

## **INSPECTION REPORT**

### **WEST ROW COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL**

West Row, Near Mildenhall,  
Bury St Edmunds

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124542

Head teacher: Mr M Davies

Reporting inspector: Steve Bywater  
18463

Dates of inspection: 9<sup>th</sup> – 12<sup>th</sup> July 2001

Inspection number: 190432

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Beeches Road West Row Nr Mildenhall Bury St Edmunds Suffolk
Postcode:	IP28 8NY
Telephone number:	01638 715680
Fax number:	01638 515115
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs T A Gooch-Taylor-Balls
Date of previous inspection:	November 1996

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
18463	Steve Bywater	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Information and communication technology History Geography Physical education Special educational needs 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?
14404	Alan Rolfe	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with its parents?
18101	J Ann Sharpe	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology Music Foundation Stage	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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## **PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT**

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

West Row Community First School is situated in the pleasant rural village of West Row near Mildenhall. Most of the children come from West Row and outlying villages, but almost a third of the pupils are the children of parents who are stationed at the United States Air Force Base. The school is a smaller than average primary school with 135 pupils on roll (67 boys and 68 girls) aged between four and nine. This is more than at the time of the last inspection. A small proportion (less than five percent) of pupils are entitled to free school meals and this is well below the national average and less than the proportion of pupils found during the previous inspection. Based on the assessments that the teacher makes when pupils start school in the reception class, attainment of pupils on entry to the school is best described as average. Increasing numbers of pupils from the air base are entering school without any relevant pre-school/kindergarten experience. Eighteen pupils are United States citizens and a further five pupils are from ethnic minority groups. No pupils speak English as an additional language. Twenty pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs; two pupils with emotional and behavioural difficulties receive support from outside agencies. No pupil has a statement of special educational need. There have been many staffing difficulties in the past four years and this unavoidable disruption has presented difficulties in a number of aspects of a small school. Three more new teachers are due to start in September.

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

This is a school whose strengths far outweigh the weaknesses. Pupils achieve well at the age of nine and standards overall are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science. At the age of seven, pupils have not achieved as well as they might because their education has been badly affected by staff absences in Year 1. Mathematics standards are lower than they should be. Teaching in all classes except Year 1 has been very effective. An interesting, broad, balanced and relevant curriculum motivates pupils well and promotes their personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well. Aspects of the leadership and management are unsatisfactory because the role of governors and co-ordinators are not clear. Whilst most parents are justifiably pleased with the education their children receive at West Row, many feel that the school does not involve them enough. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- By the age of nine, pupils achieve standards which are well above average in English and above average in mathematics and science.
- Teaching and learning are good.
- A broad, balanced and relevant curriculum motivates pupils well. Literacy and art and design are very strong aspects of school.
- The school provides very well for pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development.
- Most pupils behave well and have very good attitudes to their work.

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

- Standards in mathematics in Key Stage 1.
- The leadership and management of governors and co-ordinators have some weaknesses. The head teacher needs to delegate more.
- Teachers do not use assessment information rigorously or effectively enough.
- The school's relationships with parents are not as strong as they should be.

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

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## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

Overall, the school has made satisfactory improvements since its last inspection. The head teacher successfully implemented a planned system of support and monitoring of teaching and curriculum development. However, the governing body and teachers with responsibilities have not been involved sufficiently. All pupils, particularly the more able, have increased their progress in reading and science but improvements in pupils' progress in mathematics at Key Stage 1 have not been consistent enough. The quality of curriculum planning has improved by ensuring effective progression and continuity of pupils' learning and meeting in full the requirements in all subjects. However, the school has not been effective in using the outcomes of assessment to match work to the needs of pupils and to set future targets. The curriculum for the under fives has improved significantly and now addresses all areas of learning and gives greater emphasis to purposeful play, talk and opportunities for children to initiate their own activities. The issue of 'more overtly encouraging links with all parents so that they can make a full contribution to their children's learning' has not been developed enough. Although the governors dealt immediately with the health and safety issues, they have not developed a clear understanding about pupils' needs, progress and standards in order to successfully provide a strategic view and ensure accountability.

## STANDARDS

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

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

In the 2000 national tests for seven year olds, pupils' standards were well above the national average in writing, above the national average in reading and below the national average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, standards were above average in writing, close to the average in reading and well below average in mathematics. Attainment on entry to the reception class is average. The full range of inspection evidence shows that at the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening, reading, writing and science are above average. In mathematics, standards are below average. In art, design and technology, information and communication technology, history, geography and music, pupils achieve the standards which are nationally expected at the age of seven. By the age of nine, pupils achieve standards in English which are well above average. Standards in mathematics, science, history and art and design are also above average. In information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and music, pupils reach the nationally expected level. There are many examples of very good work in most subjects in Year 4. Too few lessons in physical education were observed to enable a



judgement to be made. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the local guidelines.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Most pupils have a very good attitude towards their work and the school. They are eager learners and try hard to do their best.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Most pupils behave well in lessons and at break times. They are consistently polite and well mannered towards visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are good throughout the school. From the youngest to the oldest, pupils welcome responsibility and respond well to the few opportunities given to them – more opportunities are needed.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory and close to the national average. Most pupils arrive punctually.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	Good	Satisfactory	Good

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

Overall, the teaching is good. In the lessons observed, 100 percent were satisfactory or better, 78 percent were good or better and 26 percent were very good. In the reception class, the teacher and non-teaching staff work well together. They are becoming accustomed to the new Foundation Stage Curriculum; they plan an interesting range of activities and assess how well children cope with their tasks. Teaching in Years 2, 3 and 4 is often impressive. Teaching in Year 1 is not as good as it should be and has been badly affected by the inconsistencies in expectations of some supply teachers and the regular class teacher who has been absent for well over a term. The teachers manage pupils very well and ensure well-chosen resources keep pupils interested. Throughout the school, support staff are used well. The teaching of the basic skills in literacy is good. The teaching of numeracy skills is satisfactory but more attention should be paid to practical activities and problem solving in Year 1. Teachers' subject knowledge is at least satisfactory in all subjects and very good in art. In the best lessons, teachers communicate the objectives to focus pupils' thoughts at the start and use demanding yet enjoyable activities to motivate pupils. Weaknesses in the otherwise satisfactory lessons include short-term planning which does not identify what pupils of different abilities are expected to learn. Although the teachers have high expectations and work is mostly challenging, there are occasions when higher attainers and pupils who are struggling are given the same work. For some it is too easy, for others too difficult.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good overall. There are strengths in the good way that subjects link together. The weakness is in the short-term planning which does not identify the needs of pupils of different abilities. There are very few extra-curricular activities and more use could be made of visits into the local community in order to motivate and encourage pupils.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory overall but a mixture of strengths and weaknesses. Pupils make good progress as a result of effective teaching and support in small groups. In some lessons, work is not well matched to pupils' needs and individual education plans are not specific enough.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good overall. Pupils' spiritual, moral and cultural development is very good. Pupils develop a very good understanding of their own culture through subjects such as history and art, and knowledge and understanding of other cultures are also well developed. Social development is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a strong commitment to the well-being of pupils, which is obvious in the day-to-day work of the staff. The head teacher analyses data from tests rigorously. However, assessment procedures are not being used accurately to prepare projected targets for the school, for tracking the progress of individuals and for planning pupils' work.

The school does not have effective enough methods of seeking out parents' concerns and views. Some parents express a desire to be more involved in the life of the school and pupils' learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Satisfactory overall. The head teacher and deputy head teacher are fully committed to the school and aim to raise standards. Staff changes and absences have reduced the effectiveness of the leadership and management over the past four years. Subject co-ordinators are not given sufficient opportunity or guidance to develop their subjects. Many procedures lack rigour.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors recognise the strengths of the school well and are very supportive. They do not, however, take an active role in school development planning or in monitoring the school's performance. They rely too heavily on the information provided by the head teacher.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The head teacher monitors standards and teaching well but subject co-ordinators and governors are not involved enough.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school's spending reflects the priorities in the school development plan. The head teacher clearly understands the principles of best value and these are at the heart of the financial planning process. The school makes good use of resources. More thought needs to be given to targets beyond the current year.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are generally good.

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children like school and they make good progress.</li> <li>The teaching is good and the school expects children to work hard and achieve their best.</li> <li>They feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.</li> <li>The school is helping their children become</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The closeness of the school's working relationship with parents.</li> <li>The information that parents receive about how their children are getting on.</li> <li>The amount of extra-curricular activities.</li> </ul>

mature and responsible. • The leadership and management of the school. • The amount of work pupils do at home.	
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This table takes account the views of six parents attending a meeting held with the registered inspector prior to the inspection and those expressed in 37 returned questionnaires. The inspection team agrees with the positive views of parents and also believes that parents have accurately identified some of the areas for improvement.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

#### **The school's results and pupils' achievements**

1 Attainment on entry to the school is best described as average overall but includes the full range from well above to well below average; their skills in talking are above average. Although some have attended a local playgroup, few have had any nursery experience. Some children have only a short period of full-time attendance before they become Year 1 pupils. In this short time available for working towards attaining all the Early Learning Goals<sup>1</sup>, children achieve well, so that by the end of the reception year, most children attain much of what is expected of them nationally in each area of learning.

2 The 2000 national test results in reading and writing for seven year olds were above average in reading and well above average in writing. When comparing these results with the outcome of tests in similar schools, pupils' achievement was average in reading and above average in writing. In mathematics, pupils' attainment was below the national average and well below the national average when compared with similar schools. There are no national results available yet by which we can make a comparison but the results for the 2001 tests are unlikely to show much improvement, especially in reading and mathematics. This year group, however, are considered by the school to have had a lower starting point at the beginning of the year than most previous year groups, and fewer pupils reached a level higher than expected for their age. This is hardly surprising since there has been very significant disruption due to frequent and prolonged staff absence in Year 1. The teacher in Year 2 then has to try and make up the 'lost' ground and pupils are not achieving as well as they should by the age of seven. However, the school sets itself suitably challenging targets for national tests for all seven year olds and generally achieves them in English. It is not succeeding in meeting the targets in mathematics. In science, the 2000 teacher assessment results show that the proportion of pupils in Key Stage 1 achieving the expected level was above the national average and those achieving the higher level was below average. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily in all classes except Year 1. Over the past few years, boys and girls have achieved similar standards, although boys have done particularly well in comparison to the national average of boys in other schools in reading.

3 Pupils in Year 1 have made slow progress and it is clear from scrutinising pupils' work that pupils are not being taught the basic skills in numeracy in a systematic way. In Year 2, progress escalates due to the very good teaching. Since the last inspection, teachers have successfully put the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies into day-to-day practice, and this has been an important factor in the raising of standards in literacy; it has been less effective in numeracy in Key Stage 1. There remain instances when higher attaining pupils could do even better in lessons and do not achieve as much as they could.

4 Both seven and nine year olds listen very well to their teachers and to each other. Pupils speak clearly and correctly, using interesting and extended words and phrases. By the age of seven, all pupils have started to read by themselves and use different ways of

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<sup>1</sup> Early Learning Goals - these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They mainly refer to achievements children make in connection with: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; personal, social and emotional development; knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning; for example, in language and literacy pupils should be able to write their own name and other things such as labels and begin to write simple sentences.

reading new words. They read a range of different books and texts with accuracy, fluency and understanding. Their knowledge of the features of books, such as author, title and index, is good, and they use dictionaries very well to look for spellings and check meanings. By the time pupils leave the school they read widely. When talking about reading, pupils show an extensive knowledge and understanding of the features of books. They know how to use the library to find books or use a computer to find information and read it. Teachers attach a lot of importance to the teaching of reading, and use the dedicated hour for teaching literacy to good effect. By the age of seven, all pupils write in a lot of different ways in most subjects. Their spelling, grammar, and punctuation are good, and their handwriting and presentation are very good. By the time pupils leave the school, the range of their writing is very extensive. Pupils' writing is well above average because pupils write so widely, using interesting vocabulary in the right context.

