

INSPECTION REPORT

BRAMPTON CE VC PRIMARY SCHOOL

Brampton, Beccles

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124724

Headteacher: Mr A Thomas

Reporting inspector: Mrs Barbara Crane
21227

Dates of inspection: 21 – 23 May 2001

Inspection number: 193379

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: First school
School category: Voluntary controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 - 9
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Southwold Road
Brampton
Beccles
Suffolk

Postcode: NR34 8DW
Telephone number: 01502 575287
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Appropriate authority: Governing body
Name of chair of governors: Mrs Susan Slatter

Date of previous inspection: 10 December 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21227	Mrs Barbara Crane	Registered inspector	English, Science, Art and design, Geography, History, Religious education, Equal opportunities Foundation Stage.	The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19692	Mr Robert Folks	Lay inspector		How well does the school work in partnership with parents? How well does the school care for its pupils?
29989	Mrs Pauline Goodsell	Team inspector	Mathematics, Design and technology, Information and communication technology, Music, Physical education, Special educational needs.	Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How good are the curriculum and other learning opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school serves a rural area and is much smaller than most schools. It has 57 pupils who come from the village of Brampton and the surrounding villages. About a fifth of the school's population changes each year, as families move in and out of the area. All of the pupils are from white families and have English as their first language. Twelve per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is lower than average. Nine per cent of the pupils are on the school's register of special educational needs and one pupil has a Statement of Special Educational Need. There are two classes, one for children in the infants and the other with junior pupils aged up to nine years. There are two class teachers and the headteacher. The pupils' attainment covers a broad range when they start at the school but it is average, overall. At the time of the inspection, due to the headteacher's long-term absence, the infant teacher had been appointed acting headteacher and continued to teach her class. The acting headteacher is being supported by an experienced headteacher for part of the week. A supply teacher taught the groups usually taught by the headteacher during the inspection week.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school in which the pupils receive a good quality education. Their work reaches a good standard because of the good quality teaching. The pupils achieve well and enjoy school. The acting headteacher is providing a sound lead for the school but it has previously lacked direction and planning for improvement. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils' work in reading and mathematics reaches a very good standard.
- Standards in science and religious education are good.
- The pupils have very good attitudes to their work and their behaviour is good.
- The teaching is good.
- The teachers know the pupils well and plan work to meet the needs of all abilities.
- There is good provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral and social development.
- The parents express strong support for the school's work and are involved in their children's learning.

What could be improved

- The girls could make a better contribution to discussions in all classes.
- The pupils have too few opportunities to use computers because the teachers do not plan to use them in lessons.
- The junior pupils' handwriting and the presentation of work could be better.
- The roles of the staff and governors in checking the school's provision could be more effective.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress, overall, towards the key issues from the last report in 1996. Standards and teaching have improved. The quality of information made available to parents about the curriculum and their own child's progress has improved and parents are more closely involved in their children's learning. Resources for reading have improved. The class teachers have improved their assessment of pupils' work and planning for lessons. The teachers, however, have been left to do too much for themselves and have not always benefited from a clear lead from the headteacher and governors through the school's planning for improvement. The school has made

unsatisfactory progress in developing the work of the headteacher and governing body in checking the quality of the curriculum.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

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

A small number of pupils take the tests each year and this means that there is considerable variation in the school's results. Taking the school's results over the last three years together, the pupils' performance has been above, or close to, the national average. A larger number than usual, twelve pupils, took the tests in 2000 and the results show that their performance in reading and writing was below the national average and was not as good as the results in similar schools, with reading being particularly low. The mathematics results were much better, being in the top five per cent of all schools and similar schools. The school accounts for the better results in mathematics by the separate teaching of the Year 2 pupils for this subject. As a result of the infant teacher's good analysis of the results in 2000, adaptations to the curriculum and teaching have led to higher standards by the end of the infants.

On the basis of the work seen during the inspection, standards by the end of the infants and by the age of nine are very good in reading and mathematics and good in science and religious education. Overall, the pupils of all abilities are achieving well but girls' skills in speaking are not as well developed as the boys. Standards in writing are good at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 but the pupils' good progress in handwriting is not always maintained in the older class; their work is often untidy and they make some careless mistakes. The children in the Reception year make good progress and are likely to reach the goals expected of them in each of the areas of learning by the time they start Year 1. In all other subjects, standards are in line with the expectations for the pupils' ages and they make satisfactory progress. The pupils could do better in information and communication technology and there is some slower progress in using computers because the pupils use these too infrequently. The pupils reach good standards in swimming.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. The pupils enjoy school and take full advantage of what is on offer. They show a lively interest in lessons and are eager to please the teachers.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. They play well together on the playground and although their play is boisterous it is not aggressive. There have been no exclusions.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. The pupils use their initiative and willingly take on responsibility. They organise the play equipment at playtimes and help with many other daily routines.

Attendance	Good. Attendance is above the national average.
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The pupils respond very well to the teachers' praise and encouragement and they work hard to improve. The pupils are polite and show a good sense of self-discipline. The pupils get on well together and older pupils happily help the younger ones. The pupils are punctual and keen to come to school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	Aged 7-9 years
Lessons seen overall	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.

All of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better and in 77 per cent of the lessons the teaching was good. It was very good in 15 per cent of the lessons. The teachers know the pupils well and plan interesting lessons and so the pupils are eager to learn. The teachers' firm control ensures that the atmosphere in the classrooms is conducive to learning. The teaching of the Reception pupils is good and the classroom assistants are well briefed to support the children's learning.

The teaching of mathematics is very good and the skills of numeracy are taught very well. Teaching in English has some good features in both classes. The basic skills in literacy are taught thoroughly and the infant teacher has high expectations of the pupils' handwriting and the presentation of work. This is not carried through to the junior class and so the pupils' progress in handwriting is not as good and their work is often untidy and carelessly presented. The teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to think, express their ideas and pose problems for themselves. They plan well for pupils of different abilities. There are times, however, when teachers allow boys to dominate discussions or interrupt girls who are answering questions or offering ideas. As a result, the girls do not contribute as readily and their skills in speaking are not as well developed as those of the boys. The teachers have a good knowledge of most of the subjects that they teach but they lack confidence in using computers. They often have to learn specific skills so that they can teach these to the class. This lack of expertise leads to the computers not being used as frequently as they could be because the teachers are not always sure of how computers can support the pupils' learning.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. There is an appropriate emphasis on literacy and numeracy and the pupils have good opportunities to explore their ideas, investigate why things happen and solve problems. There are too few opportunities for the pupils to use computers.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. The teachers look carefully at what the pupils need and plan appropriate work to support them. As a result, the pupils make good progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	There is very good provision for the pupils' spiritual development and good guidance for their moral development. The pupils' social development is assured by the opportunities that they have to work together. Cultural development is satisfactory.

How well the school cares for its pupils	The teachers know the pupils well and demonstrate a good level of care for them on a day-to-day basis.
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The school has a very good partnership with parents and there is a high level of communication between the teachers and parents, through the daily use of home-school diaries. The parents give good support for their children's work at home and school.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership provided by the acting headteacher is sound and the school now has a clear sense of direction. However, the teachers have previously had too little support for developing the curriculum and planning for improvement. Too much has been left to the discretion of individual teachers.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors have had a limited understanding of their roles and responsibilities and so have not always provided a check on the quality of the school's provision, procedures or planning for improvement. They do not publish all the necessary information in their annual report to parents.
The school's evaluation of its performance	This has recently improved. There have previously been few checks on the school's provision or analysis of the pupils' performance across the school. The new planning for school improvement identifies appropriate priorities and the school is well placed to move forward.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory overall, but the school has had, until recently, no long term planning through which its priorities are costed or supported by financial planning. The school's investment in computers has not been used efficiently. The school has not always sought the best value it could in using its resources.

