religious education and members of these visit the school, either to support curriculum activities or to lead assemblies. Pupils from the school visit and entertain senior members of the community who are also invited to the school to share in some of the special events. Members of the local community visit the school to support work in local history. There are good links with other local primary schools that contribute both to the pupils' preparation for the next stage in their education, as well as supporting curriculum development. Some links have been made with local industry to support specific developments.

30. The school's special educational needs policy is good. The document is clearly written and conforms to Code of Practice requirements. The fact that the special educational needs co-ordinator is now class based for most of the week has reduced the amount of attention which the large number of pupils with special educational needs receive and often teachers struggle with the demands these pupils place on them. Strategic planning has been good over time.

31. Inclusion of pupils with special educational needs within the curriculum is good. Literacy and numeracy lessons include these pupils fully and teachers match the work well to their prior attainment in the group work. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the school's approach which aims to provide access to the full curriculum.

32. Provision for pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall but that for moral and social development is good. Pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. The daily act of collective worship, which complies with statutory requirements, provides positive opportunities for spiritual development, as for example, the recognition and celebration of individual pupil's achievements during a whole school Family Assembly, and opportunities for personal reflection and prayer. Teachers make sound use of contemporary and Bible stories, role-play, art, song and music and these activities provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on their own lives, attitudes and feelings and wonder at the joys and mysteries of the world. The school celebrates religious festivals and topical events, which supports their spiritual development.

33. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. The school's behaviour policy places a strong emphasis on positive rewards and praise. Together with individual classroom codes of conduct, which pupils draw up with their teachers, it makes a significant contribution to promoting pupils' moral development. Teachers show pupils the difference between right and wrong and place a high value on truth and honesty and, as a result, pupils' understanding of right and wrong is good. This is well reinforced by staff who provide positive role models by demonstrating respect and care for others and commitment to their work. As a result, the school is a calm and orderly community. There is a strong work ethic and all pupils work well, even when not directly supervised. Stories and themes covering moral issues are regularly used in collective worship and literacy lessons and support pupils' moral development.

34. Provision for the social development of pupils is good. Teachers and support staff set a good example to the pupils through their work as a mutually supportive team. In all classes pupils are provided with some opportunities to take responsibility that they accept willingly, although this aspect is not well developed. They work well together in collaborative tasks. They play well together on the playground at break-times. The planned work in classes on social and emotional development through the use of 'circle time' is making a good contribution to the development of pupils' self-esteem and social maturity. The school participates in both local and national events that encourage the pupils to think about their place in the community, as well as the wider world.

35. Pupils' cultural development is satisfactory. Pupils visit the library, museums, historical sites and other places of interest such as Thetford Forest and there are visits to the school by a range of visitors, including the librarian, artists and performers. These arrangements make a good contribution to pupils' awareness of both their own and other cultures. This awareness is promoted further by the study of world faiths and religions in religious education and opportunities to learn about non-western festivals that help prepare them for life in a multicultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS ?

36. Members of staff take good care of pupils and know them and their family circumstances well. First-aid is carried out appropriately and members of staff are committed to ensuring pupils' welfare. Very good provision is made for pupils with specific medical conditions. Pupils are made to feel safe and secure and this creates a good atmosphere in which they can learn. Procedures for child protection are good. All members of staff know the reporting procedures. The youngest children are given good support to help them settle in the Nursery. Lunch-times are pleasant occasions and pupils are well supervised. Pupils in Year 2 visit the adjacent junior school prior to transfer, enabling them to adjust to the move confidently. The quality of care arrangements continues that reported previously.

37. Each pupil's attendance is monitored carefully and analysis of it used by staff and the Education Welfare Service to pursue the reasons for unexplained absences. Every parent is issued with a credit card sized reminder card to contact the school if their child is unwell. Each half term, individual pupils are rewarded if their attendance is 95 per cent or above. These measures are having some effect on both authorised and unauthorised absence and improving attendance. Nevertheless many parents take their children on holiday during term-time and over one-quarter of the pupils have a lower than 90 per cent attendance rate.

38. Good systems are in place to monitor and improve behaviour. All pupils are familiar with class and school rules and know how to report any concerns to staff. Pupils value the rewards, which they receive in lessons and at lunch-times for good behaviour. The anti-bullying policy provides satisfactory guidance to staff for dealing with bullying and harassment incidents. No incidents of bullying or harassment were observed.

39. Assessment procedures across the school are good and are applied consistently, representing an improvement since the last inspection when they were inconsistent. A wide range of procedures is in place to ascertain standards of pupils' attainment and the progress they make. Teachers record the outcomes of lessons and with regular comments in a range of formats on pupils' attainments and progress. A timetable, indicating when assessments take place, ensures that assessments are regular. In the best practice, classroom assistants record assessments of pupils' contribution in, for example, whole class work.

40. All pupils with special educational needs benefit from the school's good arrangements for assessment. Individual education plans are generally good, some very good, although some recently written targets lack rigour. Teachers are aware of pupils' targets and use them in planning. Evidence over time shows that the good individual education plans and previous levels of support have enhanced pupils' progress. Arrangements for annual reviews are of good quality and conform to Code of Practice requirements.

41. Arrangements for formal assessments are good and procedures are comprehensive. All new pupils are assessed using a baseline assessment test. Records are maintained to good effect in mathematics and English but there is no record of pupils' skill development in information and communication technology. A portfolio of pupils' work is kept and good quality end-of-year reports sent to parents. In addition to teachers' daily monitoring, records are maintained on reading progress, including a phonic checklist; key word tests are used, grids are completed for National Literacy Strategy and National Numeracy work and on-going records made of pupils' learning and behaviour. This wide range of assessment is used effectively to inform curriculum planning.

42. In the Nursery, assessments provide early identification of pupils with special educational needs. In addition the Nursery teacher and the two assistants regularly observe, assess and record examples of children's learning across all aspects of the curriculum. Assessment activities in the Reception classes are used to group pupils for particular activities. In the Reception classes, children's progress in literacy and numeracy is regularly checked and recorded and the teachers also observe and record examples of children's learning across the curriculum. Assessment findings are used throughout the Foundation Stage to inform further planning and to track and support individual children's progress.

43. Teachers know the pupils' levels of attainment well and they build appropriate activities into classroom activities, which address individual needs, sometimes with additional support and guidance. Pupils with special educational needs are monitored closely both by the teacher and the special needs co-ordinator. All pupils on the special educational needs register are given individual targets. These are usually very appropriate and teachers try to address them in routine classroom work and in additional work set during lessons. Reviews and reports of pupils with special educational needs are of good quality. Individual education plans also are mostly of good quality with clear, manageable and appropriate targets with which staff are fully familiar. A strong feature of monitoring and target setting for all pupils is the process whereby groups of pupils in all classes have literacy and numeracy targets indicated on their tables. The assessment policy is of good quality, although currently being updated. The newly appointed assessment leader is effective with a clear understanding of the importance and relevance of assessment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents' and carers' views of the school are positive in almost all areas and more so than at the time of the previous inspection. Parents are pleased with the progress their children make, with behaviour, amounts of homework, the quality of teaching and the information they receive. However, a significant minority of parents expresses dissatisfaction with the level of after school activities. The headteacher has surveyed pupils and parents to find out what they would like and there are plans to introduce more activities. Currently, the only additional activity available is a book club. The inspection findings support parents' views, except for that of the leadership and management of the school which is sound.