5 In mathematics, pupils in Year 1 have not made sufficient progress because many different teachers have concentrated too heavily on developing the pupils' basic skills in addition, subtraction and multiplication, often repeating work unnecessarily with lots of simple sums, which do not extend them. However, in Years 2, 3 and 4, the curriculum is broad and balanced and pupils make good progress in all aspects of mathematics. Inspection evidence confirms the 2001 national test results which indicate that, although almost all pupils attain the nationally expected level, only a fifth of pupils attain the higher level. Standards are above average by the end of Year 4. By the age of nine, most pupils have a good basic knowledge of number and a good recall of facts, including multiplication tables, most pupils have a good grasp of shape space and measure, and pupils handle data well. There is satisfactory evidence of pupils throughout the school applying their numeracy skills in other subjects of the curriculum.

6 Due to the very good teaching in Year 2, standards for seven year olds in science have improved and this is shown by teacher assessments in 2001. Almost half of the seven year olds achieved a higher level whereas no seven year old achieved this at the time of the last inspection. Inspection evidence agrees with this and standards in Year 2 are above average for the age group and higher attaining pupils are doing well. This is because they are given opportunities to think, plan and record for themselves. Pupils make good progress and have a secure understanding of physical processes, and materials and their properties and a satisfactory understanding of life processes. Progress is inconsistent throughout Key Stage 1 because of the frequent and prolonged absences of the class teacher and inconsistencies in the quality of supply teachers Year 1. Standards in Year 4 are above average, although at times the work is too challenging. There is sometimes an over emphasis on knowledge and understanding and care should be taken that information given is correct. Overall, pupils have good understanding within all the areas of knowledge set out in the National Curriculum and a good understanding of experimental work. The progress made by pupils is good and consistent in Years 3 and 4, reflecting the good quality of teaching.

7 In art and design, design and technology, information and communication technology, history, geography and music, pupils achieve the standards which are expected at the age of seven. By the age of nine, pupils achieve above average standards in history and art and design. In information and communication technology, design and technology, geography and music, pupils reach the nationally expected level. There are many example of very good work in most subjects in Year 4. Standards in religious education meet the expectations of the local guidelines. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement about standards in physical education since only one games lesson and one dance lesson was observed.

8 In both key stages pupils with special educational needs, whose attainments are below those expected for their age, make good progress as a result of the additional help they get individually and in small groups from the dedicated and able support staff. Progress in whole-class lessons is not as good because work is sometimes not well matched to their needs. Targets in pupils' individual education plans are not specific enough.

### **Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development**

9 Overall pupils have very good attitudes to learning. Almost all pupils like to come to school; they enjoy their work and this is evident in classrooms. This was a strong feature during the last inspection and this very positive aspect of school life has been maintained.

10 Children in the Foundation Stage<sup>2</sup> quickly and effectively settle into reception class routines. They take responsibility for themselves, confidently choose activities and concentrate for extended periods.

11 The majority of pupils in all classes show a keen interest in their lessons. This is often the result of good teaching. Pupils listen carefully to their teachers' instructions and enter into classroom discussion in a constructive and positive manner. They work collaboratively in pairs and small groups and readily support each other, often without prompting. The majority of pupils are keen and eager to show and discuss their work and take an obvious pride in their work. Pupils with special educational needs have a positive attitude to their work. Most are keen to learn, try hard with their work and enjoy succeeding. They respond well to the considerable encouragement they receive, and this enhances their self-esteem. In almost all lessons pupils' attitudes help to create a positive learning environment. Parents feel there are too few activities beyond school hours provided by staff. The inspection team supports them in this view.

12 Overall pupil behaviour in classrooms is good and no unsatisfactory behaviour was seen during the inspection. Pupils are well aware of what is and is not acceptable behaviour. Most pupils are courteous and well mannered towards their teachers and to visitors. Pupils move around the school in an orderly manner; behaviour at break and lunchtime is good. Pupils treat other people's property with respect, there is little or no litter around the school and pupil-generated graffiti and vandalism is virtually unknown. Bullying is an occasional problem, but children are confident that the school will deal with this at once. The school has effective anti-bullying procedures in place, and pupils and parents are encouraged to report any instances of bullying. Parents are pleased with the standard of behaviour in the school: 97 percent of parents who returned questionnaires considered behaviour to be good or very good. There were two exclusions in the academic year 2000-2001, but none for a significant number of years before these.

13 Pupils make satisfactory progress in their personal development; almost all parents who returned the questionnaire consider the school is helping the pupils to become mature and responsible. Pupils are occasionally encouraged to take additional responsibility and undertake a narrow range of duties as monitors. However, opportunities for pupils to use their initiative to enhance their own learning are limited; in the majority of lessons seen almost all learning was teacher directed. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on moral issues

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<sup>2</sup> The Foundation Stage begins when children reach the age of three and ends at the end of the reception class. It is a distinct stage in preparing children for later schooling and is based on six areas of learning. These mainly refer to: communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; and personal, social and emotional development, but also include: knowledge and understanding of the world; and physical and creative development.

and how their actions may affect others. The vast majority of pupils form good relationships with each other and their teachers. In almost all lessons the good quality relationships between pupils and teachers create a good learning environment where pupils clearly enjoy their lessons, and have a positive effect on their learning. Pupils with special educational needs are well integrated into the life of the school.

14 Overall attendance is satisfactory. Registration is undertaken morning and afternoon and meets statutory requirements. Although most pupils arrive punctually, a significant minority of pupils do not arrive at school on time.

## **HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?**

15 The quality of teaching is good and this results in pupils making a good rate of progress in their learning. This good quality teaching means that pupils achieve well, particularly in English, art and design, and science by the time they leave the school.

16 Seventy-eight percent of teaching observed was good or better, of which 26 percent was very good. The remaining 22 percent was satisfactory. During the previous inspection, almost one in five lessons were unsatisfactory so it is clear that the quality of teaching has improved significantly. This has been due to:

- a. long and medium-term planning which is more thorough and followed carefully to ensure that work carefully builds on previous learning;
- b. the significant emphasis on the development of literacy and (in most classes) numeracy skills;
- c. regular and rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning, and the detailed analysis of the school's results in the national tests which is helping to identify and overcome weaknesses;
- d. the general adherence to the requirements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies in helping to raise standards.

17 The teacher in the early years class is good. She has done a good job integrating the revised National Foundation Stage Curriculum with the school's practice and making sure that children's progress is followed and recorded well. The next step is to ensure that this always leads to new challenges that take children closer to being ready for National Curriculum work. This kind of 'target setting' is the next step for the school to build on the good progress it has made since the last inspection. Children with special educational needs are spotted quite early on, but the school's procedures are not as tight as they should be to make sure that the support they receive is specific and tightly planned. All staff are caring and supportive. They work hard, together with the class teacher, to make sure that children enjoy school and become happy and interested learners.

18 At Key Stage 1, the quality of teaching seen was satisfactory overall but unacceptably variable. The scrutiny of pupils' work throughout the year shows that pupils in Year 1 have experienced unsatisfactory teaching whilst lessons observed showed pupils in Year 2 have very high quality teaching. In Years 3 and 4 the quality of teaching is consistently good and often very good.

19 The better lessons in Year 2 were characterised by precise planning and a wonderful relationship with the class where every pupil felt valued. No effort or suggestion from any pupil was dismissed and pupils obviously enjoyed contributing to their lessons.



The brisk pace in lessons and opportunities for pupils to use their initiative, as in a very good science lesson, also added to the high quality of the teaching.

20 The strengths of the teaching in both key stages include the emphasis on making pupils aware of what is to be learnt in the lesson and over the week. Pupils are asked to reflect at the end of lessons as to what they have learnt. Teachers generally have secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects, and they teach basic skills well. Sometimes pupils fail to develop basic skills through a lack of practical work and opportunities for investigation and experimenting. This comment is especially true of work in science and mathematics in Year 1.

21 In most classes, teachers challenge pupils well through skilled questioning; for example, in Year 4 the teacher effectively focused pupils' attention on what they already knew about poetry and asked "What can you tell me about the couplet in this text?" In Year 3, the teacher probed and extended pupils' understanding of the Hindu faith before they started to study the main activities in Hindu worship. Teachers throughout the school create good opportunities for pupils to practise speaking and listening skills during class discussions and in pairs and small groups. Teachers listen to pupils' views and pupils' contributions are used in a positive way to extend learning, even when the answers are incorrect. They sensitively correct any misunderstandings without belittling the efforts made. This results in pupils confidently volunteering their opinions and trying hard with their work. The high quality of relationships in the school and the generally highly effective management of pupils' behaviour mean that in most classes pupils are very well behaved and concentrate for extended periods. This was seen, for example, in a Year 4 art lesson where pupils studied the work of William Morris and thoughtfully made their own designs in his style.

22 Teachers use interesting resources, which stimulate pupils' imagination and involve them well in thinking about their work. In a religious education lesson about the Passover Meal in Year 1, for example, the teacher provided different foods including Matzos (dry cracker biscuits) and horseradish to encourage pupils to empathise with the feelings of Hebrew slaves in Ancient Egypt. In addition to these, she read a story, showed the pupils Jewish artefacts and teased out a wealth of knowledge about Judaism that was impressive for pupils aged only six years. There is a good pace to most lessons so that pupils learn at a good rate.

23 Support staff are used well on most occasions but there are times during whole-class teaching when they are not sufficiently involved and could, for instance, be assessing how well pupils are involved in answering questions and noticing if any pupils are struggling. However, they are normally clear about what to do and give good support to pupils, as was seen for example, in a science lesson in the Year 2 class. The support assistant helped pupils to plan and carry out an experiment and supported only when necessary, to enable pupils to think for themselves. There is a satisfactory use of homework throughout the school. It is structured well. However, a number of parents feel strongly that pupils (and parents) should have more feedback about how well pupils have done so that homework is valued more.

24 There is inconsistency in the marking of pupils' work. In some classes, for example in the Year 2 and Year 3 classes, teachers mark pupils' work in a positive way, giving praise and making clear what improvements need to be made. In other classes, the marking is minimal, with occasional negative comments and few indications of how pupils could improve. There are inconsistencies in the quality of teachers' short-term planning. In some classes it is too brief and there is insufficient planning for different groups of pupils.

As a result class teachers often provide work that is based upon broad target levels and not on what pupils know, understand and can do. This means that there are times when work is either too easy or too difficult for particular pupils. This reduces the progress that they make, for example pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils.

25 Pupils with special educational needs benefit from good support from teachers (including additional lessons from the head teacher) and support staff. However, precise learning targets do not underpin this support on well-organised individual education plans. On the contrary, there are weaknesses in the written guidance for pupils with special educational needs.

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

26 The school has addressed soundly the key issues from the last inspection when weaknesses in curriculum and lesson planning were found. Improvements are due partly to the school's adoption of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy, and to the introduction of the new National Foundation Stage Curriculum in the reception. In addition, the school has taken on board the national guidance for teaching most other subjects, and this has ensured that pupils learn in a way that builds step by step on what they have learned previously.