The impact of the past weaknesses in the school's leadership on standards has been limited because of the good quality teaching in both classes and the teachers have worked hard to support improvements. The school's leadership is now ensuring that it is on the right track and is using the analysis of what works well and what needs to improve to support appropriate planning for improvement. The school's staffing, accommodation and resources are satisfactory and there is a swimming pool that is well used to support the pupils' learning.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school and behaviour is good. • The teaching is good and the staff are approachable. • The children work hard and are expected to achieve their best. • The parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. • The school works closely with them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A small number of parents feel that the provision of homework, the liaison with parents and extra-curricular activities could be better. • A small number of parents feel that the school is not well led and managed.

The inspection evidence supports all of the parents' positive views but not their concerns about homework, liaison with parents or extra-curricular activities. The leadership and management of the school have had weaknesses that have led to a lack of support for the teachers in their efforts to bring about improvement.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. There is a wide range of attainment evident when the children enter the school, but overall, it is average. By the time they reach the end of the Reception year, most children are likely to reach the goals expected for their age in all of the areas of learning. The children of all abilities achieve well because the work is planned to meet their individual needs.

2. A small number of pupils take the tests at the end of Year 2 and the results have varied over recent years and dipped sharply in reading and writing in 2000. However, taking the last three years together, standards have remained above the national average for reading, writing and mathematics.

3. The results of the 2000 tests for seven year olds show that:

- the pupils' performance in reading was below the national average and well below that in similar schools;
- the results in writing were below the national average and also below those in similar schools;
- the pupils' performance in mathematics was in the top five per cent of schools nationally and also in the top five per cent of similar schools.

4. The pupils' markedly better results in mathematics (with over half of the pupils gaining a level higher than expected for their age) were due, in part, to the Year 2 pupils being taken out of Key Stage 1 class and taught by the headteacher. They did not benefit from this extra provision in literacy and very few achieved better than the expected level in reading and none in writing. The teachers' assessments in science for 2000 show standards that were well below the national average, with no pupils reaching the higher level. The careful analysis of the test results by the infant class teacher has led to improvements in planning and teaching and the standards seen now in reading, writing and science are better than last year, with a higher proportion than is normally seen working at a level that is higher than expected.

5. Pupils of all abilities make good progress, overall, in most aspects of their work because the teachers know them well and plan work that meets their needs. The pupils with special educational needs are well supported. The more able pupils are set challenging work, regardless of their age, and so they learn at a rapid rate.

6. On the basis of the work seen now, standards are very good in reading and mathematics, both at the end of Year 2 and by the time the pupils leave the school. Pupils of all abilities achieve very well in these aspects and a higher proportion of pupils than is usually found are working at a higher level than expected for their ages. The pupils read confidently, with a very good level of understanding and interest. They are keen to read and find information efficiently. They read with good expression. Standards in writing are good at the end of the infants and Year 4. The pupils adapt the style of their writing when they create reports, stories and letters and they use a good vocabulary. By the end of Year 2, the pupils' writing is neatly formed and joined. This good progress in handwriting in the infant class is not maintained in the junior class, with some pupils who have learned to join letters reverting to printing. The junior pupils' work is often untidy and they sometimes make careless mistakes in spelling words. The pupils' skills in listening are good. They listen carefully to the teachers and each other and take account of what others say before

they offer their own contributions to discussions. The boys' speaking is good. They make a lively contribution and express themselves clearly, often using extended sentences to expand on their ideas. The girls' speaking skills, while often good in small group work, is often at a lower level in whole class discussions because they have too few opportunities to contribute. This is because the boys are more forceful and are often allowed to dominate discussions.

7. By the time they are seven the pupils are quick and accurate with numbers. They have a very good understanding of how the value of a digit changes according to its position in a number. The pupils count in 2s, 5s and 10s, and have a basic understanding of division. They identify odd and even numbers and can double 2 digit numbers. All the pupils are able to make correct coin combinations up to the value of £1.00. The more able pupils work out money problems using addition, subtraction and multiplication up to the value of £5.00 and use decimal notation correctly. By the time they leave the school, the pupils use all four operations very confidently and they check their answers using calculators. The pupils calculate quickly and accurately and can explain different ways of arriving at the answer using different methods. They have a good knowledge of the multiplication tables and know that division is the reverse of multiplication. They work with equivalent fractions; measure angles accurately and know how to find the perimeter of a regular shape. They find and justify probabilities in simple situations such as throwing dice.

8. The pupils' ability to generate ideas and communicate using scientific language is good by the end of Year 2. They decide how to record their work and draw tables or charts. They make sensible predictions, based on what they already know. Their scientific knowledge is good and they enjoy being scientists and show a real pleasure in finding out for themselves. The emphasis on investigative and experimental work continues in Years 3 and 4. The pupils test materials to find which is waterproof, which substances dissolve in water and which magnets are the strongest. The pupils have a good understanding of how to make a test fair and that scientific ideas are based on observing evidence and drawing conclusions. They decide how to conduct investigations and some more able pupils suggest ways in which they could improve the process of the investigation if it was repeated.

9. Standards in religious education are good. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, the pupils have a good knowledge of Christianity and Judaism. They understand that different religions have different beliefs but that there are similarities and explore how rules, customs and rituals affect people's daily lives. The pupils show a good ability to think deeply about important issues and consider difficult questions.

10. Standards in swimming are good because of the access to the swimming pool in the summer months. Standards in all other subjects are similar to those expected at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and the pupils' work with computers is broadly in line with what is expected for their age, but they do not use computers often enough and the teachers lack expertise and confidence.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. The pupils have very positive attitudes and they enjoy coming to school. They show a keen interest in learning and their attendance is good. The children in the Reception year are secure and confident with the daily routines and settle quickly to work. The pupils in both classes find the lessons interesting and respond very positively to the teachers' praise and encouragement. They concentrate well in lessons and listen carefully to questions and instructions.

12. The pupils' behaviour is good, both in lessons and on the playground. They show a good sense of self-discipline and understand why rules are necessary. On the playground,

the pupils' play is often boisterous but it is not aggressive. Boys and girls play happily together, as do pupils of all ages. The youngest pupils play undisturbed in the sand tray at playtimes. At the end of the school day, the pupils understand the need to be sensible and patient as those pupils who go by bus leave first. They respond very well to the teachers' high expectations of them as they wait for the bus to leave. The parents have positive views about the good standards of behaviour, and about the clear effect this has on the pupils' learning. There have been no exclusions.

13. The pupils' personal development is very good. They willingly take on responsibilities that involve them in helping in the school's routines. For example the pupils get out and put away all the equipment for playtimes. At lunchtime the pupils clear away their own chairs and help to tidy the dining room. They frequently help to set out the resources for lessons in the afternoon. The pupils are friendly, helpful and polite to adults in the school and to visitors. There are very good relationships between the pupils and the adults who work in the school. The pupils use their initiative in deciding how they will set work out or how they will gather information. They organise team games at lunchtime on the school field that involve pupils of all ages, and show a good sense of fair play. The pupils show an awareness of environmental concerns such as issues of conservation and they support charities on a regular basis.