45. The school has been successful recently in obtaining parental help in classrooms and several now help. When clearly briefed, they make an effective contribution to pupils' learning. For example, a parent assisting with a finger puppet activity in a literacy lesson in one of the Reception classes contributed to pupils' speaking and listening skills.

46. A small band of helpers, which forms the Friends' Association, has raised funds to develop the outdoor area for the Nursery. They are usually well supported at events they arrange. Good links exist between the Nursery and parents and these are maintained as children move up through the school.

47. Parents are given good information about the school and their children's progress. They are informed about the teaching content before each half-term and they value this. Annual reports are detailed and well written. They have improved since the last inspection. They give a thorough overview of progress and achievement in each subject and identify learning targets for pupils in Years 1 and 2. Parents are invited to assemblies, open evenings and educational events and most feel involved in the life of the school. Many are supportive of work which is sent home, although not all parents read with their children.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. Overall the leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. The headteacher gives sound leadership, similar to the judgement at the previous inspection. She manages many aspects well. She has a good relationship with the deputy headteacher who provides added support in particular areas of the school's work, such as the arrangements for in-service training. The headteacher provides a welcoming and positive tone to the school. Time is sometimes used on routine administrative tasks, such as monitoring attendance at the expense of monitoring and improving standards of achievement. She works well with the governing body. The school has just received 'Investors in People' status

49. The governing body is effective and fulfils its statutory responsibilities. The quality of the annual general meeting report is good. The chair of the governing body gives very strong leadership and direction. The organisation of the governing body is good. Committees have written terms of reference. The curriculum committee is particularly effective and keeps itself well informed about school developments by presentations from subject co-ordinators, working in school as volunteers and through formal visits to classrooms. They have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses in provision.

50. The school development plan is of good quality and provides detail of the priorities for both the short- and long-term. When it is written, a range of opinion is canvassed about the school's priorities for development, including that of parents, staff and governors. The current priorities are appropriate and generally on target. Success criteria and costing are carefully built in at the planning stage.

51. The school's aims are many and are met with the exception of writing development. However, the school does not yet structure pupils' writing development sufficiently well nor intervene sufficiently in what pupils write to improve its quality, including the quality of presentation.

52. The work of subject co-ordinators is satisfactory. They have produced policies in final or in draft form for the new curriculum and keep a watchful brief on their areas of responsibility. Each has intentions for the development of their responsibilities. However, arrangements to keep abreast of standards in the school are not sufficiently rigorous and consistent. Co-ordinators have not yet developed a sharp enough edge when they monitor each other's lessons. Written reports of lesson observations are very largely descriptive of what has taken place and they tend to lack developmental points.

53. The role of the senior management team is unclear. It meets too infrequently to be a powerful force for improvement and to guide the work of the school. Staff meetings are, however, regular and used purposefully to develop the curriculum. Performance management arrangements are on schedule and targets have been set for all staff.

54. Financial planning is good and well supported by professional Local Education Authority staff, although the school's balance has been reduced considerably by the recent re-organisation of the age of transfer. Day-to-day management of finances is good and administration procedures are well managed. A recent Local Education Authority audit has taken place but has not yet been published. Verbal feedback at the time made two minor suggestions about the school's arrangements and these are being attended to. All grants, such as those for special needs, are used for their intended purpose. The school has good systems for prioritising and monitoring spending and the distribution of finance for consumables and equipment makes the staff suitably accountable. The school makes good use of professional advice to ensure the principles of best value are applied.

55. The school provides sound value for money. This is based on the well below attainment on entry, the satisfactory progress which the pupils make in reading, speaking and listening and mathematics, the satisfactory quality of teaching and the pupils' good attitudes and personal development.

56. Arrangements for the funding of special educational needs are satisfactory.

57. The school is adequately resourced in all areas of the curriculum. Classrooms are well resourced and have an adequate range of equipment and materials to support teaching and learning. Good levels of consumable resources for subjects such as design and technology and art are available and storage is well organised and accessible. Subject co-ordinators have responsibility for budgets and this is effective. Audits of resources are undertaken and requirements quickly identified.

58. The accommodation is sound overall with some strengths, such as the large hall, technology room and Nursery external play area. However, the Reception classrooms are compact and do not provide easily for practical activity and the school does not have any field space. There is no storage room for physical education equipment, despite the good size of the hall. The library is located in a mobile classroom and during inclement weather its use is limited. The office is inconveniently located. The accommodation is well cared for and it is clean and bright. Attractive displays enhance the appearance of the school. The potential health hazard of the unhygienic smell from the boys toilets identified during the last inspection has been resolved; the toilets have been re-decorated and extractor fans fitted.

59. There is a balance of teaching experience amongst the staff. Since the last inspection, teachers' knowledge and understanding of some key subjects, such as information and communication technology, design and technology and music have improved. Since the age-range the school provides for was reduced in September 2000, the special needs co-ordinator has a full-time teaching responsibility and the overall quality of individual education plans is not as good as it was. This leads on occasions to the learning support assistants not having clear enough direction. Additionally the large number of pupils with special educational needs sometimes make very large demands on teachers, especially in written work. The EAZ has provided good support for the school since its inception, particularly in reading. Nevertheless, the school's own level of staffing is not quite as good as at the time of the last inspection. Appropriate arrangements are in place for staff to support each other, for example by planning jointly.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

60. To improve the work of the school further the governing body, the headteacher and staff should address the following issues:

- **Take steps to improve the pupils' standards of written work by:**
 - a) Structuring the work in spelling, punctuation and handwriting to a much greater extent;
 - b) Intervening in pupils' work when pupils are writing to point out errors which are appropriate to their stage of development in becoming writers;
 - c) Introducing reminders to pupils which pupils can check against for themselves when writing;
 - d) Making more use of personal dictionaries and word banks to support their work;
 - e) Ensuring pupils learn key words and common spelling patterns;
 - f) Demanding better presentation of pupils' work and setting higher expectations for pupils' written work.(Paras 2, 3, 20, 70, 79, 80, 84, 94)

- **Review the use of the headteacher's time and the work of the senior management team against the need to improve standards further by;**
 - a) making the senior management team a more rigorous tool in improving standards and making more effective use of the headteacher's time;
 - b) reviewing the regularity of senior management team meetings to address issues and raise standards.(Paras 47, 52)

