

INSPECTION REPORT

DEREHAM CHURCH FIRST SCHOOL

Dereham

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121195

Headteacher: Mr Alan Derry

Reporting inspector: Mr Colin Henderson
23742

Dates of inspection: 13th – 16th March 2000

Inspection number: 192057

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 to 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St. Withburga Lane Dereham Norfolk
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Patsy Lowson
Date of previous inspection:	3 rd -6 th February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Colin Henderson	Registered inspector	Science Information technology Geography Physical education	How high are standards? School's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
Jenny Mynett	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Jean Peek	Team inspector	Mathematics Art Design and technology Under fives Equal opportunities	How well does the school care for its pupils?
Christine Richardson	Team inspector	English History Music Special educational needs	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Dereham Church First School is a Voluntary Aided Church of England school situated near the centre of East Dereham, an expanding rural market town in Norfolk. It currently has 196 pupils on roll (88 boys and 108 girls). This is smaller than the national average but larger than at the time of the last inspection. Most pupils come from the local area which is a community of mixed backgrounds, housed in mainly private accommodation. The school aims to develop courteous, confident, self-controlled young people, with inquiring minds and an appreciation of the world around them.

The pupils are predominantly of white, United Kingdom ethnic background. Only one per cent of pupils come from ethnic minority groups which is below average. There are 43 pupils (22 per cent) on the register of special educational needs, most of whom have moderate learning difficulties. This is broadly in line with the national average. There are 0.5 per cent of pupils with a statement of need which is just below average. Sixteen per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals which is broadly average. Baseline assessment indicates that attainment on entry to the school is just below average with weaknesses in language and literacy and social development.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Dereham Church First School is a caring, supportive, happy school whose strengths outweigh its weaknesses. Pupils are very positive in their attitudes to school and relationships are of very high quality. Teaching is never less than sound and frequently good. The leadership of the new headteacher gives a positive direction to the work of the school and is supported well by staff and an influential governing body. The school has coped very well with significant changes in its status and is now well placed to promote higher standards. The school gives sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils have positive, enthusiastic attitudes and clearly enjoy school.
- Standards of behaviour are generally good both in lessons and around the school.
- There are very good relationships throughout the school.
- The school has a caring, supportive ethos with effective behaviour management and a valued rewards system.
- Provision in the nursery is very good.
- There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- The school is managed well with a clear, positive direction given by the new headteacher.
- The governing body is very supportive of the school and makes an increasingly significant contribution to school improvement.
- Parents have very positive views of the school and work in close co-operation with staff to achieve improved standards.
- The school has very high quality support and administrative staff who contribute substantially to its effectiveness.
- The quality of accommodation is very good and promotes an attractive and interesting learning environment.

What could be improved

- Attainment in literacy at the end of Key Stage 1.
- Raise teachers' expectations of pupils' academic attainment to a consistently higher level.
- Ensure that lessons are well paced and make full and effective use of teaching time to promote learning.
- Establish rigorous assessment procedures in all core subjects consistently throughout the school.
- Use assessment information to match learning activities closely to the needs of all pupils in mixed age and mixed ability classes.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made sound improvement overall since the last inspection in February 1997. Improvements have been made on the issues of training and staff development. These were recognised when the school received an Investors in People award in January 1999. The role of subject co-ordinators in monitoring and evaluating their subjects has also been improved, for example in literacy. Standards overall are lower than at the time of the last inspection. However, the school has undergone a period of considerable change in its status and development. The new headteacher, working closely with a newly

re-constituted governing body, has directed much of his time in preparing the school for these changes. Procedures are now being established which will enable the school to make further improvements. A new nursery provision has recently been established which is contributing to raising standards, particularly for children under five.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
Reading	E	D	D	E	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	E	D	E	E	
Mathematics	D	C	E	E	

These test results show that, although there is some variation from year to year due to the changing nature of different year groups, standards have remained below and well below the national average in reading, writing and mathematics in the last two years. Standards are well below the average of similar schools; those which have a similar number of pupils entitled to free school meals. The school has set targets for the number of pupils to achieve Level 2 or above in 2000 – 83 per cent reading, 85 per cent writing and 89 per cent mathematics. These are realistically based on attainment information and are broadly in line with the current national average. The school is likely to meet these targets as the effective literacy and numeracy strategies are beginning to promote improving standards.

Inspection evidence shows that standards at the end of Key Stage 1 are improving. Attainment in reading is just below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and broadly average by the time the pupils leave school at the end of Year 3. In writing, standards are below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and broadly average by the end of Year 3. Attainment in mathematics is broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 3. The school has successfully implemented the strategies for literacy and numeracy and these are beginning to promote higher standards. Reading standards at Key Stage 1 are restricted by the limited range of strategies which pupils have to read unfamiliar words. Standards in science are broadly in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 3. Few pupils achieve above average standards as learning activities do not consistently challenge pupils to extend their knowledge and skills. Attainment in information and communication technology is broadly in line with expected standards throughout the school. Pupils' skills in word processing are generally developed soundly, although opportunities are not consistently provided in all classes to ensure that pupils' skills and knowledge are frequently used. Children under five settle well in both nursery and reception and quickly adjust to school routines. They make sound progress overall, with good progress being made in the nursery. They reach the nationally expected standards by the age of five, except in aspects of language and literacy where progress is restricted by the weaknesses identified in baseline assessment.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils generally have positive and enthusiastic attitudes. They are keen to participate and clearly enjoy being at school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour is good in classrooms and throughout the school. Pupils are courteous and friendly to each other.
Personal development and relationships	Very good relationships throughout the school promote good personal development. Pupils willingly take on responsibilities. They show respect for each other and for adults.
Attendance	Attendance is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils are generally prompt into school in the mornings and lessons start on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7- 8 years
Lessons seen overall	good	sound	sound

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

Teaching is sound overall at both key stages. There are frequent examples of good teaching at both key stages and the quality is never less than sound. Teaching was good or better in half of the lessons observed with one in ten lessons being of very good quality. Teaching for children under five is good overall. It is of a consistently high standard in the nursery and is a significant factor in settling children happily into school life. Teaching in English is good overall and it is sound in mathematics. The school has implemented the strategies for literacy and numeracy soundly and these are promoting improving standards. Teachers plan their lessons well and manage their classes effectively to ensure that pupils sustain their concentration. Teaching is less effective when pupils are not consistently challenged to extend their skills and knowledge and teachers do not maintain a brisk pace to lessons to sustain pupils' interest and attention.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for children under five is sound overall. It is very good in the nursery. A good, broad and balanced curriculum at both key stages is enhanced well by very good personal, social and health education provision, a good range of extra-curricular activities and visits and visitors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision is good. High quality support staff are used very well to ensure that pupils participate fully and make good progress towards their individual learning targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision is good. Pupils receive good quality individual support towards improving their language skills.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The provision is very good. The very good moral and social provision promote pupils' understanding of right and wrong, respect for others and high quality relationships. The provision for spiritual development is very good and effectively supports the school ethos. Pupils' awareness of their own cultural traditions and those of other cultures is promoted well.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Staff know their pupils well and provide very good care and support. There are very good procedures to monitor and support pupils' personal development. Procedures to assess pupils' attainment and support their academic progress are not fully developed.
How good does the school work in partnership with parents	The school has maintained its very good links with parents. It works closely with them to keep them well informed and involved in their children's learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The school is well managed. The headteacher gives a clear, positive direction to the work of the school. He works closely with staff to identify development priorities and to focus on their improvement.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body has been particularly effective in preparing the school for reorganisation. Governors are fully involved in improvement planning and make a positive and informed contribution to managing the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The headteacher analyses attainment data to monitor pupil performance, particularly in literacy, and to target areas for improvement. He closely evaluates teaching plans. Procedures to monitor teaching and learning are being planned for further development as they are not yet rigorously evaluating their learning outcomes.
The strategic use of resources	An effective summary improvement plan identifies development priorities which are linked well to financial planning. Recent budget uncertainties over reorganisation have created difficulties in detailed financial planning. The principles of best value are applied successfully and the school gives sound value for money. Staffing levels meet curriculum requirements with generally effective use of support staff. Resources are adequate overall to meet the needs of the curriculum. They have been improved in literacy, numeracy and music and are promoting improvement. The accommodation is very good and provides an attractive learning environment.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Parental responses were from 57 questionnaires returned (34 per cent) and from the 18 parents who attended the meeting.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The positive attitudes and caring values which the school promotes. • Behaviour is good and promoted by a valued rewards programme. • The school is well led and managed. • Staff are approachable and quickly sort out any problems. • The school works closely with parents. • Teaching is good. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More frequent information about how well their child is progressing due to meetings being late in the summer term. • A broader range of extra-curricular activities. • The amount of homework, particularly the regularity of reading books being sent home.

Parents' responses were very supportive. There were few concerns. Inspection evidence confirms the parents' positive views of the school, particularly the positive attitudes and caring approach. Inspectors' judgements found that the school provides suitable opportunities for parents to keep informed about the child's progress. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities which enhance the pupils' learning

opportunities. Homework is not fully used to promote pupils' learning, for example in mathematics and reading.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. At the end of Key Stage 1, the results of the 1999 national tests showed that attainment in reading was below the national average and well below the average of similar schools. In writing, attainment was well below average nationally and compared with similar schools. The number of pupils achieving higher than the nationally expected Level 2 was below average in writing and well below in reading. Test results show that standards in both reading and writing are lower now than at the time of the last inspection. Over the last four years, results in reading were below the national average. They were well below in writing. There were no significant differences between the performance of boys and girls. The 1999 results in both reading and writing were below those achieved in 1998. School attainment data shows that the particular year group included a higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs. Over 50 per cent of the year were at the younger end of the age range with summer term birthdays.
2. The school has set improvement targets of 83 per cent in reading and 85 per cent in writing for the number of pupils to achieve Level 2 or above in 2000. These are a realistic five per cent improvement on last year's results and, if achieved, will enable the school to be close to the current national average. Standards are improving and the school is likely to be close to achieving its targets. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in reading is just below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and broadly average by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3. Pupils' positive approach, supported by some effective guided reading activities in literacy lessons, promotes high standards. Year 3 pupils have a broader range of reading skills and use them increasingly effectively to support attainment in other subjects. However, pupils in Key Stage 1 have a limited range of strategies to help them to read unfamiliar words and this restricts the development of more advanced reading skills.
3. Inspection evidence shows that attainment in writing is below average at the end of Key Stage 1 and broadly average by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3. Improvements are being made in the accuracy and use of spellings and punctuation. However, inconsistencies in handwriting and written presentation of work limit standards of achievement. A greater range of writing opportunities, particularly to use their writing skills to support work in an increasing range of subjects, promotes improvement in Year 3. Pupils' literacy skills are improving, supported by the sound implementation of the school's literacy strategy. These are beginning to positively influence attainment. Pupils make good progress in developing their speaking and listening skills. Although a significant minority of children enter the school with language weaknesses, standards are broadly in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3.
4. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 1 national tests in mathematics showed that standards were well below the national average and the average of similar schools. The number of pupils achieving Level 3 was also well below average. Test results show that standards were improving up to 1998 but the 1999 results were lower than previous years. The 1999 Year 2 group of pupils contained a significantly higher than average number of pupils with special educational needs. There were no significant variations between the performance of girls and boys. Both attained standards which were below average, although they varied from year to year. Inspection evidence shows that standards have

improved on last year and are in line with those reported in the last inspection. Attainment is broadly average at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3. The school has set a realistic target for 2000 of 89 per cent of pupils to achieve Level 2 or above which is in line with last year's national average. Improving standards show that these targets are likely to be achieved. The school has made mathematics a focus for improvement and has successfully implemented its numeracy strategy. The introduction of ability sets in Years 2 and 3 has also contributed to improving the standard of numeracy skills.