14. Pupils with special educational needs are encouraged to take part in school activities and are fully included. They have good relationships with the adults who support them and are confident to volunteer answers to questions.

15. Attendance is above the national average and there is little unauthorised absence. There is no evidence of lateness and punctuality is good.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The quality of teaching is good in both classes. Teaching has improved since the last inspection. All of the lessons seen were satisfactory or better. In 77 per cent of the lessons the teaching was good or better and it was very good in 15 per cent.

17. The teachers know the pupils well and give them good encouragement and so the pupils are keen to please them. They plan interesting lessons and so the pupils are eager to learn. The teachers' firm control and their sensitive support for individual needs ensures that atmosphere in the classrooms is conducive to learning.

18. The teaching of the Reception pupils is good and so they quickly settle into the daily routines and enjoy taking part in the activities. The work for these young children is well planned to cater for their social and emotional, as well as their intellectual needs. The classroom assistant is well briefed to support the children's learning and extends their language through good questioning in group work.

19. Teaching in English has some good features in both classes. The basic skills in literacy are taught thoroughly. The teachers' assessment of the pupils' progress in reading is very good and they use the information gained to point out ways in which the pupils can improve. They plan plenty of opportunities for the pupils to write in other subjects and research information in books. Homework in reading and spelling is well planned to support the pupils' learning. The infant teacher has high expectations of the pupils' handwriting and the presentation of work. This is not carried through to the junior class and so the pupils' progress in handwriting is not as good and their work is often untidy and carelessly presented. The teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to think, express their ideas and pose problems for themselves. There are some occasions, however, when teachers allow boys to dominate discussions or interrupt girls who are answering questions

or offering ideas. As a result, the girls do not contribute as readily and their skills in speaking are not as well developed as those of the boys.

20. The teaching of mathematics is very good and the skills of numeracy are taught very well. The teachers ensure that the pupils know what they are to learn and they have high expectations of the pupils' work rate, concentration and ability to explain their answers when solving problems. The teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject and they use appropriate vocabulary and questions to extend the pupils' understanding of the topics. The pupils make very good progress in learning new numeracy skills and in gaining mathematical understanding because of the lively teaching and challenging work.

21. Teaching in science is good because the pupils are encouraged to organise and plan investigations and decide how to record their findings. The teachers have a good knowledge of most of the subjects that they teach but they lack confidence in using computers. They often have to learn specific skills so that they can teach these to the class. This lack of expertise leads to the computers not being used as frequently as they could be because the teachers are not always sure of how computers can support the pupils' learning when they plan lessons.

22. The teachers' planning for pupils with special educational needs is good. The work is matched to pupils' needs and identifies the small steps needed for them to make good progress. The work is carried out with good liaison between the class teachers and the special educational needs teacher and classroom assistants. The teachers and classroom assistants manage the pupils with special educational needs well and this supports a good standard of behaviour. They effectively use a range of teaching methods to enable the pupils to make good progress especially in basic literacy and numeracy skills.

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

23. The curriculum is good. It is broad and balanced, and includes good provision for the pupils' personal, social and health education. All statutory requirements are met. In both classes the teachers give a high priority to developing the pupils' literacy and numeracy skills. They plan very well for the mixed age classes and pupils of different abilities. The teachers use the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies effectively in planning work and this is having a good impact on the progress of the pupils. The children in the Reception year have work that appropriately reflects the areas of learning for the Foundation Stage and the teacher ensures that there is a good balance of direct teaching of skills and opportunities for the children to find out for themselves. The teachers plan the curriculum so that the pupils use the skills and knowledge that they have learned in one subject effectively when they approach work in other subjects. For example, the Year 3 and 4 pupils used their knowledge from geography lessons about the source of a river, to work out what the term 'source' of evidence meant in history. The pupils have good opportunities to use and extend their skills in literacy and numeracy when they work in geography, art, history and science. The school makes good use of the local and wider community to support the pupils' learning in history and geography. Local residents provide information through talking to the pupils and providing photographs. As a result, the pupils have a good understanding of how the village of Brampton and people's daily lives have changed over time. There are good links with the local church.

24. The teachers have worked hard to ensure that the curriculum is interesting, relevant and adapted to meet the needs of different abilities, however, they have too often been left to their own devices in planning the curriculum and so there are weaknesses. The teachers lack confidence in using computers and because of the school's lack of planning for improvement and support for information and communication technology the pupils do not use computers to support their learning as often as they could. The headteacher is not

presently available to teach the older pupils design and technology and the learning opportunities in this area of the curriculum are currently limited as there is little planning to support the teaching.

25. There is good support for pupils with special educational needs, and the teachers plan well to meet their needs. Their individual education plans are reviewed each term and targets set, these are clearly identified and set out in small steps to enable good progress to be made. The class teachers and learning support assistants and special educational needs teacher work well together to ensure that the pupils have full access to the curriculum.

26. A key issue from the last inspection was to improve the storage and display of books, so that the pupils have improved access to them and more opportunities for independent reading in the classroom. This has been thoroughly addressed and this contributes to the high standards in reading. For example in an art and design lesson, the older pupils made very good use of reference books to research stories and designs to enable them to depict myths and legends on their Greek vases.

27. The school makes good provision for the pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral and social development and there is sound provision for their cultural development. The school's provision is firmly rooted in a Christian ethos. In assemblies and lessons, the pupils are given the opportunity to experience music by listening to pieces in different styles. Assemblies are led by a good variety of people, with carefully planned themes and the pupils take turns in leading the school prayer. The pupils have many occasions to experience excitement and wonder in the natural world, for example, they watch with fascination a dragonfly hovering over the pond. They talk about how the willow tunnel living sculpture has changed and show amazement at the contrast between walking through the bare sticks and the willow in leaf. Throughout the school, in literature, music and art, the pupils are given opportunities to explore feelings and emotions and relate these to their own lives. In a religious education lesson, the older pupils are able to develop and express their feelings about the natural world and use words such as *incredible*, *magnificent*, *delicate* or *upsetting* with confidence.

28. The pupils are taught about right and wrong and why rules are necessary. The school has a clear discipline policy and rules and encourages the pupils to consider others. All of the pupils are expected to work hard and play well together. The adults who work in the school expect the pupils to be polite, sensible and hardworking and because the adults value the pupils' contributions to the life of the school, a working atmosphere is created in which effective learning can take place. However on some occasions the boys are allowed dominate discussions, and question and answer sessions. As a result, the girls have fewer opportunities to develop self-confidence in their speaking and listening skills, and in their ability to explain their ideas. There is plenty of opportunity for the pupils to take part in tasks to help with the smooth running of the school such as organising the play equipment, and in helping teachers to organise resources for lessons. The pupils have opportunities to support a variety of charities and to give consideration to environmental and conservation issues. All of these activities make a positive contribution to the personal development of the pupils.

29. The pupils' cultural awareness is developed through a range of activities such as visitors to the school from their own local community and from further away. Lessons in literature, art, geography and history as well as celebrations of major religious festivals help to raise the pupils' cultural awareness. The pupils study Judaism, and learn about the celebrations in which Jewish families participate. The school makes good use of the immediate area as a resource for the pupils' learning for example, visiting the Parish Church. Good use is made of holidays that pupils take in other countries, such as Nigeria, to extend the pupils' knowledge of other parts of the world. The pupils' understanding of

their own community and its cultural heritage is well fostered, but there is limited planning to ensure that the pupils explore and understand the multicultural aspects of life in Britain.

