

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **ROYDON PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Roydon, Diss

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120848

Head teacher: Mr A J Parris

Reporting inspector: Mrs Barbara Doughty  
22261

Dates of inspection: 10<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> September 2001

Inspection number: 193662

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

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

|                              |   |
|------------------------------|---|
| Type of school:              | Primary                                 |
| School category:             | Community                               |
| Age range of pupils:         | 4 - 11                                  |
| Gender of pupils:            | Mixed                                   |
| School address:              | Manor Road<br>Roydon<br>Diss<br>Norfolk |
| Postcode:                    | IP22 5PG                                |
| Telephone number:            | 01379 642628                            |
| Fax number:                  | 01379 652178                            |
| Appropriate authority:       | The Governing Body                      |
| Name of chair of governors:  | Mrs A Ross                              |
| Date of previous inspection: | 15 <sup>th</sup> April 1997             |

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

| Team members   | Subject responsibilities   | Aspect responsibilities   |
|--|--|---|
| Mrs Barbara Doughty<br>22261<br>Registered inspector | The Foundation Stage curriculum<br>Special educational needs<br>Equal opportunities<br>English as an additional language | What sort of school it is and what it should do to improve further<br>The school's results and achievements<br>How well pupils are taught               |
| Mrs Lillian Brock<br>9952<br>Lay inspector           |  | Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development<br>How well the school cares for its pupils<br>How well the school works in partnership with parents |
| Mr David Matthews<br>18505<br>Team inspector         | Science<br>Information and communication technology<br>Art and design<br>Design and technology                           | How well the school is led and managed  |
| Mr Mike Wehrmeyer<br>15015<br>Team inspector         | Mathematics<br>Geography<br>History<br>Religious education   | How good the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils are   |
| Mr John Evans<br>20404<br>Team inspector             | English<br>Music<br>Physical education   |   |

The inspection contractor was:

Schoolhaus Ltd  
Suite 17  
BPS Business Centre  
Brake Lane  
Walesby  
Nottinghamshire  
NG22 9HQ

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager  
Inspection Quality Division  
The Office for Standards in Education  
Alexandra House  
33 Kingsway  
London WC2B 6SE

## REPORT CONTENTS

|   | Page      |
|---|-----------|
| <b>PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT</b>  | <b>7</b>  |
| Information about the school  |           |
| How good the school is  |           |
| What the school does well   |           |
| What could be improved  |           |
| How the school has improved since its last inspection   |           |
| Standards   |           |
| Pupils' attitudes and values  |           |
| Teaching and learning   |           |
| Other aspects of the school   |           |
| How well the school is led and managed  |           |
| Parents' and carers' views of the school  |           |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>PART B: COMMENTARY</b>   |           |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?</b>  | <b>12</b> |
| The school's results and pupils' achievements   |           |
| Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development  |           |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?</b>  | <b>14</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?</b>                         | <b>16</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?</b>  | <b>17</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?</b>                                     | <b>18</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?</b>  | <b>18</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?</b>  | <b>21</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS</b>   | <b>22</b> |
| <br>  |           |
| <b>PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES</b> | <b>26</b> |

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

This is an average sized primary school for boys and girls aged four to eleven. There are 231 full-time and 14 part-time pupils on roll. There is a below average percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals, nine per cent. Sixteen per cent of the pupils are on Stages 2-5 of the special needs register; this is below average. Most pupils are from white, English speaking families. Very few have English as an additional language and none are at an early stage of English language acquisition. Pupils' attainment on entry varies from year to year and has fallen since the time of the last inspection. Although the county assessments for children starting new into the reception class show that this school's results fall below the county average, looking at children's past and current work in Reception, their attainment is broadly typical of that found nationally. There have been several staff changes. In September 2000, a new deputy head and two new class teachers were appointed; one of them was newly qualified. Another newly qualified teacher took up post just a week before the inspection. One of the Year 2 teachers is on maternity leave; there is a temporary teacher taking her class. This summer, the school had major building work carried out, and most of the pupils moved from mobile classrooms into the main building.

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

This school provides a sound education for its pupils. Reasonable teaching means that standards are broadly as expected by the time the pupils leave the school. Very good provision for the less able pupils enables most to attain at least the expected level in English, mathematics and science by the time they leave the school. Leadership and management are satisfactory. New initiatives introduced by the head teacher and senior managers are starting to bring about improvements to teaching and learning and, because of these, following some slippage in results between 1998 and 2000 in comparison with the national trend, the number of pupils attaining the expected level and above in English, mathematics and science rose in 2001. The school gives satisfactory value for money.

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

- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is often lively, humorous and stimulating, and pupils enjoy learning because of it.
- Pupils in all year groups add, subtract, multiply and divide numbers competently and confidently, and their science investigation skills are well developed.
- Pupils do well in music because of expert teaching and wide-ranging and exciting activities.
- This is a very caring school; pupils like coming. They are very friendly towards each other because they enjoy the company of the staff and their schoolmates. They behave very well, work hard, and help others willingly.
- The management of special educational needs is excellent and because of this the provision for the less able pupils, and particularly those with special needs, is very good.
- The school managers have a very clear view of what is happening and know what needs improving. The priorities for development are well chosen and standards are starting to improve.

### **What could be improved**

- The school has insufficient resources for teaching information and communication technology (ICT) and, because of this, pupils' experiences are too limited and standards are not good enough.
- Pupils' achievements are not assessed and recorded in sufficient detail to help with curriculum planning and setting work, and enable pupils to learn in the most effective way.
- In the Reception classes<sup>1</sup>, too little regard is given in subject lessons to the other areas of learning<sup>2</sup>, and in all lessons to the small steps that are necessary to build children's learning over time.

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

---

<sup>1</sup> Children in the Reception classes are in the Foundation Stage – this is the stage of learning for children aged from three years up until they join Year 1 and begin the National Curriculum.

<sup>2</sup> There are six areas of learning for the Foundation Stage – personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and, creative development.

## HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory improvement since its last inspection in 1997. Although between 1998 and 2000 standards did not keep pace with the national trend of improvement overall, the school has implemented some new initiatives, which are bringing about improvement. Standards rose in 2001 in English, mathematics and science. The school is much better than it was at teaching the less able pupils, particularly those with special needs. Subject guidelines are in place and are used effectively by teachers to help them decide what to teach each term. Dividing Years 5 and 6 pupils into attainment sets this term for English and mathematics means that these pupils are usually given suitably challenging work. The implementation of the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy has brought about better lesson organisation and more focused teaching. Standards in music are better and the physical education curriculum is wider and more effectively taught. The accommodation is much improved by the building of new classrooms. However, the way teachers record and then use what they know about pupils' previous learning to set suitably challenging work has not been dealt with effectively enough and remains a weakness from four years ago.

## STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

| Performance in: | compared with |      |      |                 | Key   |
|-----------------|---------------|------|------|-----------------|---|
|                 | all schools   |      |      | similar schools |   |
|                 | 1998          | 1999 | 2000 | 2000            |   |
| English         | A             | A    | C    | C               | well above A<br>average above B<br>average<br>average C<br>below average D<br>well below E<br>average |
| Mathematics     | C             | E    | E    | E               |   |
| Science         | D             | D    | E    | E               |   |

Children in the Foundation Stage make satisfactory progress overall and attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning by the end of the Reception year. Infant pupils' achievements are satisfactory, and standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly as found in most other schools. Improvements in the infant test results more or less follow the national trend year by year. In the juniors, the number of pupils attaining the expected level and above in English, mathematics and science has risen over the last three years. However, it has not risen as fast as in most other schools and, as the table above shows, the school's results fell below the national average in mathematics and science in 1999 and 2000, both in comparison with similar schools and with all others. The school has worked hard to bring about changes, though, and, with effective support for teaching from the head teacher and local authority advisers, things have improved. Pupils did much better in 2001; more attained at least the expected level in all three subjects, and none attained below the expected level in English and science. This is because the school focused on raising the attainment of the lower attaining pupils in particular and these pupils now do well. Evidence from the inspection shows that the standards of the pupils currently in school are broadly as expected for their age and, by the end of Year 6, most achieve satisfactorily given their attainment on entry and infant test results. Last year, half of them in English and over a third in mathematics did better than expected, indicating good progress. The target for English is usually met, but the mathematics target has not been met for the last two years. However, with the recent improvements to teaching and learning, it is likely to be met

this year. Pupils are particularly good at calculation sums because of the introduction of mental arithmetic sessions at the start of the mathematics lessons, and experimental and investigational science. Their musical knowledge and understanding are good. They sing well, compose their own tunes, and play a range of musical instruments competently. However, pupils' learning in ICT is not good enough and standards throughout the school are below those expected. Standards and pupils' achievements in all other subjects are broadly as expected. Up until 2001, boys tended to do better in the tests than the girls. However, the school worked hard to redress the balance, and in 2001, the picture was reversed.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

| Aspect                                 | Comment  |
|--|--|
| Attitudes to the school                | Good. Pupils work hard in lessons. They show interest in their work and concentrate well.  |
| Behaviour, in and out of classrooms    | Very good. Pupils behave very well in and out of lessons because teachers make it clear to them how they expect them to behave.  |
| Personal development and relationships | Good. Pupils are polite and friendly towards one another. They enjoy each other's company and get on well together. They show initiative at times, but these opportunities are too rare. |
| Attendance                             | Very good. Pupils like school and want to attend regularly.  |

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

| Teaching of pupils in: | Reception    | Years 1 – 2  | Years 3 – 6  |
|------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Quality of teaching    | Satisfactory | Satisfactory | Satisfactory |

*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.*

Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teaching in the Year 6/5 classes, where all of the teachers are fairly new to the school, is good and, at times, very good. It is often inspirational, lively and interesting, and so pupils now do well in their last two years in school. The teaching of pupils with special needs is very good; these pupils learn well, particularly when working with the support teacher and support assistants in the classroom, on their own or in small group 'catch-up' sessions out of the classroom. There are good relationships in all classes and teachers manage pupils well. They build pupils' good work habits by encouraging and praising, and ensuring pupils understand what is expected of them. This means that pupils start their work quickly and without fuss, and concentrate well. Teachers often make learning fun and so pupils usually enjoy lessons and work hard. Well-chosen resources grab pupils' interest and increase their understanding, and teaching promotes subject vocabulary well. Basic reading and writing skills are taught satisfactorily in English lessons, although opportunities for pupils to write for different purposes are not as good as they could be and spelling is not taught as well as it might be. Number skills are taught satisfactorily overall and particularly well through the mental arithmetic sessions at the start of mathematics lessons.

