

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ROUGHAM CE (VC) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Bury St Edmunds

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124756

Headteacher: Mrs T Sandford

Reporting inspector: Mr P H Cole  
2616

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> May 2001

Inspection number: 191355

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed

School address:	Church Road Rougham Bury St Edmunds Suffolk
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Postcode:	IP30 9JJ
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Telephone number:	01359 270288
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Fax number:	
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Appropriate authority:	Governing body
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Name of chair of governors:	Pastor T Low
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Date of previous inspection:	December 1996
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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2616	P H Cole	Registered inspector	Mathematics; information and communication technology; art; music; physical education; religious education; Foundation Stage; equal opportunities.	What sort of a school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
13448	D Lloyd	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and behaviour. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
4303	S Reynolds	Team inspector	English; science; design and technology; geography; history; special educational needs.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils? How well does the school care for its pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Peak Education Partnership

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Rougham CE is a smaller than average primary school with 132 pupils, aged from four to nine years. Since the last inspection it has grown by about a third and a new classroom has been added. All pupils speak English as their first language and almost all the pupils are white, although several come from mixed race families. Only six percent of pupils are currently entitled to free school meals, which is below the average for primary schools. All the pupils benefit from pre-school experiences at the playgroup next to the school or in nearby nurseries. The attainment of pupils when they enter the reception class is above average, but does vary from year to year, and the nature of each year group can change noticeably as pupils enter and leave the school. The proportion of pupils who have special educational needs is close to that in most other schools and two pupils have statements that support their particular needs. Five pupils in the school have either very specific learning difficulties or emotional and behavioural problems that require considerable support.

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

This is a good school. By the time pupils leave for the middle school, standards are above national expectations in English, mathematics and science, and for these pupils this is appropriate achievement. Teaching is good, as is leadership and management. The school enjoys very strong and beneficial partnerships with parents and the community. Despite high costs the school provides very sound value for money.

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

- Teaching is good, with consistently effective teaching in both the reception class and Key Stage 2 classes.
- Relationships throughout the school are very good and support much of the good work that is done.
- The curriculum is carefully planned and provides interesting and appropriate learning opportunities for pupils, including those with special educational needs. Pupils also benefit from the excellent links with other schools.
- The school is well led and managed and, as a result, standards and the quality of education provided are improving.
- The school enjoys very good relationships with parents and the community. These enrich the opportunities it provides for pupils.

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

- Standards in science at Key Stage 1, and in history and geography across the school, are in line with national expectations but there is scope for the more able pupils to achieve better.
- The procedures for assessing pupils' progress in science, non-core subjects and handwriting are not as effective as those for English and mathematics.
- Many pupils do not present their work as well as they could do.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

Since the last inspection, in late 1996, the school has made good progress in raising standards, improving teaching and addressing the weaknesses the inspection identified. Overall, results have improved more than has been the case nationally, although they have varied from year to year, reflecting the impact that two or three pupils can make when there are relatively small numbers of pupils in each year group. The quality and effectiveness with which pupils' work is assessed is now good in English and mathematics, although there is still scope for improvement in science and non-core subjects. The school has dealt well with the need to monitor and evaluate teaching and the delivery of the curriculum. These well-established and sensible approaches have helped to improve teaching and have led to better progression in pupils' learning, as they move from class to class. Better progression is also effectively promoted through the schemes of work that have been developed for each subject and the careful planning of each terms' work. The needs of higher ability

pupils have now been recognised and are effectively met in both English and mathematics, through extension work in all classes and additional support for teachers, particularly at the end of Key Stage 1. The weaknesses identified in promoting pupils' understanding of cultural diversity have been dealt with well and sound progress has been made in enhancing opportunities for pupils' spiritual development. The quality of handwriting still remains a relative weakness in English and much of pupils' work in art could be more carefully executed.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
Reading	A	A	C	C
Writing	A	A	B	B
Mathematics	A	A	D	D

**Key**

well above average    A

above average        B

average                C

below average        D

well below average   E

There are no Key Stage 2 test results because Key Stage 2 pupils are tested in the middle school. The results achieved in the Year 2 tests in 2000 were disappointing compared to previous years but were not unexpected given the nature of the cohort. The main weakness was the lack of pupils achieving the higher levels in the tests, particularly in mathematics, both compared to all schools and to those with similar levels of free school meals. The school has responded well to this setback and has worked hard to raise attainment generally and also to help ensure that the more able pupils reach their full potential. This has born fruit with both provisional test results for this year and findings from the inspection showing a much improved picture, with a large minority of pupils now achieving the higher levels. Attainment at Key Stage 1 is now appropriately high in mathematics, as well as in English. The inspection found standards in science at Key Stage 1, and in history and geography in both key stages, to be average, with too little evidence of the higher levels, and therefore to be below what should be expected for the pupils in the school. By Year 4, standards in all the core subjects are above national expectations and are appropriately high. By the time pupils come to leave for the middle school, their work in religious education is often above average and pupils are beginning to access higher than expected levels in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils' attainment in swimming is better than is usually found. Pupils in the reception class, who are in the Foundation Stage, are exceeding expectations in all areas of learning except for creative and physical development, where their achievement is average. Their personal, social and emotional development is well above expectations.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy school and are interested in their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	In almost all lessons, behaviour is very good and pupils behave well in the dining hall and during break times
Personal development and relationships	Relationships across the school are very good. Pupils appreciate each other's achievements and willingly accept responsibility.
Attendance	Good, with very little unauthorised absence.

Although behaviour overall in the school is good, there are occasions, for example in church, when a minority of pupils do not conduct themselves appropriately, and exuberance can result in running in school. There are a very small number of pupils with special educational needs who have very specific behavioural problems. They can disrupt lessons but the school has developed sensible and appropriate strategies to minimize the impact of this. Pupils get on well together and are keen to be helpful with, for example, the older ones enjoying caring for their younger friends during wet play times.

## 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 teaching in the school is good. Over 70 percent of lessons were well taught and over a quarter were very well taught. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is consistently good. In Key Stages 1 and 2, it varies from very good to satisfactory. Teaching in lower Key Stage 1 is good and sometimes very good. In upper Key Stage 1 class lessons teaching is satisfactory, but relative weaknesses in managing pupils lead to learning not always being as good as it is in the other classes. However, very effective additional support for lower and higher attaining pupils in both English and mathematics ensures that in these subjects pupils do make good progress in the upper Key Stage 1 class. The shared teaching of Year 3 pupils works well. Thorough joint planning of the class's work ensures good coherence and continuity in pupils' learning. The good match of work to the different groups in each class is a strong feature of both literacy and numeracy lessons. These lessons, in common with many in other subjects, have a clear focus for learning, and benefit from being well timed. In subjects other than English and mathematics, teaching is not as precisely targeted on the needs of different groups and this results in higher attaining pupils not always being stretched sufficiently. Teachers across the school make effective use of additional classroom support and use direct experiences and resources well to capture and retain pupils' interest. Teachers effectively use their day-to-day assessments of pupils to fine tune lessons, particularly in English and mathematics and across all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. A good start has been made in setting targets for groups and for individual pupils. The full benefit of this approach is not yet being realised as not enough is done to remind pupils of the need to work towards their targets in lessons.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides well-planned learning opportunities across the curriculum. Visits and other experiences enhance the quality of what is provided.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Clear targets for each pupil are used well to inform the work of teachers and classroom support staff.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The school does not have any pupils who speak English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	The school promotes pupils' moral, social and cultural development well and makes sound provision for their spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils' personal welfare and effectively monitors and evaluates key aspects of their learning in English and mathematics.

A major strength of the school is the central role it plays within the local community. Parents are very active in fund raising, organising social activities centred around the school and supporting their children's learning, including the good extra-curricular provision for pupils of this age. The school enjoys strong ties with the church and local organisations, such as the Parish Council. There are excellent links with the local schools and the playgroup, which help to ensure a smooth and painless transition from one phase of education into the next. The arrangements for assessing the progress that pupils make in science and the non-core subjects are inconsistent and not as effective as they could be in identifying pupils who need more help or those who could be pushed on in their learning.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher, well supported by the deputy headteacher, provides thoughtful and quietly effective leadership and management. She sets a good example with her own teaching and by the support she gives her colleagues.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors know the school well and show a strong commitment to it. They manage their work effectively and efficiently and make a valuable contribution with their own particular skills and through their monitoring of the school's work.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has good procedures for monitoring what it is doing and makes effective use of the information collected to plan and bring about improvements.
The strategic use of resources	The school uses its budget wisely and makes good use of expensive resources, such as additional teaching and classroom support staff.