30. There is a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities offered to the pupils including sports, the opportunity to learn to play the recorder and take part in educational visits such as the visit to the Anglo-Saxon village as part of a history topic. The pupils' learning is enriched and enhanced by visitors to the school. These include local clergy, friends of the school, and governors. On occasions, the school is visited by musicians and by artists such as the willow sculptor. These opportunities provide learning experiences that contribute to the very good personal development of pupils as individuals and members of the community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

31. The school has satisfactory arrangements for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of its pupils. This is a caring school and it looks after its pupils well. These findings are similar to the last inspection.

32. Class teachers provide the main daily support for the pupils but this is well supplemented by all of the staff who work the school. They know the pupils very well and good support is provided for individual needs, including outside specialists when appropriate.

33. Procedures for promoting and monitoring attendance are effective and registers are well kept. There is good liaison with the Education Welfare Officer. There are clear guidelines for behaviour that are implemented consistently by all staff. The pupils learn in a warm and supportive atmosphere because the relationships in the school are very good and they are able to play happily together because of the teachers' high expectations of behaviour.

34. Health and safety issues are addressed responsibly and regular inspections of the school premises and grounds are made. Inspections of portable electrical equipment and fire equipment are made regularly and the adventure playground has recently been checked and is in very good condition. There is one fully qualified first-aider and all other staff have had some training.

35. The school's procedures for assessing the pupils' progress have improved and the teachers use the information gained very effectively to plan the work for pupils of different abilities. The teachers keep detailed records of the pupils' personal development and use these very effectively when they write reports for the parents. These annual reports on the pupils' progress give good information about pupils' abilities and achievements but do not consistently highlight areas of weakness for improvement, to link to the individual targets set for the pupils.

36. The pupils with special educational needs receive effective support. There are arrangements in place to make occasional use of support from external special educational needs staff and other agencies. All statutory requirements with regard to special educational needs are carried out.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

37. The parents express strong support for the school and the efforts that the teachers make to maintain a high level of communication between home and school. The parents feel that they are able to take a full part in their children's education and the extent to which this happens is illustrated by the well-used home/school books which have an almost daily

dialogue in them about curricular, medical and social matters. Parents make a very considerable contribution to the school and the education of their children. Their involvement with the school is very good and they are kept satisfactorily informed about events in the school and their children's progress. Parents make a considerable contribution to their children's learning at home as the school has very effective links with them and gives good guidance on how to help. The parents feel that the school achieves good standards and works hard to involve them in its daily life.

38. The parents are very supportive of the school and many parents and ex-parents play an active role in helping in the school, either in classrooms or improving the facilities. There is no formal parent teacher association but parents are fully involved in the organisation of school events and fund-raising activities and the up-keep of the school. For example, during the holidays, one of the parents cleared out the school pond

39. The quality of information for parents has strengths and weaknesses. The school prospectus is a comprehensive and helpful document but the governors' annual report to parents is very brief and does not include all of the information that it should. The reports that teachers write on pupils are appreciated by the parents as a thorough record of what their children do during the year but do not always identify areas for improvement. The school was criticised in the last report for offering too few opportunities for the parents to learn about their children's progress. This has been addressed and parents now have an opportunity to meet their child's teacher each term.

40. The school works well in partnership with the parents of pupils with special educational needs. They are invited to the regular reviews of the progress their children are making and are kept informed as to the targets set for their children. The parents are offered suggestions about support that can be given at home to extend the work being done in school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

41. The school has made satisfactory progress since the previous inspection and standards and teaching have improved. The assessment of the pupils' progress is now thorough and the information used well to plan work for pupils of all abilities. The school's resources for reading have improved, as has the way in which the school involves parents in their children's learning. Other weaknesses are still present: the headteacher's and governors' role in monitoring teaching and learning has seen little improvement.

42. Due to the headteacher's extended absence, the infant teacher took on the responsibility as acting headteacher in the term before the inspection. The local authority has provided a mentor for the acting headteacher for part of each week to support her in analysing the school's strengths and weaknesses and drawing up an appropriate plan for school improvement. The mentor was not present during the inspection but it is evident that her support for the acting headteacher has been very effective.

43. The acting headteacher is providing a sound direction for the school under challenging circumstances. She has worked hard to maintain a stable learning environment for the pupils whilst taking the school forward in its evaluation of its work. The school's planning for improvement is now based on a careful analysis of the strengths and weaknesses identified through monitoring its performance. The right priorities have been identified and the ways in which the school will work towards the targets it has set are planned appropriately. Through consulting with staff and reviewing their needs, the acting headteacher has working steadily to improve provision. For example, discussions with the mid-day supervisors have led to clear guidelines that have improved their understanding of their role at lunchtime and better guidance for both them and the pupils on what is expected.

44. The school has lacked appropriate leadership and guidance in the recent past and too much has been left to the teachers to decide for themselves. This has placed a heavy burden on the teachers, as they have had to plan the curriculum for their key stage and implement national initiatives such as Curriculum 2000 with very little guidance. The teachers have done this well and the good quality teaching in both classes has sustained the pupils' overall good progress and the good standards they achieve. There has, however, been no delegation of responsibilities for areas of the curriculum or monitoring of teachers' planning across the school and so the shortcomings in information communication technology have not been identified or addressed until recently. The national strategies for literacy and numeracy have been implemented thoroughly, with appropriate training for all staff. However, the teachers lack confidence in using computers but have had no training to improve their expertise and so the computers are under used and the pupils' progress is slower than it could be. There has been no effective monitoring of teaching, learning or the curriculum to identify what is working well or what needs to improve, although this was an issue from the previous inspection report. The teachers have had no training in performance management.

45. The school has not had a comprehensive school development plan for some time and the reports that the governing body has received from the headteacher have given very little indication of the school's performance. The governors have neither received, nor asked, for the information necessary to support the school's work or to check on its provision. They have the best interests of the pupils at heart but are at an early stage of understanding the school's strengths and weaknesses, or offering support for the school's planning for improvement. The recent auditor's report was critical of the school's governance and some of the financial management procedures. The school has not had a clear scheme of delegation to show the responsibilities of the governing body and headteacher in controlling the school's budget and other financial and administrative procedures. The school has acted swiftly to attempt to remedy the shortcomings and has made a good start in defining its roles and responsibilities. The governors show a steady determination to improve their understanding and effectiveness.

46. The acting headteacher is the school's special educational needs co-ordinator. She has had no in-service training for the role or release time in which to check the effectiveness of the provision for the pupils with special educational needs but she has, nevertheless, managed the school's provision effectively. The recent school development plan identifies the need to consider the implementation of the new special educational needs Code of Practice and includes plans for in-service training to support this work. However, because the teachers know the pupils very well and are adept at planning work to meet individual needs they provide well for pupils with special educational needs. The governor with particular responsibility for special educational needs has a sound overview of the school's provision.

47. The school's accommodation, resources and staffing are satisfactory. The teachers have a good understanding of the needs of the different ages of pupils that they teach and the classroom assistants are well deployed to support the pupils' learning. The grounds are extensive and the provision of the pool supports good standards in swimming.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The school should now:

- **Improve the standard of girls' speaking by ensuring that they have better opportunities to contribute to discussions and answer questions.**
(Paragraphs 6, 19, 55, 58.)
- **Improve the planning for the pupils to use computers to support their learning by:**
 - raising the teachers' confidence and expertise in information and communication technology;
 - ensuring that the teachers plan more opportunities to use computers in lessons;
(Paragraphs 10, 21, 24, 83, 86.)
- **Improve the standards of pupils' handwriting and the presentation of work in the Year 3 and 4 class by raising the teacher's expectations of what the pupils can do based on their previous attainment.**
(Paragraphs 6, 19, 55, 57.)
- **Improve the quality of support for teaching and learning and the school's understanding of its strengths and weaknesses by:**
 - ensuring that the roles of the headteacher and governors in checking on the school's provision and managing the school's resources are clearly defined and understood;
 - ensuring that responsibilities for checking the quality of teaching and learning and the curriculum are defined.
(Paragraphs 24, 41, 44, 45, 83, 86.)