27 A good quality curriculum now meets pupils' learning needs well, overall, and provides equality of opportunity. It meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus for religious education, and allows plenty of time for teaching literacy and numeracy. The curriculum is broad and very relevant to pupils' ages and interests. It is usually well balanced, but teachers can decide themselves in which part of the school year they wish to teach some subjects. This can, and sometimes does, lead to uncertainties about what has already been covered, and makes it difficult for the head teacher and subject managers to know what they need to be watching out for during each half term. There was uncertainty, for example, about how much of the curriculum for religious education had already been covered in Year 1 before a teacher became absent for a long period of time. Nevertheless, teachers are now much clearer than at the time of the last inspection about what they want pupils to learn in each lesson, and 'learning objectives' are usually relevant and to the point. Not all teachers plan equally well for higher and lower attaining pupils, however, and there are times when they have the same work as other pupils but need easier or harder tasks. This problem arises because there are no agreed procedures to make sure that lesson planning is consistently good.

28 Teachers are good at planning worthwhile links between their teaching in different subjects; for example when pupils in Year 3 learn about Ancient Greece in history, they design and make model Gorgon's heads from clay as part of their work in art and design. The school's teaching of literacy is good because it has a strong focus on learning to read and write, using good quality books and text as starting points. The method of teaching numeracy is not better than satisfactory because, although in most classes the basic skills are taught well, in some classes, especially Year 1, there is insufficient attention to practical and investigative mathematics. Pupils have very good opportunities to improve their writing skills in many subjects and good opportunities to apply their mathematics skills in subjects, such as science and geography. Although they sometimes use computers as part of their work in subjects such as art and design, geography, music and history, such opportunities are not yet as frequent as they could be, for example in English, religious education and mathematics.

29 The curriculum for children in the reception class takes good account of the more recent national guidance and leads them successfully into the subjects of the National Curriculum. It prepares children well for taking part in full literacy and numeracy lessons when they transfer to Year 1. It provides a good balance of time for formal learning and time for learning through carefully planned play. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection for which the current class teacher can take the credit.

30 Staff provide pupils with special educational needs with a curriculum that is satisfactory in the main. The school implements the Code of Practice<sup>3</sup> fully for these pupils. However, their individual education plans are not sufficiently precise or practical; nor are they clear and easy for staff, parents and pupils to understand. When specialist support staff withdraw pupils from the classroom for focused work to support their literacy and numeracy skills, class teachers make sure this does not affect the pupils' entitlement to be taught all subjects. Classroom teachers do not use pupils' individual learning targets consistently in literacy and numeracy and in subjects across all areas of the curriculum.

31 The curriculum for personal, social and health education is sound. The school includes worthwhile opportunities for learning in several different ways, such as through assemblies and lessons in various subjects. Sex education, drugs education and healthy eating are also included. This part of the curriculum is not yet planned systematically, however, and work may, or may not, be covered depending on whether or not opportunities arise and are seized upon by individual teachers. Exactly when things are taught is also left to individual teachers – again, this is too 'ad hoc'. The only extra-curricular activities available are cycling proficiency, which has been an important element of Year 4 life for the last 18 years, and football; this is a narrow range and does not capitalise upon pupils' enthusiasm for learning.

32 Overall the school's links with the community are satisfactory. A range of visitors come to the school, including the police, fire service, school nurse and dentist, all of whom make a contribution to pupils' personal development and learning. The school undertakes a limited number of educational visits, including visits to a museum and the local church. Whilst the school have established good links with a local farm, they make only limited use of the local environment as a learning resource.

33 The school's links with the local middle school are good. Staff from the middle school make a series of visits to talk to Year 4 pupils about their transfer, and pupils have two full induction days at the middle school towards the end of the summer term. Staff from the two schools meet to discuss pupils' progress, and detailed portfolios are provided to assist the continuity of pupils' learning. Pupils also visit the middle school for joint events; for example during the inspection pupils in Year 4 attended a music workshop along with pupils from two other first schools and Year 5 pupils from the middle school. The theme of the workshop was African music, and the experience made a good contribution to pupils' understanding of other people's cultures.

34 Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good, and remains the strength that it was in the last inspection. Although assemblies meet requirements, some lack a sense of enjoyment, and meaningful participation by pupils is limited. Provision for spiritual development through lessons in religious education and other subjects, however, is very good, and countless lovely examples were seen during the inspection. Pupils in Year 4, for example, have written very thoughtful poems about 'green'

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<sup>3</sup> Code of Practice – this gives advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

issues entitled 'You'll be sorry', and pupils in Year 3 have written sensitively about 'Good Friends' and 'Being a Friend'. Provision for pupils' moral development is also very good. The yearly programme for assemblies covers many areas likely to encourage pupils to think about the differences between right and wrong. Much of the work in religious education, such as in Year 4 when pupils learn about Moses from a starting point of 'rules', helps pupils to form a strong moral code for themselves.

35 Provision for pupils' social development is good. As with moral development, a lot of opportunities come through the well thought out programme for religious education. Through this, pupils learn to think about fitting into their social groups, the school and later into a community. Teachers give pupils some opportunities to learn to take social responsibilities and to show initiative, but they could do more of this – given pupils' eagerness to help and their willingness and confidence to try out new ideas. Provision for cultural development, including looking at the multi-cultural aspects, is very good. A lot of the work in literacy lessons centres on studies of literature and poetry. Pupils in Year 2, for example, have been finding out about a well-known poet and have made a delightful booklet entitled 'Alliteration Adventure'. Work in subjects such as art and design, music, history and religious education, provides many wide-ranging opportunities. A relative weakness arises because pupils do not have as many direct opportunities to go out into the locality to find out about their more immediate environment.

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

36 This is a caring school that is successful in creating a friendly environment in which pupils feel safe and secure, and can learn and develop. Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Staff know their pupils well and are responsive to their needs both inside and outside the classroom. Pupils say they would ask their teachers for help should they have any problems, either with their school work or personal difficulties, and are confident that appropriate support would be given to them. The school's arrangements for child protection are of a satisfactory standard based on the Area Child Protection Committee's procedures. The head teacher, who is the designated teacher responsible for child protection issues, has received appropriate training and has a good understanding of child protection procedures. All staff have received awareness training on child protection issues, but have not yet had formal training on the signs and symptoms of child abuse. The school is committed to providing a safe working environment for both staff and pupils. The school has in place a health and safety policy, and whilst in general this policy meets with statutory requirements, there are no risk assessment procedures for educational visits, and the school does not record minor accidents or first aid treatment administered.

37 The school has good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, including a school behaviour policy that identifies the school rules. Pupils have a good knowledge of the school rules and are aware of the school's system of rewards and sanctions. Although they say there are few rewards, they readily accept sanctions as an appropriate response to instances of poor behaviour. Bullying is rare and the school have in place an anti-bullying policy to enable them to react quickly to any instances of bullying. However the school does not have a policy or procedure for using force to restrain pupils if this were ever to become necessary.

38 Procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance are good. The head teacher fully understands how attendance is affected by holidays taken during term time but is also sensitive to the needs of the Air Force Base personnel who need to return to the United States at various times in the school term. Parents are advised in the school brochure of

the need for regular and punctual attendance and are asked to inform the school of the reason for any absences. The school operates a first-day contact system whereby parents are contacted if no reasons for absences are received. The head teacher monitors registers for patterns of absence over time, and any long-term absence problems are referred to the Educational Welfare Officer.

39 The head teacher continues to analyse the data for national tests and other assessments to assess how well groups of pupils and individuals are achieving. However, since the last inspection, there has not been any significant improvement in procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress or in using assessment information to guide curricular planning. There are now important shortcomings in both of these, and the school is behind many other schools in regard to improving its assessment practice. Teachers have recently reviewed the assessment policy and put into place an annual plan for assessing pupils' attainment, although this is not often directly related to the National Curriculum. The school does not yet have clear systems for making sure that the policy is being put into practice consistently in all classes or for ensuring that assessment information is used by teachers to the very best effect. Although teachers take some account of what they know about pupils' attainment to set them individual targets for improvement, these targets are often of a very general nature. Targets are not set precisely against the detail of the National Curriculum, and pupils and their parents do not always know what their targets are.

40 Teachers have not yet started to 'track' pupils' progress in order to spot where teaching or the curriculum need to change for pupils to move forward, or where pupils are not making progress quickly enough. Also, systems for recording pupils' attainment and progress are not sufficiently consistent across the school. Governors and subject managers have a little knowledge of the national test results, but do not look at these closely in order to work together to put right any weaknesses in standards. There are, however, some good examples of assessment practice in the school, such as the systems devised by the reception teacher for children in the Foundation Stage and by the teacher in Year 2. These give a clear picture at any time of what children already know, understand and can do. Much of what happens in practice is left to individual teachers to decide, and this leads to shortcomings in planning day-to-day lessons. It is the main reason why pupils with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils often have the same work as other pupils in their classes, but it is either too difficult or lacks enough new challenges for them. The school does not yet have any reliable methods of making sure that teachers' assessments of attainment in the National Curriculum are accurate.

41 The assessment co-ordinator is very keen for the school's procedures to improve. However, she does not fully understand what is expected of her or have time allocated to do the job. She is very receptive to new ideas and understands what is needed in the school and why. She now needs to be empowered to do it.

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

42 There have been some improvements in the school's partnership with parents since the last inspection, but there are still some significant weaknesses. The school has not sufficiently addressed the key issue for action from the last inspection which required the school to 'more overtly encourage links with all parents so that they can make a full contribution to their children's learning'. Approximately 27 percent of parents returned parental questionnaires and six parents attended the parents' meeting. Many parents commented on the lack of involvement with the work of the school.

43 Overall parents' views of the school are satisfactory. The majority of parents are pleased with the quality of teaching, the expectation that their children will work hard, the way in which the school is led and managed and that the school is helping their children to become more mature and responsible. Parents also indicate that behaviour in the school is good, and that their children like school and are making good progress in their learning. Evidence from the inspection mostly confirms these positive views of the school.

44 However, a significant number of parents who returned parental questionnaires expressed concerns about the quality of information they receive about their children's progress (42 percent), that the school does not work closely with parents (48 percent) and that there are insufficient extra-curricular activities (42 percent). After considering these concerns, inspectors judge that the information that the school provides about pupils' progress and the range of extra-curricular activities are satisfactory, but inspectors also fully understand why parents are concerned about the school's relationships with parents.

45 The quality and range of information the school provides for parents is satisfactory. The governors' annual report and the school brochure provide a wide range of information about the school and its activities, although the governors' annual report does not contain all the information required. The school provides parents with termly information about the topics that each year group will be studying; this represents an improvement since the last inspection. The school provides parents with satisfactory opportunities to discuss their children's progress. There is a consultation evening each term, and, in addition, induction meetings for early years and Key Stage 2 pupils and a meeting about national tests for parents of pupils in Year 2. Overall, end of year reports are good. They identify pupils' strengths and weaknesses and provide guidance on what they need to do to improve. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are given appropriate opportunities to be involved in development and review of their individual educational plans.

46 The school does not have in place effective means of seeking out parents' concerns and views of the school. Whilst the school seeks to involve parents in social and fund-raising events for the school through the Parent Teachers' Association, the school does little to encourage parents to be involved in the life of the school and pupils' learning; indeed the school actively discourages parents from helping in classrooms. The level of concern parents have registered about how closely the school works with parents indicates that parents feel that their involvement in the learning of their children at school and at home is unsatisfactory. Whilst a few parents occasionally accompany pupils on school trips, there is little or no evidence of any significant involvement of parents in their children's learning at school or home; parental involvement therefore has little impact on pupils' learning.

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

47 The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory overall. The previous inspection indicated seven key areas for development. Five have been addressed to a satisfactory level. These are: -

- Systematic support and monitoring of teaching by head teacher, although the role of other staff and governors has been very limited;
- Good improvements in the management of the curriculum through using Qualifications and Curriculum Authority's guidance and other planning strategies;

- An improved curriculum for children under five (Foundation Stage as of 2001);
- Securing better progress for the most able in reading, although mathematics at Key Stage 1 still needs further attention;
- Addressing of health and safety issues.