5. In science, the 1999 teacher assessments at the end of Key Stage 1 showed that the number of pupils achieving Level 2 or above was above average nationally and compared with similar schools. The number achieving Level 3 was well below average. Inspection evidence shows that standards are similar to those reported in the last inspection. Attainment is broadly in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3. Pupils' knowledge in aspects of some topics, for example materials, maintains the above average standard achieved last year. Their skills and knowledge of investigational science are broadly average. Few pupils achieve above average standards with learning activities not being consistently challenging to extend pupils' knowledge and understanding. Their skills are not consistently built on prior knowledge. Assessment procedures are not sufficiently well established to give teachers accurate information on pupils' levels of attainment.
6. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly in line with those expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1 and at the end of Year 3. Attainment is similar to that reported in the last inspection. Pupils' skills in word processing are soundly developed and increasingly used to support work in other subjects. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding are promoted very well in the early years. Although these are further developed in other years, pupils are not provided with frequent opportunities in all classes to consistently extend their skills in some required aspects, for example control. Most teachers promote information and technology skills effectively in other subjects, for example in design and technology, although planning does not always clearly identify which specific skills are to be extended.
7. Pupils' learning is soundly developed, particularly their literacy and numeracy skills. However, teachers' expectations are not consistently high enough to promote good progress by frequently challenging pupils to extend their knowledge or apply their skills. In the non-core subjects, pupils make good progress in developing their observational drawing in art, in swimming and in aspects of music. They make sound progress overall in other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets on their individual education plans and the development of self-esteem and confidence. They receive good quality support and teaching which promotes effective learning. Pupils for whom English is an additional language receive good individual support, particularly when withdrawn to develop specific language skills. This promotes good progress.
8. Children under five make sound progress overall. They meet the Desirable Learning Outcomes¹ by the age of five in all areas of learning except in aspects of language and literacy. Baseline assessment information illustrates weaknesses in these aspects which limit their progress. The quality of teaching and support is frequently very good in the nursery and enables the children to settle quickly and happily. The level and quality of the help given by teaching and support staff to children under five in reception are more variable. Progress varies from being good in some aspects, for example musical

¹ Desirable Learning Outcomes are learning goals for children by the time they enter compulsory education at the age of five. They refer mainly to literacy, numeracy and personal and social education. These will be replaced with the Early Learning Goals in September 2000.

activities, to being slow in some other activities when children find it difficult to maintain interest and concentration. Children with special educational needs benefit from an early assessment of their needs which enables staff to ensure that these needs are effectively met to promote good progress.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils generally demonstrate positive attitudes to school and their learning. This was noted during the previous inspection and was commented on favourably by parents. Pupils enjoy school and are eager to attend. They are enthusiastic and keen to participate both in lessons and other activities in and around school. Where teaching is stimulating and challenging, pupils are well motivated, concentrating on their tasks and activities for extended periods. In the small number of lessons where the pace is slow and the teaching does not match the needs of the pupils, a small minority lose interest and display unsatisfactory attitudes to learning. Children under five especially in the nursery, show a confident approach to work and in their relationships with each other. They are generally developing good social skills and are eager to explore new learning opportunities. They work and play well with each other, sharing their resources. Under-developed social behaviour in reception classes, however, leads to occasional squabbling over equipment, by a small group of mainly boys.
10. The standards of behaviour in and around the school are also good. Pupils are aware of the behaviour policy, school rules and the green, yellow and red reward and sanction cards. They value the system of achievement awards and enthusiastically collect stamps and stickers, reminding teachers if they have forgotten to stamp their cards. The headteacher's lottery pizza party for good behaviour or effort is eagerly discussed. Over 95 per cent of parents who responded to the questionnaire thought the school promoted good standards of behaviour. Pupils are courteous and friendly, speak well of their school and take care of it. They are happy to talk about what they are doing and show their work to visitors. Pupils reported no evidence of oppressive behaviour or bullying in the school. They felt it was a safe school and knew who to go to if any incident were to occur. There have been no exclusions in the school.
11. Opportunities to develop pupils' personal development are good. Pupils in Year 3 apply to be part of the 'Happy Club'. This operates at lunch and break-times and looks out for pupils who may be on their own or having difficulties and problems. They meet regularly with a member of staff to discuss what they are doing. In the nursery and to a lesser extent in the reception and Year 1 classes, pupils are given a choice of activities, which is helping them to develop their initiative through independent learning. Fund raising for charities and participation in events such as the St Withburga festival enables pupils to develop different skills and confidence. However, there are fewer opportunities for individuals to make choices and to take responsibility for their own learning, for example to develop their initiative and investigative skills in Years 2 and 3. Pupils are willing to take positions of responsibility, with pupils helping to prepare the milk, hand out books in lessons and clear up. All of which they do without much prompting.
12. The very good relationships between pupils and staff and amongst the pupils themselves are a strength of the school. Where the opportunities are offered, pupils work well together in both pair and group situations. This harmonious atmosphere promotes a good working environment and makes a positive impact on learning. Pupils were observed working intently in pairs undertaking number games in numeracy, and deciding upon the contents of speech bubbles in literacy lessons. Pupils collaborated effectively in a Year 1 drama class when small groups developed different parts of a story, which they then shared with the rest of the class.

13. The personal, social and health education programme and circle time promote good opportunities for pupils' personal development. They listen to each other and are happy to talk about their feelings, with pupils respecting others opinions, values and beliefs. During a session in Years 2 and 3, pupils discussed the issue of jealousy. They talked about situations when they had felt jealous, and what they could do about it to prevent it occurring again. Even the very young children in the nursery are developing a good moral code, knowing how their unfortunate actions have an impact upon and hurt others. The clear aims and ethos of the school promotes value and respect for each other and is reinforced by the good role models of the staff.
14. The levels of attendance in the school are good, and generally in line with the national average, with few unauthorised absences. This is also broadly similar to the last inspection. A number of long term illness and flu outbreaks have led to a slight drop in numbers over the last two years. Pupils are generally prompt into school in the mornings and lessons start on time. Registers are being completed and maintained correctly. There are good systems in place for monitoring pupils' attendance and following up absences.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

15. The quality of teaching has been maintained at the standard reported in the last inspection. It is of a consistently high standard in the nursery and is a very significant influence in enabling the children to settle quickly and enjoy the start to their schooling. The quality is sound overall at both key stages. There are frequent examples of good practice throughout the school and teaching is never less than sound. However, some inconsistencies in teachers' expectations of pupils' work and in the pace and challenge of lessons restrict attainment levels.
16. Teaching was good or better in half of the lessons observed with one in ten lessons being of very good quality. There was no significant difference between key stages. Both contained frequent examples of good teaching and lessons where teaching was less effective. This variation has a significant impact on standards. Where it is good or very good, pupils are enthusiastically involved in their learning and keen to improve its quality. Where teaching is less challenging, pupils are not required to extend their knowledge and understanding or to apply their skills. The teaching of English is good overall. It is sound overall for mathematics. The school has implemented their strategies for literacy and numeracy effectively and these are beginning to promote the improvement of pupils' skills. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well, particularly when receiving high quality support either in class or when withdrawn for additional support.
17. Teachers plan their lessons well throughout the school. They generally identify clear learning objectives for each lesson, and most make pupils aware of what they are trying to achieve. Teachers know their pupils well and work effectively with good quality support staff to encourage pupils' interest and involvement. They generally manage their classes well to ensure that pupils sustain interest and concentration and try to achieve the objective of the lesson. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, the teacher used phonic card resources very well to encourage pupils' active participation in an introductory activity. She then used a 'magic count' control strategy very effectively to ensure pupils' immediate attention and concentration. Pupils are keen and want to respond to questions. The teacher builds on this enthusiastic attitude by giving clear, purposeful instructions to ensure that pupils are aware of the focus for their particular group activity in the next part of the lesson.
18. Where teaching is good or very good, teachers use good subject knowledge to extend pupils' understanding. For example, in a Years 2 and 3 music lesson, the teacher

developed the pupils' knowledge and use of correct musical terms such as 'timbre'. Teachers use questions well to challenge pupils to think carefully about their work. For example, in a science lesson, the teacher used follow-up questions effectively to extend pupils' understanding in describing the force involved in a magnetism investigation. The initial response of "pulling" was then developed into "attract" and finally into "magnetic force of attraction". This high quality teaching promotes improved standards.