Sometimes in lessons, however, the work some pupils are given to do is either too difficult or too easy. This is because teachers do not take enough notice of what pupils can already do and need to learn next and so they do not always plan suitable work for them. Marking does not always tell pupils how to improve their work, or the teachers how well the pupils have learnt. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum is insecure. Consequently, too little regard is given to the small steps that build children's learning over time and teaching does not focus sufficiently on how other areas of learning can be taught during subject lessons.



## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

| Aspect   | Comment  |
|--|--|
| The quality and range of the curriculum  | Satisfactory overall for pupils in the infants and juniors, extended very well through clubs, visits and visitors. Pupils' ICT experiences are too limited. Planning in the Reception classes does not give enough emphasis to the small steps of learning necessary for young children to learn and develop further.                              |
| Provision for pupils with special educational needs  | Very good. The work these pupils do is accurately matched to their assessed needs and they learn well because of it.   |
| Provision for pupils with English as an additional language                                  | Satisfactory. Teaching makes sure that these pupils understand what is going on and know what to do. There are none at an early stage of English language acquisition.   |
| Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development | Good. Pupils are encouraged to reflect on different aspects of their own life and those of others during assemblies and religious education lessons. Teachers show pupils how to act considerately towards others and give them opportunities to work together in lessons. However, there are limited opportunities for pupils to take initiative. |
| How well the school cares for its pupils   | The school has very good relationships with parents. There are very good procedures for ensuring pupils' well-being. The arrangements for finding out and using what pupils already know do not support teaching and learning well enough.   |

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

| Aspect  | Comment   |
|---|---|
| Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff | Satisfactory overall and improving. They work well together and have a shared commitment to improve teaching and learning. Standards are starting to rise because of some well thought out changes brought about by the head teacher and senior managers. However, some of the developments are recent and are still evolving and, although starting to work, it is too early to see their full impact. |
| How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities              | Good. The governors' involvement gives them a clear picture of what is happening in school so that they can help it to improve.   |
| The school's evaluation of its performance                        | Good. The senior managers and the subject leaders for mathematics, physical education and music, in particular, have a clear idea of what is happening in school. They bring recommendations and initiatives for development to the head teacher and this is bringing about improvements and starting to raise standards.   |

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| The strategic use of resources | Accommodation is good. Funding for special needs is used well. There is an adequate range of learning resources and teaching staff; the high number of support staff help the less able pupils very effectively. The school applies the principles of best value for money effectively. |
|--------------------------------|---|

## PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

| What pleases parents most   | What parents would like to see improved   |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children are happy to come to school.</li> <li>• The work their children are asked to do at home and the fact that it is different for different attaining pupils.</li> <li>• The provision for pupils with special needs.</li> <li>• The way they are kept informed about what their children do in school and how well they do it.</li> <li>• The approachability of the staff.</li> </ul> | <p>A small minority of parents are unhappy about:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of lunchtime and after-school activities.</li> <li>• The way the school works with them.</li> <li>• The way the school deals with bullying.</li> </ul> |

The inspection team agrees with all of the parents' positive views. There is a wide range of extra-curricular activities, including educational visits and visitors to school. There are a number of information evenings and the school communicates satisfactorily with parents. The school deals with bullying effectively.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Standards are broadly as expected by the end of Reception, Year 2 and Year 6. Standards by the end of Year 6, however, have not kept pace with the rise in standards nationally, taking English, mathematics and science together. The school's results in the 1999 and 2000 national tests for mathematics and science show that eleven year olds did not do well enough nationally and in comparison with similar schools. They did much better, however, in 2001. All of them attained at least the expected level in English, showing significant improvement, and in science. Around three per cent less than nationally did so in mathematics. Nevertheless, the overall picture in standards, by the time the pupils leave the school, is one of recent improvement and, from the work seen during the inspection and the current Year 6 pupils' results in their Year 5 tests, most of the pupils are attaining at least the expected level for their age in all three subjects. These improvements have been brought about mainly through:
  - better teaching in numeracy, largely because of the implementation of the National Strategy;
  - the appointment of classroom support assistants in each class to support the least able pupils in particular; and
  - lesson observations by the head teacher and local authority adviser that have brought about improved teaching and learning.This resulted last year in 11 of the 22 Year 6 pupils in writing and eight in mathematics attaining better results than expected given their attainment on entry and their test results at the end of the infants,
2. Standards by the end of Year 2 are broadly as expected. Whilst there is some variation from year to year, the test results for seven year olds are usually similar to those found in most other schools and those with similar characteristics; the trend of improvement is in line with the national trend. Baseline assessments show that most children come in with standards that are broadly typical of those found in most other schools, with very few attaining better than expected for their age.
3. Most children make sound progress overall in the Reception year because they experience a range of activities that develop their skills in all areas of learning, but particularly in communication, language, literacy and mathematics. By the end of the year, most can write stories and reports of two or three sentences, sometimes using full stops. They select an appropriate ending to a given sentence from a choice of several, and they sequence pictures to tell a story. They recognise rhyming words such as bet, get and let, ring, bring and wing. They form letters correctly and some write independently. Their spelling is usually correct or phonetically justifiable, writing, for example, 'gud' for 'good'. They write for different purposes, such as labels. They have a secure understanding of numbers to 10 and add and subtract correctly. They recognise objects that are longer and shorter and complete tally charts showing different ways their classmates get to school. Their learning, however, is not as rapid and their achievements not as great as they could be in the other areas of learning. This is because teaching does not always focus on how it can develop these in, for example, English and mathematics lessons.
4. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress because the support for them is good. The school employs an above average number of support staff to help these pupils in and out of lessons and the specialist teaching for individuals and small groups is very effective. These pupils are secure in their learning and not afraid to make mistakes. They

concentrate well in lessons and learn rapidly; most of them attain expected levels by the time they leave the school.

5. For some years now, boys at this school have usually performed better in the national tests than the girls; this is the opposite of what appears to be happening nationally. The school picked up on this and, with the help of the local authority advisers, the pattern has been reversed. Teachers are much more aware than they were of mixing genders within sets and attainment groups, and boys and girls are given equal attention in lessons.
6. By the time the pupils leave the school at the age of eleven, standards in English are broadly as expected and pupils achieve satisfactorily over time. Most pupils speak confidently and articulately. They listen carefully to others and express their thoughts clearly and precisely. However, although it was early in the term, there were some pupils who did not eagerly offer opinions in class discussions and the teaching did too little to involve these pupils in the general conversation. Pupils enjoy reading and read a range of texts confidently. They have favourite authors and use examples from the text when discussing parts of it. In writing, pupils express their ideas clearly and use suitable language to make the meaning clear to the reader.
7. Standards in number work are good; 15 of the 37 current Year 6 pupils are on course to attain the higher level by the end of the year. Their calculation skills are well developed because of the introduction of well-paced mental arithmetic sessions at the beginning of lessons. Pupils' scientific investigation skills are good. They carry out experiments confidently, using skills such as hypothesising and drawing conclusions. Musical knowledge and understanding are also good. By the time they leave the school, most pupils sing well, compose tunes and have a good knowledge of composers and different types of music. Their instrumental playing is good.
8. Pupils' learning in ICT is unsatisfactory and standards are too low. This is because the school has inadequate resources to teach the subject and pupils do not have enough opportunities to develop their ICT skills, knowledge and understanding. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 have insufficient opportunities to program robots and so their command skills are under-developed. They have weak skills in organising and classifying information and are insecure about how to save and retrieve their work. By the end of Year 6, pupils have had only limited experiences of exchanging information through e-mail, or extracting it from Internet websites. They do not have a good enough understanding of the use of ICT outside school. However, this has been identified as a major area for improvement in the school development plan and recent purchases of more and better ICT equipment have been made. Standards in all other subjects are broadly as expected for pupils' ages.

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

9. Pupils have maintained their good attitudes in lessons and their very good standards of behaviour since the previous inspection. There is a happy atmosphere in the school and this has a positive effect on pupils' attitudes to school life and to their learning. Nearly all parents who responded to the questionnaire feel that behaviour is good and that the school helps their children to become mature and responsible. The inspection team agree with them.
10. Parents say that their pupils are enthusiastic about what they do and are willing to talk about their work at home. From their early days at school, pupils soon become accustomed to the routines of school life. For example, in only their second week, Reception children memorised the location of classrooms and were able to repeat the names of teachers during a tour of the building. Pupils learn to relate to others in the school community and understand the standards of behaviour expected of them. Their demeanour reflects the view of their parents that children are happy in the school. They smile readily and most have the confidence and ability to discuss their work with others. As pupils move through school, they respond well to the demands of their teachers. During a Year 6 lesson on debating skills,

there was a lively 'buzz' of activity as pupils argued for and against the motion that there should be more physical activity lessons.

11. There is an orderly environment in the school and this reflects the very good standards of behaviour that are found there. In class, the behaviour of the great majority of pupils is rarely less than good and often very good. Teachers manage pupils well and if any instances of inappropriate behaviour are particularly challenging, effective use is made of the school's disciplinary procedures. The orderly behaviour that predominates makes a good contribution to learning in the classroom. This was seen in a Year 6/5 class during an art lesson. Pupils worked in pairs to draw sketches of objects in the style of Roy Lichtenstein. By the end of the lesson, some thoughtful and mature sketches were produced, sometimes using ordinary objects to create extraordinary images. The behaviour of these pupils remained very good during the whole of the lesson. When not in lessons, pupils play purposefully and sensibly. They move about the school in a calm and orderly manner. Even when pupils are confined to school during inclement weather, they show responsibility and restraint. No instances of bullying or inappropriate behaviour were observed during the inspection and there have been no exclusions in recent years.
12. The school is characterised by very good relationships amongst all members of the school community. Pupils learn to accept responsibility for their actions and to recognise that their actions often affect others. An example of this was seen in a Year 3 personal and social education lesson where pupils had placed slips of paper in a "problem box". The teacher shared the anxieties and concerns of individual pupils and the whole class suggested ideas to solve the problems that pupils new to the school may encounter. Pupils clearly respect their teachers and trust them. They are willing to offer help in the classrooms and assemblies and older pupils support younger ones. They have the confidence to participate in fundraising projects for charitable causes. Pupils do not yet have a full "voice" in the school through a school council but they have shown by their mature attitudes to school that they are capable of accepting this responsibility. In their relationships, they learn much from the example of adult members of staff who work together harmoniously and constructively.
13. Attendance is very good and well above the national average. There is little unauthorised absence. Most parents are supportive of the school's high expectations of good attendance and send their children regularly. They also understand the need to inform school of any absence and the reasons for it. Pupils arrive at school on time and lessons start promptly.