48 However, there has been insufficient improvement in: -

- Encouraging the involvement of parents in the life of the school;
- Involving the governing body sufficiently in providing a strategic overview.

49 Whilst there are strengths in the leadership and management of this school, there are some significant shortcomings.

50 The head teacher is a sensitive leader who has been instrumental in developing good relationships within school. He has been effective in implementing and developing an improved curriculum. However, the management structure does not involve all staff enough in the development of the school. The head teacher is often overburdened with tasks that should be the responsibility of other staff and the governing body. This is unacceptable, although it is understandable why this has happened. For example, the head teacher is currently doing routine administration tasks that ought to be the responsibility of a school secretary because the current secretary is working very few hours until a replacement is appointed.

51 Curriculum co-ordinators do not have a clear vision of how well pupils are doing in all classes or how their subject will develop. The current subject responsibilities are not deployed effectively enough and the head teacher has a heavy workload in monitoring standards and quality of education, whilst others are given little responsibility. The head teacher gives a number of good reasons for this decision but since the subject leaders are not clear about what is happening outside of their own classroom, their ability to develop their subject area is severely limited. The head teacher has recognised how staff absences disrupt the education of pupils and has tried to maintain stability within the classroom by taking on board tasks normally done by others. Whilst it is accepted that subject leaders have varying degrees of experience and expertise to successfully monitor and support colleagues, they would all clearly benefit from guidance and non-contact time to empower them to monitor and develop the subject area in a systematic and supportive way.

52 Necessary structures to support and sustain teaching and learning to take the school forward are in place. This represents an improvement in the quality of leadership and management since the school was last inspected. However, subject leaders and governors are not involved and consequently are not sufficiently aware of the strengths and weaknesses. In the most recent developments in numeracy, the head teacher successfully monitored teaching and learning in other classes to see what was working well and where there were problems. However, the head teacher is currently responsible for co-ordinating mathematics, history, music and personal, social and health education. This is an unsatisfactory situation but has come about as a result of lengthy absences by a member of staff. The same absences have led to a delay in developing some areas of the curriculum, for example information and communication technology, and has severely affected the standards achieved in Key Stage 1.

53 The governors' role in leading the school is unsatisfactory. Although they maintain good relationships with staff and some are regular formal visitors, they have a limited knowledge and understanding of what actually goes on. They have not been sufficiently

involved in planning for the school's development. There has been systematic and rigorous monitoring of standards by the head teacher and the results of his findings have been fed back to the governing body. Governors do not act as critical friends and challenge decisions in a constructive way. They tend to accept what is told to them. Governors are unable to make well-informed decisions when allocating financial resources and rely heavily on the head teacher alone. Although the information they receive is accurate, they need to ask more searching questions such as "How can we raise standards in mathematics?" and "Are we using our funding as well as we might and getting the best results from our resources?" Governors do not maintain a clear, overall view of the school's work. Some governors are new to their roles and there is no clearly understood procedure for monitoring by governors.

54 There are some shortcomings in school development planning. Because the school development plan records details of priorities and targets only for the current year, as the current plan stands, governors and staff do not share a sense of common purpose and cannot explain what, where and how all developments will take place beyond this year.

55 The current school development plan is a satisfactory document to take the school forward for this year. It has positive features in that it provides for curriculum development and also encompasses other aspects of school management, for example a programme for security of the premises. The school development plan is costed accurately enough, and lists key dates and relevant personnel. It also sets success criteria so that the progress can be monitored and evaluated. This is done by the head teacher and reported to governors through the head teacher's report at governing body meetings. In order to involve governors more, it is useful to have an agenda item about the school development plan so that the progress can be discussed more precisely. The weaknesses of the school development plan lie in the brief outline of plans for the current school year and nothing beyond the current year, and the lack of action plans for subjects other than English and mathematics. Most governors and subject leaders are uncertain of the future developments in some curriculum areas and other aspects of the school. It is not linked well to the previous 'post inspection' action plan and does not identify any clear priorities associated with it.

56 The school has broad aims which rest on a clear set of appropriate values. The aim of 'giving each pupil the best possible opportunity to reach his/her full potential in all aspects of school life' is the last of eight aims, and could usefully be higher up the list if standards are important. The aims are used effectively to support the day-to-day running of the school but do not appear commonly in any school documents such as the school development plan, policies and governors' annual report. Many sound policies address the aims.

57 There is a weakness in communicating a clear sense of educational direction and a shared sense of common purpose. Staff have their own personal procedures and methods of lesson planning and assessment. There is no commonly understood school procedure. Some staff have very good systems but others have few written records and do not have a clear understanding of how well pupils are achieving.

58 The ethos of the school is satisfactory overall and good in many areas. Staff relationships with pupils are strong, and there is a positive and welcoming atmosphere. A weakness in the ethos is the occasional lack of equality of opportunity when pupils of different abilities are given identical work.



59 The special needs' co-ordinator manages issues relating to special educational needs satisfactorily. He maintains records appropriately, provides additional support for pupils, ensures regular communication with staff and responsible governor, communicates with parents, organises review meetings when required, and maintains and updates the special educational needs register. However, there are no clear procedures for identifying pupils who have special educational needs because the current assessment procedures are unsatisfactory. Individual education plans are available for all pupils who need them and should have them, but the targets are not sufficiently specific and are not updated regularly enough. Consequently, gains made by pupils towards the broad objectives in the individual education plans cannot be accurately assessed.

60 The school has a nucleus of experienced staff and overall they have an appropriate range of qualifications for a primary school. However, there has been a large but unavoidable turnover of staff in recent years and this has disrupted the school's development. A newly qualified teacher received satisfactory support during her first year. Due to the member of staff responsible for her induction leaving, the support was disrupted and the new teacher was very grateful to the efforts of both the head teacher and deputy head teacher to give support when needed. The situation in Year 1 is most concerning, with pupils being taught by an unsatisfactory range of supply teachers, some being more effective than others. On most occasions, the classroom support staff provide an effective contribution to pupils' learning. There are times at the start of literacy and numeracy sessions that they could be used more efficiently, for example, in assessing how well pupils are listening and answering the teacher's questions. The system that is in place for the professional development of all teaching and non-teaching staff is satisfactory but is not underpinned by details in the school development plan, and has been seriously affected by staff absences and the desire not to disrupt other classes. There has been no recent provision for training of new teachers on placement from college. The school's accommodation is good overall and the school has used funding very well to provide additional space and a particularly well-organised library. Many quality displays of artefacts and pupils' work also create a welcoming and stimulating environment for pupils, staff and visitors alike. The school grounds are impressive with many areas of interest. Resources in the school are satisfactory overall. Although computers are adequate at present, more are due to be installed next term. Too few globes are available in geography and the selection of musical instruments could usefully be extended to provide more examples from other cultures. Additionally, there are too few small resources, such as balls, for physical education.

61 Office and teaching staff make good use of information and communication technology for administration. However, there is currently very little office and administrative support for the head teacher and much of the head teacher's time is spent on day-to-day administration and teaching. This decision commendably allows teachers and pupils to get on with their work with minimum disruption but reduces the time for very important monitoring and evaluating tasks. Financial administration is efficient and the few minor recommendations in the auditor's report have been acted upon. The various grants available to the school are controlled very well by the head teacher and the school uses these to support pupils' learning directly.

62 Most statutory requirements are fulfilled, but there are some 'new' policy requirements to be met and there are some omissions of information from the school prospectus and governors' annual report. This is further evidence of a lack of rigorous procedures.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

63 In order to raise standards and improve the quality of education, the head teacher, staff and governors should:

I. Raise standards in mathematics in Key Stage 1 by:

- ensuring that main class and supply teachers always provide sufficient challenge in the work that is set;
- ensuring that practical, investigative, experimental and problem-solving work is integral to mathematics lessons;
- ensuring that pupils build steadily upon their skills and understanding;
- dealing with staff absences as a matter of urgency.

(paragraphs 2, 3, 5, 18, 20, 24, 47, 79, 86, 89)

II. Improve the leadership and management by:

- increasing the oversight and participation of governors in key areas such as: the effectiveness of management; teacher performance; curriculum; development planning; budget making; the health and safety requirements; and general compliance with statutory requirements;

for example this should include:

- monitoring of the effectiveness of spending decisions;
- checking the accuracy and detailed information to parents in the governors' annual report and the school prospectus;
- developing and communicating effectively a clear vision for the school by ensuring that the long-term overview (possibly three years) is included in the school development plan;
- ensuring that the school development plan is linked to the post-inspection action plan;
- linking staff development to the school development plan;
- improving the school ethos by showing a commitment to raising attainment in the school aims.

(paragraphs 48, 49, 50, 52, 54, 60, 61)

III. Improve the role of subject leaders by:

- continuing to clarify and articulate the role of the subject co-ordinators by ensuring that expectations and tasks are explicitly stated with dates for completion and success criteria;
- requiring that all subject leaders provide an action plan for their own subjects;
- ensuring that full information of the budget and the detailed assessment information is communicated more fully and checking to

ensure the information has been understood; this information might usefully be included in the subject's action plan and its evaluation;

- allowing subject leaders the responsibility for making budget decisions;
- providing guidance, time and opportunity for subject leaders to monitor standards and quality of education outside of their own classrooms, thereby: -
  - identifying strengths and weaknesses;
  - taking action to improve quality and standards;
  - sharing best practice throughout the school.

(paragraphs 51, 52, 54, 62, 78, 89, 98, 104, 108, 129, 142)

IV. The school should address the needs of all pupils but specifically the needs of higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, by improving systems for assessing pupils' progress, and using the information gathered more effectively to inform future planning. In order to achieve this the school should:

- put in place a consistent system for assessment and recording so as to encourage a more consistent approach throughout the school;
- have a clear purpose for which information is gathered;
- review existing assessment records in all subjects, so that there is a coherent system for monitoring pupils' progress;
- use the assessment information to track pupils' progress;
- ensure that a more coherent and common approach to short-term planning and preparation of individual education plans ensures that all teachers are clear about precisely what it is that pupils are to learn in lessons;
- improve the consistency in quality of individual education programmes by ensuring that: -
  - work is more accurately matched for individual pupils;
  - teachers set specific, measurable targets in key skills that fully reflect the needs of pupils and that objectives in pupils' statements are used as a benchmark against which to measure pupils' progress;
  - targets are met in the shortest time possible;
  - individual education plans are updated more frequently.

(paragraphs 8, 17, 24, 25, 27, 30, 39, 40, 57, 59, 71, 77, 78, 89, 98, 104, 111, 113, 118, 135)

V Improve communication with parents by:

- actively seeking out parental concerns and views about their involvement in school, for example by questionnaire, suggestion boxes, coffee mornings and open evenings etc;
- discussing the concerns identified with staff and governors;
- ensuring that action to deal with these concerns is implemented and fed back to the parents concerned.