19. However, when teachers do not consistently challenge pupils with learning activities which are matched well to their ability, this restricts pupils' progress. For example, in a Key Stage 1 numeracy lesson, the teacher did not match the different group activities to the range of ability within a mixed age and mixed ability class. She did not challenge some groups, especially those who were not the direct focus of the teacher's attention, to extend their skills and knowledge. The teacher used a mathematical games activity, but it was not related to the learning objective and it did not require pupils to extend their mathematical knowledge.
20. Teachers do not maintain a consistent pace to lessons. Where it is brisk and the teacher repeatedly reminds pupils what they are expected to achieve in the available time, pupils try hard to complete the task. They remain focused on what they are doing and use the time well to achieve their targets. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson, the teacher maintained a very good pace by clearly explaining what the pupils were required to do. She regularly reminded pupils how much time they had left with a final reminder that, "in five minutes you will need to be ready for the plenary to the rest of the class". This ensures that pupils make full use of the time available and they respond very well to the time challenge. However, when the pace of the lesson is slow and teachers do not ensure that pupils make effective use of the time, this limits the amount of work achieved. In a Years 1 and 2 design and technology lesson, the teacher did not maintain a brisk pace to the introductory part of the lesson to ensure that pupils remained attentive and to ensure that there was sufficient time for pupils to complete the design activity. Teachers do not always make full use of available teaching time, for example when taking too long preparing for pupils' drinks or not making clear time targets for quick and efficient tidying up before the end of a session.
21. Some teachers use homework soundly to support class work, for example in literacy, and value the support given by parents. However, teachers do not use homework fully to extend pupils' skills and knowledge, for example in mathematics and reading. Most teachers provide opportunities for pupils to develop their information and communication technology skills, although these are not always consistently promoted in all classes. Teachers use plenary sessions well to evaluate pupils' work, for example in a Key Stage 1 numeracy lesson when groups were required to explain to the rest of the class the different ways in which they had completed their addition problems. However, teachers do not consistently use opportunities, either in lessons or through constructive marking, to give clear guidance over ways in which pupils can improve the quality of their work.
22. The quality of teaching for the under-fives in the nursery and reception is good across all learning areas with half the teaching in the nursery being very good. Teachers and their support assistants work well together to create secure, caring environments, which promote learning well. Relationships are very good, especially in the nursery. Teachers use effective strategies to control and manage children, such as a puppet to capture their attention, so they learn how to work, play and co-operate together. Teachers plan a wide range of interesting activities, which promote positive attitudes to school and help children become enthusiastic learners. Occasionally teachers plan activities for reception which are too structured to meet children's development needs and they do not achieve the learning goals planned. For example, in a numeracy lesson, the teacher's planned introductory activity was too long and not matched well to the needs of a significant

number of children in the class. This resulted in some inattentive behaviour and limited work being achieved.

23. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good. Teachers take careful account of the targets for pupils with special educational needs in their planning and groupings for literacy and numeracy. The targets in the individual education plans are not always sufficiently precise for progress to be easily measurable. They are reviewed regularly and progress towards them is noted. In numeracy, teachers group pupils by ability and this ensures that tasks are generally matched well to pupils' abilities. In literacy, pupils are grouped according to prior attainment within their class group and tasks are also matched well to pupils' capabilities. Pupils have good quality support from experienced and skilled learning support assistants, either on an individual or small group withdrawal basis or within the classroom. There is very good liaison between all support and teaching staff which promotes pupils' good progress.

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

24. The school provides a good range of interesting opportunities for learning for all pupils. The curriculum for children aged five and under in the nursery and reception classes is based and planned on the nationally agreed Desirable Outcomes for Learning. It is satisfactory overall, although there is variety in the quality of provision. It is very good in all aspects in the nursery. The school provides a wide range of stimulating activities both in and out of doors for its children, covering the required areas of learning. An example was the opportunity in the nursery for children to explore a range of battery operated toys. Curriculum planning is thorough. In the nursery both the teacher and nursery nurse take an active part in very detailed planning and developing the curriculum, and build into it the role of a daily volunteer parent. Good co-operation between nursery and reception ensures progression in learning and allows children to progress smoothly on to the National Curriculum programmes of study for Key Stage 1 when they are ready. Sometimes in reception planned activities last too long for the concentration span of the children. For example, in mathematics children need more gradual preparation to build up to the full-length 45 minute session by the end of reception year. Staff know their pupils well and are fully aware of children with special educational needs or English as an additional language.
25. The school provides a relevant curriculum that meets statutory requirements satisfactorily and includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, religious education, as well as an extensive personal, health and social education. Non-core subjects are covered in a thematic two-year rolling programme. This is to be reviewed because the school is aware that there is some imbalance in the arrangements for mixed-age classes. Pupils are not able to build systematically on their skills, knowledge and understanding in all subjects.
26. Pupils benefit from a curriculum that meets their personal and social needs very effectively. There are valuable opportunities for extending this effectively through discussion in circle time and drama lessons. The content and organisation of the curriculum ensure equal opportunities for learning about health and drugs awareness in science and personal, health and social education lessons, and in extended programmes such as the "Healthier and Safer Journeys to School" project. This includes work on environmental issues. The school's policy is not to teach sex education, but issues that arise are covered as required by staff at the appropriate time and level. The school has made a sound start to the introduction of the Literacy Strategy and to the implementation of the Numeracy Strategy.

27. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. All staff who work with these pupils are involved in the preparation and review of their individual education plans. Some pupils receive specific additional literacy support and some support for numeracy and science linked with literacy. They participate in all school activities. There is currently only one pupil with a statement of special educational need. There is good provision for pupils with English as an additional language and some useful extension activities for higher attaining pupils in English.
28. The curriculum is enriched in several ways. There is a good range of extra-curricular activities at lunchtime and after school, over the year. These include sporting, musical and drama interests and are very popular. Visits and visitors to the school provide valuable opportunities for pupils to extend their knowledge. The school takes part in festivals and sports events with other schools. Pupils take home reading and library books regularly and parents regard the reading diaries as a very good link between home and school.
29. There is good communication with the middle school over the transfer of pupils and good arrangements for careful induction into this phase of education. Some time is spent with other pupils in the area who are to transfer at the same time and these arrangements help to ensure that pupils move with confidence to the next stage of their education. Arrangements for entry into the nursery are good and include very good staff involvement in a series of home visits. The school has good curricular links with first schools in their cluster group. All of the schools are involved in planning together prior to the reorganisation of first and middle schools in September 2000.
30. The curriculum is enriched greatly by the school's very good and extensive links with the community. There is a good range of visits to local places of interest to enhance pupils' learning. For example, the nursery visited a local toy shop and on return wrote excitedly about their visit and produced their first piece of 'practice' writing. The school uses the environment well to enhance learning in history and art. Local businesses and associations have contributed funds for additional resources, which have had a significant impact on learning, for example in music. Many visitors come to share their experience and expertise, which contribute well towards pupils' learning and social development. Students from local colleges and training establishments come to work in the school and these links are valuable for the learning of both students and pupils.
31. The school makes very good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection.
32. There is very good provision for pupils' spiritual development, which is central to the ethos of the school. Frequent opportunities for reflection develop self-knowledge and confidence in sharing feelings. For example, pupils in a Years 2 and 3 class discussion considered what made them jealous and how they should help others not to be jealous. In Years 1 and 2 pupils discussed the need to share their worries and how things can get out of proportion. Daily school or class assemblies and lessons involve pupils well in a growing insight into human values and beliefs. When in assembly, pupils close their eyes and focus on the music. They learn how to listen thoughtfully to music at all times because of the encouragement they receive to do this. Good opportunities for spiritual reflection are provided in art when pupils write of their feelings about Monet's 'Water Lilies' painting. One summarised the painting as "It looks silent, colourful, dreamy, beautiful and reflective".
33. Provision for moral development is very good. All pupils, including those in the nursery, have a clear understanding of right and wrong. The school promotes values such as fairness, honesty, and respect for truth and justice effectively, in assemblies, lessons and

circle time. Teachers offer guidance through careful discussions about behaviour and values in personal and social education lessons. Responsibility is effectively encouraged through “Happy Club” where pupils discuss weekly class targets, for example to be kind and considerate to others. There are clear expectations given to pupils about positive attitudes, listening, thinking and being considerate. Pupils value rewards and certificates and look forward to bringing awards they have achieved out of school to Friday’s assemblies. They understand the school’s system of rewards and sanctions fully and appreciate their fairness.

34. Provision for pupils’ social development is also very good. There is a sense of community in the school and very good relationships between staff and pupils. Pupils are encouraged to listen to others and value their work and contributions. They are encouraged to work well together in lessons and in productions such as “Hosanna Rock”. Pupils complete a page for ‘A Book of Friendship’. They show the qualities they appreciate when they write “I like my friend because she plays with me” and “I can have a good laugh with my friend”. Pupils move around the school sensibly, taking care not to hurt one another. They are offered and willingly accept responsibilities around the school, for example collecting the milk for break-times. Pupils attend a wide range of sporting, music and special interest clubs over the year and have a range of planned visits, including museums, to enrich their learning and social development.
35. Cultural provision is good. Lessons in English, music, art and history effectively build up pupils’ experience and understanding of their cultural heritage. Involvement in traditional events such as the St. Withburga Festival give pupils an awareness of the historical significance of the area in which they live. The performances in the church at Harvest and Christmas give pupils a greater awareness of the celebration of such festivals. Through “Hosanna Rock” pupils learned about other cultures and the interesting range of musical instruments in music provides opportunities to learn about the countries from which they originate. In art, pupils learn about artists such as Monet and the culture of the countries in which they lived and painted.
36. Visits to museums to see artefacts and treasures from Ancient Egypt and the Victorian period add well to pupils’ understanding of other times, cultures and traditions. The school is very aware of the need to provide pupils with opportunities to read and learn about other cultures. Staff work hard to help pupils learn about the diversity and richness of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

37. The school provides a caring and support environment, and provision for pupils’ health, welfare and guidance makes a significant contribution to their personal and academic development. This area is a strength of the school. Teachers know their pupils well and will act quickly if a need is observed. The school seeks to ensure that pupils have equal opportunities.
38. Procedures for monitoring and promoting discipline and good behaviour are very effective and reflected by the orderly atmosphere in the school. The comprehensive behaviour policy aims to develop personal responsibility. It provides guidelines and procedures for promoting and rewarding good behaviour, and a systematic approach for dealing with any disruptive or oppressive behaviour or bullying. This offers a good balance of awards and sanctions which pupils understand and value. They spoke positively about the system and their enthusiasm for collecting stamps in their achievement diaries, or receiving certificates. Parents reported that any incidents of bullying which do occur are handled sensitively.