- **Use information and communication technology to a greater extent across the curriculum and ensure the computers are used to better effect.**
(Paras 19, 24, 40, 113, 117)

- **Develop a better partnership with parents in the joint work of educating their children and improving levels of attendance by**

Researching into best practice adopted in similar kinds of areas and using the results of the research to improve these unsatisfactory features

(Paras 10, 36, 46)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	55
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
4	5	40	47	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	24.5	172
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	5
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	87

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	16
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	34

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.7
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	00 [99]	27	25	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	21	24
	Girls	16	21	23
	Total	36	42	47
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 [69]	81 [64]	90 [83]
	National	84 [82]	85 [83]	90 [87]

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	23	23
	Girls	17	18	20
	Total	38	41	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	73 [66]	79 [83]	83 [85]
	National	84 [82]	88 [86]	88 [87]

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

Exclusions in the last school year

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	3
Indian	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	142
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

	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 Year 2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.6
Average class size	28.5

Education support staff: YR – Year 2

Total number of education support staff	7.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	133

Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	24.5
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	50
Number of pupils per FTE adult	8.2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	99/00
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	£
Total income	480,868
Total expenditure	506,541
Expenditure per pupil	2078
Balance brought forward from previous year	47,070
Balance carried forward to next year	21,397

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	197
Number of questionnaires returned	42

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	79	17	0	2	2
My child is making good progress in school.	59	39	0	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	36	50	5	5	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	43	43	8	0	5
The teaching is good.	63	34	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	37	51	5	0	7
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	68	27	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	61	27	5	0	7
The school works closely with parents.	38	43	14	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	38	36	14	0	12
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	52	29	10	0	10
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	34	15	7	17

Other issues raised by parents

Parents are concerned that failing schools obtain more money than schools which pass their Ofsted inspection. The teachers are doing a marvelous job with pupils' behaviour. There is a big difference between their behaviour in school and that which some pupils exhibit outside the school. Teachers stay to the children's discos.

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

61. Children whose fourth birthday falls between September 1st and the end of February are admitted into the Nursery in September and those whose fourth birthday falls between March 1st and the end of August are admitted into the Nursery in January. All children attend the Nursery on a part-time basis for three terms, after which they transfer into one of the two Reception classes either in September or January, depending upon whether they are five between September and the end of February or between March and the end of August. At the time of the inspection there were 51 children in the Nursery and 58 children in the Reception classes. It is not possible to make comparisons with the previous inspection report because judgements now relate to the end of the Foundation Stage.

62. The school has good induction procedures to support children and their parents. The Nursery carries out checks on pupils' intellectual and personal development and tests are carried out during the children's first half-term in the Reception classes. The results of the Nursery assessments show that the attainment of the majority of children on entry is well below that expected in English skills and personal, social and emotional development. Their attainment in mathematics is below that expected.

63. The majority of children make good progress in the Nursery in all areas of experience and particularly in their personal, social and emotional development. Except for personal, social and emotional development, attainment on entry to the Reception year is below that expected, particularly in language. The majority of the children are in line to attain the nationally recommended standards or Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development and mathematical development by the end of the Foundation Stage. However, a significant number of pupils will not achieve the expected standards in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical and creative development. Progress is satisfactory in the Reception year.

64. The classrooms used by the Reception children do not fully support the Foundation Stage curriculum because of their restricted size and the number of children in the Reception year. In addition, the Reception classes do not have immediate access to a secure outdoor area.

65. Activities in both the Nursery and the Reception classes are planned around a two-year programme of themes, including literacy themes. All adults plan together, led by the Nursery teacher who is the co-ordinator. This makes a significant contribution to the quality of the provision particularly in the Nursery where the teacher, the Nursery assistant and the special needs assistant work very well together. Medium-term and daily planning clearly identify assessment opportunities. The classroom assistant who supports the work of the two teachers in the Reception classes is fully informed of planned activities and their learning objectives. The relationships between teaching and non-teaching staff are good overall, and very good in the Nursery, and these make a significant contribution to the progress that children make. The Nursery assistant and classroom assistants provide good support that promotes children's achievements.

Personal, social and emotional development

66. Children make good progress in their personal, social and emotional development and attain the standards expected by the end of the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the Nursery. In the Nursery children settle quickly and show a good understanding of daily routines as a result of the good induction systems and relationships that are established. The home visits carried out by the Nursery teacher and the Nursery assistant before

children start in the Nursery play a strong part in the speed and ease with which children settle. At the beginning of sessions, the children register their arrival and quickly select an activity and, where necessary, resources for themselves. They persevere at their chosen activity, sometimes for extended periods of time, and play happily with their friends. They talk readily to adults and each other about what they are doing and are confident in their relationships with all the adults and with each other. They are learning to be sensitive to, and caring for, one another through discussion times. They are helped to take increasing responsibility for themselves and the Nursery environment, for example by putting on aprons when painting and putting resources away when they have finished with them. They enjoy tidying up when asked and do so sensibly.

67. In the Reception classes the children sit quietly and are well behaved during registration and when adults are talking, sometimes for extended periods of time. They are ready to answer questions during whole class and group discussions and listen appropriately to both adults and to each other. In set tasks they talk about their work with the adults and each other and play happily with others when given the opportunity for free play. They show consideration for others in their activities. The adults successfully encourage children to take responsibility for looking after themselves, for example changing for physical education and dressing themselves when they come back to their classrooms.

68. Throughout the Foundation Stage, all adults have high expectations of children's behaviour and concentration. The children respond well to these expectations and persist at teacher directed tasks, directed play activities and free play showing good levels of concentration and perseverance. There are well established rules for behaviour and these, together with the good role models provided by the adults, make a positive contribution to the children's good behaviour.

Communication, language and literacy

69. Children make satisfactory progress overall throughout the Foundation Stage and progress in the Nursery is good. Nevertheless, the majority of children do not attain the nationally expected standards in this aspect of their learning. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the Nursery. In both the Nursery and the Reception classes, many activities are planned around traditional and modern stories. These foster children's enjoyment of books as well as helping them to understand how stories work. The Nursery teacher uses chosen books for focused work with small groups encouraging them to predict the story from the pictures before reading it to them. The children are encouraged to read with the teacher. She also uses these opportunities well to encourage the children's listening skills and introduce new vocabulary. For example, using the story 'Titch', she helped the children to observe the difference in size of some of the articles shown and used comparative words such as big, bigger, small and smaller.

70. The writing area gives children the opportunity to share their ideas by making marks on paper (early writing) and some are developing a sound understanding of the purpose of writing. All the adults participate and intervene in the children's free-play and use these opportunities well to encourage their speaking and listening skills. Daily opportunities enable children to say and sing a variety of rhymes from memory and to recognise and try to write their own names.