In addition to the issues raised above, the governors should also consider the following points when drawing up their action plan:

- including all of the statutory information in the governors' annual report to parents;
(Paragraph 39.)
- improving the school's planning for the pupils' cultural development so that it provides more experience of cultures other than their own.
(Paragraphs 29, 73, 98.)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	13
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	15%	63%	23%	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	57
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	7
Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	5
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	6
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.4
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2000	5	7	12

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	12	11	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (80)	92 (80)	100 (93)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	*	*	*
	Girls	*	*	*
	Total	10	12	12
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	83 (80)	100 (93)	100 (93)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

* As the numbers of boys and girls taking the tests was less than ten, the results are omitted.

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	44
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19:1
Average class size	27

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	42

Financial information

Financial year	1999/2000
	£
Total income	138691
Total expenditure	133577
Expenditure per pupil	2740
Balance brought forward from previous year	5500
Balance carried forward to next year	9894

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	54
Number of questionnaires returned	21

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	62	33	5	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	71	29	0	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	48	47	0	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	33	52	10	0	5
The teaching is good.	76	24	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	66	29	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	76	24	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	62	28	10	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	62	24	10	0	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	57	28	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	29	19	9	14

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

48. The Reception children are taught in the infant class alongside the Year 1 and Year 2 pupils. The activities are carefully planned to take account of the children's developing social and emotional needs and the classroom assistant provides good support. The children's attainment when they enter the school varies greatly, but it is average overall. Children of all abilities are well catered for in the teacher's planning and receive good support to enable them to make good progress. By the time they start Year 1, most of the children are likely to reach the expected goals for their age in each of the areas of learning and some will go beyond these to start on infant work. At the time of the inspection, there were six children under five in the class.

Personal, social and emotional development

49. The teaching is good. The good routines and clear expectations of behaviour ensure that the children settle quickly in a calm and supportive environment. They are confident in approaching adults for help and understand what they have to do because they are given clear instructions. The children have good opportunities to work together and to share their ideas and they do so happily. In one lesson, for example, where the children were making models for a classroom, a boy and girl worked together to make small parts for models that they combined in the final pieces. The children develop a good degree of independence in organising their work and making decisions over what to use, as when they choose the materials for making collages or models.

Communication, language and literacy

50. The good teaching ensures that the children make a quick start with reading. The children quickly learn the sounds of letters and how to guess at unknown words by looking at the sense of the whole sentence. The teacher hears the children read frequently and makes good assessments of their progress and what they need to do to improve. The daily communication between home and school in the children's diaries ensures that the parents are fully involved and give appropriate support at home. The children are keen to read and enjoy keeping their reading folders well organised. The teaching of early writing skills is thorough and the children learn to spell familiar word. They form letters correctly when they write and have appropriate aids to help their spelling. All of the children can write their names and are keen to put down their ideas. Most children speak clearly and offer their opinions readily.

Mathematical development

51. The children make good progress because of the emphasis on practical activities that promote their understanding of shape and number. Most of the children count accurately up to twenty and all recognise shapes such as a square, circle and triangle. Two boys were discussing how many sides a circle has in one lesson and decided that it had either no sides or 'one that went all the way round.' The teacher uses a good mathematical vocabulary and so the children can explain what they are doing. They use terms such as longer and shorter and bigger and smaller when comparing objects. Most can take one away from numbers under twenty in their heads and know how many to add to three to make five. The teaching in this area of learning is effective because of the good opportunities that the children have to talk about how they work things out.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

52. The children make good progress in learning about why things happen, how things are made and observing changes because of the good range of activities that are planned. The teaching is good and both the teacher and classroom assistant extend the children's understanding by careful questions and prompts when they work with a group. The children use magnifying glasses to look closely at buttercups and daisies and explain how the petals of the daisies have pink edges and the buttercup petals are shiny. They know that when they knead dough to make bread, they are putting air into the mixture. When they look at photographs of children at school in the past, they identify the differences in clothes and classroom furniture. The children make a variety of models from junk material and paint them, as well as using construction kits.

Physical development

53. The children have a good range of opportunities to develop their physical skills because of the teacher's thorough planning. The children's skills in cutting and sticking are average, but some struggle to cut along a line. They hold pencils correctly and apply paint carefully. When they work with plasticine, to make models of a classroom, they roll and pinch the material to create the desired shapes. No lessons in physical education were observed, but the teacher plans appropriate opportunities to develop their skills.

Creative development

54. The children make drawings from observing objects and paint pictures from their imagination. They work with clay and create collages using a range of different materials. One girl said that she was disappointed with her painting on a clay tile because the colours had mixed together as she applied them and if she did it again she would use only one colour 'so that it would stand out'. The teacher plans appropriate opportunities for the children to act as different characters in the play house and to create conversations when they play with small scale figures and animals. The children know a good range of rhymes and songs and sing tunefully.

ENGLISH

55. Standards have improved since the previous inspection. A small number of pupils take the tests at the end of Year 2 each year and results have been very variable. Taking the last three years' results together, however, standards have been above average. There was a dip in 2000, when the results were below the national average in reading and writing and well below the average for schools in similar circumstances. The evidence of the inspection supports the view of very good standards in reading by the ages of seven and nine. Standards in writing are good by the end of the infants and Year 4, but standards in handwriting drop in the junior class due to the teacher's lower expectations of the pupils' handwriting and the care with which they present their work. Standards in listening are good for both boys and girls but the boys speaking is better than the girls because they have more opportunities to express their ideas. Too often, the girls are interrupted by the boys and take a limited part in discussions; this leads to reticence to speak on the girls' part and they are often passive in class discussions.

56. The teachers' assessment of the pupils' progress in reading is thorough and is well used to guide the pupils as to what they need to do to improve. The teachers hear the pupils read frequently and organise very good links with the parents to support the pupils at home, through the home-school diary. By the time they reach the end of Year 2, the pupils are fluent and accurate readers and show a good understanding of what they read. They use good expression when they read and predict what might happen in a story on the basis of what they know so far. They enjoy the humour of stories and poems. One more able Year 2 girl was eager to find out what was going to happen in her book, as the plot had taken an unexpected twist. The pupils show a good understanding of how characters are

developed through the author's use of language. The junior pupils are very keen readers and enjoy challenging books that make them think. One boy in Year 4 explained the different parts of his book as 'the Iliad is about the people of Troy and the Trojan Horse and the Odyssey is about Paris trying to get back to Ithaca, but he is delayed along the way by monsters and different people'. Another Year 4 girl, who had enjoyed all of the Harry Potter books, expressed the view that the film of one of the books was likely to be disappointing because it would not match her imagination. The pupils locate information quickly from reference books and use their reading skills to support learning in, for example, history and science.