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

14. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Teachers from Reception to Year 6 enjoy good relationships with the pupils and, because they like their teachers, pupils work hard to please them. Teachers encourage and praise pupils well and this helps to create a good working atmosphere and good work habits, and makes learning effective and enjoyable. For example, in a Year 1 art lesson, the teacher listened carefully to the pupils' comments about the portraits they were looking at. Most pupils were keen to offer their ideas about how age was portrayed, mainly because of the sensitivity and interest the teacher showed to their views. In a Year 3 literacy lesson, pupils followed the teacher's example and listened with respect to each others' suggestions of which words would best fit into gaps in a piece of text they were looking at, and in a Year 6/5 mathematics lesson the rapid pace in the mental arithmetic session at the beginning of the lesson kept pupils spellbound and well involved in what was going on.
15. Teachers make sure pupils know what is expected of them, explaining things clearly so that pupils know what to do. They demonstrate what they mean so that they are sure pupils understand. For example, in a Year 2 physical education lesson, the teacher showed pupils different passes so that they could copy and get it right. Resources are used well to support teaching and learning, such as viewfinders in art and pop-up books in design and

technology. Subject vocabulary is taught well, for example 'motion' and 'argument' in a Year 6 debate, and 'opaque' in Year 3 science.

16. Teaching and learning are good and sometimes very good in the Year 6/5 classes. Here, lively, humorous and stimulating teaching results in pupils enjoying their work and, because of this, they learn well. Work is usually adapted to suit pupils working at different attainment levels; this is made easier by the teaching of pupils in attainment groups in English and mathematics. This does not happen, however, in the rest of the school and too often pupils' work does not build on their previous learning well enough, sometimes being either too hard or too easy. This is because teaching takes insufficient account of what pupils already know and need to learn next. Although this is early in the school year, and teachers know the overall level pupils have attained in each subject, they do not get enough detail about the depth of pupils' learning. For example, in a Year 2 literacy lesson, because the teacher did not have enough information, and was therefore unsure about what the pupils could already do, she asked some of them to write alliterative and rhyming sentences, which they struggled to do unsupported. Likewise, in a Year 3 science lesson, assumptions were made about what pupils did and did not already know about materials and pupils spent too much time discussing properties of materials, which they already knew, before going onto new learning about how different materials are suited to different uses. This meant that learning was slowed because too much time was spent teaching pupils knowledge that the teacher did not know they already had.
17. The specialist teaching of pupils with special educational needs is very good. These pupils are very confident because of the excellent relationships they have with the teacher and, because they understand what they are doing and why, they try hard to get it right. For example, they practise at home reading a set of words correctly in 30 seconds, and are delighted when they achieve it in school, meeting the goal the teacher has set them. Their individual learning targets are small and measurable; consequently, pupils achieve them in a short time and this motivates them to do more. Pupils' achievements are recorded in detail and used well to inform teachers and support staff what individual pupils need to learn next. Pupils are supported in class by classroom assistants, who make sure that the lower attaining pupils in particular can do the work successfully, hence very few of them fail to attain at least the expected level for their age by the time they leave the school.
18. Pupils with English as an additional language are supported effectively. Whereas all pupils speak English fluently, teachers are aware of those pupils who do not come from families where English is the first language spoken. They and the support assistants check, nevertheless, that these pupils understand what is being said and what they are to do. Consequently they learn at the same rate as their classmates. Much work has been done on successfully addressing the issue about boys performing better in the national tests than the girls. Teaching constantly ensures that both boys and girls are given equal attention in class and take care to focus questions on both genders.
19. Teaching of the Reception children is satisfactory overall. These children are taught in classes with Year 1 pupils and their curriculum is organised into National Curriculum subjects. Nevertheless, these children are given suitable opportunities to learn through exploration and observation, such as taking care of the animals in the class and growing things from seed. They are given a lot of practical experiences, such as cutting out, painting and building with bricks. However, not enough attention is paid to promoting other areas of learning in subject lessons. For example, in the mathematics lessons seen, children painted the number 'two', but teaching did not focus on developing children's physical and creative skills through this activity, such as how they should hold the paintbrush, use sweeping strokes instead of stabbing ones, and mix colours to make their work more eye-catching. In the role-play area, because they were learning about the number 'five' the children were asked to choose and put on five things from the dressing up rack, but there was no specific attention paid to, for example, language development or improving children's personal and

social skills. This meant that when the teachers went to check on what children were doing, they did not purposefully promote children's skills in areas of learning other than mathematics and any learning in these areas was incidental. In addition, teaching tends to focus on the early learning goals to be achieved by the end of the Reception year and too little notice is taken of the early stages of learning that are necessary to build children's learning over time.

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

20. The curriculum is satisfactory overall. It is suitably broad, and includes all of the National Curriculum subjects, religious education and personal, social and health education. In addition, there is a wide range of extra-curricular activities and visits to places of interest, such as a Victorian schoolroom. These benefit the pupils' learning by enlarging their experiences, particularly in music and physical education. Teachers invite visitors to many lessons to share their expertise and further widen pupils' experience and knowledge.
21. The school has overcome the weaknesses in planning noted in the previous inspection report, by putting in place suitable subject teaching guidelines, based on national guidance. These give teachers a clear knowledge of what work pupils should do, and the levels they should achieve, in each year group. They cover the full range of the curriculum subjects and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The teaching arrangements for pupils' personal, social and health education are satisfactory. The curriculum for ICT, however, does not provide a satisfactory range of activities relevant to pupils' age and interests, and this is inhibiting their progress.
22. The school provides full inclusion and equal opportunity for all pupils. This is particularly effective in the very good provision for those pupils with special educational needs. These pupils have well-written individual teaching and learning plans, with very precise targets for learning and, because of this, teachers and support staff are clear about what the pupils need to learn next and give them relevant work to do. Consequently, these pupils make good progress. The introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is effective in developing pupils' basic literacy and numeracy skills. Pupils are organised into ability sets in Years 5 and 6. This is proving effective, as pupils are able to progress at an appropriate pace. The school monitors the performance of boys and girls, and takes action when significant differences emerge. Teachers' planning does not take sufficient account of different abilities within a class or set to make sure that work is suitably adapted to challenge all pupils in the most appropriate way.
23. The curriculum provided for children in the Foundation Stage is satisfactory overall, but insufficient attention is given in the planning to how other areas of learning can be developed in subject-based lessons.
24. Visits to, and links with, the local community, and the community's support of school events, add to the range of pupils' experience. The school has sound relationships with neighbouring schools. It is beginning to forge links with local playgroups, and its preparation for pupils' entry into the high schools helps pupils to settle quickly into secondary education.
25. The school has maintained the good provision for pupils' personal development since the last inspection. Arrangements for pupils' spiritual development have improved. The curriculum for religious education is making more impact, introducing pupils to a wider range of faiths and beliefs, through particularly wide contacts outside school. Assemblies now provide a lively forum for pupils' views. For instance, the theme of friendship developed a reflective, family atmosphere, in which pupils valued each other's achievements and thoughts. During the day, the teachers are alert to build on the pupils' capacity for reflection, thinking carefully about what they want pupils to focus on. Teachers are on the lookout for

occasions where pupils marvel at the natural or manufactured world, for instance the amazement of Year 4 pupils at the complexity of the human skeleton.

26. Staff develop pupils' moral and social awareness particularly well. The staff work together to build an ethos in the school which values considerate behaviour. They build self-esteem and stress respect for each other by insisting fairly that pupils keep to the agreed rules. Staff explain how the behaviour policy works and most pupils use it well as a guide to how they should behave. Staff are good humoured, which fosters good relationships around the school. In lessons, pupils are introduced to moral issues, and the older ones hold debates, for instance, about pollution and the environment. In the best lessons, the pupils are encouraged to discuss their classroom work in groups. Some pupils have jobs around the school, but there are too few opportunities for pupils to take responsibility and use initiative. The school values its links with the local elderly residents through its festivals and tea parties. Equally, its Indian 'Goodwill Village' project gives pupils an insight into the meaning of 'social' in a wider context.
27. The school fosters cultural development well. Teachers raise pupils' awareness of their own national and local fen heritage and other cultures through art, dance and literature. The diversity of cultures, both local and further afield, is introduced in history and geography, the study of other faiths, and through ethnic music and dance.

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

28. The school continues to provide the safe and supportive environment reported in the previous inspection report. There is good provision overall for the welfare, health and safety of pupils. Satisfactory child protection procedures are in place. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory but these are not being effectively utilised to inform the next stage of pupils' learning.
29. Teachers are sensitive to the needs of those in their charge. They know pupils well and work hard to ensure their welfare. The trusting relationships that pupils enjoy with their teachers and classroom assistants give them the confidence to share their worries and help them to cope with the problems that arise in everyday life. Staff and governors have a responsible attitude towards health and safety matters. Procedures are clear and detailed. There is a generous number of staff trained to administer first aid. Appropriate systems are in place for regular risk assessment and for the routine maintenance of electrical and fire equipment. The health and safety issues identified in the risk assessment are being dealt with. Although the school does not have its own policy for child protection or separate guidelines for new or supply staff, it does follow the locally agreed procedures. The school offers discrete lessons in personal and social education but there is no overall detailed scheme of work to guide curriculum planning. Sex education begins in Year 5 and parents are invited to view the resources used in the lessons. The personal, social and health education lessons throughout the school are giving pupils the skills to make decisions about their lives in and out of school.
30. The school's caring approach is reflected in the efforts to encourage regular attendance. Records of attendance are carefully analysed and evaluated and prompt action is taken to investigate any unauthorised or unexplained absence. These very good procedures are reflected in the very good attendance of pupils. The school's behaviour policy is proving to be effective in minimising disruption in the classroom. The strength of the good procedures lies in the consistency of their application. All staff have worked hard to develop strategies to cope with situations as they occur. Pupils have a clear idea of the standards expected of them and know that bullying or any form of harassment is not tolerated.
31. The procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress and for monitoring their academic and personal progress are satisfactory. However, the use of the information from

assessment to inform curriculum planning is unsatisfactory. Records of achievement are passed on to the next teacher but these are not sufficiently detailed to enable the teacher to use them effectively to group pupils within the set or class. Day-to-day recording is equally ad hoc. It does not contain enough information about all aspects of subjects to allow teachers to understand precisely what pupils already know and what they need to learn next. Sometimes records show what pupils have experienced but not what they have learned from the experience. The procedures for tracking pupils' progress as they move through the school are satisfactory, but they are in their infancy and the information collected so far is insufficient yet to show patterns or trends in learning year on year.