Overall, the school has sufficient teachers and adequate accommodation and learning resources, although there is insufficient large equipment to develop fully reception pupils' physical skills. The pupils benefit from the swimming pool but the small hall limits what can be done in physical education and makes school productions difficult to stage. There is good provision of support staff in classes. The play leader and well-trained lunchtime staff successfully promote pupils' play and personal development. Teachers, through their roles as subject managers, contribute effectively to monitoring the quality of education in school and to planning developments. Satisfactory use of best value principles is made when spending decisions are taken.

## 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>• Their children like school.</li> <li>• They are expected to work hard and they make good progress.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Pupils are well behaved.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The amount of homework that is set.</li> <li>• The range of extra-curricular clubs.</li> <li>• The school could be more approachable and provide more information.</li> </ul>

The inspectors agree with the strengths identified by parents and would like to reassure the small number of parents who had concerns. For children of first school age the amount of homework is appropriate and is regularly set. It is often made fun for the children and encourages parents to become involved. For this type and size of school there is a good range of extra-curricular activities. These include sports and other interests, such as French. Teachers make a positive effort to be available at the end each day to talk to parents, as well as during the parents' and the open evenings. Reports to parents are informative and detailed, and regular newsletters keep parents up to date with events and with what their children will be learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1 Overall, standards are appropriate for a school in which there are below average levels of free school meals. Within this satisfactory picture there is some variation between subjects. Provisional results from national tests, taken at the end of Key Stage 1, teachers' assessments of pupils and the findings from the inspection all point to pupils achieving clearly above national expectations in English and mathematics in both key stages. By the end of Key Stage 1 standards in science are in line with national expectations. Compared to the same pupils' performance in English and mathematics and given that their general attainment on entry is above average, pupils' achievement in science should be higher. In Year 4 standards in science are above national expectations and therefore appropriate.

2 Results in the Key Stage 1 national tests in 2000 were disappointing compared to previous years, when they had been well above the national average. Pupils' reading was in line with the national average and with schools with similar levels of free school meals. In writing, results were above the average compared to national and similar schools but in mathematics they were below the average for both. Compared to previous years fewer pupils achieved higher levels and this was particularly the case in mathematics. This did not surprise the school because of the particular strengths and weaknesses within the group of pupils. A contributory factor was also the inexperience of the teacher in preparing pupils for the end of key stage assessment. When year groups of pupils are small there can be considerable differences in test results from year to year. When these differences are smoothed out by averaging results over a number of years it is clear that the standards in the school have risen at a faster rate than has been the case in schools nationally. Although girls have tended to do better than boys in English and boys better than girls in mathematics, this has not been as marked as in many schools.

3 The school was concerned about the 2000 results and took decisive action to increase the proportion of pupils achieving higher levels. In both English and mathematics more able pupils have been targeted for extension work and additional support. This has enabled a significant minority of pupils, over 30 percent, to attain the higher level (level 3) in their work. This is a marked improvement over 2000. No special provision has been made for science: there are fewer opportunities for pupils to access higher levels and this has limited pupil's attainment. Recording skills are less well developed than other aspects of their work in science.

4 The inspectors found standards in Year 4 to be above national expectations in all of the core subjects, with no noticeable differences in the attainment of boys and girls. However, in English, handwriting can be untidy and presentation is a weakness. With this exception, pupils' attainment is well balanced in core subjects. In history and geography, standards are in line with national expectations but could be higher because teachers do not extend the higher attaining pupils sufficiently, and this prevents them from working at the higher levels. Pupils' work in religious education shows that they have a broad and well-developed understanding of the nature of religions and of the similarity and differences between major world faiths. In ICT pupils have good basic skills and are beginning to use more sophisticated ones, when presenting and handling information, than is usually the case for their ages. Pupils' work in art shows sound skills; however, standards suffer from weaknesses in the quality of presentation of their finished work.

5 Pupils in reception are following the Foundation Curriculum and overall they are achieving well in their personal, social and emotional development and above expectations in language and literacy, mathematical development and in their knowledge and understanding of the world. Their attainment in creative and physical aspects of learning is satisfactory because the opportunities they are given to explore the properties of materials, such as paint, and to use large physical equipment are limited.

6 Pupils with special educational needs make good progress, which reflects the careful identification of their needs and effective support they are given in lessons. Children from mixed race families are fully integrated into the school and achieve as well as the other pupils.

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

7 Most children have positive attitudes to learning. They are interested in their work, keen to do well and proud of their achievements. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is almost always good and relationships are very good, between the children themselves and between children and adults.

8 Parents agree that pupils like coming to school and this is demonstrated by their good attendance and punctuality. The very small percentage of unauthorised absence, which is less than that found in most other schools, is usually the result of parents failing to notify the school of the reasons for their children not attending.

9 Children have good attitudes to learning. They are keen to do well and proud of their achievements, although many could take more pride in the appearance of their work. In almost all lessons, they work hard with sustained effort, concentrating on the tasks that have been set for them. They listen attentively to the teacher and show that they have paid attention by following instructions carefully; for example, a reception group were very clear about why they must be careful when using figures made from playdough. Pupils often work with independence and are confident to ask questions, express opinions and join in class discussions and activities.

10 Behaviour in lessons and around the school is almost always good. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Most children understand and observe the few simple rules they are expected to follow. A small minority of children are lacking in self-discipline and have not yet learnt how to behave appropriately in particular situations; for example, there was some inattentiveness and silly behaviour during an assembly in church, and behaviour in the corridors and toilets can sometimes be noisy. The very small number of pupils with behavioural problems occasionally find it difficult to behave acceptably, and staff work hard to give these children the support and encouragement they need.

11 Relationships throughout the school are very good. Children get on well together and respect their teachers. The school is a focal point of the local community and because pupils, parents, teachers and non-teaching staff know one another well, there is a happy, family atmosphere in which all members are valued. Within lessons, when asked to work in pairs or groups, children co-operate well. They share equipment and take turns fairly, discuss ideas sensibly and listen politely to the opinions of others. All pupils are well integrated into the life of the school and there is no evidence of sexism or racism. Pupils agree that there is no bullying. Children are keen to celebrate the achievements of others; for example, there was spontaneous applause in a Year 4 music lesson for a group of boys who had performed with real skill and flamboyance. In the weekly celebration assembly children show genuine interest and admiration for those singled out for special mentions. They are also kind and helpful to one another; for example, in a Year 3 physical education lesson two girls carefully helped a third who was having difficulty with the movements she was trying to perform.

12 When there are opportunities to take responsibility, children are very willing to accept them. The oldest children, in particular, have a very mature approach and take it upon themselves to set an example to the younger ones and to look after them at break and lunchtimes. They enjoy helping their teachers, for example, operating the CD player during assemblies and performing useful tasks around the school.

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

13 Overall teaching is good. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed and 70 percent of teaching was good or very good, with over a quarter of lessons being very well taught. In the reception class, where pupils follow the Foundation Curriculum, lessons are consistently well taught. Teaching at the end of Key Stage 1 is satisfactory. Lessons in all other classes are often well taught and sometimes very well taught.

14 In the Foundation Stage, the teacher and the nursery nurse work well together to ensure that all pupils are fully engaged in well-planned activities that extend individuals and groups of pupils.

The teacher's careful assessments made of pupils as they work enable her to skilfully match what she does to the needs of individuals and groups. As a result, she successfully challenges able pupils, for example by asking them to explain their strategies for adding and taking numbers in numeracy lessons, and also helps those who find learning more difficult, for example to gradually improve their catching and throwing skills in a games lesson. In this class the teacher makes very good use of direct experiences, such as a visit from a pregnant mother and then a mother with her baby, to develop pupils' understanding of growth and change. Her imaginative use of a bag of shopping initiated a challenging discussion about sorting foods into their different types. A relative weakness in the Foundation Stage is the approach to developing pupils' creative skills. There are limited opportunities for pupils to explore materials and through doing this to develop their understanding of the properties of materials and to refine their skills in using them.

15 Across the school both literacy and numeracy are mostly taught well. Considerable care is taken to meet the needs of different groups in each class, including higher attaining pupils, as well as those who find English and mathematics relatively difficult and those who have special educational needs. Teachers carefully question individuals, and tasks are well matched to what each group needs to learn next. This ensures that pupils across the range of attainment consistently make appropriate progress. In Year 2, additional and very well focused support from teachers and classroom assistants for different groups has had a very beneficial effect on the standards achieved this year. In the best lessons, teachers make effective use of targets for groups and individuals, by referring to them and encouraging pupils to think about how well they are doing. This has a very beneficial effect on learning. However, this approach is not always so well used and opportunities are missed in some lessons to help pupils understand what they need to do to improve. English and mathematics lessons are well timed and usually benefit from a brisk pace, which maintains pupils' interest and ensures that planned learning is covered. Teachers often make good use of resources, such as number squares in reception to focus pupils' attention, and 'wipe boards' in mental mathematics sessions, for example in Year 3, to ensure all are involved and to enable quick visual checks to be made of pupils' accuracy. In a Year 2 literacy lesson, the teacher used a wide range of information books to successfully develop pupils' use of questioning words in their own sentences. A feature of the best lessons is the teachers' consistent use of technical language. This reinforces pupils' understanding of terminology and encourages them to use appropriate words themselves. Classroom displays including key vocabulary, examples of model texts, and relevant information, for example on geometrical shapes or different types of graphs, also positively support pupils' learning in literacy and numeracy. In the best lessons teachers use plenary sessions well to review and extend learning, as in Year 1 when pupils were challenged to describe the shapes they had been studying using the correct terminology. Homework is used well in both English and mathematics to support learning in class and to encourage parents to work with their children, for example, on practical mathematics tasks and with reading.