39. There are very good procedures for promoting prompt and regular attendance, which are detailed in the school prospectus. The school encourages parents not to take their children on holiday during term time especially during the month when the national standardised test are taken. The school secretary effectively monitors the registers and attendance figures, contacting parents promptly when pupils are away. There are appropriate links with the education welfare officer who visits regularly and follows up any incidents as required.
40. The school has very good procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' health, safety and welfare. The school follows the local authority procedures and guidelines for child protection. The headteacher has received appropriate training, and has experience of the procedures involved. The school is aware that regular updating training is required for all members of staff to ensure that they are appraised of changes to procedures. There are appropriate links with the relevant outside agencies. The school has well established systems in place to take care of pupils who may fall ill during the day. Sufficient members of staff have received first aid training, and there are effective procedures to meet the medical needs of pupils.
41. There is a comprehensive health and safety policy, and appropriate procedures in place to address the issues of safety and security of pupils in the school. The school is effectively drawing upon the expertise of the governors by appointing a specialist in this area as the health and safety governor. He undertakes regular risk assessments, advises the school on any changes or improvements required, and then reports back to the governing body.
42. Procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are satisfactory overall, but they vary in effectiveness. They are very good for monitoring and supporting pupils' personal development. Staff know their pupils very well, including those with special needs, and respond to their personal development needs in a very positive and supportive way. This is a strength of the school, a finding supported by parents' views. As a result, even the youngest pupils feel secure and happy at school, and support is directed effectively to those who need it most. For example, in a Years 2 and 3 class discussion about which aspects of school life make pupils feel happy and sad, the teacher shared helpful suggestions to resolve personal difficulties. These included how members of the "Happy Club" can provide support at playtime for pupils who have no-one to play with. Pupils' citizenship and achievement diaries provide effective records and act as an incentive to do more. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and monitored well, as are any pupils for whom English as an additional language. Their needs are accurately assessed and they are given good quality support, enabling them to make good progress against their individual targets and become more confident learners. Pupils' academic progress is recorded in detail in annual reports with appropriate targets for future improvement.
43. All procedures are very good in the nursery, where the current high levels of staffing and very thorough assessment systems ensure that children's learning is monitored, discussed and recorded individually on a planned daily basis. Teachers in all the early years' classes use assessment well, to monitor pupils' progress against expected learning goals and to guide their lesson planning. The school does not yet fully track pupils' work from baseline assessment to Year 3 to monitor whether enough progress has been made.
44. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic performance are less effective, except in English. Analysis of English test results has been used well to set whole school priorities, such as the current work to improve phonics, spelling and writing. Similar analysis is required in other subjects, especially mathematics and science, to identify areas for

improvement. Statutory requirements are fully met in national tests. Procedures are not rigorous enough on a whole school basis for teachers to make accurate judgements on pupils' standards. They do not set work which is always sufficiently challenging to extend pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. The school's termly assessments are not made using criteria from the National Curriculum, which limits their usefulness to evaluate and raise standards. The school correctly recognises that monitoring of samples of pupils' work is at an early stage of development. The good practice in English of collecting samples of pupils' work at different levels to act as guidance, has not been extended to other subjects to enable all teachers to meet and agree levels. The school has also correctly identified a need to extend individual target setting to raise standards, especially for the higher attainers. Formal record keeping by class teachers varies in quality and this affects its usefulness as a tool for discussing progress with other staff. Assessment procedures for the core subjects are no longer judged at the good level reported in the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The school recognises the importance of effective liaison between home and school, and the active role parents can play in their children's education. This area continues to be a strength of the school since the last inspection. Parents are generally very supportive of the school and feel that their children are making good progress. Parents commented that they thought the school and staff open and very approachable, and appreciate the caring attitude of staff. Most parents have signed and returned the home/school agreement. The prospectus and the governor's annual report to parents provide detailed information about the school and its activities. Regular contact is maintained through newsletters and frequent letters to parents. Curriculum information with details of projects and topics to be covered is sent home at the start of the year, and occasional workshops are run to keep parents updated and suitably informed. A parent helper recently ran an awareness raising session on drug problems, for staff and parents.
46. The school holds regular consultation evenings to provide opportunities for parents to meet teachers to review their child's progress and achievements. A small number of parents expressed some concern of the lateness of the summer meeting, which does not give sufficient time at the end of the term to deal with any potential issues. The school operates an 'open door' policy and parents can meet with teachers or the headteacher after school to discuss any matters of importance or concerns. Parents have good opportunities to visit the school and meet with staff before their children join the school. Home visits are undertaken to meet new nursery children. The quality of information provided about pupils' in their annual reports is good. They detail pupils' progress and attainment, providing information about what is covered and how they are progressing. They also indicate some targets for improvement.
47. The school offers every opportunity for parents to become involved in their child's learning. Where adults are able to respond by listening to readers, this is making a significant contribution to the standards of reading. Reading books go home daily and are changed once a week, although not all parents are encouraging their children to read every day. A small number of committed adults are regularly volunteering to help in the classroom or getting involved in other aspects of the curriculum and the day to day activities in the school. This includes work in the library helping to change the books, or accompanying the pupils when they go swimming. Parents have been effectively involved in consultations regarding the home/school agreement. The Parents Teachers Association (PTA) makes a valuable contribution to the life of the school. It runs a number of successful fund-raising and social events, which generates between £2,000 - £3,000 a year. This money has been targeted to help fund certain school activities such as trips and parties and has recently helped purchase musical instruments and a badge-

making machine. Parents also offer valuable support to the school through helping maintain the adventure playground area, and joining in regular painting sessions to help redecorate classrooms.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

48. The leadership and management of the school are good. There have been sound improvements overall since the last inspection. Improvements have been made in updating curriculum policies and guidance and in identifying training and staff development needs. These were recognised when the school received an Investors in People award in January 1999. Some improvement has been made in developing the role of curriculum co-ordinators, especially in literacy and numeracy, although this is still identified as in need of further development. Some progress has been made in establishing procedures to evaluate cost-effectiveness. Standards of attainment in the core subjects have not improved since the last inspection. However, the school has sustained the positive, caring and supportive ethos and the high quality relationships.
49. The purpose of the school, set out clearly in its mission statement and agreed aims, emphasises the development of “courteous, considerate, confident and self-controlled young people, with inquiring minds and an appreciation of the world around them”. This is clearly reflected in the work of the school and promotes a caring and supportive community. Parents value how much their children like school and feel that it helps them to mature and become more responsible. This positive and supportive ethos is a significant influence in promoting pupils’ personal development and contributing to standards of achievement.
50. The headteacher has been in post for just over a year. In that time the school has had to cope with significant changes in its status and with uncertainties over its future development. The headteacher has provided a clear and positive lead in this period of uncertainty and continues to give a clear direction to the work of the school. He has developed a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. Although most of his time has been focused on preparing the school for its change in status and for the imminent reorganisation, he has worked closely with staff and governors to carry out a self-review. This has been used to draw up an effective summary school improvement plan which clearly indicates development priorities for this and the next school year. This plan is currently being extended to give a more detailed analysis of each priority and link it closely to financial resources.
51. The headteacher has analysed attainment data to identify areas of under-achievement in literacy and, working closely with the local authority’s advisor, has implemented improvement strategies. These are beginning to promote higher standards. Key Stage 1 performance targets in English and mathematics have been revised and are now a realistic and achievable five per cent above last year’s results. The headteacher recognises the need for more standardised attainment data and improved assessment information, particularly in the core subjects, to provide more precise and reliable pupil and school improvement targets.
52. The school is developing monitoring and evaluation procedures soundly which are beginning to promote improvements. The headteacher rigorously monitors weekly teaching plans. He gives clear and specific guidance on improving their quality and on ensuring that planned activities build on prior knowledge and understanding. Subject leaders also monitor medium term plans to ensure appropriate curriculum coverage. Some classroom observations, focused mainly on literacy and numeracy, have been completed by the headteacher, the subject leaders, and nominated governors. A pattern of frequent visits, focused rigorously on improving teaching and learning, has yet to be

established. School improvement planning indicates that this a priority for development and will be closely linked to the policy for teaching and learning. This is currently in draft form and is being discussed by staff to provide a clear focus for classroom practice throughout the school.

53. The governing body has had several changes recently and their time and efforts have been focused on ensuring that the school is well prepared for re-organisation. Governors are very supportive and have established an effective and purposeful working relationship with the school. Although changes in structure and personnel have required a period of adjustment for the new governing body, governors are now re-establishing the good teamwork with the headteacher and staff. Regular meetings of the different committees, a pattern of governors' lesson observations and some governors attending staff training days all contribute to ensuring that governors make a positive and informed contribution to managing the school. They are fully involved in school improvement planning and show a good understanding of the development priorities, particularly those who were governors when the school had grant maintained status. The governors have been particularly supportive and influential in working with the headteacher and staff to ensure the continued development of the school during a rapidly changing situation. This high quality partnership ensures that governors fulfil their statutory requirements and make a significant contribution to school improvement.
54. The governors' finance committee, working closely with the headteacher, his deputy and the school secretary, have established good procedures for managing and monitoring the school's finances. They are linked well to development issues. Recent difficulties over the way in which the budget for school re-organisation has been handled have caused significant difficulties over financial planning and in maintaining staff morale. These have demanded a substantial amount of time and limited aspects of other developments. The school is generally using the principles of best value successfully to ensure that finances are efficiently used, for example by checking other suppliers for competitive quotes before making spending decisions on nursery resources. The impact of spending decisions is monitored through the headteacher and governors' committees, although cost effectiveness is not always closely evaluated. A very efficient school office supports astute financial management and makes a significant contribution to the smooth and efficient running of the school. Finances have been used effectively to implement the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy and additional clerical hours are being used to ensure that specific grants are targeted on identified priorities, for example staff training and additional literacy support. These are positively promoting standards, particularly for those pupils with literacy weaknesses and special educational needs.
55. The provision for pupils with special educational needs, including staffing and funding levels, are discussed appropriately at governing body meetings. The special educational needs' governor is very well informed and is fully involved in the life of the school. Additional funding for special educational needs is spent well and the school uses money from the main budget to increase the amount available to meet pupils' needs. The special educational needs provision is managed well by the co-ordinator. The accommodation is used very well to enable groups of special educational needs pupils to be taught within the classroom or in specific areas. Support staff are well qualified and very experienced and make a very effective contribution to the quality of support for pupils.
56. There are sufficient well-qualified teachers to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. All staff have received appropriate training for the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies and attend a range of relevant courses, all of which has an impact on pupils' learning. Support and administrative staff are very experienced and well qualified and make a very effective contribution to the quality of support for pupils and the life of the

school. The learning support assistants are well deployed to provide high quality support for pupils' learning but there are occasions when more support, for example with the younger pupils or in numeracy, could be beneficial.