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

32. This is a school at the heart of its community. Many parents have had a long association with the school and have watched its development with interest. Pupils feel a sense of pride and ownership in the school as seen in the care they give to their local environment. Parents view the school as a good school, which is helping their children to become mature and responsible. The school has a good relationship with its parents. They receive a good range of information from the school. Most have indicated that predominantly, they are well satisfied with what the school provides for their children.
33. The school's documentation is of good quality and together with the opportunities available for personal contact with teachers, it is sufficient to ensure that parents are well informed about events and developments, and about the progress of their children. The school's links with parents continue to make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. The school's partnership with parents of children with special educational needs is a real strength. The relationship between the special needs co-ordinator and parents is excellent. She ensures that parents receive copies of their children's individual education plans and works with them to set targets for their children. These plans are very informative. Parents of children who are new to the school have induction meetings that enable them to support their children in settling down quickly in the Reception classes. At the meeting for parents before the inspection, some parents felt that information lacked clarity regarding dates and times of events. This is true. On the other hand, reports to parents on children's progress are satisfactory and most set targets for future development.
34. A commitment to a partnership with parents is evidenced by the way in which the school has built on the good practice found at the time of the last inspection. The school brochure now meets legal requirements and is well presented. The annual report of the governing body is informative and contains all the necessary information. Parents' consultation evenings are held twice each year and are well attended. Some parents stated their wish for more information on what their children are learning each term in order to offer them maximum support. A few parents expressed some concerns about bullying in the school but records show that every effort is made to deal with potential conflicts and to reconcile differences. The school advocates reconciliation not retaliation.
35. The impact of parental involvement on the work of the school is exemplified in the large sums of money raised by the Friends of the School. This group raises about £5,000 each year for a variety of resources that enhance children's learning. Most parents give sound support to the work of the school through their involvement in homework activities. Many parents listen to their children read, help with activities such as spelling and provide children with resources to bring into school to support the work in the classroom. Between 25 and 30 parents can be called upon to help in the school and their support is very much appreciated. Parents give additional help when pupils make visits out of school and when events are held in the school. Parents attend and enjoy class assemblies.

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

36. Leadership and management are satisfactory overall. The head teacher gives clear educational direction for the future of the school. With particularly effective support from his deputy, he has brought about recent improvements to teaching and learning and consequently, standards rose overall last year and were better than in the previous two years. These improvements include the introduction of grouping Years 5 and 6 pupils into mathematics and English sets, improving the quality of assessment, and developing an effective homework policy.
37. The delegation and contribution of staff with management responsibilities is good and proving to be very effective. The co-ordinator for special needs is extremely good and has brought about many improvements to the provision for pupils with special needs. The subject leaders for mathematics, physical education, and music, in particular, have a clear view of what is happening in their subjects, largely through observing teaching or by providing specialist teaching such as in music. This enables them to play an effective role in identifying and initiating priorities for improvement, and consequently standards are getting better, particularly in these subjects. However, as at the time of the previous inspection, some subject leaders have not yet had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning and to look systematically at pupils' work. This is notable in art and design, design and technology and ICT. As a result, they have limited knowledge of what is happening in their subject, and their impact on its development is currently restricted. This contributes to the poor standards that the school has identified in ICT. Nevertheless, the school's development and improvement plan identifies the need for all subject leaders to be informed about teaching, learning and standards in their subjects by observing lessons.
38. The governors' close involvement with the school gives them a clear picture of what is happening so that they can help it to improve. Because the chair of governors regularly meets with the head teacher, she is aware of what the school is trying to improve, such as standards in mathematics. She keeps the governors well informed about the work of the school in order that they can carry out their responsibilities effectively, make well-informed decisions, and play an effective role in school improvement.
39. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well. It has addressed the lack of required information for parents in the school's brochure and the absence of a daily act of collective worship for pupils that were highlighted at the last inspection. Satisfactory procedures are in place for performance management.
40. There is good financial planning and management. The governing body applies the principles of best value effectively. Funds are allocated to each priority in the school's development and improvement plan, and estimated financial commitments beyond the current year provide the school with a useful picture of its likely spending patterns. The school gives careful consideration about how best to allocate specific grants, and links its decisions well to its attempts to raise pupils' achievements. For example, to help pupils in Years 5 and 6 to move to the next level of attainment the school thought hard about whether to allocate funds to a supply teacher or to additional support assistants for a longer period. Although ICT resources are inadequate to develop learning sufficiently well, the school has now received additional funding. New resources have been ordered to enable it to teach the ICT curriculum more effectively and so improve pupils' achievements. Apart from ICT, resources are adequate to enable curriculum subjects to be taught.
41. The school's priorities for development are well chosen. They are the right ones to help it to improve and to raise standards. Established systems are in place by which the school evaluates its progress towards the targets that it has set itself. However, the criteria by which it measures its success are not always precise enough to make this document as useful a tool as it could be to bring about adequate rapid improvement. The school's development and improvement plan still does not provide staff and governors with a sufficiently clear, shared vision of educational priorities beyond the current year.

42. The excellent management of the school's provision for pupils with special educational needs results in very effective support for these pupils. The individual education plans that are written for them are particularly effective because they are well focused and they identify the small steps that pupils are intended to take in their learning, in order to make good progress.
  
43. The number of teachers is adequate and there is a high number of support staff, who contribute well to the learning of the lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs. The Reception teachers have had insufficient training for the Foundation Stage curriculum. This results in the planning for children in the Reception year having insufficient regard to the areas of learning for this age group and to the early learning steps in their development. The induction of the newly qualified teacher, who joined the staff last year, has an effective impact on the quality of teaching and learning. She has been well supported and was given specific advice about how to improve the quality of her teaching. Significant improvements to accommodation have provided increased teaching space.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

44. The school should now:

- (1) Improve teaching and learning and raise standards in ICT by improving the quantity and quality of learning resources so that pupils:
  - a. develop a secure understanding of how to command and control equipment;
  - b. have improved access to the Internet and e-mail facilities;
  - c. develop a better understanding of ICT in the wider world;
  - d. use ICT more effectively to support work in other subjects.

(Paragraphs 8, 21, 90-92, 112)

- (2) Improve the recording of pupils' achievements so that teachers are clear about what pupils already know and can do, and the use teachers make of this information to plan pupils' work.

(Paragraphs 16, 22, 28, 31, 50, 56, 60, 61, 68, 72, 86, 96)

- (3) Improve the teaching and learning of children in the Foundation Stage by training staff in the use of the Foundation Stage curriculum document so that they take more notice of the early stages of learning and plan more precisely how to develop children's skills in all areas of learning.

(Paragraphs 3, 19, 23, 43, 49-52)

In addition to the above, there are some minor weaknesses in the report that governors should have regard to when writing their action plan:

- 1) Pupils do not get enough opportunities to show initiative, for example, to use the library for independent research and solve problems in mathematics (paragraphs 12, 26, 56, 64, 67).
- 2) In English, there are too few opportunities for imaginative and descriptive writing and pupils' spelling skills are weak. Not all pupils are encouraged to answer questions or offer comments in discussions (paragraphs 6, 54, 58, 59).
- 3) Marking does too little to tell pupils how to improve their work, or help teacher to gauge how well pupils have done their work (paragraph 61).
- 4) Some subject leaders do not know enough about what is happening in their subjects to influence and bring about improvements to teaching and learning (paragraphs 37, 78, 83, 96).

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Number of lessons observed   | 54 |
| Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils | 30 |

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

|            | Excellent | Very good | Good | Satisfactory | Unsatisfactory | Poor | Very Poor |
|------------|-----------|-----------|------|--------------|----------------|------|-----------|
| Number     | 0         | 5         | 14   | 32           | 3              | 0    | 0         |
| Percentage | 0         | 9         | 26   | 59           | 6              | 0    | 0         |

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

### Information about the school's pupils

| Pupils on the school's roll   | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)      | 238     |
| Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals | 19      |

FTE means full-time equivalent.

| Special educational needs   | YR – Y6 |
|---|---------|
| Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs       | 3       |
| Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register | 72      |

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

| Pupil mobility in the last school year                                       | No of pupils |
|--|--------------|
| Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission | 10           |
| Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving           | 11           |

### Attendance

| Authorised absence        | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 2.7 |
| National comparative data | 5.2 |

| Unauthorised absence      | %   |
|---------------------------|-----|
| School data               | 0.2 |
| National comparative data | 0.5 |

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

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

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 2000 | 16   | 15    | 31    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | Reading | Writing | Mathematics |
|---|----------|---------|---------|-------------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 14      | 15      | 16          |
|   | Girls    | 13      | 14      | 14          |
|   | Total    | 27      | 29      | 30          |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 87 (74) | 94 (87) | 97 (85)     |
|   | National | 83 (82) | 84 (83) | 90 (87)     |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above   | Boys     | 15      | 15          | 16      |
|   | Girls    | 13      | 13          | 14      |
|   | Total    | 28      | 28          | 30      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above | School   | 90 (85) | 90 (77)     | 97 (90) |
|   | National | 84 (82) | 88 (86)     | 88 (87) |