71. In the Reception classes, a strong emphasis is given to the development of early reading and writing skills through activities based on the National Literacy Strategy guidelines. As a result children are developing an understanding of phonics by learning the sounds and shapes of individual letters. Most can relate this understanding to the initial letter of their names. All the children have opportunities to learn how to form and write individual letters. Many of the children are able to write their own first names legibly and correctly. Most have a positive attitude to writing and are ready to attempt writing on their own using their phonic knowledge. A small number know both how

individual letters are written and the sounds they make and use this knowledge to sound out words and then try to write them. However these children receive insufficient support in learning how to write high frequency words and known reading scheme words correctly. The teachers demonstrate writing regularly by writing words and stories dictated by the whole class, or groups or individual children.

72. Children have regular opportunities to listen to stories and rhymes and can recall characters and events in familiar stories such as 'The Enormous Turnip'. They take books home to share with their parents, as well as vocabulary from the reading scheme to learn, and teachers and some parents make effective use of the reading diary. Teachers hear children read regularly in school and they keep helpful records of their progress. Some children are developing a satisfactory sight vocabulary that supports their reading. The teachers provide resources and facilities for free play, including role-play, but the lack of adult involvement in these activities limits their effectiveness in helping children to develop their spoken language skills. The sharing of one classroom assistant between the two Reception classes, combined with large class sizes, contributes to the lack of adult support for children's work on some occasions.

Mathematical development

73. Children make good progress in their mathematical development and attain the national expectations by the end of the Foundation Stage. Teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the Nursery. In the Nursery the children regularly sing action number rhymes that use counting forwards and backwards to ten. They act out the rhymes and the adults encourage them to work out the difference in number as children are either added or taken away. The teacher also provides regular structured activities that focus on aspects of mathematics, such as counting, in which the children work in small groups. She encourages them to talk about decisions they have made, for example by asking "How did you know how many there were?" and questioning how they might solve particular problems. She models mathematical language well and encourages them to use mathematical language. Many of the daily activities and routines involve the children in mathematics and planning supports all adults in effectively supporting children's mathematical development as they play. For example snack time provides real opportunities for counting and matching whilst shop play gives children the opportunity to handle and recognise money and develop their understanding of heavier and lighter as they weigh out fruit and vegetables.

74. In the Reception classes, planning for numeracy activities is based on the National Numeracy Strategy guidelines and has clear learning objectives. The use of appropriate mathematical language and challenging questions by all staff help children to make satisfactory progress. As a result, many can count forwards and backwards to twenty and beyond through the regular use of well-selected number rhymes and other counting opportunities, recognise and write numbers to ten and make simple mathematical patterns. The higher attaining children can use addition to ten to combine sets. They have a sound understanding of heavy and light as comparative measures, can order objects by size and use a variety of weighing apparatus correctly. They make satisfactory gains in their knowledge and understanding of plane and solid shapes as they handle and count everyday objects and resources in both planned and free-choice activities. They are developing an understanding of capacity and volume through play with sand and water. The lack of adult involvement in children's free play means that children's mathematical thinking and development is not always challenged.

Knowledge and Understanding of the World

75. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress in this area of learning but do not attain the standards expected for children of this age. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the Nursery. In their planning teachers make good links between different areas of learning through the use of the half-termly theme and this enhances the children's learning. The provision made for the Nursery children is characterised by the provision of a wide range of interesting and motivating activities both indoors and outside. As a result in conversation

they are ready to talk about themselves, their families and events in their lives. They are beginning to develop a sense of present and past as they recall events in the Nursery and in their own lives and stories such as 'Titch' help them to understand change. At snack time they are encouraged to observe and talk about difference in taste, shape, colour and texture of different foods.

76. They explore the properties of different materials such as soil, sand, dough and water and begin to understand how different things behave. They are beginning to learn about growth by planting seeds. As they play outside they notice different weather patterns and observe different features of the environment. They use the computer independently and are learning the skills that will enable them to use these confidently and with enjoyment. They use tools and equipment purposefully and safely. In the Reception classes children continue to develop their understanding of this aspect of their learning. They understand some of the conditions needed to help plants grow successfully. Through the use of photographs and story they can talk about some of the features of 'then' and 'now' and are beginning to develop an understanding of the purpose of maps through simple map making. They have an understanding of how their bodies work and the significance of the skeleton. They use computers and headphones regularly to support different aspects of their learning and use these and other tools and equipment with increasing control.

Physical development

77. At the end of the Foundation Stage, children do not attain the standards expected, although they make satisfactory progress throughout the Foundation Stage. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the Nursery. The Nursery has secure outdoor areas and children enjoy daily opportunities for vigorous physical movement outside as well as using these to explore other aspects of the curriculum. They are beginning to learn about their bodies and use space well showing an awareness of others around them. They use a variety of wheeled toys and climbing and balancing equipment confidently and safely and respond to any instructions quickly. They are developing their hand coordination skills through activities such as drawing, painting and making things with dough. All the adults support the children using appropriate language. Because the Reception classes do not have their own secure outdoor area, nor are they located close to the Nursery outdoor area, opportunities for regular vigorous large and small muscle development are more limited. Equally opportunities to use the outside environment for exploration and discovery across the curriculum are also limited. Each Reception class uses the Nursery outdoor area for half an hour each week when children have the opportunity for free play using the wheeled toys and climbing equipment as well as any directed activity that has been planned. On these occasions children were observed to use wheeled toys and the climbing equipment safely and with enjoyment and teachers supported them appropriately to learn and develop their physical skills. They played well together. They also use the hall on a regular basis where they use both large and small apparatus and develop their movement skills. They learn how to use different parts of their bodies to move along apparatus and when jumping from apparatus to land safely. They handle a variety of tools including pencils, crayons, brushes, glue spreaders and scissors, although several children struggle with the correct technique and they find difficulty in using them to execute fine movements of control.

Creative development

78. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children make satisfactory progress but do not attain the standards expected for children of this age. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and good in the Nursery. The teachers provide a range of activities that allow the children to express themselves creatively. In both the Nursery and the Reception classes, good links are made between music, art and literacy activities. Children enjoy joining in with simple rhymes and singing and sing tunefully. They enjoy opportunities to play untuned percussion instruments, tap in time to a beat and recognise and can talk about changes in rhythm. In the Nursery, they have daily opportunities to paint pictures from their own experiences. They also use a variety of materials and techniques to illustrate known stories or other aspects of their work in both two- and three-dimension. In the two Reception classes, children experience a range of materials and techniques to create pictures, patterns and models.

However, they have limited regular opportunities to paint pictures from their own imagination. Throughout the Foundation Stage, children have regular opportunities for imaginative role-play where they can act out different characters and events within a given theme. Many use tools such as pencils, brushes and scissors with satisfactory control, although several children experience difficulty.