16 Many of the positive features identified in teaching literacy and numeracy apply in other subjects. Lessons benefit from having clear objectives that teachers consistently work towards. This helps to ensure that planned learning is achieved. However, in many lessons teachers do not consistently identify ways of extending the more able pupils. As a result brighter pupils could sometimes be extended further, for example through investigative and research work in both geography and history. Resources are often used well to support learning, as in a geography lesson in Year 2 where pupils were able to successfully improve their practical skills in using aerial photographs and maps as they compared features in the local area with a locality they had visited. In Year 4, the local clergyman's visit greatly assisted pupils in developing their understanding of symbolism and provided a purposeful context for enhancing their skills in questioning. In most science lessons, there is a good balance between practical work, recording and discussion, which ensures that pupils are gaining appropriate skills as well as understanding and knowledge. More use could be made of assessment in science to push on the learning of higher attaining pupils in Key Stage 1.

17 Teachers enjoy good quality relationships with pupils and almost all manage pupils' behaviour positively and well. In Year 2 the teacher is less successful in this and does not always ensure that pupils are paying attention to her when she is explaining tasks or developing ideas. This can sometimes lead to learning that is less effective than it could be.

18 Overall teaching has shown good improvement since the last inspection, although more could be done to improve the presentation of pupils' work, which would help to raise standards in handwriting and art across the school and in pupils' communication and recording skills in science at Key Stage 1.

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

19 The planning of the curriculum has improved since the previous inspection and is now good. Planning for the reception children draws on curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, blended with the early stages of the National Curriculum. This is appropriate for these pupils who generally arrive at school with relatively advanced learning skills. Pupils in Years 1 to 4 benefit from all subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education and a very well planned programme of personal, social and health education (PSHE). The curriculum is supported by national, local and commercial schemes of work translated effectively into detailed termly plans that provide a good basis for the teaching. The planning process is significantly enhanced for all subjects by the allocation of time for subject managers to examine and comment on the plans.

20 Appropriate priority is given to English and mathematics. The time allocated is relatively generous and the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully introduced. They are firmly embedded in all classes so that literacy and numeracy teaching is helping to raise standards for all pupils. In literacy, the school has taken the opportunity to review the range of books used in English teaching, for example, increasing the use of non-fiction texts with the added benefit of supporting work in other subjects, such as history. Consequently, the school now makes efficient and effective links between subjects, for instance, designing some topics like 'Florence Nightingale' that contribute to learning in both history and geography.

21 Statutory requirements are met, including the provision of religious education in line with the locally agreed syllabus. The National Curriculum is enhanced by the extensive programme for PSHE. Pupils have regular opportunities to explore issues such as healthy food and the benefits of regular exercise. Time is set aside in all classes for 'circle time' when pupils discuss matters of general importance, such as relationships or behaviour. Special events, including the 'Health and Fitness Week' and the 'Body Care' programme, contribute very well to pupils' understanding. Drugs and sex education are included, the latter currently being updated to take account of recent advice and the provision made in other schools in the same cluster.

22 The school is strongly committed to equal opportunities and social inclusion. Thus all pupils have access to the full curriculum and no child is excluded, for example from extra-curricular activities, if they cannot afford to pay. The provision made for pupils with special educational needs, including those with statements, is organised well to maximize their involvement in school life and learning. Sometimes, when the special needs are profound, this demands, and receives, a high level of patience, skill and commitment. The school year includes times when pupils can exercise special talents, such as musical performances and sport. Visits and visitors are used very well to stimulate learning and broaden pupils' experience. The extra-curricular programme is good for a school with this age range and parents play an important role, for example in running a netball club. On occasion the school has identified the need to extend academic provision for some pupils by running an out-of-school club.

23 The school has developed excellent links with other local first schools and the middle school to which almost all pupils transfer at 9. Regular curriculum meetings are organised and, because of the dedication of both sides, some exciting liaison projects take place between Years 4 and 5. These arrangements contribute to an exceptionally smooth transition at the age of 9. Links with the adjacent playgroup are also very good and there is a strong commitment to build further on these strong foundations. Other links in the locality are also very good; this is truly a school at the heart of its community.

24 The provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and has improved since the previous inspection. Weaknesses remain in the provision for spiritual development, although it is now satisfactory overall. Training has helped raise staff awareness of spiritual opportunities across the curriculum. For example, Year 4 pupils showed a real understanding of the

importance of symbols, such as the cross, in the Christian religion. Equally, the excitement and anticipation of Year 1 pupils when they brought their seedlings out of a dark cupboard contributed well to a sense of wonder at the natural world. Assemblies are well organised and sensitively led, for instance inviting pupils to say 'amen' if they agree with the sentiments in a prayer. Nevertheless, partly because of the size and shape of the hall, opportunities to create a reflective and special atmosphere are not always taken.

25 Rules for good behaviour are prominently displayed in different parts of the school. In some cases the children themselves have played a part in constructing these. Good behaviour is reinforced through the 'Superstars' assembly book. Pupils have a clear understanding of right and wrong, accept responsibility willingly and show concern for others. Aspects of the PSHE programme focus on moral and social dilemmas, giving good opportunity for pupils to make sense of the decisions they make. Provision for pupils to take personal responsibility for their behaviour is less strong. For instance, whilst pupils move around the school extremely well when directly supervised by an adult, they do not always show the same restraint when making their own way along the corridors or in the toilets. Similarly there are insufficient occasions when pupils can show initiative, although the school is looking to further these, for instance through the introduction of a school council.

26 Provision for social development is good, not least because of the sense of community that pervades the school. Lessons regularly include opportunities for pupils to work collaboratively with others. Cultural development is well supported in subjects such as art and history. Pupils gain a secure understanding of the cultural traditions of their local area and of different cultures, for example through the choice of assembly music, texts used in the literacy hour and displays from different ethnic traditions. This area of the school's work has improved since the previous inspection and the headteacher is committed to further promoting pupils' understanding of present-day multicultural society.

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

27 Staff know the pupils and their families very well. They recognise the children's needs, responding quickly to any concerns. Positive relationships are established, starting before the youngest children join the reception class, and staff make themselves readily available to parents and carers.

28 Safe and healthy living is very positively promoted in lessons and in the wider life of the school. For example, the school arranges a fitness week; a 'friendship stop' is provided in the playground for pupils to assist each other when they want someone to play with and care is taken to provide sunhats for younger pupils. An exception to the high level of care is the acceptance of children wearing earrings in physical education lessons. Supervision when pupils move around the school is good, although occasionally less effective when children are not directly supervised. Staff ensure a safe departure at the end of the day and parents provide a 'walking bus'. An unusual and very positive feature at lunchtimes is the contribution of a play leader who, along with the lunchtime supervisors, helps to promote pupils' personal development and a trouble-free break.

29 Arrangements for child protection, including the necessary training, are satisfactory, although there is currently the potential for some ambiguity about responsibilities. Staff have sufficient training in first aid and resources for this are readily available and properly maintained. Effective systems are established for promoting good behaviour and attendance, including a quick telephone call home when necessary. The governors carry out a termly health and safety check, ensuring that any previous issues have been resolved.

30 The school has effective practices to check how well pupils are making progress, particularly in English and mathematics. Very good records are started in the reception class and the level of detail in assessments in English and mathematics throughout the school ensures that work is very closely matched to pupils' needs and that potential problems are picked up quickly. Good support is provided for pupils with special educational needs, including regular and detailed consultation with parents. Standardised tests are used well to monitor pupils' achievement. Analysis of the results, combined with other monitoring information, is used to modify the curriculum when necessary.

31 As a result, the teaching in literacy and numeracy is securely focused on the needs of different groups. Relevant targets are set for individuals and groups and communicated effectively to parents. Pupils are not always as aware of the targets as they might be, reducing their impact on the learning. Although broad assessments are made of how well pupils are doing in science and the non-core subjects, these are less systematic and therefore not as effective in diagnosing what pupils need to do to improve. This is a weakness from the previous inspection that has not been satisfactorily addressed.