57. The pupils' writing reaches a good standard by the end of Year 2 and they can adapt their style of writing competently to suit different purposes, such as writing letters or information booklets, by the end of Year 4. Year 2 pupils write quickly and accurately. They take pride in presenting their work neatly and spelling is good, even in first attempts. They edit text to improve it and can turn information into a report that they write with a good structure. By the time the pupils leave the school, they write confidently and at length. The more able pupils use paragraphs and talk about how to improve their writing by including similes, adverbs and connectives. The most able pupils' writing reaches a standard that would normally be expected by the end of the juniors. They are given challenging work and have to make decisions over how to best organise their writing so that it fits its purpose. The good progress in handwriting in Years 1 and 2, however, is not maintained in Years 3 and 4 and some of the pupils who have learned to join their writing no longer do so. The presentation of work is often untidy and the pupils make careless mistakes in spelling that are quickly corrected when they read through what they have written.

58. The teaching is good. The teachers are confident in using the structure of the literacy hour and their good subject knowledge supports their planning for the different ages in the classes. They deploy classroom assistants effectively and give intensive support to groups and individuals so that all pupils make good progress. The literacy lessons are interesting and lively and so the pupils learn at a good rate. The teachers encourage the pupils to express their ideas and think about how they can use language in their writing to create effects and grasp the reader's attention. The teachers provide a good model for the pupils when they read aloud and so the pupils use good expression when they read. The teachers introduce a good vocabulary and check that the pupils can spell new words. In one lesson, for example, the teacher reminded the pupils that a particular word had been in the list to be learned in the previous week and expected them to know it. Too often, however, the teachers allow boys to answer the questions in class discussions and the girls' response is sought less. In group work, the girls make an equal contribution to discussions. The teachers give good support to pupils who have special educational needs and the classroom assistants are well briefed to support the pupils' learning. The work for the part of the lesson when pupils work on their own or in groups is well planned to meet the needs of different abilities. The teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to use and extend their skills in reading and writing in history, geography, science and religious education.

59. The infant teacher has looked at the results of the end of key stage tests and drawn out points for improvement in teaching and learning. These have helped to improve the standards achieved by the Year 2 pupils, particularly in writing. There is no-one, however, who takes direct responsibility for the subject, checks the teachers' planning or has an overview of standards or provision but the teachers work closely together to bring about improvements.

MATHEMATICS

60. The results of the tests for 7 year olds in 2000 show that standards are very high in mathematics both in comparison to all schools and to similar schools. Inspection evidence

shows that the pupils' attainment is well above average by the age of seven and by the time the pupils leave the school. This is an improvement since the previous inspection when standards were in line with national expectations. Although standards at the end of the infants have varied over recent years they have remained consistently above those seen nationally. The pupils enter the school with a broadly average level of attainment and they make very good progress. There is little significant variation between the achievement of boys and girls although over time the boys perform better than the girls do.

61. Throughout the school, the pupils enjoy their mathematics lessons. They work well independently and in small groups. The pupils are given good opportunities use skills of estimation, which they do with confidence, and to solve problems using a variety of numerical operations. The pupils can explain how and why they have reached an answer and they are often able to suggest alternative ways of working out. The boys confidently offer answers to questions but the girls, on occasion, lack confidence in giving explanations about the strategies they have used to solve problems.

62. By the time they are seven the pupils have a very good understanding of place value, they can count in 2s, 5s and 10s, and have a basic understanding of division. They identify odd and even numbers and can double 2 digit numbers. All the pupils are able to make correct coin combinations up to the value of £1.00. The most able pupils work out money problems using addition, subtraction and multiplication up to the value of £5.00 and use decimal notation correctly. They can describe the properties of three-dimensional shapes and find the lines of symmetry in two-dimensional shapes. They learn to tell the time using $\frac{1}{2}$ and $\frac{1}{4}$ past the hour on both digital and analogue clock faces. The pupils can use tally charts to construct block-graphs and pictograms and they can interpret and answer questions about the data they have collected.

63. In Years 3 and 4 the pupils use the mathematics they know to work out problems involving money, capacity and weight. By the time they leave the school, the pupils record calculations using all four operations and they can check their answers using calculators. They have a good knowledge of the multiplication tables and know that division is the reverse of multiplication. The pupils can recognise and extend number sequences using their knowledge of times tables. They work with equivalent fractions, and can find halves of two digit numbers. They measure angles accurately and they know how to find the perimeter of a regular shape. They find and justify probabilities in simple situations such as throwing dice. They can use the computer to draw a block graph to illustrate the results of a survey to show favourite drinks and they can use a symbol to represent a number of objects.

64. The quality of teaching is very good. The teachers ensure that the pupils know what they are to learn and they have high expectations of the pupils' ability to use intellectual effort, to concentrate and explain their answers when solving problems. The teachers have a very good knowledge of the subject and how to teach the basic skills and they use appropriate vocabulary and questions to extend the pupils' understanding of the topics. They ensure a good pace to the lessons, and the pupils make very good progress in learning new numeracy skills and in gaining mathematical understanding because of the lively teaching and challenging work. However, the presentation of the pupils' work, especially in the older class is untidy and the pupils show little pride in their written work. On occasions, particularly in the mental and oral part of the lesson, the boys dominate the session and the effectiveness of the learning opportunities for the girls is then lessened. The teachers plan good opportunities to use mathematics in science, where a range of measures and measurements are used, but in information technology, programs are used too infrequently to support data handling and directional and positional work.

65. The teachers very successfully use the National Numeracy Strategy to support their planning and they match the work well to all of the pupils' needs. The teachers organise the work very well for the mixed age classes and include the pupils with special educational needs in their planning. The Year 2 pupils are taught separately from their class for the

numeracy session and this contributes to the very good progress that they make. The teachers regularly assess the pupils' progress and set new targets for them. There is now an overall tracking system to show individual progress as the pupils move through the school and parents are well involved in their children's learning through the home-school books and by the regular parents' evenings. Mathematics is given a high profile in the school and in all the classes there are interesting displays to support the teaching and learning. There is a good range of resources for teaching and learning mathematics although insufficient use is made of the computers to support some areas of the subject.

SCIENCE

66. The teachers' assessments of the Year 2 pupils in 2000 indicate that while all of the pupils reached the expected level, none reached the higher level. The evidence from the work that the pupils are doing now indicates that pupils of all abilities are achieving well and standards are good, both in Year 2 and Year 4. The better standards achieved by the Year 2 pupils are as a result of the infant teacher's analysis of the curriculum and identification of the need to improve investigative work.

67. The pupils' ability to generate ideas and communicate using scientific language is good by the end of Year 2. The more able pupils have a firm grasp of how to devise a fair test and can explain why it is necessary to observe results carefully and note what happens. The teachers expect the pupils to use their initiative in deciding how to record their work and draw tables or charts. The pupils are very confident and make sensible predictions, based on what they already know. For example, a Year 2 pupil predicted, in a lesson in which the class was devising a test for conditions for growth, that a plant 'will curl up and die in a few days, because a plant needs water to grow'. The pupils name the parts of a plant and the functions of the different parts. Their understanding of plants and animals interdependence with habitats is good. The pupils enjoy being scientists and show a real pleasure in finding out for themselves.

68. The emphasis on investigative and experimental work continues in Years 3 and 4 and the pupils' knowledge of the different aspects of science is good. The pupils test materials to find which is waterproof, which substances dissolve in water and which magnets are the strongest. In talking to the pupils about their work on magnetism and friction, it was evident that they had a good understanding of what they had learned from devising experiments. They have a good understanding of how to make a test fair and that scientific ideas are based on looking at evidence and drawing conclusions. The pupils often decide, in groups, how best to proceed with testing and how to record their work. They set out what they feel is a suitable method to gather evidence to support a hypothesis, select equipment and draw conclusions from what they observe. Some more able pupils suggest ways in which they could improve the process of the investigation if it was repeated.