79. The co-ordinator, who has a secure background in the Foundation Stage, is knowledgeable and enthusiastic. Both the observation of some of the teaching in the Reception classes and the regular collaborative planning undertaken with the Reception class teachers, provides her with a clear view of work across the Foundation Stage. She has a good understanding of the main issues. Resources are satisfactory overall, although at present she has no responsibility for resourcing the Reception classes. In the Nursery, parental involvement is encouraged and supported and parents were observed to be relaxed and confident with all the adults when bringing and collecting their children. Some help in the Nursery on a regular basis. They are familiar with Nursery routines, for example collecting work done by their children to take home and borrowing books from the Nursery library to share with their children at home. The Nursery gives each child a Nursery Diary that is sent home on a fortnightly basis. Staff use these to share the planned activities for the next two weeks with parents and also inform them what their children have been doing in the previous two weeks. The diaries make a very good contribution to the full and continuing involvement of parents in their children's education.

ENGLISH

80. Attainment in English overall is below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and has fallen since the last inspection. Pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking, good progress in listening and many make good progress in reading but it is unsatisfactory in all aspects of writing. About three-quarters of the pupils are in line to attain the expected standards for seven-year olds in reading, although many fewer pupils are expected to reach such a comparative standard in their writing. The above average number of pupils with special educational needs, as well as high rates of pupil mobility affect standards adversely.

81. In the 2000 national tests for seven-year-olds, the percentage of pupils reaching the expected level or above in reading and writing was well below the national average. It was below average in comparison with similar schools. However, trends over the period 1997-2000 show a steady improvement that is above the national trend. Results in 2000 are below those reported at the previous inspection. Between 1996 and 1999 the performance of girls was broadly in line with the national trend, but boys performed less well than girls.

82. Standards in listening are satisfactory by the end of the key stage but those for speaking are below those expected. The majority of pupils listen appropriately to teachers, other adults and to each other during whole-class and group discussions. Pupils talk about features of stories they study, relate to characters and use their own experiences to consider events and predict possible consequences. They learn appropriate language to describe material they read. For example, higher attaining Year 2 pupils use the terms non-fiction, contents, index and glossary accurately and can explain in their own words what these terms mean. Whilst many pupils respond appropriately to questions about the text with answers that maintain the general flow of the discussion, a significant number do not regularly join in unless directly asked by the teacher.

83. In both Year 1 and Year 2 pupils listen to and read a variety of stories, poetry and non-fiction books assisting in their enjoyment of reading. Many pupils respond well to questions about plot, events and characters in stories, reflecting their interest in, and understanding of, the texts read. They draw on their personal experiences to comment on the ideas expressed in stories. The school places a high emphasis upon the teaching of phonic skills and these are taught regularly and systematically as

part of literacy lessons. As a result, by the age of seven, most pupils can use their knowledge of phonics to help them decode unknown words. The most able pupils read fluently for their age, using a range of strategies, including phonics, knowledge of word patterns and context to tackle unfamiliar words. They predict further events in the stories they read and recall details of the plot.

84. By the end of the key stage attainment overall is in line with expectations in reading. Higher attaining pupils read aloud with good pace and expression taking account of punctuation, features of print and meaning. However a significant number of pupils, including some who generally read accurately, do not always have a sound understanding of the meaning of the words that they read and their understanding of the text is more limited. The school is using the Literacy Framework to good effect to raise standards in reading. However, because of the high number of pupils with special educational needs and pupil mobility, about one-quarter of the pupils are not reaching the level expected. Pupils take books home either to share with parents or read on their own and reading diaries provide an effective means of communication between parents and teachers. In school pupils are heard to read regularly both individually and in guided reading activities. Some parents, but not all, make a good contribution to their children's progress in reading by hearing them read regularly.

85. Present standards in writing are below expectations overall by the end of the key stage, and progress is unsatisfactory because insufficient attention is given to the quality of spelling, handwriting and punctuation. Teachers have successfully encouraged pupils to have both a positive attitude to writing and to see themselves as writers. As a result, most pupils are very ready to share their ideas using writing. They write for a variety of purposes and audiences including imaginative fiction, personal writing, re-telling known stories, poetry, factual accounts, instructions, letters, lists, note-taking and labeling. By the age of seven, higher attaining pupils can write appropriately and at length and are beginning to select words for particular effect within their writing. However, the majority of pupils, including more capable pupils, tend to rely primarily on their phonic skills when writing with the result that spelling is often inconsistent, including that of high frequency and common sight words. Punctuation is inconsistent and used too infrequently in their work. For those pupils whose spoken language reflects community language speech patterns, the reliance on phonic skills for spelling words is not always helpful. During the inspection, pupils were not observed to use personal word support banks to assist them in their writing and spelling of key words was often inaccurate. Pupils, including the more capable, were not observed to proof read their work and correct spelling errors. Pupils do not take spellings home to learn on a regular basis. Pupils begin to learn how to join their writing in Year 1 and are taught how to form letters correctly, although the use of unlined paper for this activity does not always support them in understanding the particular features of some letters nor their size in relationship to others. The handwriting of many pupils was often inconsistent and work was frequently poorly presented.

86. There are some opportunities for pupils to apply their literacy skills across the curriculum, for example using books to support their work, writing a sequence of actions taken in design and technology and using their speaking and listening skills in class and group discussions.

87. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress. Teaching linked to individual needs and well-matched learning materials and activities contribute to their sound achievements.

88. Overall pupils' attitudes to learning are good. They are well behaved in lessons and apply themselves with good concentration, purpose and interest to any tasks they are set, even when not directly supervised. They co-operate well when working in collaborative pairs or small groups and help each other both formally and informally in discussing aspects of their work. Their response in the English lessons observed was always positive and interested and they clearly enjoyed their work.

89. The quality of teaching in English is never less than satisfactory and sometimes is good or better in both Key Stage 1 year groups. Where teaching is good teachers make effective links between previous work and new learning. The purpose of lessons is made very clear and this helps the pupils to understand what they are doing and why. During group activities pupils complete tasks that are well matched to their individual needs and, as a result, they make sound progress. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and this means that lessons proceed smoothly. Their relationships with pupils are good and these are significant in promoting and maintaining pupils' good attitudes to their work. Teachers have good subject knowledge and this helps them to plan and teach with confidence. Nevertheless, the school does not have good enough whole-school systems to teach spelling, handwriting and punctuation and this is hindering pupils' progress in written work.

90. There is an agreed whole school system in place for the assessment and recording of pupils' progress in reading, phonics and writing. Pupils' work is regularly marked but marking does not help pupils to understand what they need to do to improve. All pupils have literacy targets and these contribute to their sound progress.

91. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge. She provides support and advice for colleagues and also monitors teaching and learning and medium-term planning. As a result of these procedures, she has a sound understanding of the issues that need to be addressed to raise standards. There is a good policy for English in place with separate policies for spelling, handwriting and learning to write and these provide good guidance and support for teachers. However, they are not influencing practice sufficiently.