32 Overall, the school looks after its pupils well, effectively promoting their academic and personal development.

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

33 The school has a very positive partnership with parents that makes a valuable contribution, both financially and practically, to pupils' learning.

34 Most parents are pleased with what the school offers to their children. They believe that their children enjoy coming to school, are expected to work hard and are making good progress. They also feel that teaching is good and that children behave well. A small number of parents are not happy with the amount of homework set or with the range of extra-curricular activities. Some do not feel that the school works closely with them.

35 The inspection team agrees with the positive comments made by parents and finds the criticisms largely unjustified. Homework is set consistently in accordance with a policy that was formulated after consultation with parents. Pupils feel that amounts set are generally about right. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities, which is better than might be expected given the number of staff available to run after-school clubs in this smaller than average school. Parents make a good contribution to this as well. Teachers make every effort to work closely with parents, through organised consultation meetings and informal, day-to-day contacts. Staff in the reception office are friendly and welcoming, offering an effective and efficient service to parents.

36 The quality and range of information provided for parents, both written and verbal, is good. The prospectus is written in a simple, friendly style, which encourages parents to ask questions and to become involved in school life. There is a particularly helpful booklet for parents of children entering the reception class, supplemented by a programme of visits and meetings to make the induction process smooth and comfortable. Termly newsletters inform parents about topics to be studied, while a weekly bulletin is posted on noticeboards to keep them up to date with developments and events. All written communications with parents are easy to understand and attractively presented, often illustrated with photographs or pupils' drawings. Governors make a point of being accessible to answer any queries that parents may have. Parents are invited to two formal consultation meetings where they can discuss their children's progress with class teachers and, in addition, have the option of an appointment to discuss school reports at the end of the year. School reports are very helpful and informative. They give detailed accounts of children's strengths and weaknesses and set targets for improvement, including pupils' own assessments of areas they need to work on.

37 Many parents play an active part in school life by helping in classrooms, accompanying children on educational visits and giving practical assistance to the teachers, for example, in cataloguing the books in the library. Some parents run after-school activities, such as football, netball and swimming. Parents of the reception class children begin every morning by helping with activities such as reading and writing, creating a purposeful start to the day and ensuring that children settle well to their other work. Once a week, adults enjoy a shared reading session in all classes, enabling them to see the progress that is being made, as well as demonstrating to the children that learning is a life-long pleasure. They are also willing to act as an educational resource, for example, two mothers brought their babies into school so younger pupils could examine the process of growth and development. Reading records and mathematics journals are regularly monitored by parents, showing their commitment to encouraging children to work at their learning at home. Parents'

consultation evenings are very well attended, and other organised events, such as the annual swimming gala, are always well supported. A thriving parent-teacher association arranges social and fund-raising events. Through its innovative and imaginative activities it has made substantial contributions to enable the school to make improvements to the site and to buy additional equipment for the benefit of the children. In addition, the work of the parent-teacher association has succeeded in developing the school's high profile as a focal point in the local community.

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

38 Overall, the school is well led and managed. The headteacher has a quiet but effective approach to leading the school. She is thoughtful, basing her plans for the school on evaluation of its strengths and weaknesses, and works hard to set a good example through her own very good teaching, by supporting her colleagues in the classroom and by providing release time for them to undertake their management roles. She has a clear understanding of what needs to be done to move the school forward and has taken appropriate and effective steps to bring about improvements, such as reversing the fall off in results in 2000. The deputy headteacher contributes well through her involvement in monitoring the performance of the school, supporting colleagues and working with the headteacher on school developments. The teachers have realistic roles in promoting their subject areas. They contribute to the monitoring of the curriculum and the effectiveness of teaching, and provide useful audits of their subjects that are taken into account when the school development plan is drawn up.

39 Governors show a strong commitment to the school and, through their involvement with co-ordinators, the local education authority's adviser and visits to classrooms, they have developed a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They organise their committees and manage the work of the committees very well so that their efforts are focused on the school and how it can be developed. Individual governors bring a range of useful skills and experiences to the work of the governing body and these enable them to make valuable contributions to decision making in important areas, such as the use and management of the budget and the development of the curriculum. On occasion, as with special educational needs, their efforts could be more focused on effectiveness rather than whether procedures are in place. The governors fulfil their statutory responsibilities well and they make a strong contribution to the effective leadership and management of the school.

40 The school has well-established procedures for monitoring standards and the quality of the education it provides for pupils. This involves senior managers, teachers, governors and the local education authority adviser, and covers data analysis, observation of teaching, sampling pupils' work and coverage of the curriculum. The information gained is used well to identify areas of strength and weakness, and to identify priorities for development and to focus support for both teachers and pupils.

41 The school plans development well through a three-year rolling programme. This takes full account of national and local initiatives and the need to address weaknesses identified through the school's monitoring programme. The plan provides a clear programme for action and identifies how priorities will be achieved and evaluated. The budget and other funds available to the school, for example, from the parent-teachers association, are used effectively to enable developments to take place. A good example of this is the commitment of extra teaching and non-teaching support in Year 2, which has very successfully turned around the disappointing results achieved in 2000. The budget is carefully managed and realistic balances are maintained to meet unforeseen expenditure.

42 Overall the governors and senior managers make effective use of best value principles to inform their spending decisions.

43 Support for special educational needs is well targeted and classroom assistants have had appropriate training to help them work successfully with identified pupils. The professional development needs of teachers are being effectively identified through performance management and a sensible balance is being maintained between individual needs and the priorities identified for the school as a whole. Arrangements to support newly qualified teachers are in place and work well.

44        Almost all areas of the curriculum have at least sufficient good quality resources to support teaching and learning, although the school does not have appropriate large physical play equipment for the pupils in reception and this limits their physical development. The school's accommodation is adequate. The school hall is too small for many physical education activities, but this is balanced by the swimming pool that enables pupils to make good progress in their swimming, the school field and recently extended hard play area.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

45 In order to further raise standards and to continue to improve the quality of education in the school the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Raise standards in science in Key Stage 1 and in history and geography across the school. In order to achieve these improvements, demands in lessons should be more closely matched to needs of different groups, particularly those of the higher attaining pupils.  
*Refer to paragraphs 1, 4, 73, 74 and 75.*
- (2) Develop for science and, when time permits, the non-core subjects, consistent approaches to assessing pupils' learning and for recording the progress they make. The systems used should help teachers to fine tune lessons to meet the range of needs in their classes. Similar approaches to those already used in English and mathematics would be useful starting points.  
*Refer to paragraphs 31, 77 and 88.*
- (3) Improve the quality of presentation in pupils' work, particularly their handwriting and the care taken with their artwork.  
*Refer to paragraphs 59, 75, 80 and 88.*

46 In addition the school should:

Provide large physical play equipment that will enable reception pupils to further develop their physical skills. (*Refer to paragraphs 44 and 52*)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	14

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	26	44	30	0	0	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	132
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	23

#### 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	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	10

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.3
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	200	8	16	24

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	6	7
	Girls	15	16	16
	Total	22	22	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	92 (91)	92 (100)	96 (96)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	7	6	6
	Girls	16	15	15
	Total	23	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	96 (96)	88 (96)	88 (91)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

There are no National Curriculum tests for Key Stage 2 as the pupils leave the school for the next phase of their education when they are in Year 4 and are not tested again until they are in Year 6.

### ***Ethnic background of pupils***

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	106
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### ***Exclusions in the last school year***

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

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

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

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.6
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.7
Average class size	25.6

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

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	58

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0

Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0

Number of pupils per FTE adult	0
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*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2000
	£
Total income	290,995
Total expenditure	285,615
Expenditure per pupil	2,181
Balance brought forward from previous year	9,503
Balance carried forward to next year	14,883

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

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	132
Number of questionnaires returned	50

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

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	48	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	54	40	6	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	42	52	6	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	34	50	6	6	4
The teaching is good.	59	38	3	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	42	8	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	67	26	5	3	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	59	38	0	3	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	47	5	6	2
The school is well led and managed.	52	30	8	6	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	39	5	2	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	38	45	11	3	3

## **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**

47 Teaching in reception is good. The teacher has high expectation of the pupils, which is reflected in their mature, independent behaviour and that they are now often accessing learning appropriate for Year 1 pupils. She questions the pupils well, expecting them to explain their answers and encouraging them to clarify their thinking. This was seen in both whole-class sessions and group work, and was a major factor in the pupils moving on well in their development of language skills and mathematical knowledge and understanding. The part-time nursery nurse is used well to support groups during literacy and numeracy sessions and to support practical work. She is fully involved in planning and works consistently well towards achieving the objectives identified for sessions. A particular strength of the teaching is the regular assessment of pupils' learning in each of the areas of learning. The teacher fine tunes her planning to take account of what she has found out about pupils and this helps to ensure that pupils are being taught what they need to learn next. Although, quite rightly for these pupils at this time in the year, the teacher is increasingly using approaches that will help pupils to settle into Key Stage 1, there are times when pupils still need to have the opportunity to explore their own ideas, and materials and equipment, particularly in the creative areas of learning, so that they can develop their skills effectively.