57. The accommodation is very good. There has been a significant improvement to the accommodation since the previous inspection and resources overall have improved. Improvements to the building including the new nursery have provided additional facilities and a very pleasant environment for teaching and learning in all areas of the curriculum. The grassed and playground areas available for pupils to extend their physical and social development are used well and the range of equipment available for use in the playground is very popular and well used. Resources are satisfactory in all subjects and in music, where recent purchases have significantly improved the range of instruments, they are good. The library is well and attractively organised and has a good range of fiction. The range of non-fiction books is gradually being extended. The school uses the local area, and places of interest further afield, as additional resources for enhancing learning. Good use is made of visits and visitors to the school.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. To further improve the effectiveness of the school, the headteacher, governors and staff should:
- a) improve attainment in literacy at the end of Key Stage 1 by:
 - i) ensuring that pupils read regularly and have clear guidance on how to improve the standard of their reading;
 - ii) continuing to develop regular handwriting and spelling practice to improve the overall written presentation of pupils' work;(paragraphs 2-3, 74 and 76)
 - b) ensure that lessons are well paced and teaching time is used fully to promote high standards of learning;
(paragraphs 15, 20, 89, 95 and 102)
 - c) establish rigorous assessment procedures in the core subjects and use the assessment information to ensure teachers' consistently challenge pupils to extend their skills, knowledge and understanding;
(paragraphs 15, 19, 44 and 96)
 - d) establish consistent day-to-day assessment procedures to ensure pupils are given clear guidance on how to improve the quality of their work.
(paragraphs 21, 89, 95 and 122)

In addition to the key issues listed above, the less important issue of improving the cost effectiveness procedures to evaluate the impact of spending decisions should be considered for inclusion in the action plan. This is indicated in paragraph 54.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	10	42	48	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 – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	5.5	196
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	0	31

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR– Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	43

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	13
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.9
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999	13	32	45

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	9	9	11
	Girls	26	27	27
	Total	35	36	38
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	78 (72)	80 (82)	84 (91)
	National	82 (80)	83 (81)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	12
	Girls	27	30	31
	Total	37	42	43
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	82 (86)	93 (90)	96 (90)
	National	82 (80)	86 (84)	87 (85)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	133
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR– Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7.0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	26.3
Average class size	22.5

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	137

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	6

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	13

Number of pupils per FTE adult	6
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1998 / 99
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	£
Total income	354,160
Total expenditure	355,241
Expenditure per pupil	1,996
Balance brought forward from previous year	26,714
Balance carried forward to next year	25,633

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 34.3%

Number of questionnaires sent out	166
Number of questionnaires returned	57

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	23	2	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	48	46	2	0	4
Behaviour in the school is good.	61	35	2	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	53	12	0	4
The teaching is good.	56	42	0	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	42	23	0	4
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	28	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	63	32	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	51	35	9	0	5
The school is well led and managed.	70	26	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	38	0	0	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	38	14	5	25

Other issues raised by parents

Some parents felt that they were not kept suitably informed about their child's progress due to the late summer term parents' meeting. A small number expressed a concern that reading books were not sent home regularly in some classes.

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

Personal and social development

59. Children adapt well to their nursery and reception classes and settle in happily, a view supported by parents. Good home links and an effective pre-school programme of visits for children and parents help children to quickly gain confidence. Staff and children have very good relationships with each other. For example, children in the nursery knew that it would please the teacher if they sat and waited patiently until the teacher explained how they would take turns to use a programmable toy. They behave very well and show very positive attitudes to learning. Staff set good role models, “Would you like to help me?”, so children learn to share and take turns with support, and treat equipment carefully, such as they know not to walk on a foam mat. Teachers and classroom assistants make good use of praise and a range of strategies to encourage children to behave well. An example is the effective use of a puppet in reception who ‘talks’ to the teacher about how the children are behaving. Staff control and manage children well, so they learn how to work, play and co-operate with others. For example, nursery children responded very positively to the ‘clearing-up machine’s’ commands and all co-operated well, carrying heavier boxes together, to put away equipment in the right place. They willingly perform tasks such as taking it in turns to help collect the milk and biscuits and give them out. On the rare occasion when a group of boys in reception became over-excited, disrupting other children and learning, they were handled appropriately and firmly. Children are encouraged to show independence in selecting an activity or resources and in personal hygiene and dressing. They willingly help each other put on aprons, for example, before water play. They show concern for each other and living things and are quick to ask a teacher for help if a friend is upset. Pupils’ personal and social development is in line with expected standards by the age of five.

Language and literacy

60. Many children enter school with standards below those expected for their age. They make steady progress and gain in confidence, so by the age of five standards have improved, but are still slightly below those expected in speaking and listening, reading and writing. Many children talk using rather simple vocabulary. Teachers are aware of this and identify special vocabulary in their planning, such as ‘next to’ and ‘beneath’, which are used well in mathematics and physical education lessons. They involve children well in activities which effectively encourage them to enjoy books and reading. Children handle books carefully and enjoy listening to stories, happily joining in familiar parts. They take books from the school’s reading scheme and from the library home each day, which promotes reading progress well, with parental support. They are encouraged to talk about the pictures in books, although most need some support to do this. A few read familiar words in their reading books. Teachers make learning phonics fun by using enjoyable methods, such as playing a game with socks, each with their own sound to practise rhymes, as in “a bug in a mug”. They provide a wide range of opportunities for children to practise structured and free reading and writing. For example, children choose to ‘write’ a letter in the shop and put it in an envelope. Children recognise their own names, in the nursery they put them on a board to register, and by the age of five many write them with appropriate upper and lower case letters. The quality of teaching in language and literacy is good, teachers read stories expressively to hold children’s interest and ask effective questions such as “What could happen next?”.

Mathematics

61. Children attain standards in mathematics close to those expected by five in the broad areas of number, shape, space and position, patterns and measures. By the age of five most children count to 10 and recognise the number symbols. A few go well beyond this with increasing accuracy, through activities such as counting the number of children in class each day during registration. They sort, match, order and count objects accurately up to five. Teachers plan carefully with an emphasis on practical experience and using mathematics in a wide range of fun activities. Children know a range of number rhymes, songs, stories and counting games. For example, they delight in singing a pirate song matching six hats to six pirates. By providing plentiful opportunities for children to share and discuss their work in small groups, with very good support, children in the nursery make good progress. On the few occasions where the response and progress in reception was unsatisfactory, the activities chosen were inappropriate for pupils' needs. For example, they need more opportunities to freely experiment with materials, such as sponge printing, and are not ready to concentrate on a structured task, such as printing a repeating pattern accurately. Less support is available in reception. Children's interest wanders when working in independent groups and progress slows compared to those who are supported by staff, although it is still satisfactory overall.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

62. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is in line with standards expected by the age of five. Teachers provide good opportunities for children to explore the environment outside school, for example nursery children visit a local toy shop. Staff ask questions well, so children are encouraged to talk about what they observe. A good example was when children compared and evaluated with great delight, whether the windmills they had made worked best or the ones they bought, by testing them outside. Nursery children confidently explore and use a selection of technology equipment such as a computer, telephone and programmable toys to support their learning. They show amazement when a pre-programmed toy turns and comes back to them and immediately want to find out how it works. Very good strategies, such as the teacher talking to the toy and nothing happens, promote their curiosity and learning well. Children talk about their families and where they live, they know that the nearby church is used for weddings. They explore and recognise features of living things and objects; for example, they learn about and classify healthy and unhealthy foods accurately. Occasionally, because many children in reception have underdeveloped speaking skills, opportunities are missed to extend their understanding, for example of a bungalow. Teaching is good overall.

Physical development

63. Children's physical development is in line with expectations by the age of five. It is promoted well by the good selection of playtime equipment reception staff make available, such as space hoppers, balancing toys, bats and balls. This builds children's confidence well and provides daily practice in developing their physical skills. Teachers make good use of planned opportunities to use the large adventure play equipment, with good awareness of safety. Children move confidently and with developing control and co-ordination for their age, showing awareness of space and others. They climb and travel in different ways on a range of equipment, with staff showing appropriate support when they are on large equipment. Children make satisfactory progress in handling a range of small tools, objects and construction toys with increasing skill and control, such as scissors and pencils. Staff show them how to use tools, equipment and materials carefully and extend their experiences well, for example by giving them split pins to use to join card.

Creative development

64. By the age of five children's creative development is in line with standards expected. Teachers provide a wide range of experiences for children to develop their creativity effectively through art, music, stories and imaginative play. The nursery and reception classes have interesting areas where children can dress up, for example, in a cat's furry costume in the nursery, and pretend to act. Reception children use their paintings and collages of sparkling fish to decorate their underwater shop. They draw and paint enthusiastically, and model using construction materials and plasticene. Teaching staff use their knowledge and skills to ensure children have an effective mixture of teaching and free choice activities to improve their learning. Children's rate of learning is good in music. They know several action songs and nursery rhymes from memory and sing reasonably tunefully. Children in the nursery co-operate well together to create their own music and play as a pop group of four, with two on an electronic keyboard, a guitarist and the beat banged out. In reception, children experiment and make their own shakers. They follow a picture music score accurately with children taking it in turns to shake coloured bottles.
65. The progress of learning for children under five is satisfactory overall, but varies according to the amount and quality of teacher support available. It is good for children with special educational needs as teachers assess and identify their needs early. It is at least good and sometimes very good in the nursery, where at the time of the inspection, there was a teacher, qualified nursery nurse and a volunteer parent helper for a class of 10 children. Teaching was good in half of the lessons observed and it was very good in the other half. Next term the nursery intake will rise to 26 children in the morning and 15 in the afternoon. In the reception class of 29 children, with only part-time support from a nursery nurse, learning is more varied. Occasionally it is slower than expected when learning is disrupted by a group of boisterous boys, although it satisfactory overall and sometimes good, as seen in music and phonics. Standards on entry are below those expected for the children's age with particular weaknesses in language and literacy.
66. Standards are a little below those of the last inspection at the age of five in language and literacy, mathematics, physical and personal and social development, but similar in knowledge and understanding and creative development. This reflects the group of pupils and their differing abilities.

ENGLISH

67. Results at the end of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum tests in 1999 were below the national average in reading. The proportion of pupils achieving above the nationally expected Level 2 was well below the national average. In writing the results were well below the national average, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 3 being below the national average. In comparison with similar schools, pupils' performance in reading and writing was well below the national average. Over four years, boys and girls performance was below the national average in reading and well below in writing.
68. Contributory factors to these results are:
- the high number of pupils with special educational needs in the year group;
 - there had been insufficient time for the impact of the Literacy Hour to be fully effective for this group.
69. The inspection findings are that, by the end of the key stage, the attainment of pupils is likely to be still slightly below, but closer to the national average, with more pupils attaining at a higher level than in 1999 in both reading and writing. Pupils are now benefiting from the structures of the Literacy Hour and building on skills more

systematically. Pupils with special educational needs who receive additional literacy and targeted support are benefiting from this and the systematic approach to spelling introduced last year is helping pupils to improve their spelling skills. Pupils who leave the school at the end of Year 3 are broadly in line with national averages.

