

INSPECTION REPORT

**THE ALBERT PYE COMMUNITY PRIMARY
SCHOOL**

Beccles, Suffolk

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124570

Headteacher: Mrs B. Newson

Reporting inspector: Paula Allison
21420

Dates of inspection: 28th – 31st January 2002

Inspection number: 192753

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 to 9
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Frederick's Road Beccles Suffolk
Postcode:	NR34 9UL
Telephone number:	01502 713420
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Revd Roger Prime
Date of previous inspection:	17 th March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21420	Paula Allison	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Religious education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
11439	Jill Moore	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
19041	Roger Linstead	Team inspector	English Geography History Special educational needs	
24031	Iris Idle	Team inspector	Foundation stage Art and design Design and technology Music Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
24031	Ann Lowson	Team inspector	Science Physical education	

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

This is a larger than average primary school with 247 pupils aged 4 to 9 years, and 39 part time children in the nursery class. Currently there are more boys than girls, an imbalance that affects most classes. The school has a stable roll, although at the beginning of each Year 3 the school has an additional intake of pupils from a local infant school. All pupils are of white ethnic origin and only one has English as an additional language. The school is in the centre of the market town of Beccles. It is a mixed catchment area, but socio-economic circumstances are broadly average overall. There are a similar number of pupils eligible for free school meals as in most other schools.

As children enter the school they usually have skills that are in line with what is expected for children of this age. However, information from assessments shows that children's attainment on entry varies from year to year, and can be quite low some years, with particular weaknesses in language development. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs is 26 per cent, which is just above average, but a relatively high number of pupils have emotional and behavioural difficulties. Three pupils have statements and three more are undergoing assessment. Some pupils receive support from a pupil referral unit, with which the school works closely. Since the last inspection there have been major changes in the senior management team, including a new headteacher and deputy head.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with particular strengths in the high quality of leadership and management and provision for pupils' personal development. A consistently good quality of teaching ensures that pupils achieve well. With an income similar to the national average, the school provides good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve well and standards are usually in line with or above those achieved nationally.
- Pupils like school and they work hard.
- The leadership provided by the headteacher and key staff is excellent.
- The quality of teaching is consistently good and is often very good
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs and for those in the foundation stage is very good.
- The school has a broad curriculum and provides particularly well for pupils' personal development.
- The school includes all pupils and gives them an equal opportunity to learn and achieve.
- The school works well with parents and with the local community.

What could be improved

- There are no major weaknesses. However, the policy of including all pupils can sometimes make too many demands on teachers, especially in situations where teaching groups are large and there is limited support. Occasionally this has a detrimental effect on the learning of all pupils.

This area for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997. Since then the school has made considerable improvements. Standards have been raised, despite being currently lower. However, all pupils now achieve well, as the school has made successful efforts to raise the achievement of higher attaining pupils. All areas of weakness have been addressed:

- The school now has a very strong and effective management structure, a much more whole school approach and clear direction for the future. The role of the subject co-ordinator has been well developed.
- Standards in information and communication technology have risen considerably, as a result of investment in resources, training for teachers and better planning.

Other aspects of the school have improved, for example teaching and learning and the curriculum. With the strengths of leadership and the quality of teaching, the school has the potential to develop and improve further and reach its targets.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
reading	C	C	E	E
writing	B	C	D	D
mathematics	B	D	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E

- The table shows that standards had been improving since the last inspection, until in 1999 they were above average.
- In 2001, overall results were well below national average and also well below the results in similar schools. However, there were several factors that affected results, such as an unusually high number of pupils with special educational needs and low attainment on entry to the school of this particular year group. The percentage of pupils achieving above the expected levels was higher than it had been - a result of the school's focus on ensuring that higher attaining pupils achieve well.
- Currently pupils in Year 2 are working at levels that are at least in line with expectations and inspection evidence suggests that the school is likely to achieve its challenging targets.
- By the time pupils leave the school at the age of 9, they are usually working at above average levels and are well on the way to achieving good standards by the end of Year 6.
- Standards in all other subjects are at least in line with what is expected. There are particular strengths in art and design and design and technology. Standards in information and communication technology are considerably better than they were at the time of the last inspection.
- The achievement of all pupils is good. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and higher attaining pupils are given sufficient challenge to enable them to achieve well.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils enjoy coming to school, they are keen to learn and they work hard. They are interested in the tasks they are given to do.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Almost all pupils behave well. They have a good sense of right and wrong. They respond well to the high expectations of their teachers.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Relationships between adults and pupils are positive. Pupils learn to understand and respect the needs of others. They co-operate well.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Pupils' personal development is a strength of the school, which is recognised and valued by parents.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Very good	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is consistently good and often very good. This is a considerable improvement since the last inspection. Teachers:

- encourage positive relationships in classrooms;
- have secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach;
- teach literacy and numeracy skills effectively, but also provide pupils with opportunities to use these skills in English, mathematics and science;
- have a very good understanding of the needs of young children in nursery and reception classes;
- plan with clear learning objectives and to meet the needs of all the pupils in their classes;
- use time and other resources efficiently;
- are enthusiastic, have high expectations of pupils and set them challenging work.

Support staff work well with teachers and make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching.

As a result of the good quality of teaching, pupils learn effectively. They are interested and maintain concentration. They work hard and gain skills, knowledge and understanding.

Teachers manage pupils very well, setting high expectations for behaviour. However, in a few lessons the inappropriate behaviour of a few pupils can make too many demands on teachers and this has a detrimental effect on the quality of learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. There is a clear focus on pupils having access to a curriculum appropriate to their needs. Literacy and numeracy are effectively prioritised, but the school also places an emphasis on providing a broader curriculum, for example in art and design.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good. These pupils are well included in the school and they make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes very good provision for pupils' personal development. Pupils have opportunities to reflect on their experiences and the world around them. The high expectations of adults and the very good relationships contribute to pupils' social and moral development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school takes good care of its pupils. Pupils are well supported and guided. The school has very good systems to check academic progress. Teachers are therefore able to match work to pupils' individual achievements.
How well the school works in partnership with parents;	The school works very well with parents, involving them in all aspects of its work. Parents appreciate the quality of the information they are given and the 'open door' approach.

The quality of the school's partnership with parents, its close links with the local community and its relationships with partner institutions such as link schools, have a positive impact on parents' attitudes and their confidence in school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and key staff provide excellent leadership. They have an overview of the school and a shared vision for its future development. The headteacher gives clear direction for the work of the school. There is a strong commitment to social inclusion and achievement for all, which is apparent in all aspects of school life.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors are committed to the school and its community. They know the school's work and are closely involved with its development.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has secure monitoring and evaluating procedures and takes effective action to address weaknesses.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning and day-to-day administration are good. Mostly resources are used very well and best value principles are starting to be used when decisions are made. The school invests well in support staff and they make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching. However, on occasions they are not deployed in the most effective way so as to meet the needs of all pupils.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are adequate for the delivery of the curriculum. However, there are some limitations in the accommodation, for example the size of the hall.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed. • The school works closely with parents, who feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • Children are expected to work hard and achieve their best. • Children are helped to become mature and responsible. • Teaching is good and children make good progress. • Children with special educational needs are included and supported in school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents are not happy with the amount of homework provided. • Some parents feel that the range of activities outside lessons is limited. • A few parents feel that children do not make the same good progress in all classes.

Parents have very positive views of the school and the inspection team agrees with them. Parents can justly have confidence in the provision the school makes for their children.

Comments on issues raised

- The amount of homework given is in line with what is expected for pupils of this age and teachers use it well to support pupils' learning.
- The range of extra-curricular activities is similar to what many schools offer pupils of this age, but there is a limited provision for sporting activities.
- Inconsistencies in teaching and learning have been tackled and the inspection team found pupils making good progress throughout the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

- 1 Results in last year's tests and assessments at the end of Year 2 were disappointing and they do not reflect the real achievement of pupils in this school. Standards have been improving and inspection evidence indicates that they will do so again. All pupils achieve well and make good progress from their own starting point. The school does all it can to ensure that this happens. Parents are happy with the standards achieved by the school and with the progress their own children make.
- 2 At the time of the last inspection in 1997 pupils at the ages of seven and nine were achieving in line with national expectations in English, mathematics and science. However, higher attaining pupils were not achieving as well as they could do, which was reflected in the fact that very few pupils reached levels above the expected ones. Since then standards have been rising, until in 1999 standards at the end of Year 2 were above those achieved in other schools.
- 3 In the last few years the school has successfully focused on raising the achievement of higher attaining pupils and in 2001 the percentage of pupils achieving at higher levels increased considerably. However in the same year results in reading and mathematics were well below average compared with all schools and with similar schools. Results in writing and teacher assessments in science were better, but were still below those achieved in similar schools. There were several factors that affected these results. For example there was a particularly high percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs in this year group, they came into the school with limited skills, and they have suffered from some weak teaching and changes of staffing in the past. The school's targets were higher and teachers were disappointed in the results, as they felt that some of the pupils did not perform as well as they could have done.
- 4 Inspection evidence indicates that most Year 2 pupils are currently working at levels in all subjects that are at least in line with what is expected and there are a high percentage of pupils working at levels above this. The school's targets are challenging, but with the current quality of teaching it is likely that they will be close to reaching them. Year 4 pupils are working at expected levels, but are being challenged to achieve above this. This is an improvement from their performance at Year 2 and indicates good progress from what their skills were as they entered the school.
- 5 Pupils show confidence in skills in literacy and numeracy. For example, Year 2 pupils read simple texts fluently and accurately with understanding and add and subtract numbers to twenty. Year 4 pupils read more complex texts and use contents lists and indexes. They calculate accurately with two and three digit numbers. However, because of the way in which they are effectively taught, they not only gain these skills, but are able to use them in different contexts. They read for information in literacy and solve problems and carry out investigations in mathematics. In a similar way in science the skills of investigation are taught very well, and pupils confidently ask and answer questions and carry out their own experiments. This approach is very successful and is a major factor in the higher achievement of all pupils. It has however had most impact on higher attaining pupils as it has given them the scope to think for themselves and challenged them to achieve highly.

- 6 As an extension of this, it is notable how often pupils use literacy and numeracy skills in other subjects. For example, they effectively record their ideas in writing in geography and religious education. They read a range of books to find out about different topics in history. They confidently measure and handle data in science and use directions and co-ordinates in geography.
- 7 Pupils achieve well in all subjects of the National Curriculum and they reach the standards expected. There has been a marked improvement in the standards achieved in information and communication technology as resources, training and a clearer approach to planning have been brought in. There are particular strengths in art and design and design and technology with pupils achieving above what is expected for their age. This reflects the time and space the school gives to these subjects. The sensitive approach to religious education and the good planning available to teachers enables pupils to achieve well and their knowledge and understanding meets the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus.
- 8 Pupils achieve well in the school. They usually enter the school with skills that are broadly in line with what is expected of the age, but this can vary from year to year and sometimes attainment on entry can be quite low, especially in terms of language development. They make good progress in the nursery and reception classes and most enter Year 1 reaching the standards expected for children of this age. All pupils make good progress through the school, gaining skills, knowledge and understanding. By the time they reach Year 2 their results show that they have made good progress from their starting point. The school receives pupils from a local infant school into Year 3 and this can complicate any comparative analysis, but the school's tracking systems show all pupils continue to make good progress through the last two years at the school.
- 9 Higher attaining pupils now achieve well and pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their individual education plans. They benefit from extra support in lessons and nearly all achieve as well as they can. Boys and girls generally achieve equally well.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

- 10 Pupils' attitudes to school are very good. They are happy to come to school, they want to work and do so with enthusiasm. They concentrate well, are attentive, listen carefully and show imagination and interest in the tasks set. For example in a design and technology lesson, pupils were quick to understand which mechanisms were needed to make moving invitations, and chose varied themes for imaginary parties. Pupils co-operate well in groups and show an understanding of others' needs; this is apparent in their patience with those who need extra time and help. Parents are very happy with the values and attitudes promoted by the school and in particular the way in which the policy for including all pupils has helped their own children to become more tolerant of others.
- 11 Behaviour in the school is good, although occasionally the actions of a few pupils can affect the behaviour and learning of a whole class. The class management by staff is very good; it is due to their ability to control and bring back to task the pupils with difficulties, that behaviour is good. Staff have high expectations for good behaviour and children respond well. There have been a few exclusions in the last year, usually involving pupils with special educational needs when their behaviour has the potential of putting others at risk. Parents are always fully involved in this and work positively with the school.