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

48 The pupils in the reception class have made good progress in this aspect of their development. They behave very maturely and are able to sustain activities without direct supervision. During a numeracy session a group working on their own, shared, without any fuss, 'multilink' pieces and magnetic numerals to practise their counting and recording skills. This enabled the teacher to work with little interruption with her target group. In literacy lessons, they sit attentively during whole-class sessions and confidently make suggestions and join in when reading aloud. They have good levels of independence, undressing and dressing themselves for games, using tools and equipment when making their toys for playing with in the bath, and when using listening centres to follow stories in their reading books. They have many opportunities to appreciate other people's beliefs and to explore their feelings, including experiencing a Chinese New Year and listening to the heartbeat of an unborn baby, when a pregnant mother visited and when they experienced another mother bathing and caring for her young baby in class. The high quality relationships they enjoy with their teacher and nursery nurse, high expectations and thoughtful use of a wide range of experiences provide a strong basis on which their personal, social and emotional development is built. This results in this aspect of their development being well above expectations.

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

49 Pupils come into reception with above average skills in language. They continue to make good progress and by the time they enter Key Stage 1, most are comfortably exceeding the learning goals for this aspect of learning and are working within the initial level of the National Curriculum. They listen well when participating in whole-class, group and individual activities and respond appropriately, often with quite detailed answers, for example, how to change 'he' into 'me'. Many confidently make their own suggestions and share their own ideas, for example, when sharing a 'Titch' book together pointing out that you can easily cut yourself with a saw. Many pupils have already developed good basic phonic skills and use them effectively when reading. They also use clues from pictures and their understanding of a story to help when they come across new words. The more able, older pupils read simple texts with considerable independence and can blend different sounds when tackling new words. Even the youngest have reasonable sight vocabulary and are beginning to use initial letter sounds when they are reading. All enjoy stories, identify with the main characters and suggest what they might be thinking, and can suggest what might happen next in the story. Almost all pupils can form their letters clearly when writing; many can write at least simple phrases with reasonable independence, and higher attaining pupils spell many basic words accurately. They understand that writing can be used for different purposes, for example, for lists and letters, as well as for describing what they see and do. The inspection took place near to the end of pupils' first year in school and the teacher had modified her approach to teaching both literacy and

numeracy to include many aspects used in Key Stage 1. For these pupils this is an appropriately challenging approach that enables them to achieve above what is usual for reception age pupils.

### **Mathematical development**

50 This is another area of learning where most pupils comfortably exceed expectations. Many can recognise, count out and write numbers to 20. They are able to add and subtract numbers to 10 and beyond, some being able to do this in their heads. A positive and effective aspect of lessons is the teacher asking pupils to explain how they arrived at their answers. She uses this approach well to encourage pupils to think, and to develop their use of basic number bonds and their ability to identify simple patterns in numbers, for example, when using a number square to count in 10's both forwards and backwards. They know the names of many shapes and are developing a good understanding of measures through their work on comparing their different sizes; they can order these from shortest to longest.

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

51 The teacher plans a wide range of interesting experiences for pupils and this successfully extends their knowledge and understanding of the world. They regularly have opportunities to build and make things, using kits and a range of different materials that they cut, shape and stick. Although many found using hard plastic difficult when making their bath toys, they had good ideas and followed these well. They are developing a good understanding of living things and of change in the natural world through, for example, gardening, exploring how they have changed since being babies, their play in the 'clinic', the mothers' visits described above, and a visit to a hedgehog sanctuary. Similarly, by comparing old cars, visiting a local supermarket, travelling on a train and observing their own environment, they are gaining good insights into how life has changed over time and of important aspects and features of every day life. Their current work, on healthy eating, has successfully encouraged them to think about different foods, why we need them and where they come from. Experiences, such as celebrating Chinese New Year in class and baptising a doll in church, are enabling them to develop good knowledge and understanding of their own and others' beliefs. Pupils have many opportunities to use computers in the classroom. They are confident in using the commands in programs and work with good independence, selecting items with the mouse and making sensible decisions to solve problems. In this area of learning pupils are again comfortably exceeding the early learning goals.

### **Physical development**

52 Progress and development in this aspect are satisfactory. Through their use of small tools and equipment many are developing appropriate dexterity. In games lessons, they are learning to control apparatus, including balls and hoops, and to improve their skills and co-ordination, when, for example, they are jumping. The teacher is careful to help them understand the effect that exercise has on their bodies, and most know that their heart beats much faster when they have been running and working hard. They are encouraged to develop an understanding of safe exercise through consistent use of warm-ups at the start of physical activity sessions. The school has no large play equipment, such as tricycles, scooters or a climbing frame, and this limits the opportunities to develop pupils' balance and co-ordination.

### **Creative development**

53 Although pupils experience a wide range of materials and media when making pictures and models they do not have many opportunities to explore the qualities of these materials and to choose how they will express and communicate their ideas. This limits their skills and ability to choose appropriate ways of working. They can use paint and different types of crayons, and create effects, such as wax resistant pictures and textured woven patterns, and as they have moved through the year their work shows increasing and appropriate maturity. Pupils sing tunefully and with softness when this is needed. Overall, progress in this area is sound and attainment is in line with expectations.

## ENGLISH

54 The oldest pupils in Key Stage 2 do not take national tests, because they move on to middle school at the age of nine. Internal assessments based on national standards, indicate above average standards in English. Provisional results at age seven in both the reading and writing tests are above average for 2001. They do vary considerably from year to year, mainly because of the relatively small number of pupils in each year group. The most recently published results for seven year olds in 2000 were only just above average and poorer than the improving results in previous years. This was mainly because, whilst almost all pupils reached the expected level, relatively few reached the higher level. Consequently results at Rougham were lower than in similar schools. However, this was not typical of previous years and had been predicted by the school. Girls usually do a little better than boys, broadly reflecting the national picture.

55 Standards observed in the inspection indicate above average standards for seven year olds, with almost all reaching the expected level. More pupils are achieving the higher level now, because the teaching this year has sharpened the focus on the needs of higher attaining pupils. By the age of nine, standards are better than in most schools in speaking and listening, in some aspects of writing, and in reading, where many pupils can read close to the level usually found for eleven year olds. Overall, standards in writing are a little better than average, but there is more variation than in reading and some weaknesses. Thus, whilst most pupils' achievement by the age of seven is satisfactory given their previous attainment, progress is good over the following two years and pupils of all abilities achieve appropriately. This is because the teaching is good and the school continues to place a strong emphasis on literacy both in dedicated lessons and through other subjects. In both key stages, standards have improved since the previous inspection.

56 Almost all pupils are good listeners. From Year 1 they learn to pay careful attention to their teachers, for instance when following a story with interest and anticipation, or when following instructions. They learn to listen to each other in increasingly formal situations, so that by the age of seven, for example, they can ask each other questions about a baby brought into school the previous week. Speaking skills are developed well, often through other subjects of the curriculum. In Year 4, for example, pupils had prepared probing questions to ask the vicar when he visited them to discuss the symbolism of his vestments in a successful religious education lesson. A notable feature in this year group is the pupils' confidence in using the technical vocabulary associated with different subjects. Planning for literacy lessons includes speaking and listening. However, the level of detail is often very broad and some opportunities to develop specific skills are missed so that progress is not as consistent as it should be. Pupils are given opportunities to speak in the larger setting of assemblies, where the teacher in charge is very sensitive not to embarrass individuals who might not be ready for such a large audience.

57 Almost all pupils learn to read fluently and accurately by the age of nine. In the infant classes, they develop a good understanding of letter sounds. For example, many Year 1 pupils were able to work out the word 'picnic' from their knowledge of the sounds and some knew the 'ck' also makes the hard 'c' sound. By Year 2, they use their knowledge of stories to make good sense of their reading books and many are beginning to understand how to use non-fiction books to find information. Year 3 pupils show increased confidence, for example lower attaining pupils making sensible attempts at reading longer words, such as 'disappearing'. They can explain the plot and characters in simple terms and are beginning to compare books by the same author, such as Dick King-Smith. By the age of nine most pupils can read aloud with expression, using punctuation to bring the text to life. A good proportion can predict what may happen next in a story and can read 'inside' the text, for example, to explain how a character might be feeling. The school has accurately identified the need to improve the comprehension skills of some groups of pupils, particularly in Years 2 and 3, who do not find it easy to draw inferences from the text.