70. Standards in speaking and listening are broadly in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 1 and for pupils who leave the school at the end of Year 3. A substantial number of pupils enter the school with underdeveloped language and listening skills, but, by the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils listen attentively and confidently ask and answer questions. They participate well in discussions in class and are more aware of the need to listen to each other before giving their opinion. Some children still give brief answers to questions and have a limited vocabulary, but the majority give relevant answers in complete sentences. For example, when asked “Why did you learn something today?”, a pupil promptly responds, “because we were quiet when we worked”. Pupils enjoy reading out their work and reading passages from the text they are sharing. They use their voices well to make their reading interesting for the listener and vary their tone, giving emphasis to important words. Timed opportunities for discussion in pairs help pupils to talk together with a focus on a particular aspect, for example to describe a character. In personal and social education lessons, pupils offer views and opinions about what makes them jealous and how they can help each other. Pupils stand up to offer their evaluation of how the class has responded and behaved that day.
71. Before they leave the school at the end of Year 3, pupils develop their speaking and listening skills further. With good support from staff and parents, they learn parts for productions, for example the school’s contribution for the St. Withburga Festival and “Hosanna Rock” at Christmas. They speak clearly in public. Pupils are given opportunities to plan and present their own class assembly, leading prayers and reading short stories and poems with considerable poise. Good knowledge of the pupils enables the teachers to ask questions that are matched well to the prior attainment of pupils, but offer some degree of challenge. For example, pupils with high prior attainment are asked to read out to everyone else the steps in making a waistcoat in design and technology. Another group have a less complex task in explaining how to make a sandwich.
72. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils’ standards in reading are slightly below, but close to the national average. They enjoy the big books and join in enthusiastically when reading them. Pupils enjoy reading and many are developing a sound sight vocabulary and an awareness of the need to be aware of punctuation when reading. However, pupils do not use a wide range of strategies to help them with unfamiliar words. They are not sufficiently accurate or fluent to develop advanced skills to make as much progress as they could. This means that pupils are not able to use their reading skills confidently and consistently in other situations, for example for reading instructions in numeracy lessons or reading for information. The opportunities for guided reading in a group are a beneficial part of the Literacy Hour. However, the school is aware that additional time is needed for pupils to have more regular opportunities to read individually to an adult in school so that they learn how to improve their reading. The school appreciates the support given by parents and other helpers who come into school to hear pupils read and the support for pupils when they take words or books home. The reading diaries provide a welcome opportunity for dialogue about a child’s reading between home and school and they are valued by parents. They provide a good foundation for the partnership in reading which the school encourages.
73. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 3 pupils’ attainment in reading is broadly in line with the national average. Pupils use their reading skills more widely and use letter sounds and blends to help them with unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and in Year 3 make inferences and deductions about the

stories they read. They are developing preferences for books by certain authors and discuss their books with enthusiasm, but few pupils express particular interests in non-fiction books.

74. In writing, pupils' standards are still below the national average at Key Stage 1, but are improving. Pupils progress from 'practice' writing in reception to the writing of properly spaced words in sentences. Most pupils use full stops and capital letters appropriately in their writing and higher attaining pupils write in joined script, using a wider range of punctuation. Pupils benefit from regular handwriting practice but do not consistently transfer this to their work and handwriting varies in size and legibility. Some work is well presented and pupils benefit from writing in draft before making a good copy of their work, but the overall presentation of written work often detracts from the quality of the content. The school is aware that this is an area for further development. The introduction of a new spelling and dictation programme has been beneficial and pupils are showing greater consistency in the transfer of spellings learned to their other work. Pupils write for a range of purposes. They label diagrams, put adjectives into sentences, find definitions of words highlighted in a text. Higher attaining pupils work out the meanings of words such as 'quivered' and 'amphitheatre' before confirming these in a dictionary.
75. By the time they leave the school at the end of Year 3, pupils' attainment is broadly average. They learn how to use bullet points when giving instructions or making lists and omit unnecessary words, for example instead of "you put" use "put" and omit "a" and "the." Pupils write letters and stories of greater length, with a planned beginning, middle and end. They write thoughtfully about science investigations and reflectively about Monet's work in art.
76. From reception, pupils make gains in learning in most lessons and satisfactory progress over time. Most pupils with special educational needs, and those with English as an additional language, make good progress towards their targets because of the quality of the additional teaching support they receive. Pupils progress from the learning of individual sounds and letters in reception to reading with a good understanding of text in Years 2 and 3. In writing, from the communication of meaning through simple words and pictures in reception, pupils have learned to write for a range of purposes and with sustained thought, distinguishing between different types of writing, for example reports or lists and descriptive writing. There is clear evidence of progress in speaking and listening from the limited, but enthusiastic, responses in reception to the activities in Years 2 and 3 where pupils evaluate each other's work and what they have learned in the lesson.
77. There was a fall in the standards in Key Stage 1 as identified in the last report, but these are showing clear signs of improvement and pupils' progress over time is satisfactory.
78. Pupils have positive attitudes towards their work and these promote improving standards. Many of the youngest pupils in reception often find it difficult to settle and sustain their interest throughout the whole of the Literacy Hour. When established in Year 1, however, pupils learn to listen more attentively and develop the capacity to maintain their concentration for longer periods of time. Pupils respond well to the sensitive management of the teacher and are learning to work well together in group or paired activities. Older pupils learn to expect to work quietly without direct supervision for part of the Literacy Hour, although they are sometimes so excited by their work that they become a little noisy. They show interest in the range of activities provided for group work and try hard to complete their work in the available time.
79. The quality of teaching is good overall. It is good or better in over 80 per cent of lessons. Teachers make good use of the guidelines for the Literacy Hour and this is having an

impact on pupils' learning. Teachers' planning is thorough and clearly focused on what pupils are to learn in the lesson. Lessons usually proceed at a good pace because teachers are more aware of the use of time in the Literacy Hour. Appropriate work is planned for the range of age and attainment in the class. Teachers use praise effectively to stimulate interest or thought and reward efforts by pupils. They ask open and closed questions, with sensitive prompting to enable pupils to achieve the correct answer. Pupils with special educational needs and lower attaining pupils benefit from the individual attention they receive when they work in small withdrawal groups with a learning support assistant. This helps them to achieve well in relation to their levels of prior attainment. Classroom support staff and other supporting adults are invariably well briefed and effectively deployed by the teachers. Pupils are usually asked to explain what they have learned in lessons and the consistent quality of teaching enhances pupils' capacity to learn. Pupils acquire new knowledge and increase their understanding effectively.

80. The school has made a sound start in its planning for the Literacy Hour and the teaching is having a clear impact on learning. Care is taken to ensure that pupils are given tasks that are matched well to their capabilities and will interest and challenge them. Staff are aware that thoughtful planning is required to ensure that the high number of pupils with special educational needs and those with under-developed language and attention skills extend their skills effectively. This will prepare them for the more formal structures of the literacy strategy. A flexible approach to the Literacy Hour, with carefully graded and monitored steps to ensure that all aspects are covered appropriately, meets the needs of these pupils and those of pupils with higher prior attainment.
81. The school is making increasing use of the analysis of the data available from assessment on entry into the school and the statutory assessment tasks. This enables them to identify areas for improvement, for example spelling, and led to the introduction of the new scheme. Parents and helpers assist with the welcoming library and the issue of library books to pupils. The school plans to extend the use of the library and the opportunities for pupils to extend their research skills. Storytellers and authors visit the school and pupils enjoy their involvement in performances. These activities enhance learning in all aspects of literacy.

MATHEMATICS

82. Standards are broadly in line with national averages at the end of Key Stage 1, although there are fewer pupils reaching above average levels than expected. The results of the 1999 Key Stage 1 national tests show that standards were well below the national average and the average for similar schools. This was because the year group has a higher proportion of pupils with special educational needs than usual, so fewer pupils attained a higher Level 3 than average. Test results over the last four years show that results were below the national average with standards slightly rising from 1996 to 1998, but dropping in 1999. The school has set realistic end of Key Stage 1 attainment targets for 2000 which are based on teacher assessment and broadly in line with the national average. However, the majority of pupils predicted to reach the average Level 2 are at the lowest end of the level and fewer pupils are expected to achieve the higher Level 3 than is expected nationally. There is no significant difference in standards of girls and boys.
83. Standards when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3 at Key Stage 2 are also close to levels expected nationally, except for standards of written presentation which are untidy and below those expected. Teachers use assessment tests well to monitor pupils' numeracy progress and to check whether pupils are in the correct ability set. Their planning has appropriate challenge for different ability groups. For example, pupils double and halve numbers mentally, "double 8, double 12, double 17", with the higher

attainers being asked to double 27. Pupils know that division is the inverse operation to multiplication and apply this knowledge to solving problems. Teachers encourage them well to explain different strategies they use, such as continuous addition or multiplication.

84. Inspection findings show that standards are on line to improve slightly this year. The school has mathematics as a priority this year and it has successfully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy. This has improved coverage of all areas of mathematics. It has also introduced ability sets for pupils across the two Years 2 and 3 classes, which teachers adjust appropriately at the end of each term following a test of numeracy skills. Pupils and teachers find this works effectively as it enables work to be more focused to meet the needs of pupils and increases the rate of learning. It also successfully enables teachers to provide more challenge for the higher attainers.
85. Pupils throughout the school enjoy mathematics. By effective use of number games and resources such as a 100 number square, teachers promote understanding and increase pupils' enjoyment. For example, pupils in Year 2 had fun identifying which were the missing numbers the teacher had just removed using their knowledge of number patterns. Teachers introduce mathematics' lessons well, for example to develop pupils' ability to count orally in twos, fives and tens and to develop an understanding of place value and number patterns. They recognise sequences of numbers, including odd and even numbers. Most pupils can calculate mentally accurately but their written work is sometimes less effective. This is because teachers do not set high enough expectations of presentation and pupils often write and record their work carelessly. Pupils in the combined reception class and pupils in Years 1 and 2 are developing their standards of numeracy satisfactorily. They use and apply their numeracy skills effectively in other subjects across the curriculum. For example, teachers encourage pupils in all classes to calculate how many are present and absent during registration. Pupils count beats in music and draw graphs to record science data. Computers are under-used as a resource in mathematics, for example to represent data and to support learning generally.
86. The rate of learning is satisfactory for all pupils, except when pupils with special educational needs receive additional support from either a support assistant or the teacher and then it is good. Teachers usually plan with appropriate work to meet the needs of pupils in three ability groups. In most classes this includes pupils from two years. Lower attaining pupils with underdeveloped standards of literacy progress more slowly if they are working unsupported, as they cannot read instructions unaided and require additional help to understand the vocabulary used. Occasionally group work lacks sufficient challenge to stretch pupils and so slows learning, such as an enjoyable counting game, but one which lacked mathematical challenge and was not related to the main focus of the lesson.
87. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. A strength of teaching throughout the school is that interesting methods and resources are used and pupils enjoy mathematics. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 are given a challenge to think of suitable questions they can ask their classmates and make a tick sheet to record responses, prior to recording the information on a block graph. Teachers all have a stimulating mathematics' displays in their rooms and give it high priority; they use number lines and squares well to support learning. They are enthusiastic and have willingly introduced the National Numeracy Strategy. They have good relationships with their pupils, which gives them the confidence to tackle new work successfully. There is a clear mathematical language focus in planning, and teachers reinforce new vocabulary well to improve understanding for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and English as an additional language. Teachers direct questions well at specific ability groups to check understanding and grade them appropriately to challenge individuals, but often the rest of the class is given nothing to do and start to lose interest at this time. This effects the

pace of learning as teachers miss the opportunity to challenge other pupils and fully involve them, whilst waiting for an individual answer. The least effective part of a numeracy lesson is often during group work. The unsupported groups are often given activities set at an inappropriate level. They are too difficult or too easy, resulting in slower progress than expected. Teachers' expectations for written work are not high enough. There is no marking policy to ensure a consistent approach across the school, with comments on how older pupils can improve. Assessment procedures are not sufficiently well established to provide accurate information about progress and standards within Key Stage 1.