- 12 Pupils with special educational needs are confident and nearly all have positive attitudes to work. This is because of the extra support they get and the success they enjoy from their achievement in activities planned to match their needs. For example, teachers make sure that they are included in discussions. They join in fully because teachers choose questions carefully to match their understanding.
- 13 Pupils' personal development is very good; they are given many opportunities to develop, grow and reflect. Moments of real awe and wonder were observed in lessons around the school, with staff allowing time to make the most of these. The relationships between staff and pupils, and between the pupils are very good. Staff know the children really well and care about them. The children understand this and respond very well, often sharing out of school experiences with staff. They show respect for others' values and beliefs, although a few do not always understand the impact of their actions on others. Pupils understand the school routines and move well around the school and are quick to tidy up at the end of lessons.
- 14 Attendance last year was slightly below the national average, but there were no unauthorised absences. There has been little variation in attendance over recent years. Registers are marked and closed properly. There is some lateness throughout the school, but attendance and surrounding issues are monitored well by the headteacher, education welfare officer and class teachers. Other agencies are involved as and when required to support good attendance. Parents are helped to understand their role in achieving good attendance and are discouraged from taking children out of school in term time because of the detrimental effect that this can have on pupils' learning and achievement.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

- 15 Throughout the school the quality of teaching is consistently good and is often very good. During the inspection, virtually all teaching was at least satisfactory and most of it was good. Almost a third of lessons seen were very good or better. This is a considerable improvement from the time of the last inspection. There are no longer the inconsistencies that there were then. Teachers work together as a team; they plan together and support each other. There is now much more focus on teaching, as opposed to organising, and teachers have more confidence in teaching such subjects as information and communication technology than they had previously. Parents are confident in the quality of the teaching provide for their children and feel that their children learn effectively, enjoy school and are making good progress. The quality of teaching has a major impact on the learning of pupils and their achievement and it makes a secure base for future high standards.
- 16 Teaching for children in the nursery and reception classes is very good. All staff have a very good understanding of the needs of young children and they plan carefully for them. They provide a good range of experiences and activities and put a good emphasis on the development of spoken language. Of particular note is the quality of provision for children's personal and social development. There is very good liaison between the nursery and reception classes so that children make the move confidently. They develop sufficient skills to enable them to learn effectively through the school.
- 17 The quality of teaching for pupils with special educational needs is good. This is most noticeable in teachers' provision of work for these pupils, which matches what they know with what they need to learn. It also shows clearly in the effectiveness of extra help and support

for them in many lessons. The school's records show that nearly all pupils with special educational needs make good progress towards the targets in their programmes of work. Pupils in Year 4 get extra support to help them do as well as they can in English and mathematics before they move on to middle school. The school provides an extra teacher so that they may work in three groups based on their previous achievement, rather than in two classes. All pupils benefit from these arrangements, not just those with special educational needs.

- 18 One of the main strengths in the teaching throughout the school is the quality of the relationships in classes. Teachers know their pupils well and they effectively encourage them and help them to learn. As a result pupils are confident and enjoy learning. It is because of the positive relationships that all pupils can be included in lessons. No one feels left out. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson when pupils were learning to write sentences, the teacher used praise to build confidence and targeted questions carefully so that even the pupils with special educational needs could take part. Pupils were interested and involved throughout the lesson and they enjoyed their learning. The patience and sensitivity of the teacher and the supporting adults present helped pupils maintain concentration and complete the task they had been set.
- 19 It is because good relationships exist that discussions can take place and pupils can share their ideas and reflect on their experiences. This results in a depth of understanding in such subjects as religious education and personal and social education. In a religious education lesson in Year 2 the teacher sensitively managed pupils and helped them reflect on their responses to the natural world. The enthusiasm with which they later thought of a range of questions they could ask showed what they had gained from the discussion. In another Year 2 lesson, this time taken by the headteacher, pupils were encouraged to talk about their own experiences and those of others as they considered how children might feel when a new baby comes into a home. The very careful use of questioning and prompting enabled even the least confident to take part in the discussion and share their ideas.
- 20 Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subjects they teach. This is indicated in the way in which they plan and prepare work to meet the needs of all pupils in the class. Teachers have implemented the literacy and numeracy strategies very effectively and they all show that they are technically competent to teach these skills. As a result pupils gain the skills they need and also learn to apply them. For example, in a Year 4 literacy lesson the teacher was wanting pupils to learn about newspapers and more specifically the purposes of headlines, so they could write their own. The thorough planning and careful differentiation of work meant that all pupils were working at an appropriate level and moving on in their learning. The pace of the lesson and the challenges she placed before pupils ensured that all pupils remained involved, even those who found concentration difficult.
- 21 Teachers have secure skills in teaching information and communication technology and this means pupils can now achieve in this subject. This was clear in lessons with Years 3 and 4 when control was being taught and the teachers all successfully tailored the program and the challenge to the needs of the individuals.
- 22 Teachers plan meticulously to meet the needs of pupils. They have clear learning objectives, which they share with pupils. Pupils therefore know what they are learning and can measure their own success. Teachers use a range of methods to help pupils learn effectively. They are particularly good at using problem solving approaches which promote pupils' thinking. They have high expectations and challenge pupils well. This especially affects the higher

attaining pupils as they learn to think and are inspired to achieve as much as they can. In a Year 4 mathematics lesson with the higher attaining group, the teacher effectively used the idea of target numbers to give pupils practice in estimating and adding large numbers both mentally and using written methods. The nature of the activity, especially when it was timed, encouraged pupils to work quickly and try hard. They made gains in confidence during the lesson and remained interested throughout.

- 23 Teachers carry assessment procedures on a regular basis and they use the information to help them plan for individuals and groups of pupils. They mark pupils' work in a positive and useful way, giving pupils confidence and helping them to improve.
- 24 Teachers use resources imaginatively and now use information and communication technology effectively. They also use classroom assistants and other supporting adults well, especially to support pupils with special educational needs. These adults work hard and are skilled in working with pupils in what can sometimes be quite difficult situations. They try to ensure that pupils whose special educational needs arise from emotional and behavioural problems do not disrupt the lesson for others. In this they are largely successful, although sometimes they do not have the full range of strategies that they need.
- 25 Teachers manage pupils very well. They have high expectations of pupils and make it clear how they want them to behave. They use a range of skills and strategies to divert inappropriate behaviour and to keep those whose concentration is limited involved and on task. Occasionally however, and this happened in the one unsatisfactory lesson, the management of the behaviour of a few pupils can take a lot of the teacher's time, especially when teaching groups are large and there is limited support available. In these situations such things as discussions may have to be curtailed as pupils lose concentration and become distracted. This affects the quality of learning of all pupils.

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

- 26 The quality and range of learning opportunities are very good. The curricular provision for children in the Foundation Stage is also very good and gives them a very good start to their education. Personal, social and health education is timetabled for all classes in school. A new computer suite has now been established. This has raised the standards achieved in information and communication technology and is a significant improvement since the last inspection.
- 27 The school meets statutory requirements in all National Curriculum subjects and in religious education. The headteacher has led the school well in reforming the planning of the curriculum. The creative organisation of the timetable ensures that time is very well used to achieve a well-balanced, broad and relevant curriculum for all pupils. Although there is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy, other subjects are given sufficient time and prominence in the school week. Opportunities are taken to provide important links between subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 used their knowledge of mathematical shapes well to make Norman castles when they studied the Battle of Hastings. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been well implemented and have been factors in achieving consistency across the school and in raising the achievement of all pupils. The development of the role of subject co-ordinators ensures that there is a much better focus on what is to be

taught and how, with an emphasis on raising standards. The very good curriculum offered by the school prepares pupils well for the next stage of their education.

- 28 The provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good and a strength of the school. The school has very good arrangements to give equal opportunities to all pupils with special educational needs and to include them in all activities. These pupils keep up well with new learning because teachers always take the time to make sure they understand. For example, in a Year 4 class, the classroom assistant asked each pupil to decide whether or not groups of words were sentences. In addition she expected them to give three reasons why, and made sure they did. The school also ensures that pupils with particular needs have special work and expert support to improve their skills. For example, outreach teachers give very effective help both in and out of school to pupils with acute behaviour problems.
- 29 The provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory. Opportunities are provided for pupils to learn descant and treble recorders and to develop their computing and gardening skills. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 take part, for six weeks, in a 'Football in the community' course. This gives them the opportunity to work with professional players from Norwich City football club. (A gymnastics club takes place after school and pupils attend this but this is not part of the schools' provision.) However, there is only limited provision overall for pupils to take part in sporting activities.
- 30 The provision for all pupils to have equal access and opportunities to the curriculum is very good and is a strength of the school. For example, in a Year 2 personal, social and health education lesson, all pupils contributed ideas when they discussed feelings and all suggestions were valued. The school is strongly committed to ensuring that where pupils are withdrawn for additional literacy support, this takes place during literacy sessions. Setting takes place with the older pupils in literacy and numeracy. This enables them to work in three smaller groups, doing work that is carefully planned to match and challenge the needs of all pupils. All pupils have good access to a very appropriate curriculum.
- 31 The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is very good. Weekly lessons are planned for each class when they have the opportunity to think and talk about feelings, relationships and caring for others. For example, Year 2 classes thought about a new baby coming into the family and how an older child might feel. They suggested that 'they would be sad because it would take too much of mum's time' and that 'they would feel jealous.' They considered the feelings of the parents and whether they would be different. All pupils in school have completed a questionnaire about their views of the school and many of their views are selected as issues to discuss in their personal, social and health education lessons. Pupils take responsibility in and around the school. For example, they prepare the hall for assembly and demonstrate their skills when using the overhead projector for the words of the hymns.
- 32 The school has good links with the community. There are links with all the local churches and these clergy come into school to take weekly assemblies. They link their story closely with the school's theme for the week. For example, during the inspection the theme was 'faith and courage.' A visiting vicar held the whole school enthralled with his story of 'Brave Billy rescuing Mick Muscle in the Swimming Pool Fire Drama.' Visitors to the school include a storyteller, potter and weaver. There are good links with a local newspaper. Their six-week 'Reading Together' project enables older pupils to have a free newspaper every other day. The tasks linked to this are completed, both in school and at home, and pupils have the opportunity to visit the newspaper offices and see how a newspaper is produced at the end of their work. The school uses the wider community well to support pupils' learning. All classes have educational visits and these particularly support their learning in history and geography.