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

### Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

| Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year | Year | Boys | Girls | Total |
|--|------|------|-------|-------|
|  | 2000 | 25   | 16    | 31    |

| National Curriculum Test/Task Results       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 14      | 10          | 14      |
|   | Girls    | 11      | 7           | 12      |
|   | Total    | 25      | 17          | 26      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 81 (88) | 55 (55)     | 84 (76) |
|   | National | 75 (70) | 72 (69)     | 85 (78) |

| Teachers' Assessments                       |          | English | Mathematics | Science |
|---|----------|---------|-------------|---------|
| Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above   | Boys     | 13      | 11          | 13      |
|   | Girls    | 10      | 7           | 9       |
|   | Total    | 23      | 18          | 22      |
| Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above | School   | 74 (64) | 58 (58)     | 71 (82) |
|   | National | 70 (68) | 72 (69)     | 79 (75) |

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

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

|                                 | No of pupils |
|---------------------------------|--------------|
| Black – Caribbean heritage      | 2            |
| Black – African heritage        | 0            |
| Black – other                   | 0            |
| Indian                          | 0            |
| Pakistani                       | 0            |
| Bangladeshi                     | 1            |
| Chinese                         | 0            |
| White                           | 197          |
| Any other minority ethnic group | 6            |

*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 – Y6**

|  |      |
|--|------|
| Total number of qualified teachers (FTE) | 10.6 |
| Number of pupils per qualified teacher   | 22.5 |
| Average class size                       | 23.8 |

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

|   |     |
|---|-----|
| Total number of education support staff | 10  |
| Total aggregate hours worked per week   | 170 |

### ***Financial information***

|                |           |
|----------------|-----------|
| Financial year | 2000/2001 |
|----------------|-----------|

|  | £      |
|--|--------|
| Total income                               | 464229 |
| Total expenditure                          | 463994 |
| Expenditure per pupil                      | 2100   |
| Balance brought forward from previous year | 15454  |
| Balance carried forward to next year       | 15689  |

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years     | 3 |
| Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years | 4 |

|  |   |
|--|---|
| Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)  | 0 |
| Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)                           | 1 |
| Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE) | 0 |

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

## Results of the survey of parents and carers

### Questionnaire return rate

|                                   |     |
|-----------------------------------|-----|
| Number of questionnaires sent out | 224 |
| Number of questionnaires returned | 83  |

### Percentage of responses in each category

|  | Strongly agree | Tend to agree | Tend to disagree | Strongly disagree | Don't know |
|--|----------------|---------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My child likes school.   | 60             | 34            | 6                | 0                 | 0          |
| My child is making good progress in school.  | 54             | 36            | 6                | 1                 | 2          |
| Behaviour in the school is good.   | 43             | 52            | 2                | 0                 | 2          |
| My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.                              | 37             | 52            | 8                | 1                 | 1          |
| The teaching is good.  | 58             | 36            | 4                | 0                 | 2          |
| I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.                          | 34             | 48            | 17               | 1                 | 0          |
| I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem. | 49             | 39            | 8                | 0                 | 4          |
| The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.              | 63             | 29            | 7                | 1                 | 0          |
| The school works closely with parents.   | 35             | 40            | 17               | 6                 | 2          |
| The school is well led and managed.  | 40             | 48            | 6                | 2                 | 4          |
| The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.                      | 45             | 49            | 5                | 0                 | 1          |
| The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.            | 24             | 48            | 14               | 7                 | 6          |

### Other issues raised by parents

Some parents are unhappy that the information they are sent in newsletters is sometimes inaccurate, such as times of events.

## **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**

45. Children enter school at the beginning of the academic year in which they reach five years of age. All of them attend part-time for the first few weeks. Whilst the older ones then start full-time education, the younger ones continue to attend part-time up until Christmas. Reception children are taught in two classes alongside Year 1 pupils. Lessons are subject based, but activities include opportunities for learning through observation and exploration. At the time of the inspection, which was early in the term, all of the Reception children were in school for the morning only and the only lessons taught were English and mathematics. However, evidence was gathered through looking at the work of children in Reception last year, talking with children and school staff, and looking at the school's documentation relating to the teaching and learning of children in the Foundation Stage of learning.
46. Improvements have been made to children's outdoor learning opportunities since the last inspection. There is now an enclosed learning area for children to experience a range of activities including water play, digging in the garden, and using push and pull wheeled toys.

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

47. Children's development in this area is satisfactory and teaching and learning are sound. This is the second week of the new term and children have been in school for a few days at the most; for some, Monday was only their second day. For so early in the term, they have settled very well. They already have a good understanding of the routines of the day because staff explain to them carefully what is expected. Children are fully involved in the activities and concentrate on their work for extended periods, without flitting from activity to activity. They work independently and with others in, for example, small world play and role-play in the café, taking 'orders' and 'cooking' food for their classmates. Cutting-out activities generate discussion as children talk about what they are doing and form relationships with new friends. They are extremely well behaved. They take good care of their classroom, hanging up the dressing up things and clearing away when they have finished an activity. This is made easier because the classrooms are well laid out, drawers and storage places are clearly labelled and children already know where things belong. Individuals are asked to take care of particular areas of the room, such as making sure the books are stored tidily and feeding the fish. This develops independence well.

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

48. Children are on their way to attain the early learning goals in this area of learning because teaching is sound; they make satisfactory progress in all aspects of communication, including speaking and listening, reading and writing. Children show an interest in stories because they are encouraged to look at books and listen to story tapes. They use the pictures to 'read' the story, such as in 'Toy Story, when explaining which Buzz was "the real Buzz Lightyear" and how they could tell. Talk is valued and encouraged. Children are asked to say what they are doing, such as describe the models they have made from dough. Most of the children speak clearly and audibly with confidence. They talk to one another, saying, for example, "Lets get to work", when digging in the garden and congratulating each other with "Well done", when they were satisfied that they had done a good job! Some of the less mature children are reluctant to talk to the class, and teachers are very careful not to make too high demands on these children during, for example, shared news time, being sensitive to their feelings and the need to build their confidence slowly.

49. Most children put pencil to paper and many already form some letters correctly. They understand that writing communicates meaning and are given some opportunities, during activity time, to practise writing in, for example, the class office. However, there is generally a very formal approach to teaching writing skills, which are taught mainly through planned activities in English lessons. Adults miss opportunities in, for example, the café to encourage children to use writing to communicate orders to the chef and in the office to take down telephone messages. This is because no specific skills are identified to be developed through these activities, with children being told to “play in the office or home corner”. This in turn means that children do not have a specific purpose or anything to achieve whilst they are there. The adults tend to support the more formal activities and do not join children in their play; any learning that does take place is therefore incidental. The teacher scribes their words for the children during ‘picture and story’ and, although some can form letters correctly, children are not encouraged to have a go first. This means that they cannot always show what they can do independently; demands made on them are then too low, and their learning is not as rapid as it could be.

### **Mathematical development**

50. This is another area of learning in which children make sound progress overall and attain the early learning goals by the time they leave the Reception class because teaching is generally satisfactory. All of the children are currently being taught about numbers up to five, whilst the teachers find out what they can already do. Activities such as cutting out two objects from a magazine and painting the number two develop children’s mathematical understanding successfully. Children identify groups of objects that have more or less in them and match numbers to groups of objectives correctly. Many of them can already count up to five and beyond. By the end of the Reception year, most children work confidently with numbers up to 10 and are ready to work with numbers up to 20. They identify ‘longer’ and ‘shorter’ and ‘heavier’ and ‘lighter’. They count cars in a traffic survey and record the findings on a tally chart. However, even later on in the year, work is similar and often the same for all of the children, without enough regard given to adapting the work for the more and less able. Consequently most of the children are at a similar level by the end of the year and some of the higher attaining do not progress as well as they might. In the lessons seen, some of the activities were ill chosen because they did little to promote children’s mathematical learning, although the introductions were generally good. For example, playing in two’s and completing a jigsaw of Noah’s ark showing animals going into the ark in twos, provided only tenuous links to mathematical development. Lessons are organised into subjects and too little regard is given to teaching other areas of learning through these activities, such as personal skills when playing in twos and physical skills when painting and completing jigsaws.

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

51. No lessons or activities were seen for this area of learning during the inspection, therefore no judgement is made about the quality of teaching. Some of the activities in the English and mathematics lessons seen promoted children’s knowledge and understanding of the world incidentally, such as constructing models using bricks and smaller apparatus, learning how to ‘click’ the ‘mouse’ to command the computer, and looking around the school to find out where different rooms are located. Again, however, the focus was on English and mathematics and not on developing children’s knowledge and understanding of the world and learning therefore was incidental. From looking at children’s work from last year and teachers’ planning files, there are weaknesses in curriculum planning, which mean that children sometimes miss out vital stages of learning because not enough attention is paid to the early stages necessary to build children’s learning over time. Children are taught ideas too early that are meant for pupils in the next key stage. This is because when teachers plan the lessons, they focus too much on Year 1 science, history, geography and technology work and pay too little attention to promoting the early stages of children’s learning. For

example, in a history lesson last January, in order to find out about the past and present, children were asked to compare objects from the past with those in the present. However, the objects chosen were ones of which many children had limited experience, such as horses' hooves to car tyres. Children had not had enough time, particularly the youngest ones who had only just started school full time, to sufficiently explore past and present events in their own lives, for example, by sequencing photographs of themselves from birth to the present day, or observing changes in the environment through the seasons. Too often, these young children are asked to learn from worksheets, such as in March colouring things that are held up by air, or through directed activities in June like shining a torch on a globe to show how the sun shines on the moving earth to make night and day and then copying into their books 'The front was day. The back was night'. This is Year 1 National Curriculum work and is beyond the understanding of many average attaining Reception children.

### **Physical and creative development**

52. As in knowledge and understanding of the world, these two areas of learning are taught as discrete subjects and did not take place during the inspection, therefore no judgement is made about the quality of teaching in these areas. Children move around the classroom with an awareness of space and they use equipment with developing co-ordination and control. They hang clothes on hangers and do up buttons. They enjoy painting and making models. Again, however, these skills were promoted, incidentally, through some of the English and mathematics activities and although children did make some progress in them, this was because of the experiences they had, rather than the teaching. This is because the lessons were planned to develop children's English and mathematical skills. Teaching focused on these and did not concentrate on improving children's physical and creative skills, although it could have done. For example, children practised cutting out and guiding paintbrushes when learning about the number two, but because teaching focused on the promotion of number, it did nothing to teach children how to do either more accurately than they already could, for example, by stroking with the brush and holding the paintbrush further down the shaft to have more control.