58 By the time they leave the school, almost all pupils have learned to write in a range of styles and for different audiences. They can use increasingly interesting vocabulary to enliven their writing, for example, "The gleaming, shining chariot looked magical". They have learned about formal writing, such as trying to persuade the headteacher to develop the use of the wild garden. Years 1 and 2 pupils are beginning to use punctuation appropriately and can write simple poems. They can edit and improve their writing when required. Most pupils develop satisfactory spelling skills, using a

range of strategies, including those learned by heart, spelling patterns and, more rarely, using dictionaries and other word books.

59 Standards in handwriting are variable and a number of pupils are not achieving as well as they should. They are taught a joined style so that by the age of nine most can write legibly and efficiently. However, a sizeable minority, including some higher attaining pupils, continue to have an untidy style, sometimes taking insufficient care or pride in how their writing looks. The school has identified this weakness, but because handwriting is not taught or assessed well, the strategies for improvement are having limited impact so far. Some staff are not careful enough in modelling the school's style in their own writing on the board or in pupils' books.

60 Pupils with special educational needs generally make good progress because teachers are aware of their specific targets and support staff are very effectively deployed to help them. Consequently, almost all of them achieve their individual English targets, reaching the nationally expected level and achieving well before they leave the school.

61 Pupils have positive attitudes to English. They enjoy reading and writing and because of the school's recent emphasis, are beginning to include non-fiction in their lists of favourite books. They work hard in lessons and in most classes sustain good concentration when the teacher is working with another group.

62 Teaching and learning are good. Over half the lessons seen were good or very good and, unlike in the previous inspection, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen. However, there are some weaknesses at the end of Key Stage 1, where the teacher's management of pupils is not always successful in ensuring that groups engaged on independent tasks work as hard as they could.

63 The National Literacy Strategy has been successfully introduced with teachers working very closely to the recommended structure and content. A key strength throughout the school is the effective ways that lessons are designed to meet the needs of all pupils. Focused questioning during whole-class sessions, well-planned group tasks and flexible support arrangements for higher and lower attaining pupils contribute to all pupils making good progress in almost all lessons. This feature is strongly linked with the school's highly developed approach to target setting. Group and individual targets are identified and pasted into pupils' books or displayed on their group tables. In the best lessons, staff use these well as, for example, at the end of a Year 3 lesson when the teacher asked the class to think about how well they had done against their targets. When this is not made explicit, or the objectives for a particular lesson are not shared fully with the pupils, the potential for pupils to understand how well they are doing and where they need to improve, is lost.

64 Teaching and learning are enhanced by the good use of homework and links with parents. Pupils read regularly at home and the reading log book provides a real communication between home and school. A popular and successful shared reading session, involving a good number of parents, helps to give further value to the importance of reading. Literacy skills are used well to support learning in other subjects, particularly and appropriately in Key Stage 2.

65 The teaching almost always has a good pace and resources are good. Where it is less successful, the pace can fall because pupils are not being managed effectively so that they do not concentrate or try hard enough when working independently. In the best teaching, staff maintain a sharp focus whilst continually reinforcing other relevant aspects of the subject. For instance, in Year 2 the teacher imaginatively used a selection of information books to demonstrate different words such as 'What...?' 'Why...?' and 'Where...?' that might start a question. In a Year 3 lesson, the teacher instinctively repeated 'new paragraph' as she helped the pupils with their shared reading, reminding them of something they would be expected to include in their own writing later.

66 The subject is managed very well by the headteacher. She has a very good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses through analysing assessment information, observing in classrooms and examining the planning. Resources, including the attractive and well-organised library, are good. Support staff are deployed well. The school is in a strong position to continue raising standards because staff share, with the subject manager, a commitment to doing the very best for all pupils.

## MATHEMATICS

67 Overall, the inspection found standards to be above National Curriculum expectations by the time pupils leave for the middle school and by the end of Key Stage 1. A large minority of pupils are now achieving above the expected level in Year 2, which is a considerable improvement on the results achieved in the 2000 tests at the end of Key Stage 1. The results last year were disappointing because few pupils achieved the higher level 3, although all who took the test achieved the expected level 2 (one pupil was absent). Because of this the results were below the average for all schools and for schools that took pupils with similar levels of free school meals. Until last year, results had been noticeably better than the national average and had been improving at a more rapid rate than in schools across the country. The improvement this year in pupils reaching the higher levels is reflected in the preliminary analysis of the unconfirmed test results which show over 30 percent of pupils achieving the higher level 3. The pupils in Year 4 are not tested until they reach the end of Key Stage 2 in the middle school. The inspection found overall standards to be above expectations with almost all pupils working at least at level 3, which is the expected level for Year 4 pupils, and many working above this. Given the current levels of free school meals in the school and that many pupils enter with above average attainment, the standards being achieved in the school are appropriate.

68 At both Key Stage 1 and Key Stage 2, achievement is broadly based with few areas of weakness. Many pupils have good facility with number and use a range of strategies to calculate answers both mentally and when working on paper. Year 4 pupils, for instance, round large numbers to simplify calculations, while higher attaining pupils in Year 2 round smaller numbers and use partitioning effectively to double large numbers. Some of the average and below average pupils in Year 2, however, are not always sure about when to apply addition and subtraction and when working mentally they do not apply a range of strategies. In Year 4 many pupils are comfortable handling large numbers when calculating and they can add fractions, with higher attaining pupils coping with mixed numbers, while lower attaining pupils can work out equivalent fractions and fractions of whole numbers. Pupils across the range of attainment use sensible strategies, such as using a reverse operation, to check the accuracy of their work. In Year 2, pupils also make use of reverse operations to check answers when adding and subtracting. They can identify patterns in series of numbers and understand the difference between odd and even numbers. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 can divide numbers that result in a remainder. Almost all have a secure understanding of money and effectively apply their skills with numbers when working out bills and change.

69 At Key Stage 1, pupils have a secure understanding of shapes and can name and describe common two and three-dimensional shapes, while those in Year 4 consistently use the correct terminology when describing shapes and refer to different angles, such as reflex and acute. Year 2 pupils can measure length using centimetres and estimate mass and volume using kilograms and litres. By Year 4, pupils have refined these skills and can, for example, use scales to measure mass in kilograms and grams. By Year 2, pupils collect information in tally charts and produce bar charts to present what they have found, and by Year 4 they choose appropriate types of graphs for different purposes, for example using line graphs to show how temperature changes over time.

70 In almost all lessons pupils show interest and behave well. In the Year 2 class sessions, pupils were slower to settle to work, were not as involved as elsewhere in the school and their work was often untidy. This reflected the slower pace and lower expectations regarding involvement and effort in this class. In the best lessons, where pace was lively and expectations high, pupils work very hard and are eager to contribute.

71 The teaching of mathematics is good overall. This reflects careful planning that ensures lessons have a clear focus that is well matched to the development needs of the pupils. This is sometimes shared with pupils, as in a Year 4 lesson, and when this happens it helps them to work with the teacher to achieve the intended learning, and provides a basis for useful discussions at the end of the lesson. When teaching is very good, there is sharp questioning, good coherence between the different parts of the lesson and effective use of assessment to fine tune what happens in lessons. In a Year 3 lesson, increasingly difficult questions were asked during the mental session to push pupils to their limits when multiplying and dividing, while in the Year 1/2 class, halving in the mental session flowed naturally into work on shapes when a circle was halved to make semi-circles. In Year 3, the teacher picked up, through her marking, and successfully addressed a

misunderstanding of lower attaining pupils from the previous lesson. Teachers are confident about teaching mathematics and use technical language well when explaining and questioning pupils. This helps to ensure that by the time they come to leave the school pupils are using these terms themselves as a natural part of their vocabulary. Teachers' consistent emphasis on encouraging pupils to explain how they worked out their answers is successfully developing the pupils' ability to use different strategies when calculating. In all lessons teachers use resources well to support their work. In mental sessions, wipe boards were often used for pupils to record their answers. This ensures that all participate and gives the teacher a quick visual check on each pupil's response. Support for lower attaining pupils, for example by giving them their own number squares to support calculation, is effective. Good use is made of classroom assistants to support pupils with special educational needs and other groups in the class. They are well briefed and work sensitively and effectively with pupils. In Year 3, a child with a statement was supported by an assistant as he sat on the floor and he was able to be fully involved in the whole-class session and made successful contributions to it. In Year 2, the assistant worked very successfully with a group of higher attaining pupils and enabled them to make good progress in developing their strategies when doubling numbers.