92. The school has adopted the Literacy Framework as its scheme of work. Training in issues related to literacy form part of the school's in-service programme. Literacy resources are good and these are centrally organised to meet the needs of each key stage. Additional materials have been purchased to support the needs of boys in particular. All classes are well resourced with a good range of general reading material, as well as having graded readers for home-school reading. There is also a satisfactorily resourced and attractive library but sited in a separate mobile classroom. Teachers take their classes to the library to select books. However, its location does not support its use by individual pupils for independent study or research. The good quality resources are used well and make a positive contribution to the quality of pupils' learning and the status of literacy throughout the school.

MATHEMATICS

93. Standards of attainment were in line with expectations at the time of the last inspection report in 1996. A big dip in pupils' performance ensued in the 1997 national tests when results were in the lowest five per cent nationally. Since then, standards of attainment have been gradually but consistently improving. Results in the most recent tests were still below the national average but they were average compared to similar schools. The trend of improvement has been much higher than the national improvement in recent years. Whilst the proportion of pupils gaining the higher level was well below the national average, the proportion of pupils obtaining the expected level was close to it. Overall, current standards of attainment in Year 2 are below expectations and are not as high as those reported at the time of the last inspection but they are picking up again and getting closer to those previously reported. In the current Year 2 cohort, about two-thirds of the pupils are in line to obtain the nationally expected standard at the end of Key Stage 1, although few are expected to reach the higher level. The range of experiences the pupils engage in matches the National Curriculum Programmes of Study.

94. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils know half past and o'clock times and some know quarter past and quarter to. They can measure accurately small lengths in centimetres and also draw a line on paper prescribed to be a few centimetres shorter than an already drawn line. Pupils understand odd and even numbers and can count in two's. They interpret simple block and pictorial graphs. They understand the term half-full and can order numbers to twenty. Most can order two digit numbers from highest to lowest.

95. Levels of accuracy are variable when pupils undertake written work, particularly when not supported by number lines and the 100 square. Many pupils make mistakes in calculation. A significant number of the more capable pupils rely on these resources as a support or still need to use their fingers. Few pupils have committed their number bonds to memory. When writing numbers, pupils frequently form them incorrectly and a significant number of pupils reverse some digits. Presentation of work is often untidy and setting out of work lacks thought. For example, repeating patterns involving free hand drawn shapes are inaccurate and the shapes are of different size and not drawn accurately. They were not representative of an accurate pattern.

96. The quality of teaching, overall, is satisfactory but occasionally excellent in Year 1. Lessons usually proceed at a satisfactory pace. A particular strength in the quality of teaching is the match of work to pupils' prior attainment. This is exemplified by the setting of pupils according to their capabilities in Year 2, which is working effectively, and the teachers of both sets further subdivide the sets into ability groups. These arrangements are helping the pupils to understand their work better and they are making sound progress. Teachers use resources effectively so that pupils are engaged with their work and developing satisfactory levels of understanding. The range of resources is often good, although amounts are only satisfactory, and pupils select the most appropriate to assist them with particular tasks. In the activity part of the lessons, pupils usually achieve sufficient amounts of work but the levels of working noise are sometimes a little high which affects the amount of work produced. In the best lesson pupils' attention and interest were held throughout and all pupils were challenged effectively. Pupils wanted to contribute answers. They were keen, listened carefully and made very good gains in estimating, for example the number of small squares which would fit into a big rectangle. The teacher not only had good subject knowledge but was able to develop pupils' conceptual understanding through a range of well chosen activities.

97. The co-ordinator has good expertise but has not been enabled to monitor sufficiently and the sampling of work has not been maintained at its former level. The record of pupils' achievements in the subject, developed through the EAZ, is very detailed and helpful and assists the staff to match the work to pupils' levels of attainment. A little use is made of mathematics across the curriculum, for example in science.

SCIENCE

98. In the most recent teacher assessments in science, the percentage of pupils attaining the expected level was below the national average. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level was similar to that nationally. Overall results were well below average as judged by teacher assessments of pupils nationally. Compared to similar schools they were below the national average but above average for the proportion of pupils obtaining the higher level. Currently the attainment of most pupils is in line with national expectations for the end of Key Stage 1. The curriculum meets national requirements. Attainment is similar to that reported at the time of the last inspection.

99. By the end of Year 2 pupils can name the main parts of a tree or plant. They understand that things can change state as when chocolate is melted or pastry baked. They appreciate that some things are natural and others man-made. They know the component parts of a simple electrical circuit. They appreciate that the effect of sound diminishes as distance is increased from the source. They have good opportunities to experiment and investigate and are beginning to understand the

process of scientific investigation as when they find out about the best conditions for plant growth. They communicate their results in a variety of ways such as in written, pictorial and tabular forms. Pupils make good progress in science from a low base of knowledge on entry.

100. The quality of teaching in the subject is good. Teachers captivate the pupils' interest through well planned lessons which emphasise investigative activities, often adding a sense of wonder to learning. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils all touched each other's finger tips and evidence that they were conducting electricity was provided by connecting the circle of finger tips to a small 'Galaxy Ball' which contained a battery. It made a tune as the circle of finger tips was joined to it. The idea of a switch was clearly demonstrated through this well thought through idea. The practical approach enables the pupils to enjoy the work and they learn with interest and fun, concentrating well as a result on the well chosen activities. Questioning is often probing and often focuses on problem-solving. For example, Year 1 pupils had to suggest how they could measure distance from the source of sound in the hall. Some suggested they could count the tiles or use a trundle wheel. It also encouraged pupils to use language as they suggested the sound 'faded away'. Occasionally, information and communication technology is used to report the results of their findings. Teachers make good use of resources in lessons and amounts are sometimes good so all can benefit from practical experience and be kept active. Good use is also made of prediction, as when the pupils predicted whether a circuit would light under given conditions.

101. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic, has good skills and has worked hard to make science an important part of the curriculum. She held a parents' evening which was well supported. She draws the staff's attention to important elements in teaching the subject, such as the practical emphasis and how links can be made with other subjects. The range and levels of resources are adequate overall and the scheme is suitably planned based on national materials. The portfolio of work samples and photographs which is being built up is providing an example to staff of what can be achieved and helping to set and improve standards further.

ART AND DESIGN

102. Pupils' attainment in art as at the time of the last inspection is in line with national expectations. By age seven, pupils have experienced a wide range of media including pencil, crayon paint and clay. They recognise shape and pattern and can describe texture and tone. For example, Year 2 class in experimenting with work in black and white were able to describe how they could develop a picture by using tone to replace colour. Pupils have a good understanding of how different effects can be generated. Year 1 pupils reproduced work in the style of Monet and successfully rubbed chalk and pastel to create an effective background of green, blue and yellow clearly influenced by the artist's style and choice of colours. Pupils' observational drawing skills are good. They can identify the important aspects of an object they wish to draw. Their drawings of a bicycle wheel showed that they had noticed how the spokes crossed over near to the hub and how the light had the effect of changing the colour of the rim from one side of the wheel to another. Pupils are able to discuss their work and suggest how it can be modified or improved. They make good connections in their artwork with experiences they have of working in other areas, for example, in design and technology. Displays of pupils work around the school indicate how they have an appreciation of line and colour and an understanding of the importance of quality. Years 1 and 2 pupils can describe how to improve a drawing or a model.