### **ENGLISH**

53. The results of last year's national tests suggest that pupils' overall attainment in English is above average by the time they leave the school. However, discussion with pupils, examination of recent work and observations of pupils' performance in lessons show that standards for the current group of pupils are broadly average. Comparison with their attainment at age seven shows that these pupils have made sound progress over time.
54. Pupils of all ages converse readily in one-to-one situations or in small groups. By the time pupils are seven and eleven years old, their attainment in speaking and listening is similar to that found nationally. Most pupils of all ages speak clearly and with suitable confidence. Seven year old pupils talk about the books they read and discuss the work they are doing. They listen carefully and accurately to the teacher, showing understanding by giving appropriate, clearly expressed answers. Older pupils justify their preferences in reading and explain aspects of their written work in English and other subjects. They listen with suitable precision and show consideration for the views of the person speaking. By the time they leave the school, most pupils can express themselves in correct, standard English. They draw on a satisfactory range of words and phrases and adjust their speech to match the situation and the needs of the listener. In many class lessons, however, around two thirds of pupils do not offer answers unless specifically asked to by the teacher. Some teachers are careful to direct appropriate questions to the quieter members of the class but most do not do enough to involve them. As a result, these pupils do not benefit fully from discussions and miss valuable opportunities to increase their confidence and skill in speaking.

55. Most pupils gain obvious enjoyment from their reading, and their attainment at the ages of seven and eleven is average. Most pupils in the infant and junior classes read with satisfactory fluency and accuracy, applying their knowledge of letter sounds to read unfamiliar words. Younger pupils understand the sense of stories at a suitable level and can discuss the way events unfold. The more able pupils describe and compare different characters and recall clear detail. The most able younger pupils bring their reading to life by means of apt and lively expression. By the age of eleven, most pupils read confidently. They tackle difficult words and texts systematically and make good use of different approaches to establish meaning. The most able readers understand many aspects of character and the plot of stories. When discussing them, they point to passages in the text that support their views. Many name favourite authors, for example Jacqueline Wilson and Roald Dahl, or identify personal preferences, such as stories with a historical focus.
56. Teachers ensure that all pupils gain experience of a wide range of well-chosen fiction and non-fiction. By the time they leave the school, most pupils read independently at a suitable level. All pupils use the contents and index of a book but most do not understand how to use a numerical system of library cataloguing to locate a book or subject. This limits pupils' independence in personal study. The teaching of reading is supported by regular homework and this is usefully documented in the home-school reading record. This valuable link between home and school encourages pupils to work hard at their reading and allows them to share and enjoy their progress with their parents. Teachers' own records of pupils' reading are carefully kept and positive in tone but do not analyse pupils' attainment with enough precision. As a result, they are not effective in identifying what needs doing to bring about improved achievement.
57. Pupils aged seven achieve average standards in writing. Most express their ideas clearly in simple sentences, sequence them logically, and draw on an appropriate range of words. They sometimes use capital letters and full stops to mark the beginning and end of sentences. While most pupils spell well-known words correctly, many make mistakes with the form of words, for example, 'sleped' or 'rided'. Pupils of all abilities are beginning to develop joined handwriting. The writing of higher ability pupils is imaginative and well structured, showing awareness of the reader and sustaining a lively pace and turn of event. However, there is insufficient variety in the range of writing tasks that teachers set. In particular, there is too little emphasis on descriptive and imaginative writing.
58. Standards in writing for the current group of Year 6 pupils are average. By the time they are eleven years old, pupils learn to develop and sustain ideas at suitable length and plan their work to improve its effectiveness. They present their work carefully and take pride in its appearance. Most know how to use punctuation at an appropriate level. The great majority write neatly in a fluent, joined hand. However, all but the most able pupils make too many spelling mistakes, sometimes with well-known words, for example, 'comeing' and careless errors such as, 'It look like'. The writing of the most able junior pupils is vigorous, rich and varied in tone, but that of most pupils is narrow in range. Teachers provide sufficient opportunity for pupils to practise writing stories and letters and to use writing purposefully in other ways and contexts, but do too little to promote the descriptive and imaginative aspects of pupils' writing.
59. The quality of teaching seen during the inspection was satisfactory in the infant classes and good in the junior classes. It was often very good in Years 5 and 6. Teachers throughout the school manage pupils well, use praise effectively and build very good relationships. They promote good work habits and, especially in the junior classes, encourage pupils to take responsibility for aspects of their learning. In most lessons, teachers explain key ideas and the aims of the lesson very clearly, so that pupils set to work confidently and with a sense of purpose. In a minority of lessons, teachers direct questions carefully, ensuring that all pupils are actively engaged. However, in most lessons, including the literacy hour, teachers do not do enough to involve all pupils. They usually choose those pupils who put their hand up to

answer questions and allow others to remain silent. Teachers support pupils very well while they are working on individual and group tasks. This consolidates and extends learning.

60. In the majority of lessons, teachers make insufficient provision for pupils' of differing abilities. The tasks set do not always challenge the most able or enable the least able pupils to progress without help. Lower ability pupils and pupils with special educational needs usually make good progress in lessons because the classroom assistants support them well and make sure that they understand what they are doing and how to do it. They rephrase explanations to make them clear and check on pupils regularly to see that they are completing the work successfully. The newly introduced setting arrangements in Years 5 and 6 are working well and are improving the progress of all pupils. In the best lessons here, teachers modified tasks further to match the range of abilities within the set. The combination of these arrangements resulted in very effective learning.
61. Planning arrangements are much improved since the previous inspection. The successful introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has contributed to this. Teachers now have a clear idea of how to plan lessons to ensure pupils' learning is built as they move through the school. However, assessment arrangements are still insufficiently rigorous and teachers do not make enough use of assessment information when planning lessons. This slows progress. Marking places too much emphasis on simply correcting errors and too little on showing pupils how they might improve.
62. Pupils' attitudes to learning are consistently good in the infant and junior classes. Pupils behave very well. They are polite, considerate and happy to discuss and explain their work. They show concern for one another, take turns in conversation, listen to one another's contributions and co-operate well when working in groups. The great majority of pupils enjoy their lessons. They concentrate effectively, have good work habits and show suitable independence and responsibility.
63. The subject leader is knowledgeable, enthusiastic and very effective. She sets an example of very good practice in her own teaching. Some opportunities have been provided for the subject leader to monitor teaching and standards and she has a clear view of strengths and weaknesses in the subject and appropriate plans to raise standards. She shows energy and initiative in implementing these and is fully and effectively supported by colleagues. The school has made sound improvement since the last inspection. Given the high quality of subject leadership and teachers' shared commitment to high standards the school has good capacity to improve further.

## **MATHEMATICS**

64. The successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive impact on improving teaching and learning in mathematics, and standards are better this year because of it. Most of the current Year 6 pupils are on course to achieve the standard expected for their age by the end of the year; latest assessments show that over a third of them could reach level 5. The pupils understand number and do calculations confidently. They have a sound knowledge of two- and three-dimensional shapes and understand symmetry. Pupils are beginning to discuss their ideas about how to solve problems but are not yet confident enough to develop and apply their own ideas, mainly because the opportunities for them to do so are too limited.
65. Pupils in Year 2 are on course to achieve the standards expected for their age by the end of the year. They, too, are good at mental and paper calculations, for instance counting up in 10s to 100, then building up steadily to 1000. They have a sound awareness of basic shapes, but do not know enough about three-dimensional shapes. They are beginning to use mathematical language correctly, but again, do not try different approaches to solve problems.

66. The school has looked closely at its disappointing results in the 1999 and 2000 tests, and made a number of important changes in the way it organises the curriculum. Encouraged by the co-ordinator, teachers now write more precise learning objectives for their numeracy lessons. The school has also extended the use of the mental arithmetic session at the beginning of lessons and introduced setting arrangements for Years 5 and 6. In order to ensure equal access to all pupils to the curriculum, less able pupils now get more support from classroom assistants, and this has boosted these pupils to make good progress so that many do better than expected when they started school.
67. Last year's work in Year 2 books shows that teachers gave different groups work matched appropriately to their abilities, which was effective in enabling pupils to move forward at a suitable pace. However, most work was on worksheets that directed pupils in what to do and inhibited their ability to develop solutions of their own. Teachers select activities that are relevant to promote the learning intended, and use resources well to help pupils' understanding. For example, the use of small wipe-clean boards in one lesson helped Year 2 pupils to alter mistakes in their counting pattern and achieve successful recording. Pupils enjoy such devices, which, together with teachers' good classroom management, create conditions where pupils enjoy learning and so concentrate well.
68. Teaching and learning are satisfactory throughout the school. Teaching creates sound learning conditions where pupils make steady progress. The least able pupils, including those with special needs, make good progress due to effective support from classroom assistants. Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is good. Teachers set up good learning situations with clear objectives and explanations, encouraging pupils to discuss their work. They use the previous test results to arrange pupils into attainment sets, where pupils work well together. During the lessons, the teachers check carefully that the pupils understand what they are doing and are going in the right direction, consciously focusing equally on boys and girls. The plenary sessions at the end of the lessons gather the ideas together and help pupils to make sense of their learning. Teachers are beginning to note down who does and does not understand particular points. This, however, is not as precise as it could be, and in consequence some of the work is not as challenging as it could be. For instance, in one Year 4 lesson, work on recognising numbers and rounding them off was abstract, too hard for the slower pupils to understand and too easy for the brighter ones, who then became less interested and more fidgety. Teachers make only limited use of ICT to support their class work. Consequently, pupils are not as clear about compiling and handling data as they should be. Teachers are, however, increasing the focus on literacy by training pupils how to approach 'word problems', and by encouraging precise use of mathematical language.

## **SCIENCE**

69. The attainment of pupils at the end of Year 6 in 2000 was well below the national average. This was largely because too few pupils achieved the higher level. In the following year, teaching focused more effectively on extending the learning of pupils who were ready to move on to the next level of attainment. Consequently, the results in 2001 improved, with significantly more pupils reaching the higher level.
70. The attainment of pupils in the present Year 6 is largely in line with that expected of pupils at the beginning of the school year. They have a secure understanding of how sound travels, show a developing understanding of processes such as evaporation, and identify some of the organs of a flower. Past work shows that when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6 they have well-developed skills in investigative science. This is because teaching places strong emphasis on this important element of science. Higher attaining pupils in particular have strong skills in planning investigations, including describing how their tests will be fair and in predicting what will happen. They select a suitable approach when answering questions such as how high different balls might bounce. All pupils record their

observations and measurements in suitable form, such as by plotting points to form simple graphs. They learn correct scientific terms such as 'dissolve' and this fosters their understanding of certain processes securely. They have satisfactory knowledge, for example, about how to separate different materials such as sand and water. Most know about the earth, the moon and the sun and their relationship and effects.