- 33 The relationships with partner schools are very good. Teachers in the nursery visit the playgroup before children move into the nursery. They also visit the children in their homes, which is greatly appreciated by parents. Pupils from a local infant school join the Year 3 classes and there is an effective transfer policy in place for this move. The new pupils, with their parents, visit the school in the spring term and while the headteacher talks to the parents, older pupils, who have experienced the same move, show the visiting pupils round the school. The parents of these pupils also have the opportunity to meet their child's new teacher before they join the school. All pupils, including those joining the school in September, start a transfer book in the summer term that they take with them to their new class. The same procedure takes place when Year 4 pupils move to their middle school. During their summer term visit, they spend a day taking part in lessons and getting to know the school.
- 34 The overall provision for pupils' personal development is very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. The moral and social elements are particularly relevant to the current aims of the school because of the emphasis that has been given to the full inclusion of all pupils to all aspects of school life.
- 35 Spiritual development is very good. An appropriate atmosphere is created in assemblies to help pupils to develop their spiritual awareness. For example, the visiting vicar, who is blind, shared his difficulties with the pupils and explained how Trevor, his guide dog helps him. He told the pupils that he was scared, but 'Jesus comes with me.' Parents are regularly invited in to join in with class or year group assemblies. These are very well supported and become social occasions adding to the ethos of the school and the confidence of pupils taking part. Religious education lessons provide very good opportunities for pupils to learn about Christian values and beliefs and those of other faiths. Time was given for pupils to reflect on the beauty of the countryside in springtime, during hymn practice, when they sang hymns about springtime. Opportunities for reflecting of feelings and emotions are provided both in personal, social and health education lessons and in art and design lessons. For example, pupils identified and discussed the feelings of an artist portrayed in the choice of colours he used in his pictures.
- 36 Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good and strongly linked. Pupils develop an understanding of what is right and wrong from an early age. Class rules, which have been negotiated with pupils, are displayed in all classes. In a whole school assembly at the beginning of the year, all classes share their rules with each other. Pupils have good opportunities to celebrate their successes by sharing their work in year group assemblies with their parents. Older pupils show very good understanding of the difficulties some pupils have both in work and behaviour and manage this in a most mature way. In a Year 4 numeracy session the teacher gave all pupils time to think and work out answers to questions. When some pupils needed more time, the others happily accepted this.
- 37 Personal, social and health education, music and art lessons make a significant contribution to pupils' social and moral development. These lessons require pupils to develop social skills, to share ideas, materials and equipment, to listen sensitively and to contribute confidently. Older pupils consider more complex issues, such as the events of September 11th in America and bereavement. Pupils are given many opportunities to develop the social skills needed when working in groups. For example, in Year 2, pupils discussed the work of the artist Matisse and shared their ideas about how the pictures were created. The school works hard to ensure that pupils learn to consider others and their feelings, and show their understanding through their relationships with all the people they work with and meet in school.

- 38 The provision for cultural development is also very good. Visitors from the local community talk to the pupils about their work. Theatre groups visit the school. Pupils visit a mosque as part of their religious education studies and learn about Islam and Judaism. A potter worked with children in the nursery and a weaver spent the day in school as part of a Greek day. The school has teachers from other countries working in school and this enhances pupils' understanding of different cultures and lifestyles. A range of educational visits is provided to support their work in school. For example, when pupils learn about castles, they visit Framlingham, Bungay or Orford castle. Pupils have opportunities to listen to music of other cultures in assembly. Gamelan enables pupils to play musical instruments from Java and they become aware of cultural issues relating to Java, as they have to play barefooted.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

- 39 The school takes good care of its pupils. New staff are quickly integrated into the school, thus ensuring a continuity of care. The procedures for monitoring pupils' academic performance and personal development are good, and the educational and personal support and guidance to pupils is very good. Child protection procedures are in place and working in practice, although some are not formalised in writing, for example in the staff handbook or in induction material for new teachers. Health and safety procedures are in place and working, apart from a few issues, which have been shared with the school. A risk assessment checklist is used regularly in school but individual risk assessments need to be formalised in more detail. School security is good and parents are happy that their children are safe in school.
- 40 Relationships between staff and pupils are very good. Staff know the pupils and their parents really well and it is obvious that the school cares deeply for the well-being of its pupils; this is reflected in the commitment shown for the school's policy on social inclusion. All pupils are taught within the classroom with their peers and this enables everyone to gain an understanding of the different needs within a group, and is a good preparation for citizenship. The school rules are shared throughout the school, as are the playground rules, and children understand and abide by them. There are a wide range of outdoor play areas, which enhance pupils' play and development.
- 41 The school is well supported by a large group of external agencies to provide a good level of welfare support for pupils. For example, the support for pupils with special educational needs is very good. Staff are quick to identify any difficulties that pupils have and to take action, calling parents in to school to discuss difficulties and decide a mutually beneficial solution. Parents appreciate this level of care, which was seen in practice during the inspection. In-class support is good and especially effective where appropriate training is ongoing. The staff work well together and this partnership enhances learning.
- 42 The monitoring of attendance is good and outside agencies, such as the education welfare officer, are involved to support good attendance and overcome lateness. Parents are encouraged to carry out their role in supporting attendance and are helped to see the detrimental effects of absences on achievement and standards.
- 43 The school monitors and promotes good behaviour well by implementing its behaviour policy effectively across the school. Pupils' academic performance and personal development are monitored well and many steps are taken to identify pupils' individual needs and to give them appropriate support. Children's achievements in and out of school are celebrated. Good use is made of the inclusive reward system in school and children strive to do well. Pupils clearly

enjoy school and it shows in their achievements. Parents are happy with the care that the school gives and it is easy to see why.

- 44 Since the previous inspection, procedures for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress have improved and are now very good. Teachers are now using information from assessments well to plan more challenging activities, which are linked to national standards of attainment. In English and mathematics, assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do are very good, and this information is being used to raise standards. The school uses teachers' assessments, together with standardised and national tests, to check pupils' progress. These are then used to set targets for classes, groups and individuals. The assessment of pupils' progress in most other subjects takes place informally. Co-ordinators have begun to keep portfolios of work, which provide useful evidence of what pupils know and can do.
- 45 The school has very good arrangements to assess pupils' special educational needs. Staff observe carefully what children can do when they start in the nursery. Teachers then use this information to find out which children have difficulties in learning or behaving. Teachers have started to make good use of these tests to plan the right sort of support. For example, children who do not speak often are encouraged gently to repeat words and sentences. The school's very good assessment system also alerts teachers to pupils who will need extra help. For example, teachers regularly test and measure pupils' reading standards against both their age and their previous attainment.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

- 46 Parents' views of the school are very positive. The school has a very good partnership with parents, which has a positive effect on learning and personal development. The school acknowledges the partnership with parents, which is a strength of the school, valuing the help of parents both in and out of school. The grounds have been developed with considerable help from the parents and the improvements are greatly valued by staff and enhance the environment and play opportunities of the children. Parents are provided with good information about the curriculum and given useful information as to their role in children's learning.
- 47 Parents are fully involved in the provision for children with special educational needs. For example, they are invited in at an early stage in the process of identifying difficulties and deciding on ways forward. When pupils are receiving support from the pupil referral unit parents are very closely involved and supported, so that they can continue helping their children when the support is no longer available. The school keeps parents well informed about the progress of pupils with special educational needs. Teachers inform parents immediately there is any cause for concern. The prospectus gives parents clear information on how the school provides for pupils with special educational needs, including higher attaining pupils.
- 48 Parents have positive views about the school. They know that their children like school and feel that they are making good progress. They value the school's policy on social inclusion, which is seen as a positive personal development tool for all pupils. Parents feel that behaviour is good, that the teaching is good, that the school is approachable, and that they are well informed about the progress their children are making. They feel the school is well led and managed and works closely with them.

- 49 A few parent have concerns about the amount of homework given. The school does not have a policy for formal homework setting, but work is set in line with what is required and is well used to support learning, and fully explained to parents in the information sent home. Parents are encouraged to hear their children read at home and parents can help their children change library books at any time. Staff usually have time to help and give guidance as to the sort of books that children are ready for and will enjoy. Some parents feel that the range of extra-curricular activities is limited. The range of extra-curricular activities is similar to what is offered by other schools for pupils of this age, but there are few sporting activities. A few parents were concerned about some inconsistencies in progress made by children in different classes. This has been addressed and the inspection team found all pupils making good progress.
- 50 Information to parents is of a good quality and reflects the high regard that the school has for partnership with parents. The Governors' Annual Report to Parents has some statutory items missing, but otherwise reflects this partnership. There are termly newsletters home, which are informative and friendly, and parents are given good information about the curriculum covered by the children. The children's very good attitudes to school are partly due to the very good relationships between staff and parents.
- 51 Parents are invited in to share school lunches with the children. Parents get the chance to do this once a term, and greatly appreciate the opportunity, as they feel that they then have a better understanding of what their children eat and how they behave! The children also like to share their day with their parents and carers. Parents are involved quickly if staff have concerns about children and they appreciate being involved at an early stage. The inspectors observed several instances during the week where parents were involved in sorting out minor worries so they did not escalate out of control. There is an open door policy in practice that works very well. The school's home/school books are well used and enable parents to feel that they really understand what is going on in school and that their views are valued by staff.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

- 52 At the time of the last inspection the leadership of the school was undergoing major changes. A new headteacher had been appointed, but was not yet in post and a newly appointed deputy was leading the school. At that time, although the deputy was bringing about changes, the inspection team found weaknesses in whole school policies, inconsistencies in teaching and limited vision for the future development of the school. Since then there have been extensive improvements in the leadership and management of the school. The headteacher and key staff now provide excellent leadership, the school is well managed and there is a much more whole school approach evident in its work.
- 53 The headteacher provides the school with clear direction for its work, based on secure educational principles. She has created a strong team of teachers and support staff, who work together and are constantly seeking ways to improve. She has high expectations of everyone, but has provided good quality support to enable staff to take responsibility. Gaining the full support of staff and governors, she leads the school purposefully. She works closely with parents and has secured their confidence, which was reflected in the very positive responses to the inspection questionnaire.

- 54 The senior management team is carefully constructed to provide an overview of the whole school and the individuals work well together, seeking always to improve standards and opportunities for everyone. Each member of the management team, including the headteacher, leads by example in their quality of teaching, support for others and commitment to the school's aims. The role of subject coordinator is well developed and teachers work hard to ensure that standards in and support for their subjects are of the highest quality. Some have been given the opportunity to monitor teaching and learning in the school and they have used this well to evaluate what is going on and how it can be improved. For example, the information and communication coordinator monitored teaching and learning in her subject, and in particular how the new computer suite was being used. This helped her plan for future support and development.
- 55 The school is well managed at a strategic level. Governors are committed to the school and its community. They work hard to ensure that its aims are fulfilled and their statutory responsibilities are met. Between them they have a good knowledge of the work of the school, many of them having daily links with the school. They are clear about strengths and weaknesses and play a positive role in deciding future development. The school has clear and appropriate priorities for development and decides on action to be taken to address weaknesses. All issues from the last inspection have been successfully addressed and this has led to considerable improvements in provision. In particular, there was a focus on raising the achievement of higher attaining pupils. Strategies to address this have been successful and this is reflected in the better achievement of these pupils.
- 56 The school effectively monitors its performance. The headteacher and other staff monitor teaching and learning and take appropriate action to secure improvement. Performance management is well established and teachers have their own objectives set and reviewed regularly. The procedures that the school uses to track individual achievements are being refined and the information from this is proving useful for checking progress towards targets. At the same time all staff and governors are becoming more effectively involved in the target-setting process.
- 57 The ethos of the school is based on a strong commitment to social inclusion. There is an emphasis on equality of opportunity and achievement for all embedded in the aims of the school and apparent in all aspects of its work. Parents recognise the quality of this approach and are very happy that their children have the experience of working alongside others, whatever difficulties they might have. The school is involved with social inclusion projects, both at a local and regional level. Staff and parents work closely with agencies, such as a pupil referral unit, to try to enable all pupils to have access to an appropriate curriculum. Occasionally there can be difficulties, for example the demands some pupils make on teachers, but this does not take away from the very positive approach and the impact it has on all pupils' personal development and achievement.
- 58 The school is well managed on a day-to-day basis. Administration systems are effective and the school runs efficiently. Financial planning is good. Governors play a key role in the overview of the budget and all funds are spent appropriately. When making major spending decisions, the school considers options and looks for best value for money. Other aspects of best value, such as comparison and consultation, are less well developed.
- 59 The leadership and management of the school's arrangements for pupils with special educational needs are very good. In addition, a school governor effectively oversees the school's provision for them. The school uses all its funding for pupils with special educational needs well, almost entirely to provide additional staff for these pupils