72 The subject is well managed by the co-ordinator who has worked hard to promote the subject through a mathematics week and an open evening for parents. Targets for pupils have recently been introduced and shared with parents. The co-ordinator has had time out of class to work on planning and to support her colleagues, including the classroom assistants. Her monitoring of teachers' planning and her checking of coverage of the curriculum and discussions with pupils has given her a good understanding of the how well mathematics is being taught in the school. The Year 2 teacher undertook a detailed analysis of the results from last year and this information has been used to fine tune what has been taught this year and to inform the decision to ensure that higher attaining pupils, as well as lower attaining pupils, are given additional support. This has been very effective in addressing the disappointing results from last year and has enabled the school to achieve appropriately high standards at the end of Key Stage 1 this year.

## SCIENCE

73 Pupils at Rougham do not take national tests in science as they move on to the next school before the age of eleven when the first national tests are taken in the subject. Standardised teacher assessments at the end of Year 2 were a little below average in 2000 and disappointingly low when compared with similar schools. This reflected the particular group of pupils, as shown in their results in English and mathematics, and the inexperience of their teacher with this age group.

74 The inspection shows standards to be broadly in line with national expectations for seven year olds and exceeding expectations by the time pupils leave. This is an improvement in Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection, when standards were reported as being at the nationally expected levels for both seven and nine year olds. Given the relatively high standards when pupils start the National Curriculum, this represents a degree of underachievement in the infant department, although achievement by the age of nine is at a realistic level. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress through the school with some making good progress in practical work. On the evidence available, achievement in physical processes, such as forces and movement, is weaker than the other areas of the science curriculum.

75 By the age of seven pupils can make simple observations, for example of ice melting in different situations or of the stages of growth in plants or humans. Higher attaining pupils can make sensible hypotheses about why certain changes happen. In a well-designed Year 2 lesson, most pupils showed understanding of a baby's need for food and warmth and how it communicates with its parents. This work was made interesting and relevant because two mothers had agreed to bring in a baby and a toddler for the pupils to find out about. In the follow-up lesson pupils themselves were able to ask relevant questions to help in charting the changes that occur. Many Year 2 pupils do not record their work well. The emphasis in teaching, rightly, lies in practical work and discussion at this age. However, the lack of care and consistency in many science books holds pupils back in communicating and explaining their findings.

76 By the age of nine, pupils have acquired a good scientific knowledge in most areas. In the Year 4 class, they understand and use a very good range of scientific terms, following the consistent example set by the teacher. Most pupils can understand the need for fair testing and how this is usually achieved by making sure that only one thing is changed in an investigation. They use equipment safely and sensibly and appreciate the need to take measurements over time using apparatus, such as a thermometer.

77 A general strength is pupils' ability to record their work in a range of formats, including tables, diagrams and descriptions using their own words. This is because, throughout the school, worksheets are used sparingly and, from the start, pupils are encouraged to work in large plain paper exercise books. Where the teaching sets high standards and provides pupils with the necessary skills, these books enable pupils of all abilities to reinforce what they have learned from observation and investigation. The good balance of practical work is promoting pupils' investigative skills, although assessment is not used enough to set targets for what needs to be taught next. Higher attaining pupils often make similar progress to others, although their work is sometimes thoughtfully differentiated to provide additional challenges. For example, in a Year 3 lesson, they were expected to design their own investigation using an ingenious set of cue cards. At the same time, lower attaining pupils worked in attractive 'growing' booklets that could be finished fairly quickly giving them a well-earned sense of pride and achievement.

78 Teaching and learning are satisfactory in both key stages, with some important strengths. Pupils' careful use of equipment, for example when measuring growth or drawing a labelled diagram, is a direct result of high expectations in most classes and regular opportunities for them to practise the necessary skills. Lessons have a well-balanced blend of discussion, practical work and recording so that pupils learn to predict and explain their findings in a range of ways. Because lesson plans have clear objectives, the teaching is usually well focused and adjusted to the different needs of pupils, including those with special educational needs. On occasion, the objectives could be shared more effectively with pupils so that they can begin to judge for themselves how well they are doing. Where the teaching is less successful, classroom management is weaker, with time wasted as misbehaviour is tackled or pupils do not fully concentrate. In one case this was partly related to the special needs of an individual child leading to the disruption of others nearby.

79 The subject manager has recently taken on the responsibility at a time when science has not been a key priority in school. Consequently, whilst there has been useful interaction through examining planning and providing informal support to colleagues, monitoring is not fully developed as was also reported in the previous inspection. The planning is supported by a scheme of work that ensures coverage of the National Curriculum and a broad allocation of the programmes of study across year groups.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

80 No art and design lessons were observed. Judgements about standards are based on analysis of pupils' work across the school. Across the school pupils experience a satisfactory range of materials and their skills in working with them are broadly in line with expectations. The overall quality of the art work suffers because too often not enough has been done to polish the work through attention to detail, for example, use of shading in drawings. In Year 4, there is some satisfactorily detailed pencil work, including the drawings of figures, the pupils' self-portraits and sketches of plants, but these have very little shading to provide tone and interest. Their prints, using motifs and letters, are thoughtfully designed and effective, as are their work on card patterns. The Year 3 sketches of the church include details and some shading and line work that give depth and texture and their Willow Pattern work is careful and detailed. In both Year 4 and Year 3 the design and execution of the three-dimensional models of treasure islands and a local village show skilled use of construction techniques and satisfactory decoration. In Year 2 the best work, pencil crayon drawings of geraniums, are drawn and coloured with care.

81 An aspect of the art curriculum that is not well developed is the investigation of the work of artists and of art in different cultural traditions.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

82 Due to the inspection timetable, insufficient teaching of design and technology was seen to be able to make a judgement about standards or teaching. An examination of the planning, some displays of finished work and discussion with pupils suggest that the programme now meets National Curriculum requirements, an improvement since the previous inspection. Termly projects are planned, in line with the school's policy, and these are often imaginatively linked with other subjects, for example, the designing and making of artefacts linked with a history project, or the tie-in between science and healthy food. Occasionally the distinction between art and design and technology is weakened when the two subjects are planned together.

83 Pupils learn to design and make a range of models, often using paper and card. For example in Year 1 they used their imagination well to make opened-out houses which they decorated with flair and creativity. At the end of the infants pupils again show great individuality in making glove puppets of a range of characters. In Key Stage 2, they can design and make artefacts, such as Roman shoes, evaluating what they were pleased with and what they would do differently next time. A major strength through the school is the freedom that pupils are given in coming up with their own solutions within the parameters set for the task. As a result, they gain confidence in generating ideas and are pleased with the finished products. Good emphasis is placed on food technology, including the making of curry, contributing to pupils' understanding of different cultural traditions.

84 Because the school does not yet have its own plan for covering or assessing the key designing, making and evaluating skills in each year group, progression is hindered. Thus, the products seen, where pupils work with paper and card, do not show sufficient progress in skills, such as cutting, fixing and decorating. Assessment and monitoring of the subject are underdeveloped. Planning does not always indicate where pupils will be expected to choose materials or tools for themselves and where they will be provided. Similarly, the expectations for designing are not always clear enough in teachers' planning.

## **GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY**

85 Few lessons were observed during the inspection due to the timetable. However, from the evidence in pupils' finished work, both subjects provide adequate coverage of the National Curriculum with almost all pupils reaching the expected levels at the ages of seven and nine. Standards in history are more secure than those in parts of the geography syllabus, although attainment in history is now lower by the end of Year 2 than that reported in the previous inspection. In view of the relatively high attainment levels of pupils when they start the National Curriculum, standards should be higher across the school.

86 In history by the age of seven, most pupils have learned about different time periods and can place important events on a time line. Higher attaining pupils can explain and compare events and many show some empathy, for instance, when writing about the life of a servant at the time of Florence Nightingale. By the age of nine, pupils have studied several time periods at some depth. For example, an extensive topic on Ancient Greece leads to pupils gaining a good knowledge of the period, including the vocabulary associated with features, such as the Greek temples. At the same time they are beginning to use different sources of evidence, such as pottery and other artefacts. This work is often presented well in comprehensive topic books that include a contents' page and illustrated covers. Higher attaining pupils, particularly, do not show sufficient skill in researching information for themselves using reference books or computers. There is little planned opportunity for this in lessons or in homework.

87 The strongest part of the geography curriculum in both key stages is local studies. Starting in Year 1, pupils begin to examine aspects of their locality and compare these with other geographical areas, such as Swaffham. Year 3 pupils study the local church – blending aspects of history and geography. By Year 4, they can identify features that are causing environmental problems and many pupils can make sensible, well-informed suggestions about how the environment could be improved.

The study of contrasting places is weaker and pupils' knowledge and skill less secure, for example, in studying the village of Chembakoli. The extensive use of printed worksheets is restricting pupils' ability to apply their geographical knowledge, for example, when comparing climate differences or in drawing and interpreting maps to different scales.