71. Standards in the current Year 2 broadly reflect those expected nationally. All pupils have a growing awareness of the importance of a healthy diet and higher attaining pupils have a good understanding of the different types of food eaten by humans. By the end of Year 2, most pupils know that living things such as animals grow, and they have a clear awareness of health issues including the potential danger of medicines. They have a sound understanding of how a bulb lights up in a circuit and of the dangers of electricity. Most pupils sort materials into groups such as natural and man-made and they know how some materials can be changed, such as by heating.
72. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. The support for pupils with special educational needs is good. For example, in one Year 3 lesson an additional teacher supported those pupils with special needs with effective questions and encouragement, so they made good progress. However, throughout the school, teachers do not make sufficient use of pupils' previous learning to sufficiently challenge all of the pupils all of the time. For example, Year 2 pupils' knowledge of electricity is not extended to include how bulbs light up in different types of circuit. This is because teaching takes too little notice of which pupils learn faster in lessons and over time and do not therefore make their work more challenging. As a result, not many pupils reach the higher level before the end of Year 2. In another Year 3 lesson, the teacher did not incorporate what she knew about the pupils' past learning to plan what they needed to learn next about materials and their properties. Although teaching took account of the fact that pupils had grasped some knowledge of materials that included an understanding of 'opaque', the lesson was pitched at too basic a level to stretch most pupils. This is because teachers' assessments of what pupils have and have not learned are too ad hoc to be sufficiently useful in planning what particular pupils should learn next. This weakness remains from the last inspection.
73. Pupils throughout the school have good attitudes towards science. They behave well, especially in the investigative work that interests and motivates them. At the time of the last inspection, there were no teaching guidelines for science. This has been dealt with; the school now uses national guidance to plan work for pupils in Years 1 to 6, which ensures that teachers know what to teach and when to teach it. The school works hard to enrich the science curriculum, for example through a 'science week', when all pupils engage in activities that foster their learning well.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

74. The pupils' work reaches the expected standard by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 and pupils make satisfactory progress. Throughout the school, pupils have a developing awareness of the characteristics of the work of different artists, and they talk with increasing detail about the qualities that these artists bring to what they create. This effectively broadens pupils' perceptions of art beyond the school, particularly with regard to Western traditions.
75. Teaching is satisfactory, with some strengths. In the Year 6/5 lesson seen, for example, teaching worked well because the lesson was effectively planned to stimulate, excite and interest the pupils. It gave them a good foundation for the next lesson when a full painted composition was planned. It successfully helped the pupils to select from the techniques of others for their own work, and to discuss their reasons for doing so. As a result, some very good original sketches were created. Teaching gave pupils the confidence to combine unusual objects in their cubist designs. The pupils' very good attitudes in this lesson reflect the positive attitudes to art and design throughout the school. Pupils in a Year 3 lesson

cheered when they were told that they were going to do art. This lesson gave pupils good opportunities to 'practise and play around' with ideas, but it did not sufficiently extend the learning of the higher attaining pupils, by, for example, inviting their judgements on the effectiveness of flag designs. Where teaching was less effective, discussions for younger pupils, for example in Year 1, were too long, and this restricted the time that they spent exploring and trying out ideas.

76. By the end of Year 2, most pupils confidently explore and share their ideas for designs though lower attaining pupils are less confident and lack originality. Higher attaining pupils understand terms such as 'collage' and they confidently combine an imaginative range of materials in their work. Most pupils are less competent when talking about their own work and evaluating it. By the time pupils leave the school, they work effectively with colour, using different techniques to make it lighter. They know about the skills of famous designers and artists and they effectively describe their own work and that of others in terms of style, colours and realism. Higher attaining pupils use terms such as 'surrealism'.
77. The subject leader has a good understanding of the need for pupils to be creative, and to bring their own originality and inventiveness to their work. This has a positive impact on the pupils' approach to what they do and to the quality of what they produce. For example, they use a range of materials and ideas to make sculptures that show individuality and incorporate interesting shapes and forms. This leads to some thoughtful evaluations by the pupils. One pupil, for example, told how she liked the 'curly' shapes of the straws that formed part of one sculpture.
78. The subject leader, however, has limited influence on the quality of teaching, learning, and on pupils' achievements throughout the school. This is because she has not yet had the opportunity to observe what happens in classrooms, and to share her expertise with teachers to bring about developments. The school has identified this in its development plan as an area for improvement.
79. The school has effectively addressed the lack of subject guidelines for art, identified as a weakness at the time of the last inspection, by adopting the national subject guidance. The school has no agreed system for assessing pupils' developing skills, knowledge and understanding to support teachers in what they plan. Consequently their use of assessment information remains inconsistent through the school, reflecting the findings of the last inspection.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

80. Pupils make sound progress, and they reach expected standards by the end of Year 2 and also by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6. By the end of Year 2, most pupils have sound skills in designing and making. They communicate their designs on paper and use a range of materials, tools and techniques to make, for example, cars that they test, and clay tiles that they finish attractively. Higher attaining pupils have a good grasp of correct terms such as 'glaze', 'doweling' and 'axle'. However, because teaching provides too few opportunities for them to make judgements about what they have made, most pupils' skills of evaluation are not developed well enough. For example, they have limited abilities in considering how they could have made things better.
81. By the time they leave the school, most pupils have sound design skills, for example when brainstorming ideas. Their plans, however, do not always show the steps that they intend to take in the making stage, when this would be helpful. Lower attaining pupils are unsure about the limitations of certain types of materials such as which ones would be suitable for the inside and outside of a slipper. They have sound skills in using a range of tools, techniques and equipment to make, for example, musical instruments and to meet challenges such as to construct a paper bridge that meets specific criteria. Most pupils use

correct terms such as 'cog' and they can explain that certain shapes, such as triangles, give strength to structures. Pupils suitably evaluate what they have made by testing them to see if they meet the design requirements and by considering how they would have made them differently to make them work better.

82. Insufficient teaching was seen during the inspection to judge its quality throughout the school. The two lessons that were observed contributed well to pupils' learning. Teaching in the Year 6/5 lesson seen ensured that the pupils gave full consideration to the views and preferences of the intended user of the slipper that they were going to make. Questions were well focused on the design priorities, including the need for a sole that was safe. The Year 4 lesson was particularly effective in using working examples to develop pupils' ideas of a wide range of devices that they could consider incorporating into a pop-up book for a young child. Pupils show good attitudes, particularly when engaged in making, and there is often a 'buzz' of conversation that is securely focused on the current task.
83. The subject leader has a limited knowledge of what is happening throughout the school. This is because, as yet, she has not had the opportunity to observe teaching and learning or to analyse pupils' work. Her impact, therefore, on developing the subject is not as extensive as it could be. The last inspection identified the absence of subject guidance; the school has addressed this weakness by adopting national guidance and teachers are much clearer about what to teach pupils in each year group.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

84. Only two lessons were observed. However, discussions with pupils and evidence from the work in last year's books show that that pupils are likely to achieve the expected standards for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils generally make satisfactory progress. Their knowledge of places, and how people use those places, develops steadily through the years. For example, pupils in Year 2 can make simple maps of the imaginary Isle of Struay, and show on them the features they have heard in the story. They can compare Struay with their experience of geography of Roydon. They enjoy answering questions and use simple technical vocabulary well.
85. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have studied a range of themes, mostly related to places and the effects of man's activities on them. From the evidence available, teaching is satisfactory. The new teaching guidance, based on national guidelines, is more helpful to teachers than the one in use during the previous inspection. Teachers use it effectively to guide the planning of topics on a two-year cycle to take account of the needs of the mixed age classes, and this ensures that elements are not repeated unnecessarily.
86. The planning of work to match the differing abilities of the pupils is not always evident in the lesson preparation. The lack of a secure system for measuring pupils' attainment and progress, means that teachers cannot always be certain of the appropriate starting points for lessons. In one lesson, for example, the teacher had to quickly revise what she had planned, to deliver it at a simpler level because the Year 5 and 6 pupils did not know as much about maps and landforms as she expected them to. Similarly, there is no way to monitor if skills are developed evenly in the mixed age groupings. For example, Year 5 tackle co-ordinates as four-figure references, and Year 6 would move into six figures, but last year's books show them still working in two figures. Numeracy and ICT do not make as full a contribution as they might, but resources to support practical work are being built up.

## **HISTORY**

87. Only one lesson was observed; it was in Year 6/5. However, from discussions with pupils and from the evidence of work in last year's books, it is possible to make the judgement that

pupils are likely to achieve the expected standards for their age by the end of Years 2 and 6. Pupils make satisfactory progress. By the end of Year 2, pupils represent the past in different ways in their books, and have a sound knowledge of a range of famous historical figures. By the end of Year 6, pupils have a wide range of knowledge; they study and interpret artefacts from different periods and can compare life in the past and present.

88. From the evidence available, teaching is satisfactory. The co-ordinator has effectively raised the enthusiasm for history. The new teaching guidance, based on national guidelines, is better than the planning during the previous inspection. Teachers use the guidance well to ensure that in the two-year cycle of topics, material for the mixed-age classes is not repeated. In the lesson observed, the work was well matched to the ability of the pupils, but this is not always evident in last year's books. Teachers use a variety of approaches in their lessons, which motivate the pupils well and create sound learning conditions where pupils find out facts for themselves and present their work with care.
89. The level of support given to pupils who have special educational needs ensures that these pupils make good progress. Teachers use and develop pupils' literacy skills well, setting different tasks such as writing as a character in a particular historical event in either a journalistic style or as a diary. Numeracy is not as prominent, however, and pupils are not working as well with figures, for instance lengths of time, such as reigns. Consequently their sense of chronology and how long ago events occurred, is not as secure as it could be. Visits to historical sites such as the Victorian schoolroom, have increased since the previous inspection, and have a positive impact on pupils' learning by making history come alive. However, the use of assessment to record pupils' attainment and to monitor pupils' progress through the attainment levels has not developed further since the previous inspection. As a result, some teachers do not have a sufficiently clear picture of how near pupils are to achieving appropriate levels in the mixed-age classes. The resources needed to enable pupils to engage in practical study have improved since the last inspection and are now satisfactory.