- 60 The school is well staffed with suitably qualified teachers and support staff to teach the curriculum fully and effectively. Arrangements for the induction of new staff, training new teachers and appraising the performance of teachers are very good. The school has successfully addressed the issues from the last inspection report concerning improving training and teachers' professional development. Effective systems are now in place to meet both individual teachers' and whole school needs. All these improvements have significantly raised the quality of teaching and learning in the last two years. The school places a clear emphasis on the training and development of all staff and other adults. Support staff are particularly effective in their work when they take part in the training offered to them. The school is an effective provider for initial training of teachers and for overseas teachers achieving qualified status.
- 61 The school invests heavily in support staff to enable teachers to cope with the demands of including all pupils in the school. The school is also helped by a range of parents and other volunteer helpers who offer their services on a regular basis. These adults work very effectively with teachers and make a valuable contribution to the quality of teaching in the school. This is particularly so in the case of the support given to pupils with special educational needs. Whether the support is given within the class or by withdrawal it is of good quality and has a good impact on achievement. However, there is not enough flexibility built into the deployment of other adults and sometimes they are not used in the most efficient way. In some classes the demands made by a few pupils are very high and this can detract from the quality of learning of everyone. This is especially the case in circumstances when teaching groups are large and there is limited support available.
- 62 The accommodation is adequate but there is a considerable lack of storage space, especially in the hall, where musical instruments reduce the space available for physical education lessons and assemblies. The size of the hall itself is very limited for physical education and assemblies. The school is based in four buildings on one site. This inevitably has an impact as far as resources are concerned, especially as the school is split to mix ages to ensure full inclusion. This means that Years 1 and 3 share one building, and Years 2 and 4 share another. Resources therefore are harder to share efficiently.
- 63 The grounds have been imaginatively developed with the help of money and time by parents and offer many different areas for imaginative and varied play. The under-fives do not have a separate grassed area but because of the well-written playground rules which are adhered to by the children, this is not seen as a problem. They have a safe, fenced, hard surface on which to play on their own, with a large supply of outdoor equipment to enjoy imaginative play. The school has worked closely, through the governing body to increase safety outside the school and in the vehicular entrances to the school. Prominently displayed signs saying 'Parking here can endanger a child's life' must make parents think twice before parking too close to the school!
- 64 Resources are adequate for the teaching of the curriculum and are certainly an improvement from the last inspection. In particular the computer suite has made an immense difference to the teaching of information and communication technology. The school library is in a shared room with the computer suite, but is nevertheless used well for pupils' borrowing books and researching topics.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to deal with the effects of including all pupils, the school should take steps to support the good quality of teaching and ensure that all pupils learn effectively in all lessons by:

- more efficiently managing resources, particularly considering the deployment of supporting adults, to ensure all teachers are supported effectively; (*paragraphs 25, 61 and 127*)
- within the limits of the school's resources, ensuring that teaching groups are of a size to enable the needs of all pupils to be met; (*paragraphs 25, 61 and 153*)
- providing all members of staff with training in behaviour management and in supporting pupils' social and emotional difficulties, to ensure that they have sufficient shared strategies to match their high expectations. (*paragraphs 11 and 24*)

The school has clear ideas for further development and, in order to ensure that targets are reached, the headteacher, staff and governors should follow this programme for improvement.

Other issues that should be considered by the school:

- Develop the use of portfolios of assessed work to help teachers know what levels their pupils are working at. (*paragraph 44*)
- Develop a programme for speaking and listening skills through the school. (*paragraph 100*)
- Plan for further financial investment in information and communication technology, to provide for example more effective printing facilities, some technical support, a projector and screen for whole class teaching from a computer. (*paragraph 155*)
- Keep more formal and detailed risk assessments. (*paragraph 39*)
- Prepare a long term building plan to address some of the inadequacies of the accommodation. (*paragraphs 62 and 164*)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

69

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

27

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	21	36	10	1	0	0
Percentage	1.5	30	52	15	1.5	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one percentage point.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	Y1 – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	20	247
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/A	44

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	Y1 – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	1	65

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	7
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	11

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1 (Year 2)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	32	20	52

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	22	28
	Girls	16	19	17
	Total	40	41	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	77 (89)	79 (80)	87 (93)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	28	26
	Girls	17	19	19
	Total	41	47	45
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	79 (80)	90 (93)	87 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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	0
White	210
Any other minority ethnic group	2

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	27
Average class size	25

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	133

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	32.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	13

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	5
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	2
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

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	3	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	2000/2001
	£
Total income	493555
Total expenditure	495845
Expenditure per pupil	1784
Balance brought forward from previous year	18086
Balance carried forward to next year	15796

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	271
Number of questionnaires returned	50

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	44	4	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	62	30	4	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	62	4	2	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	38	20	4	8
The teaching is good.	48	48	0	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	36	6	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	80	20	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	42	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	58	38	4	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	82	16	0	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	42	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	14	40	22	6	18

Other issues raised by parents

- Parents of pupils with special educational needs felt strongly that the school provided well for their children and worked closely with them as parents.
- Parents felt that the social inclusion policy in the school had a positive impact on their own children's attitudes.

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

- 65 At the time of the inspection, 39 children were attending the nursery for half-day sessions, and there were 31 children attending full time in the reception classes. There is a three-term entry into the nursery and children move into reception in the term in which they are five. Assessments take place soon after children start school or nursery, depending on their age. This early assessment means that children with difficulties are quickly identified and given additional help at a very early stage. Teachers keep careful records of children's progress throughout their time in the Foundation Stage and use these very effectively to plan work that matches closely children's individual needs
- 66 When children enter the nursery, their attainment is broadly in line with that expected of children of their age. The teaching in both the nursery and the reception classes is very good and children make good progress.
- 67 Children in the Foundation Stage enjoy coming to school. They quickly feel happy and secure in the stimulating environment that has been created. They soon settle into the routines of the nursery and respond very well to adults and other children. The nursery nurses make a very good contribution to children's learning and children gain maximum benefit from their skilled interaction. The work in the nursery is also well supported by two nursery nurse students and by parents. This enables children to work regularly with an adult in small groups to develop their speaking, listening and social skills. A good display board is provided for parents giving clear information about the focus for their children's learning. Relationships with parents are very good. They are encouraged to come into the nursery when they bring their children to school. The children find their name card and write their name, with help from their parents, as part of the morning routine of registration. Time is given for parents and children to share books before parents leave. Teachers in the Foundation Stage work very closely together. They plan together, share teaching in the reception classes and the routines established in nursery continue very successfully in the reception classes.

Personal, social and emotional development

- 68 Children enter the nursery with satisfactory personal, social and emotional skills but make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage, and most are in line to achieve the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children are keen to be involved in all the activities offered. Their behaviour is very good and they establish good relationships quickly with adults and other children.
- 69 All the children quickly settle into the well-established routines in the nursery and accept simple social rules. The school places much emphasis on caring for each other and children learn this from a very early age. The youngest children quickly learn the strategies used throughout the school to ensure good behaviour. Although many of the children have only been in nursery for three weeks, most can say 'Hello' confidently when their name is called during registration. Relationships with all adults are very good. The calm, quiet approach of the nursery teacher encourages them to respond well by sitting quietly, looking at her and being ready to listen. Many offer their own ideas, while others listen very carefully.

- 70 They develop independence by pouring their own drink and helping themselves to pieces of fruit for their snack. They carry this carefully to a spare place and sit with others to eat. When they made sandwiches for a picnic, they served each other and collected the cups successfully. Children had sufficient confidence to move from a secure circle to an open space and back again during a physical development lesson. They respond very well to instructions, understand the need to take special care in the hall and take turns when using materials in the nursery. The youngest children gained confidence to try painting activities when they watched the older children create moving patterns using thick paint. The older children change independently for their physical development lesson but most still need help to undress and dress.
- 71 This progress is maintained throughout the children's time in reception, where relationships are also very good. Circle time is used well for children to greet each other and, with a handshake, wish each other 'bonjour' or 'good morning.' The children help each other and behave well. They respond quickly to the teacher's requests and they confidently contribute in discussion and offer good suggestions. They considered the feelings of characters in the story 'When Sophie gets angry' and explained that 'she went to the wood because it is quiet and she can't hurt her sister there.' They understood that 'we don't do the same thing back if someone hurts us.'

Communication, language and literacy.

- 72 Children enter the nursery with satisfactory speaking and listening skills and make good progress during their time in the Foundation Stage. This enables most of them to reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Speaking and listening is the main focus in nursery, until children are confident and speak in sentences. All the children who move to reception next term have already achieved this. Opportunities for children to develop speaking and listening skills are plentiful. For example, they described the difference between the tambour and the tambourine by saying that 'one doesn't make a noise when you shake it' and 'one has shiny metal bits.' They developed their language skills well when they described the difference between clay before and after it had been in the kiln.
- 73 In the writing area, children write and make marks using pencils, crayons, chalks and felt-tip pens. This provision is always available. Many of the children form recognisable letters and numbers on paper. Some of the older children write their name correctly, using name cards. Many make a very good attempt, using recognisable letters, but some are still making marks that have little meaning. Many opportunities are provided in the nursery to encourage early reading skills. Children share books with adults every day and can identify the front of the book, and most of them turn the pages from left to right correctly. They describe what is happening in the pictures and can predict what might happen next in the book. The nursery teacher reads books with individual children before they take these home and books are changed weekly.
- 74 In the reception classes the teaching is very good and children make very good progress. The curriculum in reception builds on the children's previous learning in the nursery. Good opportunities are planned to extend children's speaking and listening skills. For example, they had 'talking partners' to share their experiences of travelling on trains. Children felt secure when working in pairs and described clearly what happened when they went on the underground and went shopping to Lowestoft. They talked about it 'being dark when you're in a tunnel'. When they share books together, the youngest children are introduced to the

author and illustrator of the book. This is a good introduction to the more formal literacy lessons they will receive in Year 1.

- 75 They practise writing the letter 't' first in the air following the teacher's demonstration, and then in their writing books. Most pupils are able to achieve a page of recognisable examples, but some children reverse the shape of their letter and find it difficult to keep a consistent size. They take letter sheets home for further practice. Most children write their own name, using a capital letter correctly, though some need name cards and additional support. They practise letter formation regularly and the more able children recognise many of the letter shapes and sounds and can identify these at the beginning of a word. The more able children are using their knowledge of sounds to build up simple words. For example, a child read 'saf' for the word 'safari'. These children know many simple words and both read and write these. All the children are encouraged to give the sound of the letter as well as attempt to write it, but many find it difficult to write a sentence unaided and have difficulty forming recognisable letters. These children are not yet writing simple key words unaided.
- 76 The children discussed imaginary holidays, when they created a postcard to send to their friends. They knew that a postcard has a picture of the place they visit, that they need to write a message about their holiday, and that they have to include the address and a stamp 'because it goes in the post.' Some can write their own simple sentence, using capital letters to start the sentence, while others make a good attempt to do this. All children are encouraged to try their own writing and much of this includes recognisable words.

Mathematical Development

- 77 Children make very good progress in developing their mathematical skills and are in line to reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.
- 78 At the time of the inspection, the youngest children had only been in the nursery for three weeks, but were already counting together the number of children in nursery each morning, with the older children helping with numbers to 18. They are encouraged to add on the one child absent and are beginning to understand 'one more' than a given number. They recognise the shape of a circle, square, rectangle and triangle and identify and match colours. Children compare large and small shapes and one younger child knew 'that they are both yellow as well.' Older children know that a triangle has three sides and three points. They looked at two circles and knew that they were both the same size and colour but, when looking for differences, thought that one was wider than the other. This led to them beginning to understand 'thick' and 'thin' shapes.
- 79 Children matched shapes correctly when colouring, using one colour for each different shape. When threading beads, children understood that round shapes roll, but square ones don't 'because they have got corners and rectangles can't roll either.' Very good provision is made to support their understanding of shape; they match lids to containers and use shapes to create pictures. Information and communication technology is also used well. For example, they selected shapes to match objects on the computer screen.
- 80 Most children in reception can count and order numbers to 10 and count back to zero. They understand 'more than' and 'less than' a given number and can sort by colour and shape. Information and communication technology is used well to reinforce their understanding of shape, such as when they created pictures of wheeled vehicles. The more able children are beginning to write numbers and understand addition, but some children find counting to 5

difficult and confuse numbers with letters. Good opportunities are created for children to be actively involved when they are sorting into sets or groups of objects. For example, girls sat on one side of the carpet while the boys stood opposite. Children knew that one set was girls, the other boys and that one set was sitting, the other standing. They used a practical activity well to sort by shape, colour, size, texture a variety of objects. All the children were actively involved in sorting activities that match their individual needs, and all were able to achieve success. Reception children are beginning to develop an understanding of appropriate language and are beginning to use this when describing how they have sorted their objects. They know what a set is and describe this as 'all the same.'