SCIENCE

88. The 1999 teacher assessments show that the number of pupils achieving Level 2 and above at the end of Key Stage 1 was above average nationally and compared with similar schools. The number achieving Level 3 was well below average. Inspection evidence shows that standards have been maintained at the level reported in the last inspection. They are broadly in line with the national average at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3. Pupils have above average knowledge and understanding in aspects of the topics of materials, life and living things and physical processes. These reflect the standards achieved in 1999. Pupils' skills and knowledge in experimental and investigative science are broadly average. They are not so high as last year and there was little evidence of pupils achieving higher than average levels. Pupils' skills are not consistently developed and are not effectively built on prior knowledge and understanding. Assessment procedures are not rigorously established which enable teachers to monitor and accurately assess pupils' levels of attainment.
89. By the end of Key Stage 1, most pupils know the main parts of a plant and know that seeds need water, light and warmth to grow. They show an increasing understanding of the human senses, for example how we see and hear. They use their knowledge well, for example when Years 1 and 2 pupils identify a broad range of different sounds on a 'listening walk' around the school site. However, their investigational and observational skills are not effectively promoted during the walk. They are not challenged to predict the range of noises, the changes in volume and pitch or try to explain the causes of particular sound. For example, many pupils know that the 'rustling' noise is coming from the trees but the teacher does not question pupils to try to explain how the particular sound is made. Pupils know that light comes from different sources, such as the sun, electricity and torches. Some higher attaining Year 2 pupils know that a shadow is created by an object blocking out the light beam. Pupils record their results well in different ways, for example when investigating the growth of cress seeds. However, below average literacy skills limit the standards of presentation. Inconsistencies in handwriting, spelling weaknesses and a general lack of high expectation over the way in which work is completed frequently restrict standards of achievement.
90. By the end of Year 3, most pupils are developing a sound understanding of how to carry out a scientific investigation. They use prediction and try to work out what is likely to happen before carrying out an investigation. Pupils use their observation skills effectively to carefully note what is happening. For example, they predict which magnet is likely to be the strongest and devise an appropriate test to check their predictions. Some higher attaining pupils are beginning to identify a fair test. They talk about what they can change and what must remain unchanged, for example the way in which they use the magnets to pick up a number of paper-clips. However, the lack of consistent and frequent opportunities to carry out investigations does not allow pupils to build up their skills and knowledge and apply them to solve different problems. Years 2 and 3 pupils have a good understanding of the effects of magnetism. They know and accurately use specific scientific terms such as 'repel' and 'magnetic force'.

91. Pupils enjoy science and are very enthusiastic in their attitude when challenged to carry out a practical investigation. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 co-operate very well to discuss their ideas on how to test magnetic force. They respond well to questions and are keen to put forward their ideas, for example when describing the different sounds they heard on their 'listening walk'. This positive approach positively influences achievement, although many pupils do not sustain their interest when recording and writing up their results. This is reflected in significant variations in the quality of written presentation.
92. The quality of teaching is sound overall. It is good on occasions, particularly in Years 2 and 3, when pupils are challenged to apply their skills, knowledge and understanding. Teachers plan together in detail and organise their lessons well. They manage their classes well and this good control enables pupils to stay focused upon their work. This was clearly evident when Years 1 and 2 pupils walked around the school listening carefully for any sounds. Teachers used a good range of methods to ensure that the pupils concentrated upon their task. Teachers use questions effectively to develop pupils' knowledge, for example in a Years 2 and 3 lesson when the teacher used a series of follow-up questions to effectively extend pupils' understanding of magnetic force. She repeatedly challenged pupils to develop their answers so that they included a good range of specific terms in their replies, for example 'pulling', 'attract', and 'magnetic force of attraction'.
93. Teaching is less effective when the pace of lessons is not brisk enough to retain pupils' interest and attention. Standards are lower when the challenge of the work is not sufficiently high to require pupils to extend or apply their knowledge. For example, in a Key Stage 1 lesson on 'floating and sinking', the teacher spent too much time on demonstrating the activity rather than challenging pupils to predict and carry out their own tests. Pupils' interest was not maintained at a high level when they were required to sit on the carpet for a long time, rather than being fully involved in the practical investigation. Teachers know their classes well and encourage pupils to contribute to class discussions, for example when describing the range of sounds heard around the school. However, teachers do not give clear guidance to pupils when marking their work to indicate ways in which the quality can be improved.
94. There are no clearly established procedures which allow teachers to consistently assess pupils' work and compare and moderate their assessments. This does not enable teachers to indicate what pupils have to improve in order to gain a higher attainment level. Although teachers plan their lessons in detail, longer term plans do not clearly show what skills and knowledge have been covered in previous topics. This does not ensure that skills are built well on prior understanding, particularly in investigational work.

ART

95. Although only one lesson was observed during the inspection, judgements have been made by looking at pupils' art work, displays and talking to pupils and staff. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress in investigating and making and in their knowledge and understanding of art. Progress is similar to the last inspection. Due to the increased time spent developing literacy and numeracy, less time is now available for art which has effected the range of work covered. There was insufficient evidence to make an overall judgement on standards.
96. Pupils make good progress throughout the school in developing their ability to do observational drawings. For example, in Year 1 pupils carefully observed and drew plants using pencil and crayons putting in details of texture, sometimes adding their own

imaginative touches, such as setting the plant in a cornfield to improve their results. Whilst pupils in Years 2 and 3 make more accurate line drawings using charcoal to draw household objects past and present, with shading to portray the glass in an old lamp. Pupils are enthusiastic about drawing and painting. Pupils in Years 2 and 3 through their study of a work by Monet, show good knowledge and understanding of his use of pattern and colour. For example, very good individual teacher support successfully encouraged pupils to look at lighter and darker shades of colour, and try out the colour on a test paper to evaluate and improve their mixing. Art enhances pupils' language skills. After the teacher used terms, such as "complimentary colour", a pupil correctly identified one and went on to describe a colour as "standing out against others". Teachers choose activities that interest pupils and extend their knowledge. Years 2 and 3 pupils enjoyed being given a small square of a Monet painting to copy and paint in the same style. They showed obvious pride in their work and the contribution they had made to creating a large, class picture of water lilies. Pupils enjoy explaining how they achieved their results. They have less opportunity to experiment with three-dimensional work.

97. There was insufficient evidence to judge the overall quality of teaching. Teachers value pupils' art highly and display it well throughout the school. This promotes cultural development well and acts as an incentive for pupils to do their best work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Although only two lessons were observed during the inspection, judgements have been made by looking at pupils' design books, work samples, displays, photographs and talking to pupils and staff. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language, make sound progress in their skills of designing and making throughout Key Stage 1 and in Year 3. Changes since the last inspection, when there was insufficient evidence to make a judgement on attainment and progress, have included more design and technology taking place and improved cooking resources in food technology. This has improved pupils' learning.
99. Pupils are enthusiastic about the subject and enjoy experimenting with new techniques. Reception and Year 1 pupils watched with interest whilst the teacher gave a clear demonstration of how to make a thumb pot, showing how to pinch plasticene and smooth over any cracks. Years 1 and 2 pupils experiment appropriately with different methods of joining cardboard and making a simple lever that slides. Pupils enjoy the challenge of investigating how products are made as a result of interesting tasks set by teachers. In a mixed age Years 1 and 2 class, the teacher provided a good range of three puppets for pupils to see how they moved. Pupils' speaking skills are promoted well through group and class discussions to share their findings, with good use of teacher questioning to guide pupils' answers. Without support, about 75 per cent of these Year 2 pupils find it difficult to use appropriate vocabulary to discuss and evaluate their work, due to slightly less developed standards of speaking skills than expected for their age. Older Year 2 and Year 3 pupils describe, with understanding, the process of how they made a waistcoat for a bear. They clearly explain drawing a paper design, designing the pattern on a computer, then making and evaluating their finished product. This work shows good teaching and is in line with expectations for pupils' ages.
100. Insufficient teaching was seen to give an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. Clear expectations are always made known to the pupils about the importance of handling sharp tools safely and pupils take care. The pace in lessons is sometimes too slow. For example, a group working with the teacher remained on task for longer than planned, but others lost concentration and their learning slowed, so there was insufficient time to complete the lesson within the allocated time, effecting learning. Pupils' learning is also affected by inconsistency in the use and expectations of presentation in design

books for different teachers. Examples of effective use are neat, clearly labelled designs in a Year 3 class, with a list of materials required, whilst less effective designing consists only of a simple drawing without indication of how the design will work. Teachers plan lessons effectively and have recently adopted a national scheme of work to provide a whole school planned progression of skills. Monitoring of standards of work and pupils' progress over time is insufficient. This means that some aspects, such as using a wide range of tools, are underdeveloped.