69. The teaching is good and is supported by a good knowledge of the subject. The teachers' enthusiasm is transmitted to the pupils. The pupils are given good opportunities to use their initiative and try out their ideas. As a result they develop confidence and refine their ideas. The teachers' planning builds effectively on what has been learned previously. In a lesson with the infant pupils, for example, the teacher insisted on the pupils using scientific terms and her good questions prompted the pupils to think about what might happen, based on what they had learned the previous week about how plants grow. The teachers plan good opportunities for the pupils to work together and discuss ways in which investigations can be carried out and what resources will be needed.

70. There is no subject manager and consequently, no-one checks the quality of teaching and learning or the standards achieved across the school, but the teachers work closely together and so the pupils' good progress has been maintained.

ART AND DESIGN

71. The pupils' work reaches a broadly average standard by the end of Year 2 and Year 4 and the pupils make satisfactory progress. This is similar to the last inspection.

72. By the end of Year 2, the pupils work in an appropriate range of media and show sound control of, for example, paint and clay. They make detailed observational drawings and match the colours that they use to those that they observe in plants and flowers. In one lesson observed, the infant pupils made clay plaques from smoothing the material over a mould and used these to print patterns. They have previously made prints using polystyrene tiles and used their experience of printing with this medium to good effect when laying the tile on the paper and applying pressure. Their drawings from photographs of the old school building show some good attention to detail. In another lesson, the Year 4 pupils researched motifs from Ancient Greek vases to create their own designs. They understood how the artists had tried to represent movement in the positioning of the figures and how the contrasting colours added to the dramatic effect. The pupils evaluated their work at the end of the lesson and suggested ways in which they could improve it.

73. Teaching is satisfactory, and the pupils enjoy learning about different types of art, although too few opportunities are planned to learn about art from different cultures. The teachers make very good use of classroom assistants and volunteer helpers to assist in lessons. The teachers' good demonstrations of techniques ensure that the pupils understand what they have to do and that they learn the basic skills. The teachers encourage the pupils to choose the materials that they use, as when Year 1 and 2 pupils created collages of plants and flowers and superimposed stitching and beads on the finished design. A local willow weaver has worked in the school to create a willow tunnel to mark the millennium and the pupils are fascinated to see the form of the tunnel change as it comes into leaf. There is no co-ordinator for the subject and the teachers are very much left to their own devices. They ensure a reasonable provision and good attitude to the subject on the part of the pupils because of their enthusiasm.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

74. By the end of the infants and by the time the pupils leave the school their attainment is in line with national expectations and they make satisfactory progress. The previous inspection report judged that Year 3 and 4 pupils attained standards above national expectations but this no longer the case. As no one in the school is responsible for design and technology, there have been no checks on the provision of this area of the curriculum or on standards of teaching and learning. The headteacher is not available to teach the older pupils, as previously, and there is little planning to support the teacher's work and so slower progress has been made this term.

75. The younger pupils mark, cut and join card and paper to make clown puppets, with folded paper to make the limbs move. They build structures using junk material and wooden blocks and they construct models using recyclable materials. The Year 2 pupils use a good range of joining techniques and materials such as tape, paper clips, treasury tags and glue. They construct giraffes with moving necks and make simple string puppets. Throughout the infants, the pupils take part in cookery and food technology activities such as making biscuits and Christmas cakes. The Year 3 and 4 pupils design and make musical instruments using straws of different lengths and yogurt pot telephones as part of their science topic on sound. Their art lessons often have features of design technology as when they construct clay pots from moulds, and plan and evaluate their designs for Greek vases. The pupils talk knowledgeably about their work about their work and can evaluate the standard and use of the finished articles.

76. No lessons of design and technology were seen during the inspection. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with the teachers and the pupils. Work in design and technology is frequently linked to topics being studied in other curriculum areas; this has positive impact on the pupils' understanding of the usefulness of the techniques they are taught. However, there is no overall plan to ensure that the pupils' skills are built and developed systematically from year to year and no-one has been given the overall responsibility for planning the curriculum.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

77. Only two history lessons were observed as no geography was being taught at the time of the inspection. Judgements on standards in geography are based on the pupils' previous work, discussions with pupils and the scrutiny of the teachers' planning. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, the pupils' work reaches the standard expected for their ages in both subjects and the pupils are making satisfactory progress. This is similar to the picture at the last inspection for history. Standards in geography, at the last inspection, were judged to be above average; however, the school now devotes less time to geography because of its increased emphasis on literacy and numeracy and this accounts for the more average standards attained.

78. The Year 2 pupils look at the differences between living on a small island and living in Brampton. They identify different physical features of the two areas and explain that a boat or a helicopter would be necessary to get to the mainland if they lived on the island. The Year 1 and 2 pupils have created a large scale map of Brampton, and marked on it the village's main features. They decide which features of their locality they like, such as the woods, and which they would change, such as the mud on the roads. The Year 2 pupils explain that Beccles is a town and is 'about as big as five or six villages' and has a factory, more traffic and a supermarket. They can find the villages where they live on an Ordnance Survey map and find significant features such as the railway line. In studying the history of the local area, the pupils have a firm understanding of how Brampton has changed over time. They know that Brampton used to have a shop and that the original school is now a house. From listening to a local resident they have gained an insight into how life in the village has changed. In the lesson on how schools have changed since the 1930s and the 1960s, they identify differences in children's clothes and school furniture. One pupil was amused to discover that boys in 1960 wore long socks and short trousers but that boys now wear the opposite. A group of Year 2 pupils who were asked to decide how we know about the past decided that the most reliable ways were: talking to grandparents, looking at photographs and reading books.

79. By the time they leave the school, the Year 4 pupils have a good geographical vocabulary for describing the course of a river, such as meander, tributary and estuary. They study the River Waveney and know that water is pumped out of the river and treated so that it is suitable for drinking. They know that the river starts at Lopham and Redgrave Fen and that it enters the sea at Great Yarmouth. They study the physical features and climate of Kenya and compare the work, shopping and food and transport of people in Brampton, Naro Moru and Nairobi.

80. The teachers' planning for geography ensures that the pupils build upon what they already know and all relevant aspects of the curriculum are covered. There were some good features to the teaching that was seen in history. The teachers use a good range of resources to capture the pupils' interest and provide good opportunities for the pupils to find out information for themselves from books and artifacts. In the lesson with the Year 3 and 4 pupils, the teacher's skilful questioning led to the pupils deepening their understanding of sources of evidence and how reliable these are. In the lesson with the infant pupils, the teacher's support for a more able group of Year 2 pupils led to them identifying changes in schools from the 1930s to the 1960s to the current day. The pupils

were intrigued to discover that boys and girls did different work in craft lessons in the past and when the teacher asked them if this would be unacceptable now, a lively discussion on equality of opportunity ensued.

81. The school makes good use of the local area and villagers with knowledge of local history to support the pupils' learning.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

82. No lessons in information and communication technology were observed, during the inspection, nor were any computers seen in use in any other lesson. Judgements are made from: discussions with teachers, a scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' planning and demonstrations by pupils of what they are able to do using computers.

83. The picture of standards is similar to the previous inspection. The standard of work in information and communication technology at the end of Year 2 and Year 4 is broadly in line with national expectations and the pupils make satisfactory progress but the computers are under-used to support the pupils' learning. The teachers lack confidence in teaching parts of the information and communication technology curriculum and so the use of computers in lessons is erratic and is not fully integrated into the teachers' planning. There has been no guidance for teachers on what should be taught in each year group to make sure that pupils build on what they have learned before. The school recognises that this as an area for development and has begun to plan for improvements through the recently established school development plan.

