

INSPECTION REPORT

WIGGENHALL ST MARY MAGDALEN PRIMARY SCHOOL

Wiggenhall
St Mary Magdalen, King's Lynn

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120892

Headteacher: Mrs J Simmons

Reporting inspector: Janet Sinclair
19824

Dates of inspection: 29 – 31 October 2001

Inspection number: 193663
Full inspection carried out under Section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Primary
School category:	County
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Park Crescent Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen King's Lynn Norfolk
Postcode:	PE37 3BU
Telephone number:	01553 810326
Fax number:	01553 811964
Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Conyard
Date of previous inspection:	April 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
19824	Mrs Janet Sinclair	Registered inspector	Foundation Stage curriculum; Equal opportunities ; Science; Information and communication technology; Design and technology	The school's results and achievements; How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed
11041	Mr Marvyn Moore	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes behaviour and personal development; How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10053	Mrs Janet Simms	Team inspector	English; Art and design, Music; History	How good are curricular and other opportunities?
20063	Mr Gerry Slamon	Team inspector	Mathematics; Religious education; Geography; Physical education; Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

*Westminster Education Consultants
Old Garden House
The Lanterns
Bridge Lane
London
SW11 3AD*

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London
WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen is a small primary school for boys and girls of four to eleven years of age. There are 47 pupils on roll, of whom two are part time. The school draws most of its pupils from Wiggenhall St Mary Magdalen and neighbouring villages. Children's attainment on entry is broadly average. Pupil mobility is low, with few pupils joining the school other than the usual time for admission. The number of boys and girls is about the same in all year groups except Year 5 where there are five boys and only one girl. Eight per cent of pupils have special educational needs, which is below average, and six per cent have a statement of special educational needs, which is well above average. Currently there are eight pupils who receive free school meals, and this is well below the national average of 19 per cent. The school does not have any pupils who come from a home where English is spoken as an additional language, which is a lower incidence than in most schools.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. The head teacher and governing body are providing effective leadership and a firm steer for the work of the school. They have worked extremely hard since the last inspection and have significantly improved the quality of education provided for the pupils. Children start school with average levels of attainment. By the time they leave the school at age eleven, standards are above average in English and mathematics and pupils are achieving well. They do well because the quality of teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 and work is well matched to the needs of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and higher attaining pupils. The main weakness is in the school's provision and teaching in the Foundation Stage, where young children do not receive a curriculum appropriately planned to meet their needs. Overall, the school provides satisfactory value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards are above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6, as a result of good teaching in Years 3 to 6 which ensures that pupils make good progress.
- The leadership of the head teacher is good. She ensures that the school continues to improve standards and includes all pupils. This contributes strongly to the school's ethos, where all pupils are valued.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they are well supported by learning support assistants.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities in Years 3 to 6 is good and, as a result, pupils develop a wide range of skills and competencies.
- Relationships are very good and ensure a secure learning environment for all pupils.
- Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have very good attitudes to their work and behave very well, and this helps with their work and the progress they make.
- There are very good links with parents, and the school provides them with good quality information.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- The provision and teaching of children in the Foundation Stage, so that they have a curriculum which is appropriate to their needs.
- Monitoring of teaching to ensure that improvements are secured.
- Improve standards and provision in information and communication technology so that pupils reach the appropriate level for their age.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made good improvement since its previous inspection in 1997. Standards have improved in English and mathematics. The quality of teaching and learning has improved significantly. The curricular provision is greatly improved and ensures that all pupils from Years 1 to 6 now receive a broad and balanced curriculum. The school has worked extremely hard to address the key issues from the previous inspection and has moved forward successfully in many directions. There is only one issue that has not been adequately addressed, and that is the provision for children in the Foundation Stage, which remains unsatisfactory. However, the school is aware of the need for improvement and is in the process of addressing it through additional training. Cost effectiveness has improved because the school thoroughly evaluates its spending to ensure it meets the needs of its pupils. The school is well placed to make further improvements.

STANDARDS

Only eight pupils took the national tests for eleven-year-olds in English, mathematics and science in the Year 2000, which is too small a number to make valid comparisons with national averages. However, over a three-year period the trend in English, mathematics and science at the end of Year 6 has been upwards, and all subjects have remained above the national average. Levels of attainment on entry vary year on year but are average overall. Given this average baseline from which pupils start, they achieve well by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6.