- 81 The teaching is very good and every opportunity is taken to reinforce children's understanding of number, shape and size. The tasks set match the needs of individual children. They are encouraged to try when they find tasks difficult and are sensitively supported by all adults. They enjoy their learning and show this in the way they talk about their activities to each other.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

- 82 Children's knowledge and understanding of the world develop through a range of activities that encourage them to pay attention and show an interest in what is happening around them. Children make good progress in developing these skills and most are in line to reach the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.
- 83 Children in the nursery have very good opportunities to look at the world around them. For example, they observed old objects, such as clocks and a Braille machine to help them to understand 'now and then.' They were encouraged to match the keys to the correct object to see if they would work. One child looked very carefully at a clock and commented 'I wonder who had this when it was new?' Children went for a walk to look at traffic being controlled by traffic lights. During their walk they looked at street signs, buildings and the pavement. They make good use of information and communication technology to support their learning. The youngest children controlled the mouse successfully to select a shape from the side panel and place it on the same shape in the picture.
- 84 The children learned how to prepare sandwiches for snack time. They knew that meat extract isn't sweet! They looked carefully at the labels on the margarine container and decided that 'it is made from dandelions!' They found it difficult to decide what was in one container, as there are no pictures to show them that it is cheese spread. One child did not want to take part but when she knew that teacher hadn't a sandwich she happily made one for her. As part of this activity they developed an understanding of the importance of clean hands when they work with food and that they have to use knives carefully. Children developed an awareness of the culture of others by listening to the favourite music of a Turkish child in their class, recorded for them by her mother. They looked at changes in materials when they used clay to make pots and bake them in the kiln.
- 85 In the reception classes children learned about wheels, cranks and cogs. They used information and communication technology well to find out more about these and create their own pictures of wheeled vehicles, using colour to fill their shapes and create a background. They knew the different parts of the wheel and understood the words 'rim', 'spoke', 'tyre' and 'spindle'. Children began to understand the differences between trains in the past and trains of today when they compared pictures. They shared their different experiences of travelling by train and reasons why they used the train. The 'Station' role play area provided good opportunities for children to become 'the train driver' or the 'passenger', although this

area is used more by the boys than the girls. Their understanding of the story of Noah's Ark was developed further when they used a model ark and animals to re-enact the story in activity time. This also supported their understanding of 'pairs' in mathematics.

Physical development

- 86 Children make good progress in their physical development and most are in line to attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1.
- 87 In the nursery children are encouraged daily to improve their cutting skills using scissors and their handling skills by using pencils, felt-tip pens and brushes to make marks, patterns and pictures. They develop their fine motor skills well when they practise using the mouse when using the computer. Opportunities to make models using a wide range of construction kits also improve their manipulative skills. Children developed their skills to use knives when they spread margarine, honey and jam on bread to make sandwiches. Some found this difficult and used the edge of the knife to pat the spread onto the bread.
- 88 Children in nursery have only just started to use the hall but moved confidently from a secure circle into their own space in the hall. Whilst sitting in a circle, they wriggled their feet, shoulders, arms and elbows to warm up their bodies. They stretched high and also curled into a low shape. They moved slowly and quickly, responding very well to their teacher's instructions and demonstrations. Good use was made of coloured ribbons to encourage children to move to music using all the available space. They responded with slow and fast movements and made circles using their ribbons. They understood the need to cool the body down after exercise and rested quietly until tapped gently to get dressed. All adults working with the youngest children in the hall are very sensitive to their needs. Very calm, quiet voices are used and children respond by demonstrating excellent behaviour throughout the lesson.
- 89 The reception classes work together in the hall and think carefully about moving in different ways to different kinds of music. They know that they have to warm up at the beginning of the lesson and these exercises link well with their work on wheels. Children move their heads, shoulders and wrists round like a wheel. Most balance on one foot whilst moving the other leg round, and all the children can turn round slowly on the spot. They understand the need to move round the hall carefully so that they 'do not bump or hurt anyone.' As they moved around the hall doing 'train movements' in time to the music, they were encouraged to smile as they met each other. Children know the routines when using the hall and all sit quietly when the music stops. They used their arms well to show the movement of pistons and used space very well. Children demonstrated their movements to others confidently and all responded well to the dreamy music by moving slowly, some moving on the floor in order to cool down their bodies. The sensitive approach observed in the nursery is also being used very well with reception children and this encourages very good teaching and learning to take place.
- 90 There is a secure outdoor play area for the nursery children to use with outdoor storage for large toys. There is a wide range of wheeled toys, large and small tyres, a plastic tunnel and small home space available and children enjoy using these. They take turns, help each other and move around the available space safely. Although there is no designated grass area for them, as identified in the last inspection, there are very appropriate grassed slopes near the slide in the school grounds and these are used well when the weather is suitable. The adventure area is also a popular place that is much enjoyed by all the children in school.

Creative development

- 91 The creative development of most children is good and they are in line to attain the early learning goals by the time they enter Year 1. Children are provided with a good range of materials for them to use to make models. They extend their understanding of shapes by using a wooden construction kit to build houses. They know what the shapes will do. For example, 'we can't use that because it will roll off.' Children remember the feel of wet clay and know that it is soft and you can add water to it. They looked carefully at what has happened when their pots had been in the kiln and described these pots as 'hard, smooth and solid.' They knew that they could not change the shape now because 'you can't move it.'
- 92 Children mix colours to add zigzag, striped or spotted patterns to their pots and relate the patterns well to those on their jumpers. Plenty of opportunities are provided to create pictures and patterns using paint. For example, children ran their toy cars through paint to create track patterns and painted the tyres of their cycles and rode over paper to print a tyre pattern. Adults help children develop their responses. For example, they begin to understand movement in pictures by looking at an artist's impression of a moving train. Children described the movement by saying that 'it's going fast because the colours are blurred.' They then made their own movement patterns using thick paint and moving their fingers through the paint.
- 93 Older children looked at the pattern in an Indian scarf and showed good observational skills when they recreate their version of the pattern. They had very good opportunities to create a collage of a railway carriage, cutting tissue, fabric, mesh ribbon and paper to stick on their picture. They used circular shapes well and stuck half the circle onto the bottom to form wheels. Children mixed paint well when painting a wheel picture and looked closely at the detail of a cycle when using crayons to draw.
- 94 Children have opportunities to play a range of un-tuned musical instruments. They have a good understanding of how the instruments make their sounds. They play them well and respond very well to their teacher's signs showing when to stop and start their playing. They also understand and respond well to loud and soft signs and make appropriate sounds. The teacher checks their understanding of the names of instruments well by asking 'If you have tambourines, will you put them away.' They all put their instruments in the box carefully without them making a sound.
- 95 The quality of teaching and learning in the Foundation Stage is very good. The nursery and reception teachers plan their work together to ensure that children make good progress towards the early learning goals and all children have equal access to all the areas of learning. This planning is detailed and shows clearly the knowledge, understanding and skills young children need to acquire. Teachers have a very sensitive approach to their teaching and children respond very well to the very good teaching they receive. They are enthusiastic, show a willingness to work hard and are keen to please the teacher. They behave very well at all times. They enjoy sharing their work with other adults, talk confidently about it and take pride in what they achieve. The resources for the Foundation Stage are satisfactory and used well to offer all children equal opportunities to make very good progress during their time in nursery and reception.

ENGLISH

- 96 Currently standards in speaking, listening, reading and writing are similar to those in most primary schools both in Year 2 and Year 4. Pupils' sound reading and writing skills therefore give them full access to all the other subjects and are not a barrier to their learning. This is a good improvement since the last inspection when higher attaining pupils were not always reaching the standards they should. However, standards of handwriting and spelling are not yet high enough.
- 97 Pupils' results in last year's national tests for seven-year-olds were low. They were well below those in most primary schools in reading and below in writing. Almost a quarter of pupils did not reach the standards expected for their ages. Girls did better than boys in these tests, following a national pattern. Teachers judged pupils' standards of speech by the end of Year 2 to be much lower than they are in most primary schools.
- 98 There are several reasons why the test results were much lower than present standards. There were an above average number of pupils with special educational needs in the two classes. Pupils' standards had been well below average when they started school. There had been shortcomings in English teaching at the beginning of the infants and a lot of changes of teachers. Now the quality of English teaching is very good, and these pupils are making up lost ground.
- 99 Nearly all pupils in Years 1 and 2 say clearly what they think, feel, see and want to ask. By the age of seven, most pupils use expected ranges of words to enlarge on simple statements. This is because teachers speak very clearly, and carefully encourage all pupils to answer and comment. It is also because pupils are making good progress in reading. However, the main reason is the family atmosphere in much of the work in the lessons. This arises from very good relationships, small class sizes and good levels of support in lessons. Pupils also copy teachers' good examples of speech and expression when they read and discuss stories. Because they are very interested, all pupils learn new words quickly as they listen. For example, in a Year 1 literacy lesson on letter sounds, pupils talked enthusiastically as they worked. Speech developed well because of the teacher's skill in firing pupils' interest and good use of experienced support staff working with small groups of pupils.
- 100 The quality of speaking and listening continues to improve in the older classes, but at a slower rate. This is mainly because the school has not mapped out in detail a plan to develop pupils' speech as they move through the school. Standards remain as expected for pupils' ages in Year 4. They follow accurately teachers' detailed instructions and explanations of new work. In the best lessons, pupils of all abilities also take part thoughtfully in class discussions of new work and ideas, particularly in English, art and religious education. For example, in a Year 4 lesson on writing headlines for children's stories, pupils also made good progress in speech. This was because the teacher expected high standards of listening. She also widened discussion with open questions and got pupils to agree ideas in pairs. Nearly all then composed effective headlines such as: 'Twister Strikes Oz' and 'Cinderella's Magic Wore Away'. Year 4 pupils talk confidently to visitors. For example, a group of Year 4 pupils explained clearly the difference between the Olympic games today, and in the times of the Ancient Greeks.
- 101 Reading standards are as expected for pupils' ages in Year 2. This is because basic reading skills are now well taught, and parents support their children's reading effectively at home. Able pupils read simple stories with enjoyment and understanding by themselves. They also read speech aloud with realistic expression to reflect characters and events in stories. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs in language also read independently.

However, they continue to need help with expression. Other pupils read aloud both accurately and expressively. Nearly all pupils know how to use contents pages and indexes to find facts in books and to skim text for words or information. Higher attaining pupils begin to read back their own writing to check it. Because of weaknesses in letter formation, other pupils often get stuck when they do this. As they know alphabetical order, Year 2 pupils also use simple dictionaries to improve their writing and understanding.