(paragraphs 42, 44, 45, 46)

In addition, the school might consider making better use of the local environment to further enhance pupils' learning. (paragraphs 32, 35, 103, 117)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	25
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	19

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	26	52	22	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	NA	135
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	NA	5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	NA	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	NA	20

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	12
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	11	15	26

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	9	10
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	24	23	24
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (90)	88 (94)	92 (87)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	10	11
	Girls	13	14	14
	Total	24	24	25
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (90)	92 (87)	96 (90)
	National	84 (82)	88 (87)	88 (87)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	1
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	130
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

### Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

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

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	6.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	27

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000-2001
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	£
Total income	276441
Total expenditure	272292
Expenditure per pupil	2033
Balance brought forward from previous year	5336
Balance carried forward to next year	9485

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	135
Number of questionnaires returned	37

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	71	29	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	61	36	3	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	63	34	0	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	61	3	0	3
The teaching is good.	55	39	3	3	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	13	42	34	8	3
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	55	34	3	5	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	37	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	11	39	45	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	63	37	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	61	36	0	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	21	29	24	18	8



## **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**

64 When children start school, their attainment is variable, but about average overall; their skills in talking are above average. Few have had any nursery experience, although some have attended a local playgroup. Due to the school's arrangements for gradually changing from part-time to full-time school attendance, some children have only a short period of full-time attendance before they become Year 1 pupils, who are expected to start the National Curriculum. In this short time available for working towards attaining all the Early Learning Goals, children achieve well, so that by the end of the reception year, most children attain much of what is expected of them nationally in each area of learning. Since the last inspection, there has been a change of teacher in the reception class. The current teacher, who has only been in post since September 2000, has accepted responsibility for managing the school's provision. In her short time at the school, she has done a great deal to successfully address the key issue from the last inspection, which found weaknesses in the curriculum and lesson planning for the youngest children in the school. She has also established a very good system for keeping records of what children know, understand and can do in each of the six areas of learning, as well as producing helpful information for parents and trying to involve them more fully in their children's education. Teaching has improved from satisfactory to good overall, due to this teacher's high degree of commitment and expertise in teaching children of this age. Standards are similar to the last inspection overall, but children now do better in the important area – their personal, social and emotional development.

#### **Personal, social and emotional development**

65 The children achieve very well due to very good, enthusiastic teaching that encourages them to settle quickly and happily to school life and routines. They attain above average standards by the end of the reception year. They take a full part in registrations, assemblies, physical education lessons and playtimes. They eat school dinners or packed lunches with older children and show good table manners. They are confident to join in whole-class discussions or to work with the many different adults who support them in lessons and at lunchtime. They listen well to their teacher's guidance and do what is expected of them. Their behaviour is very good; for example, when they choose to go outdoors they play sensibly with equipment and materials and get along very well with each other. They are friendly, polite and courteous towards others; for example, they remember to say 'Please', 'Thank you' and 'Excuse me'. A few children sometimes call out in whole-class discussions, but this is usually due to their enthusiasm, excitement or eagerness to answer questions. The teacher has several different ways of getting their attention and manages children well so that they can benefit from their first months of education. Occasionally, adults do too much for children; for example, when making things adults leave too little to children's initiative and independence.

#### **Communication, language and literacy**

66 The children are good listeners and confident talkers by the end of the reception year. They achieve well and attain most of the Early Learning Goals, including those for reading and writing. Teaching and learning are good because the teacher knows how young children learn best and does a lot of careful questioning and talking with them. Other adults also spend time talking with children, but their questioning is not yet as challenging as that of the teacher. Most children already understand what reading and

writing are about. In their literacy lesson, they try to join in reading a story from a large book aloud. They are aware that letters and groups of letters represent sounds, for example 'sh' is the start of the word 'shells'. Most children have made a start with trying to write by themselves, and all but a few write one or two ideas connected together sensibly, and with recognisable letters and correctly spelt simple words. They write in different ways, for example postcards and instructions for scaring away seagulls in their topic about the seaside.

### **Mathematical development**

67 Children achieve well and attain most of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. They join in saying several number rhymes, using their fingers to show that they understand adding up and taking away smaller numbers. Most can count objects correctly, at least to ten, and are beginning to recognise and name coins, such as 50p. In their books they record their number work using mathematical symbols, and when asked, can name several two and three-dimensional shapes, such as cylinder and oval. Children do well because teaching is good. The work about money, for example, is extended through an opportunity to 'play shops' and buy or sell things. Although the teacher has introduced parts of the numeracy hour, in readiness for next year's work, she has a sensible approach to this, and does not focus too early or strongly on formal group work. As with all areas of learning, the teacher puts a lot of emphasis upon teaching the words associated with mathematics, such as 'more' and 'less'. Consequently, children learn to use and understand these right from the start.

### **Knowledge and understanding of the world**

68 Teaching and learning are good and children achieve well. By the end of the reception year, they attain most of the Early Learning Goals. The teacher is good at making sure that work leads naturally into the National Curriculum. In one lesson, children compared old and modern cameras and photographs. This gave them a chance to learn to look for evidence of how things change over time. They were curious about the cameras, asked questions and did very well with suggesting which camera had taken which picture and why. The teacher's very good questioning prompted children to think hard and to offer answers. In another lesson, the teacher introduced a variety of bags, discussed these and asked children to make their own bags strong enough to hold things. Again, very good questioning made children think hard, for example, "Why do you think the strap on this bag goes all the way around?" Children are confident to try out new technology, but do not use computers as often as they might. The current work about the seaside shows that children take an interest in the world around them and remember a lot about their recent visit to Hunstanton.

### **Physical development**

69 Children move around the school and their classroom safely, sensibly and confidently. They take part in formal physical education lessons in the hall and enjoy helping to get the equipment out and put it away. They move in a wide variety of ways, such as running, skipping and jumping, and move their bodies along the floor with control and imagination. They work hard physically when asked to, but can relax fully at the end of the lesson. Children handle a good range of small equipment, such as scissors, brushes and crayons, competently. Teaching and learning are good overall. The one physical education lesson seen was satisfactory, although the planned purpose of the lesson was broader than it needed to be, and children were not always as calm as they should be for

safety reasons. Nevertheless, children achieve well and attain the standard expected of them by the end of the reception year.

## **Creative development**

70 Children achieve well and attain most of the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. Teaching and learning are good overall because the teacher gives children opportunities to have their own creative ideas, as when they make pictures in the sand using pebbles, stones and other natural materials, and make up 'pretend' stories. Children can use paint to mix colours for themselves, as when they paint and decorate the clay starfish they have made. Their collage pictures of hot air balloons show that they can mix art materials to good effect, although the ideas were the teacher's on this occasion.

## **ENGLISH**

71 At the time of the last inspection, standards were average overall by the ages of seven and nine, with speaking and listening being a strength of pupils' attainment. Since that time, standards have risen in reading and writing to above average by the age of seven and well above average by the age of nine; speaking and listening is equally strong. From average attainment when pupils start school, this represents a good level of achievement overall. There remain, however, instances when higher attaining pupils could do even better in lessons and do not achieve as much as they could. Also, work in pupils' books in Year 1 shows that their progress, at least since last September, has slowed down, but in Year 2, progress escalates due to the very good teaching. Since the last inspection, teachers have successfully put the National Literacy Strategy into day-to-day practice, and this has been an important factor in the raising of standards.

72 The 2000 national test results in reading and writing for seven year olds were above average in reading and well above average in writing. When comparing these results with the outcome of tests in similar schools, pupils' achievement was average in reading and above average in writing. The unconfirmed results for the 2001 tests do not show much improvement, especially in reading. This year group, however, is considered by the school to have had a lower starting point at the beginning of the year than most previous year groups, and fewer pupils reached a level higher than expected for their age. Nevertheless, their speaking and listening is good, and the inspection evidence largely confirms the outcome of the national tests in reading and writing. There has been no significant difference in the achievement of boys and girls in national tests for seven year olds. In comparison with boys' achievement nationally, boys at this school have done particularly well over the past five years in reading and have, in some years, outperformed the girls. The national trend has been for girls to outperform boys.

73 Both seven and nine year olds listen very well to their teachers and to each other in lessons across all subjects. This was seen in a lesson in Year 4, when pupils examined the words of a poem about colours in great detail. The teachers asked challenging questions and pupils listened very well and thought hard to try to answer them. This work increased their understanding of poetry and of how words can be used for effect. Later, when writing their own poems, pupils wrote thoughtful words, such as, "Grey is the colour of the air force, riding the sky like a Viking chariot." A significant contributory factor in the high standards in writing is pupils' ability to speak clearly and correctly, using interesting and

extended words and phrases. An example is when a pupil in Year 4 explains what the words in a poem, “on which this whole world depends” means.

74 By the age of seven, all pupils have started to read by themselves and use several different ways of reading new words. They read a range of different books and texts with accuracy, fluency and a growing understanding. Their knowledge of the features of books, such as author, title and index, is good, and they use dictionaries very well to look for spellings and to check meanings. Teachers select books wisely and the school’s book stock is very good. By the time pupils leave the school they read widely. When talking about reading, pupils show an extensive knowledge of the features of books, and they talk about ‘settings’, ‘characters’, ‘contents’ and ‘blurb’, showing a very good understanding. They know how to use the library to find books or use a computer to find information and read it. Teachers attach a lot of importance to teaching reading, and use the dedicated hour for teaching literacy to good effect.

75 By the age of seven, all pupils can write in a lot of different ways and in most subjects. Their spelling, grammar, and punctuation are good, and their handwriting and presentation are very good. The work on display in the Year 2 classroom – ‘Alliteration Adventure’, ‘As They Grew Poems’ and ‘Amazing Animal Stories’, to mention just a few – shows how well the teacher promotes writing in interesting ways and how well pupils respond to the challenge. By the time pupils leave the school, the range of their writing is very extensive. In Year 3, they write mature letters, for example. ‘Dear Editor...’ and record their opinions and resolutions for the New Year. By the end of Year 4, pupils’ writing is well above average because pupils write so widely, using interesting vocabulary in the right context, such as ‘overjoyed’, ‘amazingly’ and ‘totally’ to add feeling to their ideas. They write very sensitively in both Year 3 and Year 4, for example when they write imaginary letters home from evacuee children in history and when they write about an imaginary bullying incident. Work in writing in Years 2, 3 and 4 makes a very good contribution to pupils’ spiritual and cultural development. A weakness arises, however, because pupils do not yet use information and communication technology often enough to record ideas and present their work.

76 Teaching and learning are good overall over time and they were sometimes very good during the inspection. A weakness is found in Year 1, however, where pupils’ poor handwriting and spelling is not always dealt with properly and pupils continue to make the same mistakes they made at the beginning of the school year through much of the first two terms. Otherwise, teachers are competent to teach the basic skills and do this well. They set high expectations of pupils’ behaviour and of their handwriting and presentation of work. Teachers plan worthwhile and interesting work to stimulate and motivate their pupils. Consequently, pupils always behave well, show interest and try their very best. Teachers use the time of support assistants to good effect when pupils are completing work, but could use this time better during whole-class sessions – which are sometimes rather long in Years 3 and 4.

77 Teachers plan lessons carefully to show what pupils will be learning, but they do not share this information with the pupils themselves, and could involve them more in their own learning. Although they set learning targets for pupils, these are sometimes very general, and teachers do not always have enough information available about pupils’ prior attainment within the National Curriculum. Teachers have their own systems for assessing pupils on a day-to-day basis and recording their findings, and some of these systems are more useful than others. This means that not all lessons take fullest account of what pupils need to learn next; higher attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are not always catered for as well as they could be with the best match of work to make sure they

keep on improving. Nevertheless, overall, the progress of pupils with special educational needs is often at the same pace as other pupils in their classes.

78 The subject manager supports staff well and has helped them to introduce the National Literacy Strategy to good effect, including making sure that the school has the right books for the job. English has been a priority for school improvement for the last two years, especially to improve standards in writing, and the subject manager is very keen to find out how she can improve her own performance and influence that of other teachers. She has had insufficient opportunities to find out directly how well teachers are doing in their lessons with putting the revised policy into practice, however, and she does not use information about standards and test results to help her to plan a way forward. This means that a valuable staffing resource is not being used as well as it could be in improving teaching and raising standards. This was a weakness at the time of the last inspection which governors and the head teacher need to continue to develop.