Inspection evidence shows that standards are above average in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 and that pupils are achieving well. Standards are average in all other subjects except ICT, where they are below average. The initiatives to raise standards in ICT, through improved provision, have been too recent to have sufficient impact on standards for pupils currently in Year 6. By the end of Year 2, standards are average in all subjects of the curriculum except history, where they are below average. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily, except in history, where their achievement is unsatisfactory. Over time, boys have not achieved as well as girls in English and mathematics. The school has worked hard to address this issue with initiatives such as homework club, the purchase of books that more directly engage the interest of boys, and an emphasis within literacy and numeracy on subjects that will interest them. During the inspection there was no evidence that boys achieved less well than girls, and this indicates the success of the school's initiatives.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good in Years 3 to 6. Pupils enjoy coming to school because there are many interesting things for them to do. Attitudes are satisfactory across the rest of the school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good in Years 3 to 6. Behaviour is satisfactory in other classes, and around the school it is generally good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and older pupils take good care of younger pupils. A strong feature of the ethos of the school is the way in which all age groups mix well with each other.
Attendance	Very good. Pupils arrive at school on time and settle to their work quickly. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting attendance.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Good

The quality of teaching is good in Years 3 to 6, and this ensures good learning for these pupils. The quality of teaching is generally satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and, as a result, pupils learn appropriately. The teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory, as not enough attention is given to their needs and they mainly receive a curriculum suited to pupils in Years 1 and 2. The teaching of English and mathematics is good in Years 3 to 6, enabling pupils to make good gains in their learning and contributing to the good progress they make. Occasionally the teaching of English is inspirational and pupils are thoroughly challenged, motivated and excited. Literacy and numeracy are also well taught in these year groups. Teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory, and this ensures that pupils learn appropriately. Literacy and numeracy lessons are well planned but occasionally the pace and content of the lesson do not challenge the pupils to improve their performance. Overall strengths in the quality of teaching include very effective teaching methods that interest and motivate pupils, very good class management, challenge for higher attainers, and good support for those with special educational needs. Relationships are very good and there is a high level of respect shown by the teachers towards the pupils, which is fully reciprocated. This creates a very good learning environment in which pupils thrive. The weaknesses in the teaching are a lack of clear understanding of subject requirements, insufficient content for the time of the lesson, and lack of challenge.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum for the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory. The curricular provision is satisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. Provision for literacy and numeracy is good. Extracurricular provision is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. It ensures their inclusion in all aspects of school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' personal development, including their moral and social development, is good and strongly supports their learning. Provision for spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are very good procedures for child protection; health and safety are very good in all respects. Assessment procedures are good in all subjects and inform curricular planning well in English and mathematics.

- The school's partnership with parents is very good and the school provides them with very good quality information. There is a good parent/ teacher association.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The head teacher provides caring and thoughtful leadership. She has worked hard to build a good team who are committed to raising standards and improving overall provision for the pupils in their care. However, monitoring of provision for the Foundation Stage needs greater attention.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governors provide very effective support to the school. They have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses and have a positive impact on shaping its direction.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. The school analyses its performance well. Good tracking procedures ensure that areas of weakness in pupils' learning are quickly identified and addressed.
The strategic use of resources	Good. The school is adequately staffed and uses its accommodation well. There is a suitable range of resources, which are targeted well, and there are good resources for ICT. The principles of best value are applied to good effect. Governors evaluate spending very carefully.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Their children like school and are making good progress.• The school is well led and managed, and the teaching is good.• The school expects children to work hard and gives them the right amount of homework.• The school works closely with parents and they feel comfortable about approaching the school on any issue.• Their children are becoming mature and responsible.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Some parents would like to see behaviour improved.

The inspection team supports the positive views held by parents. There are some minor issues of behaviour and the school deals with these extremely well.