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

90. Standards in ICT are below average overall and the school has made insufficient improvements in the subject provision since the last inspection. There are not enough suitable resources to enable pupils to develop skills and understanding in sufficient depth across the different aspects of ICT. This results in weak ICT skills, and pupils underachieving by the time they leave the school. The school is aware of this weakness and it has committed grant funding to new equipment. This, together with its plans for staff training and the recent adoption of national subject teaching guidance, will provide it with the capacity to improve pupils' learning and so raise standards.
91. In Years 1 and 2, the standards are below those expected for the pupils' age. This is mainly as a result of inadequate resources, and too few opportunities for pupils to use some of these to improve their learning. For example, pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop their skills when programming floor robots. Consequently, by the end of Year 2 they have poor abilities in describing how they plan and command to make things happen in a range of situations. When talking about their work, pupils show underdeveloped skills in using ICT to organise, classify and present their findings. Although higher attaining pupils describe how to save their work, most pupils do not have sufficient independent skills for saving and retrieving their work on computers. The majority of pupils competently use the computer for writing, but their independent skills in the use of tables to communicate information are not sufficiently developed.
92. The narrow curriculum resulting from the lack of teaching and learning resources restricts learning in Years 3 to 6, so that the attainment of pupils aged eleven years is below that expected for their age. For example, pupils' access to the Internet is ad hoc. While some

pupils have visited commercial websites to gather information, teachers have not routinely established pupils' communication through e-mails. This limits the range of ways that pupils exchange information and ideas with others, and makes it harder for them to achieve the expected level 4 by the time they leave the school. The curriculum under-emphasises the teaching of pupils' ICT control skills. This means that by the end of Year 6, although pupils competently describe how to program what happens on a screen, they have little understanding of how to use ICT to sense physical information, such as temperature. Pupils in Year 6 combine different forms of information including text and pictures, but as yet this does not extend to sound. They have poor abilities in talking about how ICT is used in the outside world other than computers. They have limited skills in comparing ICT with alternative methods, or describing the advantages and disadvantages of each.

93. Pupils talk about computers enthusiastically and their responses to working with computers are good, with very good attitudes to work developing. These help pupils to concentrate hard and work effectively together. They co-operate well, share skills and knowledge, and are confident in trying suggestions made by the teacher and their peers. For example, in the Year 6 lesson observed, one pupil extended the skills of others by sharing his knowledge of how to move the cursor quickly from one part of the screen to the other.
94. Not enough teaching was seen during the inspection to judge its quality throughout the school. Teachers teach pupils correct terms such as 'cell' when dealing with spreadsheets in Year 6/5, and 'switch' when discussing a mobile phone in Year 1. This ensures that they learn the appropriate vocabulary for the subject. Teaching seen in the one Year 6/5 lesson was good because there was a good understanding of what the pupils were expected to learn and this led to clear explanations and good learning about what a database is for. Because there is no computer in one Year 6/5 classroom, small groups of pupils use the one in the library. This makes it difficult for teaching to monitor effectively the work of both the pupils remaining in the class and those in the library.
95. Teachers link pupils' experiences in ICT to their work in some subjects. For example, in Year 6 pupils work on spreadsheets and represent science data in the form of bar charts. CD-ROMs effectively support pupils' work about environmental issues, health education, and work in history, for example about World War 2. As yet, however, not all subjects plan thoroughly for the use of computers, and the use of ICT is often incidental rather than precisely planned to promote pupils' learning systematically across the curriculum.
96. The subject leader has not yet had the opportunity to observe other teachers teach, or to evaluate systematically the standards of pupils' work. Consequently, he has a limited view of what is happening in ICT in the school as a whole. This restricts his impact on the quality of teaching and on learning and on improving pupils' achievement. The school has a written intention to ensure this happens. He is aware that his subject knowledge needs to be developed in order to support other teachers, and he expects that forthcoming training will address this weakness. As at the time of the previous inspection, there is no coherent system for teachers to assess pupils' attainments as they move through the school. This causes a lack of information available to teachers that they can use to plan pupils' work more precisely.

## **MUSIC**

97. By the time they are seven, pupils attain the standard in music expected for their age. By the time they leave the school at the age of eleven, their attainment in music is above average. This is better than at the time of the last inspection and results from a rich and varied curriculum and very effective teaching.
98. Infant pupils listen carefully to music, responding to the moods of, for example, extracts from the 'Carnival of the Animals'. Most pupils sing with a satisfactory sense of the shape of a

melody, follow the pulse of music accurately, and begin to control volume to achieve different effects. They vary the pitch and timbre of their voices to reflect, for example, the characters of different animals. Pupils gain experience of using musical instruments, including tuned and untuned percussion and recorders; they handle them responsibly and with suitably developing skill.

99. Junior pupils begin to improvise using, for example, recorders and tuned and untuned percussion. They play and sing accurately, combining voices and instruments confidently. When making music together, pupils maintain their own part very well. Pupils learn to use different forms of notation, ranging from simple, graphical ways of representing sounds to standard musical notation. They learn, for example, to recognise note values and to understand and use some musical terminology.
100. Pupils in the infant and junior classes gain wide and varied experience of the music of different composers and music from different cultures and traditions. For example, they explore the imagery generated by Britten's 'Sea Interludes', the origin and meaning of spirituals, and the qualities of pop music.
101. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. Pupils enjoy music greatly. They behave very well and co-operate effectively. They listen very carefully when music is played and respect each other's tastes and opinions. When singing or playing an instrument, they concentrate hard and give of their best.
102. The quality of teaching is very good. Most lessons are taught by the subject leader, but other teachers with musical expertise also make valuable contributions. The subject leader's teaching is consistently lively, well planned, and rewarding for pupils. She successfully communicates to pupils the pleasure of music while promoting very effective learning. Lessons are well paced and include a variety of activities including listening, reflecting and performing. High standards are set. At the same time, the work of lower and higher ability pupils, and boys and girls, is equally and warmly valued.
103. The curriculum is enhanced by a good range of extra-curricular activities. These include recorder and guitar clubs, planned for different year groups, and additional instrumental tuition given by visiting teachers. Events such as the 'Busking Day' and visits by a private music group provide further opportunities for pupils to enjoy and widen their understanding of music.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

104. Because of the school's timetable arrangements, only three physical education lessons, two infant and one junior, were seen. Secure overall judgements on attainment and the quality of teaching and learning cannot therefore be made.
105. In the lessons seen, pupils' attainment was in line with the expected levels. In one of the infant lessons, pupils found different ways of travelling along benches and mats. They showed suitable inventiveness in using different actions and varying the level of their movement. They moved with satisfactory awareness of the space around them and the movement of other pupils, and began to make pertinent comments about the quality of each other's performances. In the junior lesson, pupils devised dance sequences around a tribal theme. Pupils were inexperienced with dance and showed some initial awkwardness in moving to the well-chosen music. However, the high quality of teaching enabled them to make rapid progress. Pupils learned to diversify their movement, make gains in inventiveness and accuracy and build well-formed sequences that reflected the mood and flow of the music.

106. In all three lessons, pupils' attitudes to their work were consistently good. Pupils enjoyed the lessons, interacted safely and behaved well. They showed consideration for one another and were appreciative of each other's performances
107. Coverage of the physical education curriculum is good and teachers provide an exciting, varied and well-planned programme of activities including gymnastics, dance, games and swimming. Most pupils swim at least 25 metres competently by the time they leave the school.
108. A very good range of extra-curricular activities, including football, netball, tag rugby, cross-country and skipping, usefully extends the classroom curriculum. These are planned to meet the needs of pupils in different year groups and are enthusiastically supported by pupils and teachers.
109. Good improvements have been made since the last inspection. Documentation is now closely informed by national advice and gives clear guidance to teachers on the order in which knowledge and skills are to be taught and the ground that is to be covered. The curriculum now offers suitable challenge to all pupils and the status of the subject is now deservedly high. Many of these improvements result from the initiative of the subject leader, who is very well informed and enthusiastic and whose own teaching sets a high standard.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

110. Pupils are likely to achieve the standards expected for their age by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Standards have not declined since the last inspection despite the report showing the standards of seven year olds to be above average. The expectation of what pupils should know and do has risen, partly because of the requirements of the new locally agreed syllabus. The provision has improved, and the 'matter-of-fact' approach seen during the last inspection has been replaced by concerned and committed teaching, some of it by specialist teachers. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound knowledge of Jesus' life and the calendar of festivals of Christianity and a suitable range of other faiths. By the time the pupils leave the school, they have satisfactory skills to add to their sound content knowledge. They study and make sense of artefacts and customs, interpret information, and make comparisons about a wide range of beliefs. Throughout the school, pupils do not make sufficiently close connections between the content knowledge of religion and its relevance to their own lives. In last year's books, Year 6 pupils lacked the vocabulary to express abstract ideas. Their writing after a visit to a local church was brief and disappointing in quality.
111. Since only one lesson was observed a judgement on teaching overall is not possible. However, this lesson contained some good features. It was well planned and teaching created good learning conditions in which pupils engaged confidently in discussion. Clear explanations from the teacher raised the pupils' interest and encouraged them to concentrate. Several pupils wanted to continue and add further material at home.
112. The new locally agreed teaching guidance gives teachers a secure structure to plan from to ensure careful coverage of all topics in an order that promotes pupils' progress. Resources in school are now much better able to support practical teaching methods, but ICT has yet to make a significant impact. Classroom support assistants help those pupils with special educational needs to be included fully in classroom activities and to improve their skills in writing down their ideas. There is no formal system of assessing and recording pupils' progress, and one result of this is that pupils do not yet have a clear picture of their own steps in learning.
113. The management of the subject has achieved both a strong sense of direction and an enthusiasm for teaching it. The new feel for religious education is enhanced by the

programme of homely, pupil-centred assemblies, which further develop pupils' thinking in a considered, reflective way.