- 102 Reading standards in Year 4 are also as expected for pupils' ages. Nearly all pupils read by themselves for enjoyment both at school and at home. They have appropriate skills in working out both stated and suggested meanings in text. Pupils of all abilities read to learn from books, computer screens and worksheets. Higher attaining pupils show good levels of understanding when they compare and discuss books, characters and authors. Other pupils read stories aloud accurately but slowly. Skills in using libraries and finding information are similar to those found in most schools. For example, pupils know how to use colour codes to find books in the library and to search the Internet for information. All pupils benefit from half an hour of supervised reading each week with a pupil from a different class and age group. Pupils use this opportunity sensibly, and it also makes a real contribution to their social development.
- 103 Writing standards in Year 2 are similar to those in most schools. Higher attaining pupils control complex sentences well and make clear statements in joined writing. For example, a Year 2 pupil wrote a detailed story about a castle in sentences with capital letters and full stops. However, nearly all pupils, including those with special educational needs in language, vary letter shapes and sizes too much. As a result, their work becomes both untidy and hard to read. All pupils also shape their letters much more clearly in their handwriting books than in their exercise books. This is because, although pupils start joined writing in Year 1, they do not practice often enough. Writing rates are satisfactory. Pupils write in the expected range of forms: stories, letters, riddles and descriptions of animals, holidays and a local walk, for example.
- 104 Pupils make steady progress in writing in Years 3 and 4, not least because of very good teaching in most lessons. As a result, standards are now similar to those in most schools by the time pupils leave. Pupils with special educational needs in language benefit from high quality individual support and make good progress. Pupils learn many new techniques, such as persuasion, effectively, because teachers link writing skills to their levels of achievement. As a result, higher attaining pupils use well-chosen words and control a good range of sentences. All pupils begin to match the tone of their writing to its purpose. However, nearly all pupils are capable of neater, better-presented work. There remains a marked contrast between handwriting standards in practice sessions and those in exercise books and files. This is because the school does not always give enough emphasis to presentation. Weaknesses in spelling remain. This is because pupils do not apply spelling skills learnt and tested to their daily writing activities. However, they do make good progress in the planning, drafting and the descriptive power of their writing. For example a Year 3 pupil described an elephant's ear as 'like a flapping fan'. Such good choices of words result from teachers' skilled development of writing skills in literacy lessons.
- 105 The quality of teaching and learning is now very good and makes up well in the juniors for gaps in skills at the end of the infants. There were no unsatisfactory lessons during the inspection. The quality varied between satisfactory and very good. There was very good teaching in nearly two thirds of the lessons. The marked improvement in teaching quality since the last inspection ensures that pupils in both the infants and the juniors do as well as

they can. For example, the school quickly spots both infant and junior pupils who are starting to fall behind in reading and then gives them extra support for several weeks to catch up.

- 106 There are four main reasons for the high quality of the teaching:
- teachers have very good working relationships with the children;
 - teachers are very skilled at matching work to children's achievements;
 - they expect a lot of the children;
 - the school provides very effective support and individual help in literacy.
- 107 For example, in a Year 1 lesson, a group of pupils with special educational needs made very good progress in building words that began with the same consonant. This was because the teacher matched the work to their skills and understanding. She also expected them to finish it. By the end of the lesson, along with the rest of the class, they were suggesting words that shared the same first three consonants. At the end of another Year 1 lesson the teacher saw that a pupil could have done better. She immediately made this clear: "You need to work harder. That's really not enough work for one session." In Year 4 literacy lessons, the school puts two classes into three ability groups. This arrangement reduces group sizes, increases the amount of individual help and enables teachers to match work exactly to each pupil's needs. As a result, pupils work at their best rate and make good progress.
- 108 Teachers have good knowledge of language and children's books. They also assess individual achievement very carefully so as to support each pupil's progress. For example home/school books note each step in the pupil's reading development. These books also give parents detailed guidance on encouraging pupils' reading development. Parents therefore help their children effectively at home and share their observations of progress with the teachers. Teachers also make sure that each pupil's reading book is at the right level and both interesting and challenging. Most basic reading and writing skills are well taught. However, teachers do not always give enough attention to handwriting, spelling and standards of presentation. Very clear planning, sharing of aims, careful preparation and stimulating resources engage pupils' concentration. For example, teachers quickly develop high levels of interest at the beginning of most lessons.
- 109 In the very good lessons, teachers expect and enable pupils to do their best all the time. They also skilfully link work in speech, reading and writing effectively to improve the quality of learning. For example, in a Year 2 lesson on the contents page of a book, the teacher's skilled questioning quickly showed the whole class what it did. Questions such as: 'Are we able to answer his question on this page?' developed all pupils' close reading skills. Pupils then worked hard to write out their own questions with the teacher giving lots of individual attention. The review of learning at the end of the lesson showed that pupils were even more interested than at the beginning.
- 110 Leadership and management of English are very good. Good use of the literacy strategy, very careful planning and effective monitoring of lessons have raised standards in the last two years. Teachers are giving top priority to the present main need: improving writing standards further. The school recognises the need to improve handwriting, spelling and planned opportunities to develop pupils' speaking skills. The school also ensures that by the end of Year 4 pupils leave school properly prepared for the demands of their middle school language work.

MATHEMATICS

- 111 Despite the fact that results in the end Year 2 tests last year were well below those in similar schools, currently standards in mathematics are at least in line with the national average and achievement in good. There has been considerable improvement in planning and teaching in the subject since the last inspection and the school has set itself challenging targets to underline its confidence in achieving higher standards in the future.
- 112 In the tests at the end of Year 2 in 2001 standards were well below the national average and well below those in similar schools. However, there were factors such as a high percentage of pupils with special educational needs that affected these results. Currently pupils in Year 2 are working at levels higher than this and the school is likely to achieve its challenging targets by the end of the year. In Year 4 there is a wide range of attainment levels, but overall most pupils are working at expected levels. This is an improvement from their Year 2 results and is an indication of good achievement.
- 113 Since the last inspection standards have been rising. It was only in the last two years that there was a dip in results. During this same time the percentage of pupils achieving above average levels has risen considerably, as a result of the school's determined focus on the achievement of higher attaining pupils. The school's strong emphasis on the application of mathematics has enabled the higher attaining pupils to achieve very well. Boys and girls achieve similar standards. Pupils with special educational needs achieve well, especially in Year 4 where they are in a small teaching group for mathematics and receive good quality support.
- 114 Year 2 pupils have confident number skills. They use mental recall of addition and subtraction to ten and many have learnt strategies to help them work with higher numbers. For example, they work out change from 20p and halve and double numbers. Work shows that they can apply this knowledge. For example they find the difference between numbers, complete sequences, recognise odd and even numbers and work with sums of money. They have a range of mathematical understanding, such as when telling the time to half an hour or describing a turn clockwise or anti-clockwise.
- 115 By Year 4 pupils have developed a good understanding of numbers to 100 and above. They add and subtract numbers with two digits mentally and using different written methods. Again their level of understanding is good. For example they can estimate the numbers needed to get to a target number before actually carrying out the calculation. They also have a range of mathematical understanding, for example in working with fractions, co-ordinates and angles.
- 116 Achievement is good throughout the school. In carefully planned daily mental sessions, pupils gain skills and confidence in handling number and mental recall of number bonds. The level of mathematical understanding that pupils gain is of particular note. It is as a result of an emphasis on an open-ended, problem-solving approach and has a remarkable impact on achievement. Pupils understand how numbers work and this means that they can think through their own strategies to work out answers. For example, Year 2 pupils noticed patterns in odd and even numbers and were beginning to predict answers. Year 3 pupils began to halve numbers confidently as they estimated where they might appear along a line. Pupils think about what they are doing and explain their thinking. This has had a major impact on raising standards, especially with the higher attaining pupils.
- 117 The quality of teaching in mathematics is consistently good and can be very good or excellent. Teachers have a secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and the skills to teach numeracy. This shows in the quality of the daily mental sessions, which are at their best when

there is a close link between this and subsequent tasks set. For example, in one lesson a Year 2 teacher concentrated on skills in counting back and taking away from 20. Pupils then used these skills as they worked with finding out change from 20p. As a result of such teaching, pupils gain skills and apply them confidently.

- 118 Teachers plan carefully to meet the needs of all the pupils in their classes and they use a range of appropriate methods. In Year 4 pupils are divided into smaller teaching groups according to attainment levels, but teachers still plan for the need of individuals in their groups. The lower attainers benefit from careful explanations and repetition and in this way begin to understand and apply what they have learnt at their own pace. Meanwhile the higher attainers are kept going at a good pace. They are given the opportunity to share their ideas about different strategies to use when solving problems and are given challenging targets to keep them thinking. All pupils work hard and learn effectively.
- 119 Relationships in classes are positive. Pupils feel confident and are willing to try without worrying they might be wrong. This is an important factor in the gaining of confident number skills. For example in a Year 3 lesson the teacher kept the whole class involved in estimating and halving numbers but providing lots of encouragement and praise and very skilfully targeting questions to individuals. In the same lesson an assistant supported some pupils with special educational needs so skilfully alongside the teacher that they were able to work out some of the answers and take part alongside their peers. In such situations pupils enjoy mathematics and apply themselves well.
- 120 A particular strength in the teaching of mathematics is the way in which it is planned across the curriculum. For example, Year 1 pupils worked with 3D shapes as they designed and built castles during a history topic and Year 4 pupils used co-ordinates and directions in a geography topic. Measuring and data handling skills are used regularly in science throughout the school. Since the school has had use of a computer suite, teachers use information and communication technology effectively in different ways to support pupils' mathematics learning. During the inspection Year 2 pupils were using a carefully chosen program to practise finding totals of money. There was a very close link between this and the work they were doing in class, and it was obvious the next day that pupils had gained more confidence in totalling money. Year 4 classes worked on control with a logo program. As they worked they were gaining skills and understanding in the use of angles and directions.
- 121 There has been considerable improvement in the teaching of mathematics since the last inspection. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has ensured more consistency in planning and delivery across the school. Assessment systems have resulted in more precise planning to meet needs. The setting of Year 4 has had a considerable impact on the achievement of the oldest pupils. But it is the strength of the co-ordinator and her emphasis on high expectations and the development of mathematical understanding that has really brought about a change in approach and improved achievements.
- 122 The co-ordinator has a very good level of subject knowledge and understanding and has high expectations of what pupils can achieve. She has been well supported by the management of the school and carries out her role effectively. She monitors and evaluates teaching and learning and has a good understanding of the standards being achieved and how they can be improved. With her leadership and the good quality of teaching throughout the school the school has raised achievement and looks forward to high standards in the future.

SCIENCE

- 123 There has been good improvement in science since the previous inspection. Standards have been maintained, but pupils at the age of seven and nine are achieving well and many more pupils attain the higher level in national tests at the age of seven. The quality of teaching in science is now consistently good and the leadership and management of the subject is better.
- 124 In the national tests in 2001, the standards reached by the majority of seven-year-olds was well below the national average and well below standards achieved by pupils in similar schools. This was against the normal trend in standards that are usually achieved by the school. A combination of factors led to the low results. Over a third of the pupils who took the tests in 2001 had special educational needs, some of them with profound learning and behavioural difficulties. School tests taken when these children first entered school had shown results that were below the county average. Inspection findings indicate that the pupils currently in Year 2 are achieving well and are in line to attain national standards. Pupils in Year 4 are also achieving well, particularly in their ability to undertake scientific investigations and by the time they leave the school will reach the standards found in most schools. Whilst in many classes there are more boys than girls, this does not affect the standards achieved by pupils or mean that girls have fewer opportunities to ask questions in lessons. Teachers monitor this carefully to ensure that all pupils have equal opportunities in their learning experiences.
- 125 The quality of teaching throughout the school is consistently good, and this is a major factor in the good achievement of pupils. Observation of lessons and the scrutiny of work in pupil's books show that a good range of learning opportunities is offered to pupils. One of the main strengths of science teaching is the way pupils are encouraged to ask questions, predict what may happen and then use the skills of investigation to test their predictions. This was seen in all lessons throughout the school and consequently, by the age of seven and nine, pupils are skilled at scientific investigations. Most pupils in Year 3, when they were testing a sample of rocks for erosion knew that a fair test must be carried out to make the results valid. Pupils who have special educational needs are given good support in lessons and develop their ability to talk about what they think may happen. This enables them to be fully included in lessons, even though their ability to record their results in written form is weaker. In Year 4, pupils asked many questions during the initial part of a science lesson and teachers used their good subject knowledge in this lively interaction to extend and develop pupil's existing knowledge.
- 126 Teachers use learning resources well to give first hand learning experiences. Good examples were seen in Year 2, to develop the knowledge of food categories, and in Year 4, when teachers brought their own bicycles into the classroom, so pupils could study how a cyclist uses wheels, brake pads and pedals to apply force and friction to move and stop. This effective use of resources, good subject knowledge and carefully planned activities mean that pupils of all abilities make good progress in lessons. Pupils enjoy their science lessons and this is evident in the way they respond to questions, their attitude to the challenges and tasks given to them and the good behaviour displayed by most pupils.
- 127 Pupils who have special educational needs are given good support during independent or group activities. Teachers plan work matched to their needs to help pupils achieve the targets set for them in individual education plans. Learning support assistants liaise well with teachers and this ensures that no time is lost in lessons and pupils make good progress. However, opportunities are sometimes missed to use the learning support assistants to give help to groups or individuals who present behaviour or attention difficulties during whole-class teaching activities.