OTHER INFORMATION

The governing body is responsible for drawing up an action plan within 40 days of receiving the inspection report, showing how the school will tackle the improvements needed. This action plan will be circulated to all parents at the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry to the school varies year on year as a result of the small number of pupils in each year. Over time, however, attainment is broadly average in all areas of learning although it covers the full range. Children in the Foundation Stage do not make satisfactory progress across all areas of learning, as a result of unsatisfactory curricular provision. They are taught with pupils in Years 1 and 2 and receive the same provision, instead of an Early Years curriculum based on learning through play. They spend long periods of time on the carpet listening to the teacher when little of the content of the lesson is directed at them. By the time they leave the Foundation Stage, at the end of the reception year, they are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals in mathematics, in most aspects of communication, language and literacy and physical development, and they achieve satisfactorily. They are unlikely, however, to attain the early learning goals in knowledge and understanding of the world, creative development, personal social and emotional development and some aspects of communication, language and literacy. They are not achieving as well as they should in these areas of learning. Their teacher is inexperienced and does not have a good enough understanding of the needs of this age group. She is due to attend some courses to help her develop her skills. Additionally, the school has identified this as an area for development. This was an issue in the previous inspection that has not yet been addressed.

2. The significance of comparative test results or teacher assessments as measures of a school's performance depends on the number of pupils in a year group. Given the small year groups in this school (normally less than ten in any year), and the variations between numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the year groups, too much emphasis should not be placed upon National Curriculum test results in any one year.

3. In the National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 2 in 2000, results were average in mathematics and reading and below average in writing. Teacher assessments for science were above average. Pupils performed better at the expected Level 2 than at the higher Level 3. In 2001, the year group was smaller; all pupils reached the expected Level 2 in reading, writing and mathematics, and one attained Level 3 across the board. All pupils reached Level 2 in science. When the three years 1998 to 2000 are taken together, results have fluctuated depending upon the number of pupils with special educational needs in each year group.

4. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests taken by pupils at the end of Year 6, results were well above average in English, above average in mathematics and average in science. Again the year group was small. In 2001, the year group was very small, and two out of the four pupils had special educational needs. Only one of the four pupils reached the expected Level 4 in English, 2 in mathematics and 3 in science. In comparison with attainment in schools with a similar proportion of pupils receiving free school meals, attainment in 2000, the most recent year for which data is available, was above average in English, average in mathematics and below average in science. However, this data is based on average points, and in very small year groups such as these, one or two pupils with special educational needs can significantly distort the

points score. When the three years 1998 to 2000 are taken together, results have been consistently above average at the end of Year 6 in English and mathematics and broadly average in science. The previous inspection judged that standards were average in English, mathematics and science by the end of Years 2 and 6, so there has been a good improvement in standards in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6.

5. Inspection evidence shows that there are variations in standards according to the proportion of pupils with special educational needs in each year group. Standards are likely to be average in all subjects, except history, by the end of Year 2. Pupils are achieving satisfactorily in these subjects. Standards are below average in history and pupils are not achieving as well as they should.

6. Standards are likely to be above average in speaking and listening, reading, writing and mathematics by the end of Year 6, and pupils are achieving well. Standards are average in science, design and technology, history, geography, music, physical education and religious education, and pupils are achieving as they should. The school is doing well to accomplish this, as pupils in Year 3/4/5/6 are taught in one class for all subjects except English and mathematics. Standards are below what is expected in ICT. The initiatives to raise standards through improved provision are too recent to have sufficient impact on standards for pupils currently in Year 6.

7. Over time, boys' performance in reading and writing has not been as good as that of girls. The school is aware of this and has purchased books to engage their interest. In literacy and numeracy lessons teachers now ensure that the content of the lessons will fully engage boys as well as girls. Additionally, the school now provides an after school homework club to encourage all pupils, but particularly boys, to complete homework tasks.

8. There are several reasons why pupils achieve well from their broadly average attainment on starting school. The good quality of teaching in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 is fundamental to this. Pupils achieve well in English and mathematics by the end of Year 6 because of the consistently good teaching, the attention given to all aspects of these subjects, and the close attention given to tracking pupils' progress and taking effective action. Pupils do very well in speaking and listening as a result of opportunities to discuss issues in well-organised drama sessions. They do well in mathematics because of the good emphasis on mental calculation and problem solving, and the opportunities they are given to discuss the strategies that can be employed to improve mental calculation.