## **MATHEMATICS**

79 In the 2000 national tests for seven year olds, pupils' attainment was below the national average and well below the national average when compared with similar schools. Over the past four years, there has been no significant difference in the standards achieved by boys and girls. The standards in mathematics in Key Stage 1 are not high enough and fall below the standards in reading, writing and science. It is clear from scrutinising pupils' work that the progress made in Year 1 is unsatisfactory and pupils are not being taught the basic skills in numeracy in a systematic way. This is hardly surprising since there has been very significant disruption, due to frequent and prolonged staff absence in this year group. The teacher in Year 2 then has to try and make up the 'lost' ground and pupils are not achieving as well as they should by the age of seven. The unconfirmed results from national tests for seven year olds in 2001 show that although almost all pupils achieved the nationally expected level, scores were lower than normally expected and few pupils achieved at the higher level. In Key Stage 1, this is a decline from standards attained in the previous inspection when standards were judged to be in line with expectations. Standards are above average by the end of Year 4 and this is an improvement on standards in the previous inspection.

80 The school is well aware of the need to deal with the difficulties in Key Stage 1 and has taken action in order to raise standards. For example, it implemented the National Numeracy Strategy effectively and teachers received intensive support and advice from the local education authority. Most teachers have improved their classroom practice but there are still some concerns, particularly in providing challenging work for all abilities in lessons.

81 The mathematics co-ordinator has analysed the results of the national tests and other assessments and correctly recognised weaknesses in the curriculum and in teaching. For example, it was clear that teachers needed to spend more time in developing pupils' problem-solving skills and their skills in telling the time. Pupils in Year 1 do not build systematically on their learning and often repeat work unnecessarily, with lots of simple sums which do not extend them.

82 However, in Years 2, 3 and 4, the curriculum is broad and balanced and pupils make satisfactory progress in all aspects of mathematics. In Year 2, for example, pupils' skills of measuring using standard units such as centimetres, using money and applying their mathematical knowledge in practical situations are developed well but the teaching of time is not well developed.

83 By the age of seven, pupils count in tens with numbers to 100 and arrange numbers to 100 in order. They confidently use correct mathematical language, such as 'more than', 'less than' and 'doubling'. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of common two and three-dimensional shapes, such as circle and square and cube, and they sort them by referring to their properties such as faces and edges. They understand what is meant by rotational symmetry. A weakness is in telling the time and around half of the pupils struggle with using the analogue and digital clocks. Many are making very basic errors, including mixing up the minute and hour hands. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of money up to one pound. There is evidence of pupils handling data at a satisfactory level by producing simple bar charts. However, inspection evidence confirms the 2001 national test results which indicate that, although almost all pupils are likely to attain the nationally expected level, only a fifth of pupils will attain the higher level.

84 By the age of nine, most pupils have a good basic knowledge of number and a good recall of facts, including multiplication tables. They use mental strategies together with their knowledge of number to solve problems with the minimum of recording. Pupils can explain their methods with increasing accuracy using correct mathematical language. When asked "How would you add  $19+10+19+6$ ?" pupils in Years 4 confidently explained that they would add all the tens first and then all the units, whilst others would approximate and 'round up'. Pupils in Year 4 work in decimals and understand place value but all pupils are doing the same work and higher attainers could do more. By the age of nine, most pupils have a good grasp of shape space and measure. They name two and three-dimensional shapes, including for example, hexagonal prisms, and look for patterns when comparing shapes. Pupils understand that a net can be made into a three-dimensional shape and higher attainers recognise which one it is from looking at the net. Pupils know that area can be measured in centimetre squares and angles are measured in degrees. They are aware that a right angle has 90 degrees. Pupils handle data satisfactorily and produce bar charts. Although there are occasional examples of computer-generated graphs, teachers sometimes miss opportunities to encourage pupils to produce these on computer.

85 There is satisfactory evidence of pupils throughout the school applying their numeracy skills well in many subjects of the curriculum and there is good numeracy work in science. When developing their mapping skills, pupils in Year 4 use co-ordinates to locate places on a map. In design and technology lessons, pupils measure materials before cutting them to make their models. In science lessons they make graphs of the findings in their experiments. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support mathematics and pupils' data-handling skills are average. Pupils need to be taught to consider why, if and how the computer can be used to store, organise and present data.

86 Pupils' learning is satisfactory overall, but is uneven because in many lessons pupils are given the same work irrespective of their age and abilities. There are occasions when average attaining pupils make good progress in the same lesson in which higher attaining pupils do not make sufficient progress. There are times when pupils with special educational needs struggle to answer any questions whereas higher attainers in the same lesson complete their work with ease. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in the lessons taught by the head teacher and when helped in small groups by support staff or the class teacher.

87 Pupils' attitudes to mathematics are generally good across both key stages. Most pupils are keen to become involved in the mental sessions that begin numeracy lessons, participating with both enthusiasm and enjoyment. They usually work well on their set

tasks, showing good concentration. Most listen well during the final recap of the lesson, confidently sharing their work when required to do so.

88 Teaching overall is satisfactory across both key stages but due to difficulties in staffing in Year 1, the basic skills are often missed and action to deal with the weaknesses is not totally effective. The scrutiny of work shows that the many different teachers, the main class teacher and some supply teachers in Year 1 have concentrated too heavily on developing the pupils' basic skills in addition, subtraction and multiplication. During the inspection, however, all lessons observed were at least satisfactory, and one was good. The judgement on teaching involves more than just the lessons observed and includes scrutiny of work pupils have been given prior to the inspection. There is considerable inconsistency in the quality of teaching. Most staff have appropriate subject knowledge to enable pupils to make effective progress. Particular strengths in most lessons are the high quality questions, which develop pupils' understanding and take into account pupils' prior learning. For example, the teachers in the Years 3 and 4 classes asked questions of varying difficulty to different pupils. All pupils were challenged and encouraged to explain how they achieved their answer. The open-ended questions such as "How did you do that?" helped pupils to feel that their efforts are valued. Teachers have high quality relationships and value pupils' contributions. The most common weaknesses include planning for the lessons which is often not specific enough. Work for higher attainers and lower attainers does not include specific learning outcomes to assist with accurate assessment. A common weakness in some classes is inconsistent marking. Much of the marking is simply ticks and crosses and rarely includes comments to encourage or show how to improve.

89 The subject is satisfactorily led. The National Numeracy Strategy has been introduced well by most teachers, but there is a need to improve the whole-school approach to planning work for different abilities within lessons. The curriculum provides a basis for the systematic development of knowledge, skills and understanding and staff have been well guided in its use. Teaching, standards of pupils' work and the mathematics curriculum being offered in all classes have been monitored by the head teacher. However, this monitoring has not been totally effective due to the problems in Year 1. Some of the weaknesses mentioned earlier have not been identified and dealt with yet. The school has not yet begun to set individual targets for all pupils and to track their progress. Until the assessment procedures are consistently in place and used to inform future planning, it will be difficult to improve standards further in the subject.

## **SCIENCE**

90 The school has made significant improvements in science since the last inspection. Teachers have looked closely at what they teach and have devoted more time to experimental and investigative science. The 2000 teacher assessment results show that the proportion of pupils in Key Stage 1 achieving the expected level was above the national average but those achieving the higher level was below average. However, due to the very good teaching in Year 2, standards for seven year olds have improved in 2001. Almost half of the seven year olds achieved a higher level whereas no seven year old achieved this at the time of the last inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve satisfactorily in all classes except Year 1. By the age of nine, pupils achieve standards which are above average. There is no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls.

91 Inspection evidence shows that standards in Year 2 are above average for the age group and higher attaining pupils are doing well because they are given opportunities to think, plan and record for themselves. Pupils make good progress and have a secure understanding of physical processes. They know that forces can make things move and change shape and that 'push' and 'pull' are forces. Almost all pupils, for example, can test how far a buggy will travel down a slope and if the distance between the wheels makes a difference. They record their findings in a simple chart. Pupils capable of harder work can go beyond this. For example, they begin to think how they can improve the experiment by ensuring that the buggy does not veer off course. Pupils have a secure understanding of materials and their properties, and understand that materials can change when heated and cooled. However, too few go on to record that some changes are reversible and some are not. They have a satisfactory understanding of life processes and understand the life cycle of a plant and why plants and animals live and grow in different areas of the environment. The high quality of newly-introduced planning and the 'new' scheme of work is addressing this issue and should ensure that all pupils are challenged appropriately. Progress is inconsistent throughout Key Stage 1 because of the frequent and prolonged absences of their class teacher and inconsistencies in the quality of supply teachers.

92 Standards in Year 4 are above average, although at times the work is too challenging. The quality of work seen during the inspection shows that there are times when all pupils are given identical work, albeit very demanding. There is sometimes an over- emphasis on knowledge and understanding, and care should be taken when giving information. For instance, there is some very good work about healthy living, but the phrase "Drugs are bad for your heart" which all pupils recorded, is not accurate. Pupils have good understanding within all the areas of knowledge set out in the National Curriculum and a good understanding of experimental work. The progress pupils make is good and consistent in Years 3 and 4, reflecting the good quality of teaching overall.

93 Pupils in all year groups experience a well-planned curriculum, often with a good emphasis on scientific enquiry. This ensures that the pupils understand what they are doing and have to think hard in order to predict what might happen and to explain their work. Pupils are set interesting problems to solve. They work systematically, asking themselves questions and describing what they did in a logical order: "What do we need to find out?" "we think", "we used", "we did", "this happened", "we found out" and "we would make it better by". They predict the outcome of experiments, testing and evaluating their results. They have a particularly good understanding for their age of 'fair testing' due to the emphasis placed on this throughout their experimental work. They respond well to the challenging questions posed by the teacher, working consistently hard to meet the high expectations of them. They record their work well, organising their ideas under headings and using charts and diagrams to show their results.

94 Teaching and learning are mostly good. This is an improvement since the last inspection especially because teachers now give ample opportunities for scientific investigation. Teaching places good emphasis on pupils developing their knowledge. Features of the best lessons were very good questioning of pupils to extend knowledge and understanding, good use of resources to support learning, and good emphasis given to developing the skills of scientific enquiry. 'Wrong' answers are acknowledged with a smile for effort, but carefully corrected. Feedback to pupils in class is good and helps pupils to see how they can improve their work. Teaching in most classes is well organised and helps pupils to make good progress. Good relationships and control in both lessons observed, together with praise of pupils' efforts, encouraged pupils to express their ideas and to work hard. A good range of resources was used to help pupils to test and understand which materials make good filters when separating solids from a liquid.



95 The weakness in teaching is the over-direction at times. For example, teachers will often provide very clear guidance about how they should carry out an experiment and give pupils directions about how to record their experiment and ready-made tables onto which they can record their results. This restricts higher attaining pupils from producing their own methods. There are times when work is too easy. For example, the sticking of photocopied sheets and a colouring exercise in work on healthy eating is not sufficiently challenging for higher attaining pupils in Year 2. There are also times when work is pitched too high. It is highly unlikely that all Year 4 pupils understand about pulmonary arteries and what is inside a capillary! Although there are a few examples of pupils using and applying their information and communication technology skills in the subject, there is scope for more improvement.

96 Pupils' attitudes to science are good. Most pupils show high levels of involvement in practical work, especially when they are challenged. Pupils mostly listen well and respond to the teachers' targets to complete their work. Many pupils are confident when carrying out practical work, and require little help, support and reassurance. These pupils also show initiative, and help others who are less confident to experiment to reach their own conclusions.

97 Numeracy skills are promoted well through work in science. For example, pupils measure using a variety of standard and non-standard units and record and analyse data, sometimes in graphs and charts produced on computer. Literacy skills are promoted well through note taking and reporting of experiments.