- 128 Appropriate links are made with literacy when, for example, pupils are encouraged to use spelling check lists for scientific vocabulary and are required to write the outcomes of investigations using the correct writing format. Numeracy links are made as pupils use graphs, tables and charts in the recording of their work. Sometimes, computers are used as part of the recording process, for example in Year 4, pupils worked with a partner to record the results of a test on insulation. They input data, set the data out correctly, editing where necessary, then print out the results. This is only just developing in some classes however, and more use could be made of computers to support learning throughout the school.
- 129 The leadership and management of the subject are both good. The subject co-ordinator has secure knowledge of the quality of teaching and the standards of work in all year groups. She monitors teaching on a regular basis and analyses the work in pupils' books to get a clear view of strengths and points for development. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. Assessment procedures are also improved and are now very good and used well. For example, the co-ordinator has encouraged staff to assess pupils' work just before the end of a unit of work, so if there have been any gaps in learning or understanding, this can then be put right immediately. This is an effective use of assessment and is one factor in ensuring all teachers know what individual pupils know, understand and can do. The school's focus on improving the quality of teaching, particularly teaching the skills of science investigations and recording, has also been effective and can clearly be seen in the scrutiny of work in books and in work on display throughout the school. Resources are now good and support the school's scheme of work and are used well to support pupils' learning.

ART AND DESIGN

- 130 By the time pupils leave the school, standards in art are above those expected nationally and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Art is taught for one half term each term and alternates with the teaching of design and technology. During the inspection, the younger pupils were learning about techniques to create collages and the work of artists using these techniques. The quality of teaching and learning is good, an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' attitude to their work in art is good. They develop careful observational skills and good understanding of the work of other artists. Pupils work well in groups, such as when working successfully on group collages.
- 131 Pupils in Year 1 collected natural materials from the school grounds to create a collage in the style of the artist, Andy Goldsworthy. They sketched their ideas before choosing leaves, pebbles, straw, twigs and wood shavings to make their collage. The results achieved were very successful and closely matched the original sketches. Pupils have further opportunities for personal development in their art lessons when they share materials, consider the needs of others and help each other.
- 132 In Year 2, pupils studied the works of Henri Matisse and looked carefully at 'the snail' picture. They chose their own creature to represent in their collage. For example, an elephant, snake, otter or tiger. They mixed paint to create similar shades to those used by the artist and cut their painted strips to create their creature. These skills were developed further when they worked in groups to make a larger collage, using both primary colours and their painted strips. Pupils evaluated their work well and knew that when they make a snail, 'the secret is to space the pieces out to make a spiral.' They also identify clearly the things they would change in

their finished work and knew that ‘they would make it more spiral but can’t because it’s stuck.’

- 133 Time is used well to give pupils opportunities to look carefully at a range of pictures by artists and discuss in groups what methods the artists used to achieve the finished picture. They have looked at the work of Giacometti and created textured patterns, using thick paint, in the style of Anthony Frost. Pupils are confident when offering their suggestions in groups and show a good understanding of why an artist chose particular colours for his picture. Opportunities are carefully planned to give pupils experience of a wide range of materials and techniques. These include detailed pencil drawings, using a range of pencils, and patterns using charcoal, oil pastels and wax crayons.
- 134 Although no art lessons were observed in Years 3 and 4 as they were doing design and technology, evidence was collected by analysing work in art folders, work on display and by talking to pupils. Pupils have studied the works of Van Gogh and Picasso and have created portraits, looking carefully at shading, in the style of these artists. They have had plenty of opportunities to observe objects such as fruit, vegetables and fish and their drawings show their ability to look carefully and draw accurately. Their art work is closely linked to learning in history. For example, when studying the ancient Greeks, they painted vases showing the different activities undertaken by the Greeks. As part of a Greek day in school, they made large group collages of the symbols of the gods. A spinner spent the day in school and pupils made their own weaving frames and created their patterns using a variety of wool, tinfoil, ribbon and fabrics. Pupils describe the work they do with confidence and show a good understanding of the processes used. For example, they understand how wax is used to resist paint and that when the finished fabric painting of a fish is ironed, the wax melts and leaves a white pattern behind.
- 135 The subject co-ordinator for art has a very good overview of the work achieved in school. She has opportunities to monitor the planning and observe other teachers teaching the subject. Very good facilities are available for practical work and an experienced support assistant, who works very closely with class teachers, supports pupils very well. Resources are good and good links are made with other subject areas, particularly design and technology, history and information and communication technology.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

- 136 By the time pupils leave the school, standards in design and technology are above those expected nationally and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. Design and technology is taught for one half term each term and alternates with the art. A subject development plan is in place and a subject policy. Photographic evidence is also available. These are all improvements since the last inspection. The quality of teaching and learning is good with some very good teaching seen and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils’ attitude to their work in design and technology is good. Pupils understand the design, make and evaluation process and their understanding is apparent in all the projects they undertake. They use their art skills well to enhance their work in design and technology.
- 137 Pupils in Year 3 designed an invitation card that had to include a simple mechanism. They understood pivots and levers and identified the one they wished to use on their card. They were encouraged to use their own designs, so that all the cards will be different. Good links

were made to their work in information and communication technology when they used the computer for the text. In Year 2, pupils use their work in history on The Battle of Hastings to make castles. Their understanding of shapes in mathematics is used well to help them to create the different parts of the castle. Pupils investigated the shields used in 1066 and designed and made their own shields. They used paint to colour their design. Pupils understood the purpose of the design on the shield and that it shows 'who's on their side.' Older pupils have opportunities to use small hand tools, such as when they made a land yacht, using wood strips for the framework. They understand the need for care when using a glue gun and the importance of the axle being parallel to the chassis because 'it would turn round corners all the time if it wasn't straight.'

- 138 Pupils in Year 4 created their own book based on a multicultural poem. The book included using a slider or lever and pivot mechanism to create a moving picture. They understood both a fixed and moving pivot. Pupils know how the mechanisms work and have had good opportunities to make prototypes prior to working on their book. One pupil commented that 'the second design works better because we have had more practice.' They worked with enthusiasm, created good designs for both their front cover and their mechanism and made these successfully. Pupils were given good opportunities to evaluate their work and share their ideas with others. Both their class teacher and the support assistant support them very well during lessons. Safety issues are addressed clearly when pupils use the paper trimmer and craft knives. All pupils have opportunities to develop their food technology skills. For example, they investigated different breads and baked flavoured bread of their own choice. They made a feast on Greek day with a variety of dishes that included salads, vine leaves and bread with sun-dried tomatoes.
- 139 The co-ordinator for design and technology has a good overview of the work achieved in school. The present scheme is a mixture of the local education authority's suggestions and a nationally agreed scheme but this is to be reviewed this year. Good links are made with other subject areas including art, history, literacy and information and communication technology. Although pupils are making satisfactory and often good progress in this subject, there is a need for teachers to have further training in order to teach design and technology with more confidence.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

- 140 In Year 2 and Year 4, the standards of pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills in both history and geography are as expected for their ages. The school has made a satisfactory improvement in these subjects since the last inspection. Teachers now make good use of topics based on the nationally recognised whole school plans of work, as well as on tried and tested topics of their own. This ensures that pupils cover work that matches learning to their ages. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress.
- 141 The school teaches geography in one term and history in the next. This gives pupils equal experience of the two subjects in a two-year period. However, it also means that learning stops and starts and that one subject gets more emphasis than another each year. For example, pupils may study no geography between April and September. The advantage of this arrangement is that pupils learn more about each topic. The two disadvantages are that they study fewer topics and that skills development takes longer. To bridge these gaps in learning, the school makes effective links between the subjects, particularly through the use of maps,

pictures and photographs, for example in work on Greece and studies of Lowestoft. Teachers also build in good links with other subjects. For example, during the inspection a great deal of the speaking, reading and writing in Year 2 literacy lessons was based on castles. The school also enhances learning by giving pupils direct experiences of these subjects. For example, junior pupils have both Greek and Indian days.

- 142 By the end of Year 4, pupils have the expected standards in map work. They use grid references to find human and physical features on maps. Their understanding of map symbols and keys is as expected for their ages. In site work on Beccles they use large-scale maps to record routes. Pupils of all abilities also investigate and gain understanding of local issues through observation and discussion. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 used brochures, advertisements, maps and aerial photographs to identify buildings and features, and to investigate economic activity in Lowestoft. They compare their own area with the environment of towns and villages they visit. Pupils also understand how climate and weather affect the way of life in countries such as India.
- 143 By the end of Year 4 pupils' knowledge and understanding of history and their skills in finding out about the past are as expected for nine-year-olds. They recall key facts about Ancient Greek civilisations. For example, pupils compared the ancient and modern Olympic games, and the armies of Greeks and Persians in ancient times. They understand how and why the Anglo-Saxons invaded and settled in England. Pupils use historical artefacts such as Greek vases to find information about life in the past. Time lines showed good progress in understanding chronology. Junior pupils learned a lot from their Greek day at school. They experienced some of the crafts and skills that had been practised in ancient Greece. They prepared meals, made weaving frames, medallions and pottery and dressed in costume for a day and had a feast. Their pictures on model vases replaced Greek sporting activities with images of skateboarders.
- 144 During the inspection, the overall quality of teaching and learning was good. The best teaching enables pupils to learn from direct experience. For example, pupils gained understanding of art, design, crafts, culture, diet and family life through their varied activities during the Greek and Indian days. In good lessons teaching often draws on different areas of pupils' experience. For example, in a Year 3 local studies lesson, half an hour of skilled questioning and leadership of discussion on Lowestoft drew out pupils' previous knowledge of the town. As pupils shared their observations, the teacher carefully used this body of local knowledge to show how the geography of the area linked to settlement, industry and tourism. A further strength of the teaching is the school's intelligent use of links with other subjects. For example, the infant classes' understanding of castles steadily broadened through nicely linked work in mathematics, information and communication technology, art, design, and geography.
- 145 Pupils enjoy their learning in these subjects and work busily because teachers engage their interest in these ways. For example, Year 4 pupils continued their enthusiastic reading of Ordnance Survey maps of the Norfolk Broads even when lunchtime had started.
- 146 Leadership and management of the subjects are satisfactory after many changes of co-ordinator. The school acknowledges the need to improve assessment and planning so as to develop pupils' skills more steadily and fully. Teaching and learning make good contributions to pupils' understanding of their heritage and to their cultural awareness.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