88 Insufficient teaching was seen to make an overall judgement on its effectiveness. Planning indicates that increasingly effective use is made of links between the two subjects and with other subjects, most notably literacy, where some shared texts are used that tie in with a history or geography topic. Frequent visits are imaginatively planned to enhance the learning. Visitors and other resources are brought into the school whenever possible, giving the subjects added interest and relevance. Pupils' work is marked regularly, although it rarely includes precise comments about what they have learned well and what they need to do next time. As a result, and because assessment is inconsistent, the work is too often pitched at the middle with the needs of the higher and lower attaining pupils being insufficiently recognized. Presentation is often below the standard shown by pupils in other subjects, because expectations are not made clear enough.

89 Both subjects are now managed by the same co-ordinator who has experience and a particular interest in history, which she has led for some time. Monitoring of standards and teaching is underdeveloped overall, although planning is examined and an annual action plan of needs, including resources, produced. Termly planning is generally satisfactory, although teachers are not consistent in identifying assessment opportunities and particularly how they intend to assess skills. However, planning has improved since the previous inspection because teachers now have agreed schemes to follow and some initial work has been completed in distributing the programmes of study across the year groups.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)**

90 Standards in ICT are in line with national expectations at both Year 2 and Year 4 and in some aspects of their work pupils are beginning to access the level above that normally expected for their age. Pupils are confident using computers. By Key Stage 2, they can launch programs, save their work and print it out. They develop these skills early on through their use of computers in the reception class.

91 Year 4 pupils understand how information can be shared through the Internet using email and how it can be obtained from the worldwide web. They use computers effectively for writing and present their work thoughtfully, using emphasis and formatting appropriately and a digital camera to capture images that they include in their work. In Year 3, for example, they learned how to use special packages to produce interesting effects with the shapes of words. Pupils' knowledge and understanding of how to use computers to store and manipulate data are becoming well developed. Year 4 pupils use terms such as files, records and fields when describing how data is organised and they know how to ask appropriate questions to generate surveys and how information, for example about themselves, can be searched and sorted once it has been collected. They also understand that information in computers can be interrogated to test simple hypotheses, for example, that their skeletons grow as they get older. When using database programs to present information, Year 4 pupils make sensible choices about the most appropriate graph type to use, for example, a line graph to show flows of traffic over time. A strength of pupils' learning is their ability to compare the use of computers for these sorts of tasks with other ways of doing them.

92 By Year 2, pupils can also use computers to write with and have pasted pictures into their work. Their Mondrian-inspired pictures include the use of line tools and colour fills and, as in Key Stage 2, pupils have been successfully encouraged to compare producing their pictures on the computer to using conventional materials and equipment. Pupils' skills in using computers to present information are well developed, enabling them to collect information, for example, on their favourite foods, pets and car colours, and to use graphing programs to present what they have found using bar charts.

93 Pupils respond well in lessons. They listen carefully, are eager to answer questions, behave very well and work responsibly and sensibly. This reflects the expectations of their teachers. The teaching seen was good. ICT is mainly taught through discrete lessons that enable teachers to

develop particular skills or aspects of the subject. This works well. The two lessons seen were both in Key Stage 2 and both were well taught by teachers who were confident about what they were doing. The lessons had clearly identified objectives that built well on what pupils had learnt before. In both lessons the teachers were careful to check that pupils understood what already had been covered, before moving on to the new focus for the lesson. A consistent and appropriately strong emphasis was placed on the correct technical vocabulary associated with databases, and this successfully encouraged pupils to become confident in their own use of these words. Teachers carefully explained new learning, and together with effective support for groups who needed additional help, this enabled all pupils to achieve the lesson's objectives. In the Year 4 lesson, the teacher was also careful to set an additional challenge in the work for higher attaining pupils that pushed them to develop sophisticated approaches to solving the problem of devising a survey to capture, record and present the flow of different types of traffic over time. In addition to specific ICT lessons teachers regularly identify opportunities to deliver aspects of ICT through other subjects. In Year 3, this was done very well when pupils used Logo to produce shapes in a mathematics lesson.

94 The subject is effectively managed by two co-ordinators, one for each key stage. The curriculum being followed is broad and balanced and there are sufficient resources to support the teaching of the subject. The co-ordinators have developed a useful form for recording the progress of individual pupils that could be made easier to maintain by making it into a group record. Teachers' expertise in the subject has been audited and the staff are currently benefiting from the national ICT training programme.

## **MUSIC**

95 Although two lessons were observed in music and children were heard singing in assemblies there was insufficient evidence to make secure judgement on standards in the subject. On the basis of what was found during the inspection pupils across the school sing tunefully and, by the end of Key Stage 2, they are capable of achieving above expectations. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils showed good skills in composing and performing their compositions in small ensembles. Their compositions were imaginative and their performances were polished and demonstrated good use of dynamics. Throughout the lesson pupils were thoughtful in their evaluations of each other's work and they co-operated well within their groups. This lesson was very well taught by a teacher who was enthusiastic, demanding in her expectations and skilful in managing the pupils and in teasing out improvements through careful evaluations and well-targeted questioning. In a well-taught lesson for the younger pupils in Key Stage 1, the teacher clearly explained and demonstrated rhythmic clapping and when to start and stop. She was careful to gradually develop the pupils' skills and by the end of the lesson had succeeded in getting them to copy and sustain a rhythm and to alter the speed in time with the teacher.

96 The co-ordinator is a music specialist and takes an active role in promoting the subject in the school through, for example, leading hymn-singing sessions and by providing an extra-curricular recorder club. She is currently producing a new policy and guidance for teachers to support progression in pupils' learning from year to year. She monitors planning to check that the requirements of the National Curriculum are being covered and is beginning to use the information gained to guide her work.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

97 Too few physical education lessons were observed during the inspection to form judgements on standards. The school has its own swimming pool and during the second half of the summer term pupils across the school have swimming lessons every week. As a result, almost all are able to swim by the time they leave and many can swim 25 metres. The school hall is very small and is an unsatisfactory space for gymnastics, dance and indoor games. The school has worked hard to compensate for this weakness by providing a new hard play area outside that complements the field and extends the time when games can be taught. The older pupils benefit from their involvement with tutors from the Body Care project, which gives them insights into developing their fitness and a good understanding of the nature and effect of exercise. The school follows the detailed and well-structured programme for physical education provided by the local education authority. This provides

a balanced curriculum that gradually develops skills as pupils move through the school. The one lesson seen in Key Stage 2 was well taught and enabled pupils to improve their footwork skills before moving on to developing and refining their ability to strike a ball with a racquet. The teacher was careful to ensure that pupils were warmed up properly and she used small competitive situations well to develop pupils' interest and involvement.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

98 Standards, by Year 4, are above expectations and they are in line with them at the end of Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 1, pupils are developing a sound knowledge and understanding of important stories from the Bible, such as The Good Samaritan and Noah's Ark, and they are able to consider how these relate to their own lives. Through their study of Christianity and Judaism, they are developing a satisfactory knowledge of important festivals, such as Christmas, Easter and Hanukkah and why these matter to Christians and Jews, and also of their holy books and places of worship. When opportunities arise they also learn about other festivals, such as Chinese New Year, which extend their understanding of the breadth of religious practices. In many lessons in religious education, pupils are encouraged to reflect on what matters to them, such as special times, feelings and moods and what rules people ought to follow in their lives. These opportunities have provided a firm base for them to find out about festivals and celebrations and religious teachings, as well as contributing to their spiritual development. By Year 4, pupils are able to reflect thoughtfully on what are the wonders of the world and how religious people take this as evidence for their belief in God. They have a good understanding and knowledge of features of Christian life and have also developed a detailed knowledge of key elements in Judaism, including the nature and importance of the Torah, the importance of Moses and Abraham, the nature of the Shabbat and the synagogue as a place of worship. Recently they have gained a good understanding of the use of symbolism in religious contexts and how some are specific to one religion, such as the cross, but others, such as candles, have significance in several religions.

99 The school closely follows the local education authority's agreed syllabus and teachers use the accompanying guidance effectively to plan their lessons. In the two lessons observed, artefacts were used well to make the lessons interesting and to make difficult ideas accessible to the pupils. In a satisfactory lesson in Year 2, a Torah was used to focus pupils' interest, and as the basis for a clear explanation of how it was similar to the Bible used in churches. In Year 4, the local clergyman dressed in his vestments and the discussion based on these were used very successfully to develop pupils' understanding of the importance of colours as symbols. The teacher was very careful to ensure the pupils were well prepared before the session to enable full benefit to be gained from it. As a result, pupils asked sophisticated questions and were able to extend their understanding and knowledge of important aspects of Christian beliefs. The teacher's sensitive and skilful managing of the lesson ensured that pupils' responses and behaviour were very good. This was a very good lesson that was both challenging and informative.