98 The subject co-ordinator leads her subject satisfactorily although there are shortcomings. She has been instrumental in bringing about developments to help improve the quality of planning and has recently updated the policy and scheme of work so that it is in line with national guidance. There is still a need to identify the levels of challenge for different ability groups in lessons. A weakness in the management of the subject is lack of opportunity to monitor planning, teaching and standards. The subject leader does not have an action plan for science and because the school development plan covers only the current year, is unaware of future developments for the subject. Assessment in science is unsatisfactory because staff tend not to keep written records of how well pupils are doing. There is an urgent need to produce a consistent assessment procedure in science which will allow for teachers to plan work at the correct level for individuals and enable them to track pupils' progress. The Year 2 teacher displays good practice by assessing how well pupils complete an experiment and recording this in an effective way. This could usefully become a school system. A portfolio of pupils' work provides an exemplar of standards but does not attempt to assess the pupils' work to National Curriculum levels. Plans for further development include an increase in the use of information and communication technology in science.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

99 Since the last inspection, teachers have reviewed the art and design policy and decided to continue to teach the school's existing National Curriculum programme of work rather than adopt the more recent national guidance about the curriculum. Although only two lessons were seen, pupils' previous work in their folders and on display around the school indicates that standards are in line with national expectations by the age of seven and above expectations by the age of nine. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory by the end of Year 2 and good by the time they leave the school. Pupils with special educational needs do equally well. This position is the same as that found at the time of the last

inspection, and art and design has not been a school priority for improvement during this time.

100 There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about teaching and learning in infant classes, but teaching in Years 3 and 4 is good overall. Teachers show how much they value pupils' efforts by displaying high quality work. They plan interesting work that enables pupils to have a broad experience of art materials and styles, and they set high expectations that pupils will produce careful and pleasing pieces and improve the end products. Teachers understand the need to actually teach art skills, such as how to use brushes to mix colours and how to use shading and colouring for effect. The display of work in the hall shows how teachers make sure that pupils make progress over time from simple observational drawings of objects with pencils in Year 1, to careful, well-proportioned observations of still life in pastel in Year 4.

101 By the age of seven, pupils produce thoughtful work using pencil, paint, pastels, collage materials and clay. They can explain how clay has to be fired to make it hard and less likely to break when touched, and talk about their work using the new words they have been introduced to. The recent work of pupils in Year 2, when they studied sea creatures, is attractive and carefully done, although the original ideas were those of the class teacher.

102 By the age of nine, pupils work with a good range of art materials. Their miniature clay 'busts' of Romans include fine detail, such as hair and facial features, similar to the flatter Gorgon Heads made by pupils in Year 3. The pictures of local buildings have been made using different art materials, and again, these are very detailed, accurate and attractive – although pupils' observations and ideas came from photographs and could have benefited from first-hand experience. Current work in Year 4 is of a high quality. Pupils have studied the work of a well-known designer and are making their own designs of flowers and plants in the same style. Their work is very carefully done and pleasing to the eye, and pupils concentrate very hard to get it right. They use art equipment and materials thoughtfully and sensibly, often sharing equipment co-operatively without any fuss at all.

103 Pupils' work, particularly that in Years 3 and 4, makes a very good contribution to their spiritual and cultural development. Pupils in Year 3, for example, have studied the work of a lesser known artist and made their own imaginative designs in black and white using a variety of media. They have studied shadows made by objects to produce colourful and eye-catching designs in pastel, inspired by art from Central America. Although there is a good range of work in the school, more use should be made of the school grounds and the locality as starting points for artistic work, especially at this time of the school year.

104 The subject manager has a good level of expertise and supports other teachers informally, as well as by providing occasional training sessions. She has not yet had an opportunity to find out about standards and teaching in other classes except by informal observations and discussions with teachers. Consequently, she does not have a clear understanding of what teaching and standards across the school are like. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment and using information to plan what they need to learn next are in the early stages of being put into practice. The subject manager's role in overseeing the subject and taking the school forward is fairly limited. Nevertheless, she has a good influence upon pupils' attitudes to art and design and to teachers' confidence to try out new ideas and materials.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

105 Due to school timetables, no lessons were seen and no judgements were made about teaching, learning or current standards. Pupils' previous work, however, is broadly of the standard expected for their ages.

106 Pupils in Year 1 make realistic models of lighthouses and beach huts during their topic about the seaside. In Year 2, pupils design model boats, using a special design sheet. They indicate what materials and tools they wish to use and draw their intended models from a side view and bird's-eye view. They plan containers for money by thinking about what they will use, how the finished product will look, and what they will need to do to make it. Their written work names a range of materials and tools and shows that they use their mathematical skills of measuring when working in design and technology. There is no written evidence of evaluating their finished items, however, and the subject manager says that they find this difficult.

107 Pupils in Year 3 have planned and made delightful small boxes to hold a few Easter eggs, although again, there is no written evidence that they evaluated how successful they had been in making objects to suit the purpose. Pupils in Year 4 have planned and made lovely storybooks for younger children with moving parts. They have clearly taken a great deal of time, care and patience to fit all the moving parts together correctly, using card, glue and split pins. When talking about their books, pupils know that after some handling, the books had to be put away safely to avoid breaking the delicate parts or tearing the card. They did not try them out with younger children, however, or do any kind of written evaluation about how successful their storybooks had been. Again, teachers say that pupils find this part of the work difficult and most evaluations are done orally.

108 The subject manager has attended courses and helped other teachers to adapt into their curriculum the recent further guidance about the National Curriculum. The policy has been reviewed since the last inspection, but the subject manager has not had any formal opportunities to find out how well this is being put into practice in other classes or to find out what teaching and standards are like across the school. She has a lot of expertise that is not being put to best use by the school. Nevertheless, pupils' previous work suggests that they make satisfactory progress with learning to plan and make things using a variety of materials and tools.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

109 The school has maintained the satisfactory standards found in the last inspection. Pupils at the age of seven and nine are attaining in line with expected levels. Most pupils are achieving satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs make progress in line with their classmates. The school has introduced a new scheme of work since the last inspection.

110 By the age of seven, end of Key Stage 1 the pupils have a sound understanding of their local area and are able to compare features with other places. This is due to the good teaching using resources that catch the pupils' imagination, for example comparing West Row with the Isle of Struay and also with a Norfolk seaside town. Pupils make very little progress in Year 1 since there is and has been a constant stream of supply teachers and work in geography has not been approached in a systematic way. The teacher in Year 2 gives pupils good opportunities to express their own views on places and environments and this enhances learning. For example, pupils empathise about what it would be like to live in a remote island community. A weakness in the planning of work is that it is often set at the same level for all pupils and as a result the higher attaining pupils are not always stretched.

111 In Key Stage 2, the pupils have a satisfactory understanding of maps and know where their school is in relation to a world map. They use symbols and a key competently. Pupils' personal development could be developed more by giving pupils opportunities to study independently. The scrutiny of work shows that this type of opportunity is limited. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of their own area but this would be considerably enhanced by using the local area more. They rarely leave the school to study first hand and this experience is needed so that they are more secure in discussing local facilities and how they could be improved. Their knowledge and understanding of wider world issues that affect the environment are not as well developed. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The pupils with special educational needs receive additional support if necessary but work is not always set at a different level. There is some good quality teaching in Year 4. For example, in one lesson the teacher used photographs effectively to allow the pupils to identify differences and similarities in their own school and a school in the Indian village of Kanjikolly. Using this information the pupils were able to discuss what facilities were missing and if they would be happy to be educated in a school such as the one studied. The pupils respond well to the teaching. Pupils with special educational needs work well together with higher attaining pupils, discuss their work confidently and with interest. This has a positive effect on the progress made by these pupils.

112 Literacy skills are taught and developed satisfactorily in geography. In Key Stages 1 and 2 the pupils read and write about the places they have studied. Teachers develop numeracy skills well as pupils work on directions, use co-ordinates, develop pupils' understanding of scale and measure distances. The use of information and communication technology is satisfactory overall and occasionally good. Pupils have opportunities to use CD-ROMs to find out about the areas they are studying and in Year 2 they downloaded information about worldwide seaside destinations using the Internet.

113 The subject is soundly co-ordinated but would improve if time were made available to the subject leader to monitor standards and quality of education outside her own classroom. There are a number of assessment procedures in place, but these are not used effectively to ensure that there is step-by-step skill development as pupils move through the school.

## **HISTORY**

114 By the age of seven, pupils achieve standards that are typical for their age group. However, by the age of nine pupils exceed national expectations. Pupils make satisfactory progress in Key Stage 1 and good progress in Key Stage 2. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers. These judgements are an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection where standards were described as in line with expectations in Key Stage 2.

115 Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 have a developing understanding of how people lived in the past. They know about some famous people in history, such as Samuel Pepys. Pupils' historical skills are developed well. By using timelines they are developing a sense of chronology and, for example, know that some events happened long, long ago. They remember factual information well, showing that the teaching has been effective and that they have applied themselves well to their learning. A strength of their learning, promoted by good teaching, is their curiosity about past events. In their work about the Great Fire of London, for example, pupils answered questions such as "How did the fire start?" and "Why did it spread so quickly?" A further strength is the way that the teacher promoted pupils'

writing skills as they wrote a beautifully presented diary of the events and their feelings as if they were present during the fire.

116 Although no history teaching was seen in Year 4, the scrutiny of pupils' work shows that they make very good progress in Key Stage 2. In Year 3, pupils have a substantial knowledge of Ancient Greece and explain how they have used evidence from pictures, ruins and artefacts to support their findings. They show high levels of interest in their work, appreciating how the archaeologists use evidence to find out about the ancient culture. Pupils were thrilled by their visit to Fitzwilliam Museum where they were able to see a building with 'elements of classical architecture' and they recognised the Corinthian Columns. Progress in Key Stage 2 is very good in the lessons where pupils develop their understanding of the difference between primary and secondary sources in history. Their ability to deduce information from sources is above average. Pupils enhanced their learning considerably by participating in a dig in their own grounds which unearthed Roman artefacts.

117 Although only one lesson was observed in Key Stage 2, this evidence and the scrutiny of work is sufficient to judge teaching as good in Key Stage 2 and satisfactory in Key Stage 1. There is a good balance in the teaching between passing on facts and encouraging pupils to enquire for themselves, either through asking questions or using a range of sources including books, photographs, pictures, artefacts and visits. Sufficient time is given to history, and teachers skilfully link subjects such as art and design and literacy to maintain interest and consolidate skills. Pupils in Year 4 produced fine paintings of West Row buildings from photographs. However, it would have been useful to allow pupils to visit the local community to gain first-hand experience. The local area could be used much more. Pupils' numeracy skills are not developed particularly well in history lessons but literacy skills are promoted very well. Some exceptional writing has been produced by pupils in Year 4 when giving accounts of the feelings of World War II evacuees, and teachers generally do not miss opportunities to develop writing. Teachers are making good use of information and communication technology to enhance pupils' learning in history. Research using the Internet and CD-ROMs is now seen as a regular tool to enhance and consolidate pupils' knowledge, for example in finding out about Ancient Greek thinkers and inventors.

118 The subject leader is currently absent and there has been little development in the subject for some time. Assessment is a weakness but of more concern is the lack of progress in Year 1 where teacher absence has contributed to unsatisfactory progress in this year group.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

119 Since the last inspection there have been significant improvements in the provision for information and communication technology, which have resulted in the improvement in the quality of computers, a broader curriculum and greater staff confidence, leading to better use of computers in subjects across the curriculum. By the ages of seven and nine, pupils meet national expectations in information and communication technology. Pupils who have special educational needs achieve as well as their peers.