84. By the time they are seven, the pupils have appropriate word processing skills and use the mouse to point to insert text and to change the font and size of the print. They learn to use the shift key for capitals and the enter key to move to the next line. They use the keyboard with confidence and can delete and correct work and are able to save and print out their work independently. In Year 2 the pupils use a floor turtle and learn about the need to enter the correct data in sequence to achieve a sequence of movements. The pupils can access information programs and use the index to find an entry. They can load and open programs such as a musical composition program and know how to use the features. When showing their work to a member of the inspection team they concentrated well, persevered with enthusiasm and enjoyed using the computers. The pupils in the infants are taught how find an illustration and add it to text but this work is not much extended in Years 3 and 4.

85. Year 3 and 4 pupils continue to use word processing to record their work, for example, in writing stories to make class books. They have opportunities to collect information and present it as a block graph and to enter information into a program to investigate ways of sorting data. However, their ability to turn questions into appropriate search criteria is limited. They are able to research information for history topics from CD-ROMs and by accessing the Internet. They have learnt to email by sending messages to each other at home. The pupils know how to use music software to create a musical composition. Although the Year 4 pupils can measure angles accurately in their mathematics lessons they have had no opportunities to model this work using a screen turtle or to extend work done in Year 2 using a floor turtle.

86. The teachers have worked hard to improve their knowledge and skills in information and communication technology but there has been no plan in place to enable them to be trained in the use of the new computers and software. When the teachers want to teach a topic, such as emailing for example, they have to first learn the skills themselves. In the infants, the teacher has used a commercial plan to identify clear learning objectives and activities to carry these out. However, the planning for the older pupils, although it includes an outline of the national guidelines does not identify how these will be taught to the pupils.

No-one in the school has been responsible for developing or checking on the planning for information and communication technology and there have been no checks on standards or teaching and learning. As a result of these shortcomings, the school has not yet achieved its aim to make information technology part of the pupils' everyday experience in lessons.

MUSIC

87. The standards of attainment by the end of the infants and Year 4 are in line with those expected nationally. This is a similar picture to that at the time of the last inspection. No music lessons were observed during this inspection and judgements are based on discussions with teachers and pupils, a scrutiny of teachers' planning and the music and singing heard in assemblies and around the school. The pupils, including those with special educational needs are provided with a range of experiences that enable them to make satisfactory progress in music.

88. By the end of Key Stage 1, and by the time they leave the school the pupils have learned to sing songs with the correct tempo, they enjoy singing and all join in enthusiastically with the hymns in assembly. They know the names of a variety of instruments and play a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments. They handle the instruments well and treat them with care and respect. The pupils can sustain rhythms and keep to a beat whilst listening, and playing. Using music software, the pupils have opportunities to compose music, and they are beginning to use and understand simple notation. The pupils are provided with opportunities to listen to a variety of musical styles both in lessons and in assemblies.

89. The teachers' planning shows that all aspects of the National Curriculum programmes of study are covered. They make good use of taped music to support singing in assemblies and broadcast music programmes for music lessons that cover these requirements. One of the teachers extends the pupils' musical opportunities by offering recorder tuition out of lesson time. There is a range of percussion instruments available, but there are limited opportunities for the pupils to explore musical instruments and traditions other than those of western culture. The pupils take part in musical performances for festivals such as Christmas and the musical curriculum makes a satisfactory contribution to the pupils' spiritual, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

90. During the inspection no lessons of physical education were seen. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with the teachers and the pupils. By the time they leave the school the pupils have achieved standards in line with national expectations and have made good progress in physical education. This is a similar picture to that found at the time of the previous inspection. All of the pupils, including those with special educational needs have equal opportunities to take part in activities. The pupils are able to talk confidently about the work they cover in lessons; they are often pleased with their performances and achievements for example in making up team games.

91. The pupils were observed at lunchtimes playing cricket and football, they can kick and hit the ball and throw and catch with accuracy. They demonstrate good running and skipping skills. Many of the activities were being carried out in small groups and teams that the pupils had organised for themselves. In addition, the pupils were observed in free activities on the adventure playground equipment. They showed that they are able confidently climb, step from log to log and turn somersaults using the rings and tyres.

92. The teachers' planning includes aspects of gymnastics, dance, and swimming together with outdoor education activities using the adventure playground and school field. As the previous report commented, the size of the school hall limits the opportunities available for the pupils to experience gymnastic work and in particular the opportunity to work on indoor apparatus. The good use made by the school of the outdoor adventure playground helps to overcome this problem. Throughout their time at the school, using the school's own pool, the pupils have good opportunities to learn to swim and to improve their strokes and stamina. Nearly all of the pupils leave the school able to swim at least 25 metres.

93. There is a range of opportunities for pupils to take part in sports outside of lessons, together with clubs and coaching schemes, in the local villages. Each morning the pupils get out the equipment for use at morning break, and lunchtime. They make good use of the wide range of small apparatus provided together with the netball posts and football goals, the adventure playground and the good sized field which can be used in the drier weather. They share equipment well, using it fairly and taking turns. B The physical education activities make a significant contribution to the good breadth of the curriculum offered and especially to the pupils' personal development.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

94. By the end of the infants and when they leave the school, the pupils' work in religious education is better than expected for their ages and they make good progress. This is an improvement since the last inspection.

95. Only one lesson was observed in the junior class and evidence is also drawn from displays of work and discussions with pupils, as well as the scrutiny of teachers' planning. By the end of Year 2, the pupils have a firm grasp of the differences and similarities between Christianity and Judaism. They know that the Jews' special day is on Saturday and that they have a special meal on Shabbat. They recognise artifacts such as the menorah and kipah and understand that these are part of the rituals and customs of Judaism. They show a real interest in the subject and recall previous work in detail. This work goes beyond the learning of facts to the answering of difficult questions and putting forward their own ideas. They explore, for example, their ideas about why Jesus rose again after he was crucified and how his friends felt when they saw him. They extend their ideas about friendship and how the Christmas Story relates to their own experiences of helping others and receiving gifts.

96. By Year 4, the pupils consider the concept of friendship more deeply. One pupil writes: 'A good friend tells a grown-up when you have done something wrong and cares enough about you to criticize you if it helps you'. The pupils have good opportunities to think about important questions and express wonder at the natural world. In the lesson seen, the pupils were writing about what their feelings about their environment and nature. Their ideas varied from awe at one Year 3 boy's father 'because he's so tall', to a sense of curious wonder about why the planets revolve around the sun. Two boys who were working together wrote 'The moon at night is very relaxing and soothing, I feel mesmerised by it'. Another pupil wrote about her sorrow at seeing litter on the beach at Southwold and her joy at finding pebbles of glass that had been smoothed by the waves.

97. The teaching and learning are good because the pupils have plenty of opportunities to express how they feel and to think deeply about important issues. They know that the teachers value their ideas and so they express their opinions freely and confidently. The teachers encourage the pupils to bring in resources and share their experiences, and they do so willingly. One girl, for example, had brought in a cut glass ball to show the class and her friends were amazed that it made a rainbow pattern of light on the windowsill when the light shone through it.

98. The teachers' planning closely follows the agreed syllabus and the teachers have high expectations of what the pupils can achieve, however, there are few visits to places of worship other than the local church.