9. Standards in literacy are above average by the end of Year 6. They are average by the end of Year 2. Pupils use their literacy skills well to enhance learning in other areas, for example to record historical facts and investigations in science. ICT is used satisfactorily to support writing, through opportunities for word processing. Standards in numeracy are average by the end of Year 2 and above average by the end of Year 6. Pupils use their developing skills well across the curriculum, for example to measure in design and technology and in a variety of contexts in science.

10. Pupils with special educational needs are identified early and, when they receive specific support, they make good progress in relation to their individual education plans. In lessons where there is no support provided, pupils with special educational needs

make satisfactory progress in Years 1 and Year 2 and good progress in Year 3 to Year 6. An indication of the success of the special needs provision is that pupils are regularly taken off the register of special educational needs as well as placed on it.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

11. Pupils at the school display good attitudes and behaviour. Provision for personal development and relationships are very good. All pupils are enthusiastic about coming to school and the caring attitudes shown by staff enables new pupils at the school to settle in very quickly indeed. Older pupils work and play with confidence and they make good progress as a result.

12. Respect for other's feelings and values is well featured within the school, and pupils are very supportive of those with special physical and educational needs. Pupils with special needs respond well to the good support provided by the school.

13. Pupils display keen interest and involvement in lessons and activities. For example, in a circle time lesson observed during the inspection week, Year 1 and 2 pupils were able to give their views on friendship in a sensible and mature manner. At play times pupils of different age groups mix well together and older pupils socialise equally well with younger pupils. Lunchtimes are pleasant social occasions where again pupils of differing age groups sit together and display mature and sensible behaviour.

14. Behaviour in the school is generally good, except for occasions in the Year R1/2 class where lessons are sometimes interrupted by the challenging behaviour of individual pupils. The school's behaviour policy of reward and sanction is simple but effective and as a result almost all the pupils behave well, both in and out of lessons. Pupils clearly understand the discipline policy and are very keen to obtain rewards such as house points or certificates for good work and behaviour. They understand and adhere to the school motto of 'Think of Others First' and have a sensible and mature understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Pupils with special educational needs are fully accepted by their peer group, who show care and concern for them.

15. The school has a very concise anti-bullying policy, which is clearly understood by parents, pupils and staff. Instances of bullying are rare and the head teacher very quickly and satisfactorily dealt with the one instance of verbal aggression observed during the inspection week. Pupils have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. They treat other pupils with courtesy and consideration and have good respect for their own and other pupils' belongings and the property of the school. In a lesson observed during the inspection week, pupils accessed the computer unaccompanied and were quick to point out that school equipment had to be treated with care. In the playground some older pupils kicked a football into the flowerbed and were very careful when retrieving it to see that there was no damage to the shrubs or flowers.

16. The personal development of pupils is very good. The school gives them ample responsibility, such as bell ringing, helping with music in assembly, working in the library, acting as house captains and mentoring the very youngest pupils in a simple and unofficial way. Pupils demonstrate that they put a high value on other people's feelings and learn, through the encouragement of staff, that pupils' feelings matter. An ambience of care and concern is created in the school and this has a very positive effect on pupils' progress and development.

17. Attendance at 97.5 per cent during the last term, with no unauthorised absences, was very good. The overwhelming majority of pupils arrive at school on time, and registration sessions are prompt and provide a very bright and positive start to the school day.

18. The pupils' good attitudes to the school, and the very good relationships, ensure that pupils make good progress throughout their school life and are very well prepared to continue the next stage of their education.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. The quality of teaching is good overall. Of the teaching seen, just over half the lessons were good or better, one in three was satisfactory and one in ten unsatisfactory. The unsatisfactory lessons seen were all in the Year R/1/2 class

20. Although teaching seen in the Foundation Stage varied between good and unsatisfactory, it is judged to be unsatisfactory overall due to a lack of appropriate learning through play, inadequate provision for all aspects of the areas of learning, and unsatisfactory use of time. Teaching is satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2. Teaching is good and occasionally very good or excellent in Years 3 to 6. Overall, this is a good improvement since the previous inspection, when almost half of the teaching was found to be unsatisfactory. However, the weaknesses in the teaching in the Foundation Stage, identified in the last report, remain.

21. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage. It is satisfactory in communication, language and literacy and mathematics, but is unsatisfactory for all other areas of learning. Planning is not detailed enough for all areas of learning, and children spend too much of their time sitting on the carpet or in unfocused activity. This means that children do not acquire all the necessary skills to help them reach all the Early Learning Goals and are not sufficiently engaged in productive activity. In most whole class sessions the main input from the teacher is directed at Year 1 and 2 pupils and as a result the reception children lose interest and become fidgety. Although group activities are often planned satisfactorily to meet their needs the rigid interpretation by the classroom assistant means that children do not learn as well as they could. There are too few opportunities for them to show their own initiative or learn through appropriate challenges.

22. Teaching is satisfactory in English and mathematics in Years 1 and 2. It is good overall in English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6. Where teaching is good, the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well and often in a stimulating manner. Planning is detailed and clearly identifies activities for pupils of differing prior attainment, and this ensures that work is appropriately challenging. Work for pupils is based on

guidance from the national strategies and ensures that pupils' skills are developed in a progressive manner. Good use is made of assessment to inform planning. Teachers make good use of questioning, and this helps pupils develop their knowledge and understanding and encourages them to use their imagination.

23. Teachers have good subject knowledge, manage pupils extremely well and make good use of resources. For example, in an excellent literacy lesson pupils were confident to contribute their ideas because they knew these would be valued and would be incorporated into their developing play scripts. In this lesson the teacher's very high expectations of the pupils' productivity and their very good behaviour were key features of their success in the activities. Pupils make good gains in their learning and enjoy the content of the lessons. In both English and mathematics in Years 3 to 6, teachers have high expectations of what pupils can achieve and challenge them well. Where teaching is satisfactory, as in Years 1 and 2, the pace is sometimes slower and work is not always organised well enough to ensure pupils are engaged fully for the length of the session. The teacher tends to monitor groups rather than engage in focused teaching of one particular group. Pupils' good level of interest and concentration in almost all literacy and numeracy lessons helps with their learning. Sometimes, slow pace and uninteresting activities inhibit pupils' progress and affect their engagement with the tasks. Homework is used satisfactorily to enhance learning.

24. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 make good use of opportunities to develop literacy and numeracy across the curriculum. Examples are the creation of graphs, taking measurements, and writing up experiments in science and research projects in history.

25. Teaching in science is satisfactory overall. Work is well presented, there is good coverage of the subject, and there is an appropriate focus on scientific investigations. Teaching in art and music is satisfactory overall. Teaching in history is unsatisfactory in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6. In the lesson seen in Years 1 and 2 there was too little emphasis on historical content, whereas in the lesson in the Year 3 to 6 classes historical concepts were being developed well. There was not enough teaching seen in other subjects to make an overall judgement on the quality of teaching. However, the teaching that was observed in these subjects was satisfactory overall in Years 1 and 2 and good in Years 3 to 6.

26. Teachers make sound use of ICT to support their teaching. For example, during a mathematics lesson, pupils in Years 5 and 6 used computers to create a spreadsheet for a family holiday. In a lesson in the Year R/1/2 class, pupils used a number game to reinforce their knowledge of numbers to 20. They have also used 'Colour Magic' to create their own self-portrait based on the work of the artist Mondrian.

27. In lessons, there are good features which contribute effectively to learning. In most science lessons pupils are given opportunities to work together on practical tasks and investigations, which enables them to share ideas and discuss methods. Pupils with special needs, of whatever complexity, are very well integrated into all lessons. The class teacher and the LSA's very effectively support them. This, in turn, encourages all pupils to treat them well and they are fully included in all aspects of the curriculum. All teachers have good relationships with their pupils and as a result pupils respond well

with good behaviour and responsible attitudes to their work. In the ~~good~~ lessons, teachers are well prepared, lessons have a brisk pace and activities are purposeful and challenging. In these lessons pupils are enthusiastic, work hard and put a good amount of intellectual and creative effort into their work.