GEOGRAPHY

101. Although less time has been allocated to geography since the last inspection, standards have been generally maintained. Changes in the curriculum planning framework have enabled effective coverage of required aspects and ensured that pupils' learning is soundly developed. Although only one lesson was observed during the inspection, evidence was gained from analysing work in pupils' folders and on display, looking at teaching and curriculum plans and from talking to staff and pupils. Pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, continue to make sound progress throughout Key Stage 1 and in Year 3.
102. In Key Stage 1, the school makes good use of the local area to develop pupils' understanding of maps and plans and the use made of buildings and facilities. Younger pupils begin to recognise and name different houses such as bungalow and detached. They know that different materials are used to make these houses, including glass and bricks, and that the church is older and made from stone. Years 1 and 2 pupils make their own plans of the school site and correctly identify features on a map of the nearby town centre. Curriculum planning is made on a two-year topic cycle. It shows that pupils' knowledge of the local area is extended further through visits to the town to study shops, buildings and other local facilities.
103. This local knowledge is then used effectively in Years 2 and 3 when pupils compare their lives in Dereham with those of people living in very different parts of the world, including the Arctic and the equatorial rain-forests. They talk with interest about how the weather is different and how this would affect their lives, including what clothes they would wear and what food they would eat. Pupils use their knowledge of some history topics well, for example Ancient Egypt, to enhance their understanding of living in contrasting climates and cultures. The school makes good use of visits to Gressenhall Rural Life Museum and to Thetford Forest to extend pupils' geographical and historical knowledge. Such visits also allow pupils to apply the mapping skills which have been initially developed in class-based activities.
104. There is not sufficient evidence to give a secure judgement on the overall quality of teaching. In the one lesson observed, the teacher planned in detail with specific lesson objectives to give a clear focus to her teaching. She used questions well to promote pupils' understanding, for example by extending their knowledge of the different uses made of the local church. She used a good range of strategies to try to maintain pupils' interest and attention and was supported well by helpers and support staff. However, the excitement created by being given a guided walk around the streets adjoining the school led to difficulties for some pupils in sustaining quiet concentration. This restricted the learning opportunities for other pupils in the class.

HISTORY

105. Pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding in history are as expected at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 3. During the inspection there were no topic lessons in history. There was, therefore, not enough evidence to judge the quality of teaching and learning. Conversation with teachers and pupils and analysis of planning show that pupils have appropriate experience of the programmes of study of the National Curriculum. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. The standards indicated in the last inspection have been maintained.
106. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the importance of famous people such as Florence Nightingale and Louis Braille. Pupils watch historical television programmes to discover differences between then and now and have a good understanding of why things were different in Victorian times. For example, they know that baths were not made of plastic as they are now because it had not been invented. They are horrified to think how dirty the water would be when the last member of the family had a bath after everyone else. They are also aware that lighting was different because there was no electricity in houses. Pupils begin to understand time and change. From their topic on Ancient Egypt, pupils recall the mummification process with pleasure and talk with interest of the artefacts they saw when on their visit to the Fitzwilliam museum. The school makes good use of visits and artefacts to broaden and focus pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

107. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Attainment is broadly in line with standards expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 1 and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3. Pupils' learning is soundly developed, particularly in word processing skills. These are used with increasing effectiveness in promoting standards in other subjects, for example literacy, design and technology and science. For example, pupils in Years 2 and 3 produce good quality, detailed word processed descriptions of their designs and evaluations as part of a 'waistcoat' project.
108. Pupils' confidence in using information and communication technology is developed well in their early years in the school. Teachers provide frequent opportunities for children in the nursery and pupils in reception to develop their basic skills in using computers and in using other equipment such as listening sets. Their keyboard and mouse control skills are introduced and developed well. They use a good range of programs to extend their knowledge and understanding in aspects of design work and of mathematics, for example in shape and pattern work. However, these skills are not consistently built on later in the school. For example, pupils learn how to control a programmable robot in the nursery but these control technology skills are not extended sufficiently in Key Stage 1.
109. Pupils in reception and Year 1 use a computer program well to extend their knowledge of patterns and sequences. Years 2 and 3 pupils complete a survey of favourite things, for example pets and colours, and use a data-handling program to produce graphs of their results. Pupils use a simulation game to extend their number skills, although there is little evidence of information and communication technology being regularly used to promote numeracy skills. Listening sets are used effectively to extend pupils' understanding of stories and to encourage them to share their ideas about the stories they have heard with others in the class. Word processing activities are used to enhance pupils' literacy skills and reading skills are extended when pupils use CD-Roms to research information on such historical topics as the Ancient Egyptians. Pupils with special educational needs are given some additional support to improve their skills and use information and communication technology to promote their learning, for example in extending their range

and use of language.

110. Pupils are very enthusiastic in wanting to use information and communication technology. Many have computers at home and are keen to extend and apply their skills. Pupils who have a good knowledge and understanding are very helpful to others whose skills are less well developed. This positive and co-operative approach promotes higher standards.
111. A very detailed development plan clearly shows how the school is intending to extend its range of resources and ensure that pupils' skills, including Internet access, will be enhanced and used throughout the school. Although the school is still at the early stages of its development, the use of its grant from Phase 2 of the National Grid for Learning will significantly enhance learning opportunities. Staff's confidence and subject knowledge have improved significantly through training, although their knowledge and use of procedures to assess pupils' achievements have yet to be developed. There were not sufficient opportunities to observe teaching during the inspection to give an overall grade on its quality.

MUSIC

112. The attainment of pupils in music has been maintained since the last inspection and is broadly in line with national expectations for pupils at the end of Key Stage 1 and for those who leave the school at the end of Year 3. All pupils, including those with special educational needs or with English as an additional language, make at least satisfactory progress.
113. Teaching and learning are consistently good and there is clear evidence of progress in the acquisition of skills and knowledge across the school. At the end of Key Stage 1 pupils have acquired a wide repertoire of songs and rhymes. Pupils sing together with enthusiasm; their tone is pleasant and diction clear. Pupils listen attentively to music in assemblies, matching their words well to the playing of the piano. The teacher provides an interesting variety of instruments for younger pupils who listen most attentively whilst her assistant plays an instrument behind a furniture unit. All pupils match the sound they hear to an instrument in the group in front of them accurately. The assistant very adroitly draws their attention to the slightly different tone between the hand bells. Pupils are able to say confidently which is the higher or lower note. Pupils copy the teacher's playing of the maracas by clapping the exact rhythm. The teacher extends the level of difficulty of the patterns and pupils respond very quickly and well. Pupils respond immediately to the teachers' signals.
114. In Year 1 pupils create very interesting sea sound pictures by experimenting with body percussion and instruments. Pupils suggest a range of appropriate sounds for the sea, a crab, a seahorse, tropical fish and snails. They make the sounds together and hear the exciting development of the sound pictures within the group. Pupils at the end of the key stage and from Year 3 create a graphic score for a piece of music that reflects the sounds that could be heard on a walk through Monet's garden at Giverny. Pupils are excited by the new instruments they have but some pupils make clear choices to use older ones that more accurately represent the sound they wish to make. Pupils work in groups and experiment to see if the instruments are appropriate. They discuss their composition thoughtfully and the teacher facilitates their work but does not over-direct it. The high quality of the teaching results in sensitivity to the task and a clear focus on appropriate music for a purpose. At the end of the lesson pupils listen to each other and evaluate their work so far.
115. Pupils' response to music is good. They are enthusiastic and show interest in the instruments. They enjoy listening to music and work hard. The teaching is good and staff

expertise allows pupils to reflect upon their music and to learn well in lessons. Teachers give pupils practical experiences and the demands made on pupils are challenging. The school has received generous donations to purchase instruments. These have been carefully chosen by staff to give a good range of instruments from other cultures as well as a wide range of traditional instruments. Pupils attend the lunchtime recorder club with enthusiasm and look forward to being members of the choir and rehearsing for events such as the St. Withburga Festival and the Christmas performance. The production of "Hosanna Rock" was very successful and pupils are rightly proud of their achievements in this challenging work.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

116. During the inspection the focus was on pupils' performance in gymnastics, dance and swimming. Standards have been generally maintained since the last inspection. Year 3 pupils continue to have regular swimming lessons and standards remain above average. Just under half of the group are already achieving standards which are expected nationally by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils' skills and knowledge in other areas of activity are generally soundly developed. Although curriculum planning indicates that all the required aspects are to be included, it does not clearly show how an appropriate balance is achieved between the different activities. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, are fully involved in all activities.
117. At Key Stage 1, younger pupils use a sound range of movements, for example swinging and jumping, to illustrate the movements of animals in the jungle. They make good use of facial expressions to interpret emotions, for example when they imagine coming face to face with a lion in the jungle. Years 1 and 2 pupils show a broader range of movements when developing a group sequence based on 'The Carnival of the Animals'. They use different movements to show how particular animals move, for example a graceful swan or a creeping lion. Their awareness of how their movements can link into the rhythm of the music is less well developed. Year 2 pupils develop a good range of travelling movements, both on the floor and on apparatus. They show improving control and balance to link together a sequence of 'zig-zag' movements. Many use the balance beam particularly well to show good control when trying a difficult turning movement.
118. Years 2 and 3 pupils use a limited range of movements to demonstrate the effects of 'force' in interpreting the words of a descriptive section from their class story book, read out by the teacher. Although they show an improved range of imaginative movements, for example they use facial expressions, they do not vary the range and quality to emphasise aspects of speed and tension. Pupils at both key stages clearly enjoy the lessons and participate enthusiastically. They generally listen carefully, although on occasions their excitement generates noise levels which impact upon the concentration and efforts of others in the class.
119. The quality of teaching is sound overall. Teachers generally manage their classes well and give clear instructions. Pupils listen carefully and try enthusiastically to achieve what is being asked of them, for example to use movements to interpret a reading or a musical extract. Teachers generally use demonstrations well to illustrate the range of movements, for example when Year 1 pupils were imagining that they are wading through water. However, teachers do not frequently use the opportunities to show how pupils can improve the quality of their movements. They praise and encourage pupils to develop their performance but do not clearly investigate ways in which the technique can be improved. Although teachers encourage pupils to evaluate dance and gymnastic sequences, they do not challenge pupils to identify the specific aspects which could be improved.

120. Teachers use resources well to develop pupils' ideas, for example when Year 1 and reception pupils lay on the floor and listened carefully to music about the rain-forest. The teacher used the music very effectively to ensure a controlled, calm end to the lesson and used questions very well to focus pupils' attention. For example, the probing use of questions such as "Can you hear the noise of the colourful birds singing?" encourages imaginative ideas and prepares them well for follow-up work in the next lesson. On occasions, teachers do not maintain a brisk pace to lessons and this limits the amount of time for pupils to be actively involved. For example, in a Years 1 and 2 dance lesson, pupils were required to sit and listen for nearly half of the lesson time. They had very little time left to develop their dance ideas and this restricted what they could achieve in their group sequence.