103. The quality of teaching and learning in lessons observed was at least satisfactory and often good and clearly contributes to the standards pupils attain. Art and design lessons are carefully planned to meet National Curriculum requirements and pupils' needs. Teachers provide good demonstration of techniques and their subject knowledge is good. Pupils are encouraged to experiment and refine their work, for example when using only black and white medium one pupil

reproduced a photograph of an ocean liner which showed not only remarkable observational skill, but also the ability to refine his original work to a high standard. Pupils clearly enjoy their work in art and design. They respond well to the demonstrations and support they receive and persevere with tasks and techniques which are new to them. They show pride in their finished work. Behaviour in art and design lessons is good, but pupils with special educational needs receive insufficient support.

104. The curriculum is appropriate. It addresses knowledge, skills and understanding effectively, however the subject policy is outdated. The subject co-ordinator has good understanding of art and design and is able to provide support and advice to the other staff. Resources are adequate and good arrangements are in place to ensure that consumable materials are always available.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

105. Due to timetable arrangements it was only possible to see one lesson during the inspection. Observation of this lesson, scrutiny of pupils' work and records and discussions with pupils and staff show that attainment in the subject is now in line with national expectations and has improved since the last inspection.

106. Design and technology is well established in the school and, by age seven, pupils have experienced the use and manipulation of a range of materials and techniques. They work with paper, card, textiles construction kits and resistant materials and have developed a technological vocabulary using words such as design, evaluate, chassis and axle. They use tools confidently and they understand that certain tools are required for particular techniques. They know the difference between cutting and sawing and make suggestions about techniques to use when working with particular materials. A Year 2 class designing and making a wheeled vehicle expressed good ideas about its construction and suggested effective ways of fixing body parts together and assembling the axle to the vehicle. Work on display indicates that pupils working with a range of materials know how to draw, cut, fasten, assemble and disassemble. It also indicates their increasing understanding of design issues, particularly the importance of ensuring that things they make achieve their design intentions, work and are securely held together.

107. The quality of teaching and learning is good and has impacted on improved standards in the subject, despite the weaknesses in the undated and brief subject policy which does not give much attention to teaching and learning or the identification of key skills. Teachers have sound understanding and knowledge of the subject and pupils' skills have developed well, along with their understanding of how things can be made, improved and tested. Teachers' planning is good. It provides a good balance of activities, which cover the subject requirements and the work captures pupils' interests. Consequently pupils show a lot of involvement in the activities and talk confidently about what they have made and how and why they carried out certain operations. Pupils with special educational needs are insufficiently supported.

108. Leadership of the subject is sound and resources are good.

GEOGRAPHY

109. Little geography teaching was taking place during the inspection period and judgements are based on scrutiny of work, discussions with staff and pupils and observation of a Year 2 lesson. Standards of attainment in geography are similar to those reported at the previous inspection and in line with expectations.

110. Most pupils understand simple co-ordinates and can locate features on an imaginary island they have drawn. They can draw their route to school. They have drawn a school plan indicating the areas which are planted. They make studies of an imaginary island and visualise what life is like in remote areas, although there is a lack of videos for such work to help them develop accurate concepts. In the one lesson observed, in which the teaching was satisfactory, pupils looked at aerial photographs and were able to identify features such as a caravan park, sea, beach and houses and then transfer these to a drawn outline of the same area. They have some understanding of the differences between Thetford and a coastal town, such as Great Yarmouth, and know that seaside resorts might contain such features as a boat park or permanent fairground. Resource provision and co-ordination of the subject are satisfactory.

HISTORY

111. Due to timetabling arrangements, only one lesson of history was seen during the inspection. Observation of this lesson, scrutiny of pupils' work and displays and discussion with pupils and staff indicate that standards are in line with national expectations and similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils are developing a sense of chronology and by the age of seven have developed an understanding of the past and how peoples' lives were different. They show an interest in what happened and how, they ask questions such as "What was it like?" In the lesson observed, comparing homes in the past with the present, the teacher skilfully presented a range of old household artefacts. Pupils showed great interest and made observations such as "it's a bit like the ones we use now" or "we don't have those anymore". Pupils work and displays indicates good coverage of, for example, historical enquiry, chronology and knowledge of the past through and study of events, such as the Great Fire of London and famous people, such as Pepys.

112. Teaching and learning in history are good. Planning is now good and is focused on National Curriculum requirements. The quality of work has improved since the last inspection. Good opportunities are taken to bring history alive by visits and visitors to the school. Teachers' subject knowledge is sound. Pupils are aware of change in their lives and are beginning to relate to events in the past. They show good progress in their ability to understand how things have changed over time.

113. The co-ordinator has sound subject knowledge and the policy, although brief in detail, indicates the key areas of study. Resources for the teaching of history are adequate.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

114. Pupils' attainment in information and communication technology has improved since the previous inspection report and the attainment of most pupils is now in line with expectations by the end of Key Stage 1. A good range of information and communication technology work is taught and the curriculum complies with national requirements. Nevertheless, pupils do not have enough opportunities to use computers across the curriculum in lessons other than those devoted to information and communication technology. Computers are often unused in lessons or used as a reward for early completion of work. Occasionally good use is made of links to mathematics such as in the graphs produced for their favourite play park apparatus and to represent the different ways pupils come to school. They are also used well to interest pupils in story and early reading development, although they could be used to better effect with pupils who have special educational needs. Overall, pupils' progress is sound.

115. Pupils can use digital cameras and transpose the images onto screen. They operate cassette recorders and the music centre. They know how to compose text on screen, although their word-processing skills are not well developed. Nevertheless, they can delete letters using the backspace. They know the function of, and can use, the space bar, return key and backspace. They have a good facility with the mouse and can select icons and move images across the screen to their required position. They can insert and use CD-Roms, for example to obtain specific information. With adult support they use the Internet and can send e-mails. They can close and open files and retrieve personal work. They appreciate that information can be sent in different ways from visual images such as posters to modern technological forms.

116. Pupils are interested in information and communication technology work. They enjoy the opportunities when they work on the computer and work with interest and perseverance. In a Year 2 lesson observed, they showed good skills in entering information to a data base about holidays and knew how to enter the next record. In a Year 1 lesson pupils could deduce information from posters assisting their knowledge that information can be drawn from different sources.