120 Pupils make satisfactory progress overall in Key Stage 1, but unsatisfactory progress in Year 1 where there is very little evidence of any information and communication technology work because the teacher has been absent. Pupils in Year 2 make satisfactory progress as a result of effective teaching by the class teacher and support assistant. By

the age of seven, most pupils are competent in using the keyboard and mouse of the computer and can load and open a program, use the icons effectively and save, print or delete their work. Pupils display sound levels of competence in word processing and write and amend sentences on the computer screen. However, there are many pupils who cannot change the size, font and colour of text and many pupils do not know how to use the spell checker. They have a sound understanding of how to program a controllable floor robot and show this by planning a route for the robot to follow. Pupils have satisfactory skills in using databases, for example when producing a variety of charts. Pupils in Year 2 also supported their geography and history work by using a CD-ROM to research work about seaside destinations and the Fire of London. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in using an expected range of equipment.

121 In Key Stage 2, pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their skills, knowledge and understanding of how to communicate and handle information through information and communication technology. Their attainment in this aspect of the curriculum is in line with national expectations. Progress would be better if pupils had more opportunities to use the computers. There are sufficient occasions when pupils use a word processor to draft and redraft their writing on screen. Pupils in Key Stage 2 have the knowledge to combine text and graphics. When pupils have easy access to computers they can apply their skills, as pupils in Years 2 and 3 showed when they downloaded information and pictures from the Internet. In the controlling and measuring aspect of information and communication technology, pupils' attainments are in line with national expectations. They have a satisfactory knowledge of how to write a set of commands, for example to draw an intricate shape, such as a capital letter or hexagon on screen and use their numeracy knowledge of angles to help them. Pupils in Year 3 have had the opportunity to use e-mails to contact their friends or a support assistant. This they do with skill and enjoyment.

122 In all classes, except Year 1, pupils are beginning to use information on a CD-ROM to provide information to support their topic work. There is still room for improvement but pupils have used computers to compose music in Year 4, to design biscuits, and to produce art work and pupils have used CD-ROMs to research their work in history and geography. It is good that this is becoming a common and integral part of teachers' planning.

123 The quality of the direct teaching of information and communication technology skills is satisfactory. Most teachers have developed their own knowledge, skills and understanding considerably over the past two years or so and further training is planned next term. Teachers are generally much more confident in their own knowledge than they were previously. The school now has a good scheme of work to ensure that skills are taught in a systematic way. Lessons are well planned with a clear identification of what skills pupils are expected to learn. The best lessons are well organised with pupils being given good opportunities to work individually on computers. In these lessons the teacher or support assistant circulates well and does not interfere unless a pupil is experiencing difficulty. Occasionally, because time on the few computers is limited, staff tend to rush pupils a little and pupils do not have enough time to think things out for themselves. Pupils enjoy using the computers and treat them carefully. They are well behaved and listen carefully to their teacher or adult helpers. Through their high levels of concentration and perseverance, pupils display a determination to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding. Pupils appreciate the support they are given and they are sufficiently confident to ask questions when unsure about the task.

124 Resources are adequate at present but a further eight computers are due to be installed shortly.

125 The subject is well led by a teacher who recognises the need for a further development. Her contribution has had a significant impact on the information and communication technology curriculum which is now appropriately balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. Ongoing assessment is at an early stage of development but is satisfactory and the next step is for teachers to track pupils' skill development during lessons. Occasional samples of pupils' work are kept as a record of attainment and this is to be developed further.

## **MUSIC**

126 Since the last inspection, teachers have adjusted the curriculum to take account of more recent national guidance, but music has not been a strong focus for school improvement. Pupils' achievement is sound, and their attainment by the ages of seven and nine remains in line with national expectations. Pupils with special educational needs make progress at the same pace as other pupils in their classes.

127 No judgements about teaching and learning were made because no full lessons were seen. The evidence available, however, shows that pupils benefit from an interesting and worthwhile programme of work. In assemblies, pupils of all ages sing together, and their singing is enthusiastic, tuneful and accurate. When pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4 join together for singing practice, their singing is of a better standard than expected for their ages. Seven year olds enjoy listening to a piece of recorded music based on the story of 'The Three Bears'. They listen carefully to spot musical instruments and suggest which part of the story each section of the music represents. The teacher shows her own good knowledge and understanding of the National Curriculum and of how to motivate pupils to want to listen and to learn. She also finds an enjoyable way for pupils to practise their reading and talking skills at the same time.

128 Nine year olds sing songs with complex tunes and rhythms accurately and with enjoyment. They practise to improve their performances, as when learning the words and tunes from a well-known musical. They compose their own tunes and rhythms by using a computer program, and invent their own musical symbols as well as sometimes using correct musical symbols to write their compositions down. Pupils listen to the work of various composers and record their ideas about the music using musical terms correctly. Work in pupils' music books is very carefully presented. During the inspection, pupils in Year 4 took part in a music workshop, along with pupils from other local schools. They played different percussion instruments in groups to accompany an African song, and showed that they can keep a beat going independent of other groups. Pupils concentrated and worked hard, and their behaviour when out of their own school was very good. About 14 children in Years 3 and 4 learn to play the violin in lessons provided by the school, but lessons were not seen.

129 The head teacher has responsibility for managing the subject because there is no member of staff with strong expertise. He checks how well the school is doing on an informal basis only, and at present, this has only a minimal effect on standards and teaching. The lessons each Thursday for pupils in Years 2, 3 and 4, when a pianist visits, aim to give different pupils each week time for intensive learning in smaller groups. In Year 2, this is quite successful, because pupils benefit from very good quality learning time with their class teacher every other week. In Year 4, only about six pupils each week work with the computers on a rota basis, and this means that most of their musical experiences are singing along with Years 2 and 3. This gives them too little time overall for covering the

breadth of work of the National Curriculum. The school's work in music, nevertheless, makes a very good contribution to the pupils' personal development.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

130 It is not possible to make a clear judgement about standards in physical education since only one games lesson and one dance lesson was observed. It is also not possible to compare the judgements made in this inspection with findings of the previous inspection. On the evidence available, pupils who have special educational needs make similar progress to their peers.

131 Planning for physical education indicates that all aspects of the curriculum are appropriately taught and work carefully builds on previous learning. Good emphasis is given to the teaching of skills in the small number of physical education lessons seen. There are good arrangements for swimming, with Year 4 pupils given weekly opportunity all year round to learn and develop skills, and to build their confidence in water at a nearby pool. Two thirds of pupils can swim 25 metres unaided by the age of nine and others are well on track to do so by the age of eleven.

132 Pupils of all abilities, including those with learning difficulties, made very good gains in learning in the Year 2 games lesson. This was due to the very good teaching, the emphasis on the development of important skills, and pupils' very good attitudes to learning. Year 2 pupils learn to push and stop a ball with increasing control and co-ordination. They worked hard to repeat a series of actions and improved the speed and quality of their movements. They make simple judgements about what others have done, and describe the effect on their bodies when exercising. In a Year 3 lesson pupils were a little over-directed in performing a dance and interpreting music. They are beginning to apply their developing skills such as twisting and stretching to demonstrate the interpretation. They know why it is necessary to warm up, and are aware of the benefits to health of physical activity.

133 Most pupils have good attitudes to learning. Pupils are almost always attentive to their teachers and follow instructions promptly and accurately. They work sensibly in pairs and groups, developing independence, initiative and responsibility, and behave very well.

134 The teaching of physical education was very good in one lesson and satisfactory in the other. The subject leader demonstrates very good practice in her teaching. For example, there is a clear focus on the development of important skills. She uses resources well to help pupils to learn and ensures a brisk pace to the lesson to maintain pupils' interest and involvement. She gives lots of praise and support to encourage pupils to 'do their best' at all times. The teacher also shows good subject knowledge and much enthusiasm to help pupils enjoy physical education whilst also placing good emphasis on establishing safe working practices. A positive feature of both lessons seen was the way teachers provided opportunities for pupils to demonstrate correct technique to enhance their self-esteem, and to improve practice. However, there are missed opportunities for pupils to discuss and evaluate the performances of others and to analyse their own performances to assist with their learning. It is important that all teachers dress correctly for physical education lessons and set a good role model for pupils. One teacher did, the other did not.

135 Physical education is soundly led. Parents are disappointed that there are no after-school activities except a lunchtime soccer club to enrich the curriculum. There are no



competitions with other schools but the school does make use of Ipswich Town Football Club to develop team sport. Assessment is not consistently used to enable teachers to identify how well pupils are achieving.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

136 Since the last inspection, teachers have adapted the curriculum to match the revised Suffolk Agreed Syllabus. Other than this, religious education has not been a strong focus for school improvement, and standards remain in line with the expectations of the local authority syllabus. Pupils' progress and achievement, although satisfactory overall, are better in some classes than in others. There is no record of any work for pupils in the current Year 1 class until about March, when it was discovered that the intended programme had not been covered properly from the previous September. During the inspection, however, pupils in Year 1 made good progress in their lesson when they learned about the Jewish festival of the Passover. The small amount of more recent work in their books shows that the school is now trying to compensate for previous lapses.

137 The school's programme of work is good overall because it ensures that pupils have a balanced experience of learning about general spiritual matters, learning about Christianity and learning about major world religions, such as Hinduism. Teachers are good at looking for meaningful ways for pupils to learn and record their ideas about religions. In Year 3, for example, pupils learn about the Hindu ritual of Puja by watching a video, discussing artefacts and experiencing aspects of the celebration for themselves. Similarly, in Year 4, when pupils learn about the story of Moses, their teacher asks them to think beyond the actual story and look for reasons *why* people might have behaved as they did.

138 By the age of seven, pupils enjoy acting out situations, such as saying sorry and telling someone how good they are. They can look for meanings in the words of the 'The Lord's Prayer' and appreciate the relevance of these to their own everyday lives. They record their ideas about religions in a variety of ways, such as charts, pictures, poems and stories. By the age of nine, pupils record their ideas in a wider range of different ways, and the presentation of their work is very good. It also shows the extent to which the oldest pupils can reflect upon stories from the Bible and other religious books and consider quite advanced ideas, such as *why* Moses made excuses to God. They have a good knowledge of stories from the Bible, as well as a growing knowledge of the ways in which people of different religions celebrate and worship.

139 Teaching and learning are good overall, although there has not been enough time for the revised curriculum and this good teaching to raise standards overall. Teachers have the right approach towards teaching religious education and make sure that they do not influence pupils' beliefs; instead they help encourage and help pupils to find things out and think for themselves. They are positive about teaching the subject, and make sure that lessons make a very good contribution to pupils' personal development – in addition to helping them to gain knowledge, understanding and skills in religious education. Consequently, pupils have good attitudes towards the subject and try their best.

140 Teachers rightly expect pupils to record their ideas carefully in writing, but sometimes need to take care not spend too much lesson time helping pupils to improve their writing skills rather than increasing their religious understanding. Whilst pupils with special educational needs make progress at the same pace as others in their classes, those who find writing difficult have to put more effort into writing down their ideas than they

do talking and thinking about them. Pupils do not often use information and communication technology to present their work, and during the inspection, computers were sometimes a wasted resource.

141 Also, all pupils usually have the same work, and teachers have not yet started to try to find ways to give additional challenge to higher attaining pupils, although they do organise help whenever possible for those pupils needing support with reading and writing.

142 The subject manager has introduced a good programme of work into the school, but has not yet been given an opportunity to find out how well things are going in other classes, except on an informal basis. The concern about lack of work in books in Year 1 was overlooked, for example, and it is not known for certain what standards in the school are like. The subject manager has expertise herself and has supported other teachers well in order to review the policy and the work programmes during a staff training session.