- 147 Standards in information and communication technology (ICT) have improved considerably since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress through the school and reach the levels expected in all aspects of the subject. With a huge investment in resources, all pupils now have opportunities on a regular basis to develop their skills. Because of the training teachers have received and the support of a competent and enthusiastic co-ordinator, all teachers are now sufficiently confident about planning and delivering a full curriculum. The school has worked hard and with success to get to this stage, and deserves the credit for such an extent of improvement in a short space of time.
- 148 Pupils achieve standards that are in line with what is expected. Currently standards are better in the younger classes than they are in the older classes, but this is a reflection of limitations in the past. Pupils have not had the chance to develop their skills sufficiently, but they are 'catching up' rapidly. There are strengths in word-processing, graphics work and data handling, but pupils are developing skills in all aspects of the subject.
- 149 Year 2 pupils use ICT to organise and classify information, for example in presenting their findings from a traffic survey. They have secure skills in word processing, using the 'shift key' and changing font styles and sizes confidently. They find out information from a CD ROM to support a topic on castles. Year 4 pupils use ICT to present their work. For example, they choose appropriate font styles, graphics and colours to complement and enhance the presentation of poetry. Most can use instructions to control a device, such as a 'turtle' on a screen, although not many of them are yet sufficiently confident to combine instructions into sequences and so achieve the outcome they want.
- 150 Achievement is good throughout the school. Pupils develop skills and use them to complete tasks given to them. There is sufficient challenge in every lesson to ensure that higher attaining pupils extend their skills. Teachers use different levels within software packages to help lower attaining pupils achieve at an appropriate level. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively included in lessons, their interest being such that they usually stay on task and make good progress, whether they have adult support or not.
- 151 Although the school has concentrated on ensuring that pupils develop basic ICT skills through weekly lessons in the computer suite, teachers are beginning to use other available sessions to use ICT to support learning in other subjects. For example, a Year 2 teacher effectively used software at different levels to help pupils develop skills in totalling amounts of money. This had a direct impact on the level of their skills when they tackled the similar work in their next numeracy lesson. Pupils have used ICT to handle data in mathematics. They have found out information for history topics and have used a modelling program to create plans in geography.
- 152 The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding and they plan with clear learning objectives. As a result, pupils know what they are learning and are keen to complete the tasks given to them. Teachers use the resources well and keep a good pace to lessons. This motivates pupils and they work hard. Pupils work together well and the teachers encourage this, for example by reminding them to take turns. This does work best when there are only two to a computer. On occasions when not all computers are in use owing to technical hitches, the co-operation between three pupils does not work as well.
- 153 There can be weaknesses in the learning, despite the good teaching. Pupils who find it difficult to concentrate can make inordinate demands on the teacher and, when this occurs in a large class or when there is no extra support, the quality of learning for the whole class is

marred. The problem is exacerbated in Year 3, where many pupils are dependent on adults and have not yet got the confidence to solve their own problems. Although teachers have good management skills it can place heavy demands on the teacher. In a very good lesson in Year 4 the teacher deliberately and effectively faced this weakness. She took a problem-solving approach to a control lesson by setting a task of drawing a beach hut with a window and door. This involved pupils in solving their own problems and coming up with solutions. The teacher set high expectations and encouraged and supported individuals. There was a positive impact on learning, as pupils remained interested and worked hard throughout the lesson.

- 154 The co-ordinator for ICT is competent and enthusiastic. She has monitored and supported teaching and learning through the school and is well aware of the standards being achieved. She has worked hard to bring about the improvements and knows what needs to be done in the future. Resources have improved beyond recognition since the last inspection. Funding from the National Grid for Learning enabled the school to purchase computers and the school invested its own money in developing the spacious computer suite, so that class lessons could take place on a regular basis. This is working very well.
- 155 There are a few weaknesses, which the school is aware of, but needs funding to put right. As printing facilities are unreliable, pupils do not always get to see their work printed out. A lack of technical support puts demands on the co-ordinator and individual teachers and means that the available resources are not always used in the most effective manner. Without a screen linked to a computer, teachers find it difficult to demonstrate effectively to a whole class. A small screen is not adequate for this.

MUSIC

- 156 By the time pupils leave the school, standards in music are in line with those expected nationally and all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. There have been changes to the way in which music is taught in school since the last inspection, which have enabled all pupils to have full access to a range of musical opportunities. A new policy and scheme of work are in place, linked to a nationally agreed scheme. The quality of teaching and learning is good, an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils' attitude to their work in music is good. They work hard, listen carefully and enjoy opportunities to be actively involved in music making.
- 157 Pupils in Year 1 learn about rhythm and enjoy copying examples given by the teacher. The examples increase in difficulty and pupils work hard to copy accurately. Pupils have opportunities to clap their own name while others listen carefully to make sure it is correct. Teachers link the work in class well to encourage pupils to practise their skills at home, using titles of television programmes and names of football clubs. Pitch is the focus of Year 2 lessons and pupils identify high, medium and low notes when they are played on chime bars. They use their bodies well to show a high, medium and low position when responding to sounds played. Pupils match correctly a short series of dots, on the whiteboard, placed in different positions to the sounds made on the chime bars. They listen to short extracts of music carefully to identify the instrument and know whether the music is moving in steps or as a slide.
- 158 Older pupils extend their learning by gaining an understanding of pulse and rhythm. They clap a rhythm successfully whilst the teacher claps a steady pulse. Pupils understand what a scale

is in music, and know whether it is ascending or descending. They enjoy using xylophones to play a scale and work well in groups, taking turns to demonstrate their skills. Those who are not playing, sing the scale and all pupils are involved. Pupils in Year 4 clap a four beat phrase with confidence. They explain that ostinato is a 'melody or rhythm that is repeated' and demonstrate this very well when they work in five groups with different word phrases for each group. They perform this as a round, responding well to the teacher's signals to stop and start as required. Pupils are developing a wide range of musical vocabulary and identify instruments correctly when listening to music. They know that when two instruments are playing together, this is a duet. Pupils show understanding of the pentatonic scale and use this, when playing xylophones, to create their own music. They look at different textures, such as smooth, bumpy and spiky and add them to improve their own composition.

- 159 During hymn practice, pupils are encouraged to listen carefully to the music between the lines and verses of the hymns. The very rhythmic piano playing supports their singing well and all pupils sing tunefully and with enthusiasm. They are attentive, enjoy singing and add actions to their hymns. This enjoyment is also seen in their singing in assemblies.
- 160 The co-ordinator for music has only had this post for a short time but has a good understanding and overview of music across the school. The new scheme of work has only been in place since October but it is quickly developing pupils' musical knowledge and understanding. Pupils have a good understanding of rhythm, they are developing good listening skills and have opportunities to work together in groups. However, teachers have not had enough training for them to be confident enough about teaching music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

- 161 Most seven-year-olds and nine-year-olds achieve standards that match the levels expected nationally for their age. The school makes particularly good provision for swimming and pupils' attainment in swimming is good, with over 57 per cent of pupils already achieving their 25-metre certificate by the time they leave the school. Standards in physical education have been maintained since the previous inspection. Throughout the school, pupils show good skills in gymnastics, which is taught well. The progress pupils make in their knowledge, skills and understanding in physical education is consistently sound. Those pupils who have special educational needs make similar progress to all pupils. Pupils enjoy their lessons and show enthusiasm and good attitudes to new challenges. The behaviour of most pupils is good.
- 162 The quality of teaching is satisfactory, with good teaching of gymnastics. This represents a similar picture to that found in the previous inspection. All teachers ensure that pupils receive a broad and balanced physical education curriculum. A very good gymnastics lesson was seen in Year 2, when the teacher set very clear learning objectives, explained these clearly to the pupils and then had high expectations of what her pupils could do. All pupils were able to balance well on different parts of their body, so the teacher then extended the activity by asking pupils to develop how they used their hands whilst moving between balances. Pupils were alert and attentive and responded quickly to the teacher's request, using their hands in more inventive and controlled ways.
- 163 A good gymnastics lesson in Year 4 showed pupils using a good range of apparatus to show a stretched balance, displaying control, flair and flexibility in their balances. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine, the quality of their movement is good, with body control and gymnastic skills developing well. All teachers change into appropriate clothing for lessons

- and this sets a good example to the pupils. Relationships in lessons are good and this ensures that most pupils respond quickly to directions. Teachers show good skills at managing both pupils and activities, so lessons are usually at a good pace.
- 164 In games lessons and some gymnastics lessons, where a range of apparatus is used, the hall accommodation makes teaching more difficult and pupils work in cramped conditions. The hall is small for the large number of pupils in some classes, but this is made worse by the storage of music, television and religious education resources around the perimeter of the hall. This does affect what pupils can do during lessons and a good example of this was seen in two Year 2 lessons, when teachers had to move a piano and many other objects to get enough wall space to teach ball skills. The overall quality of both teaching and learning and the pace of the lesson were therefore not as good as it could have been and this was directly linked to lack of safe space to practise new skills. Pupils with special educational needs are given good support in lessons and this enables them to be fully included in activities. On occasions however, the profound behaviour problems of a few pupils does slow the pace of lessons.
- 165 The leadership and management of the subject are both satisfactory. The subject co-ordinator is new but has already identified priorities for development, in particular new policy guidance for the staff. Currently, there are no procedures in place to assess what pupils know, understand and can do, but the use of video to record lessons is being developed for the school to develop recording and assessment procedures. Resources for the subject are satisfactory. The school does not make provision for extra-curricular sporting activities, but the new subject co-ordinator has plans in place to develop these soon.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

- 166 Since the last inspection there has been a good improvement in quality of provision and standards achieved in religious education. The efforts of the co-ordinator and the introduction of a local scheme of work have ensured that the inconsistencies in teaching apparent before have been securely addressed. Teachers are more confident in the subject, and pupils now make good progress, gaining knowledge and understanding, but most significantly developing a reflective approach to the subject. This is in marked contrast to the previous situation and is more in keeping with the current ethos of the school and the emphasis on pupils' personal development.
- 167 Standards in the subject are in line with the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus. The work of Year 2 pupils shows that they have a good knowledge of different faiths. For example they know about places of worship and festivals of Christian and Islamic faith communities. They are at the same time developing an understanding of experience and belief. For example they have thought about the groups they belong to and what contributions they make to these groups. In a lesson during the inspection they shared their experiences of the natural world, such as the effects of seasonal change, and they asked questions about the world around them.
- 168 The oldest pupils in the school have developed a good understanding of some of the characteristics of faith, such as how Christians learn how to live from the life and stories of Jesus. They are gaining an understanding of the language of belief. In one lesson, pupils talked about the symbolism of colours and discussed possible meanings in a religious context. They then looked at how dress can also have symbolic meaning.
- 169 The quality of teaching is consistently good. Teachers plan well, with clear learning objectives taken from the shared scheme of work. There is challenge for higher attaining pupils in the

open-ended questions and the opportunities for discussion. Lower attaining pupils and pupils with special educational needs are given time to respond and to take part in class discussions. They are also well supported by the imaginative use of recording sheets, which means they are not held back by weak recording skills. For example, all Year 2 pupils were able to complete phrases such as 'I am good at ...' as they learnt to value themselves and what they could do.

- 170 Secure subject knowledge and understanding show in the ways in which teachers effectively approach quite complex ideas. The Year 2 teacher encouraged pupils to explore their responses to the natural world by asking 'why?' A Year 4 teacher made very good use of resources as she presented items of clothing for pupils to examine and ask the question: 'What information does this give about the owner?' In both cases pupils responded very well and showed interest and curiosity as they tackled the task given to them. They made visible gains in understanding. In both cases also the teacher encouraged pupils to work together, which they did very effectively, sharing their ideas and responses.
- 171 Occasionally, despite good teaching, the learning is not as good as it could be as a few pupils, especially in the larger classes, find it difficult to concentrate and take part in the lesson appropriately and the level of discussion is curtailed as a result.
- 172 The co-ordinator provides effective leadership. She has good knowledge and understanding and enthusiasm for the subject. Through the introduction of a local scheme of work, which gives teachers very good support for their planning, she has ensured that there is continuity through the school. She has also secured an approach to the subject that emphasises practical activity, response, reflection and discussion. This has had a positive impact on pupils' learning, their level of understanding, and their personal development.