117. The quality of teaching in the formal information and communication technology lessons observed was consistently good. The teachers have good skills and knowledge in information and communication technology. They know the programs well that they demonstrate. Their teaching intentions are clear. Questioning is effective and they have good class management. They ensure that all pupils engage profitably in their work, despite the limited number of computers in each classroom. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the pupils who were not working directly on the computer engaged in logical activities which related to binary theory and in which the answer could only be yes or no. They asked questions to try and guess the name of a shape from a range of shapes on the floor which had already been chosen by another pupil.

118. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. However, the co-ordinator is not monitoring the work in the subject enough and has yet to develop a profile of skills to help teachers know how well individual pupils are progressing and with which to assist in the next stages for their learning.

MUSIC

119. The school fulfils the National Curriculum requirements for music. This is an improvement since the last inspection at which time the school did not teach all aspects of the programmes of study for music. By the end of the key stage, pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress.

120. In Year 1 pupils enjoy singing a range of songs. They sing tunefully in unison and show a good sense of rhythm and pitch. They are able to use untuned and tuned percussion instruments, as well as their voices, to reproduce notes of different duration. They use instruments to compose short musical compositions that reflect their understanding of duration, pitch and dynamics and are learning how these could be recorded so that they can be played again. In Year 2 pupils extend their repertoire of known songs and hymns and refine their vocal skills through regular singing opportunities. They work in collaborative groups to create, record and perform their own compositions using tuned and untuned percussion. In both year groups, pupils have regular opportunities to listen to a range of musical pieces by different composers. They can make and describe personal responses to music and are developing an understanding of different musical moods. They are beginning to make thoughtful responses to music following careful listening. By the end of the key stage, most pupils can identify and name a range of instruments.

121. Pupils enjoy all aspects of their music lessons and participate with lively enthusiasm. They sing well and listen attentively to recorded music. When working with instruments they use them appropriately. They are able to organise themselves into groups when required and can negotiate aspects of musical composition. They are acquiring a satisfactory knowledge of musical terminology.

122. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are planned carefully with clear learning objectives and there are identified opportunities for assessment.

123. A sound policy is in place and the school has adopted national guidance as its scheme of work. This guidance, together with commercial materials, provide good support for teachers. The headteacher, who is also the co-ordinator for music, monitors half-termly planning, as well as receiving a tape recording of pupils' work from each teacher. Centrally stored resources are well organised and include a comprehensive range of songbooks, tuned and untuned percussion instruments, CD's and tapes, and are well organised and accessible. In addition, each year group has its own set of musical instruments to support lessons. Resources are of a satisfactory quality overall.

124. Pupils learn a range of songs from other cultures and this makes a good contribution to their cultural development. The opportunity to hear a range of recorded music and reflect on pieces heard during assemblies contributes to their spiritual development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. Pupils' attainment in physical education is in line with expectations for the end of Key Stage 1 and similar to those at the time of the previous inspection. A suitable range of activities is taught which complies with National Curriculum requirements. Pupils have opportunities to engage in dance, gymnastics and in games.

126. Pupils have satisfactory levels of skill in catching and throwing. They can receive and throw quoits and small balls with suitable levels of accuracy for their age. They are sufficiently confident on the climbing apparatus and when they work at height. They can perform a balance and different kinds of rolling movements of their own choice. Some can link two movements together into a sequence, though they are not yet skilled at linking movements together so that the whole sequence flows together as one smoothly joined movement.

127. The quality of teaching observed during the inspection ranged from good to unsatisfactory. It is good overall. Teachers demonstrate skills correctly, as when they teach the correct over-arm throwing technique by showing how to transfer the weight of the body to the front foot and changing the position of the feet. They teach pupils to catch correctly and, as a result, the pupils make good progress in such lessons. Overall, the pupils' progress is satisfactory and their achievements are sound. Teachers often make good use of teacher and pupil demonstration. Sometimes they make good use of problem-solving techniques such as asking the pupils how many different types of a particular movement they can think of. In the best teaching, the approach is brisk and bright, instructions are clear and there is purposeful development of skills in the lesson. More demands are made on the pupils by increasing the challenge of movements and they become more complex by the combination of two movements together. Sometimes pupils do not understand the instructions given, such as the term 'link' and there is an assumption that pupils understand. Pupils are enthusiastic in their work. They handle equipment correctly and respect it. In the lesson, which was unsatisfactory, insufficient teaching of skills took place and the teacher did not intervene enough in the lesson. The noise level increased and pupils did not make enough progress. However, good use was made of markers in this lesson to divide up the hall into working zones and pupils generally adhered to them.

128. The co-ordinator is keen on sport and is developing her own scheme of work to broaden the national guidance to which the school is currently working. She has arranged training for the whole staff on the teaching of games skills and is keen to arrange in-service training for gymnastics to strengthen teachers' skills in this aspect of physical education. Resources for the subject are adequate. The school does not have any grassed provision of its own and has to seek permission from the neighbouring school to share its field. However, the hall is a good size and suitably equipped.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

129. Standards of attainment in religious education at the end of the key stage are satisfactory and pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The planned curriculum meets the recommendations of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus for pupils of this age. The school has successfully maintained the standards reported at the previous inspection.

130. Pupils in Year 1 learn about Christian festivals and celebrations such as Christmas and harvest, as well as beginning to understand the importance of celebrations in other faiths. As part of this work, they have learned about those celebrations that have a particular significance for families. With the help and support of the minister of the local church, they have learned about the customs and practices at weddings and baptisms. They visited the local church where they were able to role-play a wedding and during the inspection acted out a baptism ceremony, again with the support of the local minister. Pupils in Year 2 have thought about how Christians behave in their everyday lives and in learning about Hinduism and the Hindu home have had the opportunity to reflect upon the similarities as well as differences between different faiths. Whilst the emphasis of the Local Agreed Syllabus is upon the pupils experiencing rather than recording, there is insufficient use of written work, particularly in Year 2, that would provide opportunities for teachers to assess what pupils have learned and understood.. All pupils learn about the Bible through hearing some of the parables and other stories. Assemblies also provide additional opportunities for them to learn about Christianity.

131. Pupils have good attitudes to their work, behave well and are attentive in lessons. They settle well to any tasks they are set. They work well in groups and listen to and consider the views and ideas of others. They develop positive attitudes to Christianity and other world faiths and, in this way, the subject contributes well to their cultural and spiritual development.

132. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of visits to places of worship and use resources effectively. The shared year-group planning supports equality of opportunity and allows teachers to share skills and expertise

133. The coordinator monitors half-termly planning and uses informal discussions with colleagues and scrutiny of displays to monitor standards but as yet has not monitored teaching. A sound policy is in place. The coordinator is developing a portfolio to support teachers' planning that mainly uses photographs to record particular activities undertaken by pupils in religious education with some examples of pupils' work. The range of centrally stored resources, including artefacts, posters and books, is satisfactory and these are well managed and maintained and are readily accessible to staff and pupils.