28. In the unsatisfactory lessons, however, the work is insufficiently challenging, the pace is slower and the work is not clearly targeted at pupils' needs. This factor is linked to teacher's inadequate knowledge of the subject and lack of experience. In these lessons children do not make the gains of which they are capable. Occasionally, behaviour is an issue and this disrupts the learning of all pupils.

29. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs have clear, concise targets, which are shared with pupils and reviewed regularly. Teaching is particularly well focused on specific needs when pupils are supported in lessons. Communication between teachers and support staff is effective and this enhances pupils' learning.

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

30. The school now provides pupils in Years 1 to 6 with a curriculum significantly improved from the time of the last inspection. All the issues identified for improvement then were taken very seriously and all necessary mechanisms put in place to overcome the many weaknesses reported. However, there are still some weaknesses in the Foundation Stage curriculum, which need attention. In all areas of provision, the curriculum now meets statutory requirements. In geography, design and technology, information technology and music, where the curriculum did not meet the National Curriculum requirements, provision is now satisfactory. In religious education, the school now conforms to the locally agreed syllabus. Aspects of mathematics, which were weak, are now suitably covered in curricular planning. The requirements of the national literacy and numeracy strategies are followed and adapted flexibly to suit the school's needs. Strategies for the teaching of literacy and numeracy are effective across the school. These aspects have improved very greatly of late because of the funding for a second teacher in the mornings and the acquisition of a mobile classroom. Together, these mean that Years 5 and 6 have their literacy and numeracy teaching separated from Years 3 and 4. This creates much more effective learning for both groups. The school now uses national guidelines for all other subjects, which ensure that the expected breadth and balance of curricular provision is in place.

31. The provision for the curriculum in the Foundation Stage is unsatisfactory as these children receive the same provision as pupils in Years 1 and 2 instead of an Early Years curriculum based on learning through play. The curricular provision is now satisfactory for pupils in Years 1 and 2 and good for pupils between Years 3 and 6. The improvement in curricular provision for pupils when they are older is due to the good range of additional opportunities to which they have access in these years. These include a range of afterschool activities, visits and residential experiences that enhance their learning of many subjects, for example history and geography. Pupils also benefit from sporting opportunities, visits to the secondary school, taster sessions of modern languages and participation in musical concerts. While younger pupils do have access to these, this range contributes more to the quality of curricular provision when pupils are

older. The adjacent village hall is a useful provision for hosting some of these events, which would otherwise be difficult for the school. Whilst the facility is expensive, the range of opportunities identified would not be as rich without it. Because activities often happen there, the community is appropriately involved in many of these events. The nursery/playgroup from which many pupils enter the school is one of these. This on-site provision ensures close liaison for families whose children move from one to the other.

32. The school's curriculum is based on appropriate policies and guidelines from which long-term plans, at school level, cater for the wide range of age groups within a given class. This ensures that pupils do not repeat work in any subject as they move through the years in one class. From these longer-term plans, teachers plan in six-weekly blocks. Teachers in their roles as coordinators monitor the curriculum in their given subjects. Continuity and progression in pupils' learning are thus secure. Lesson plans are now appropriate to provide for different year groups across the range of subjects. All pupils are fully included in the school's provision, with equality of access to all activities in and outside school. One pupil who is disapplied from the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 6, takes an extremely active part in all curricular and extra-curricular activities.

33. The good quality support given to pupils with special educational needs ensures their inclusion in all aspects of school life. Teachers and support staff plan work suited to their needs. The Code of Practice regulations are fully met. Provision for formal interviews and regular contacts with parents are good and contribute well to the learning of these pupils.

34. Circle time provides all the expected elements for the personal, social and health education aspects of the curriculum. Governors have given due consideration to sex education, and Year 5 pupils are provided with an appropriate video covering this aspect of their lives.

35. The school's links with other small local schools are effective. The arts week, for example, which takes place in the summer term, is very useful in enabling pupils to work with pupils from similar schools to develop larger scale artwork. Links with secondary schools are secure, particularly with the main secondary school. There are useful cluster group meetings, where teachers exchange information about pupils who are to transfer to the secondary school, but curricular links in core subjects, English in particular, need to be restrengthened because they are not as useful for the school as they once were.

36. Provision for pupils' personal development, including their moral and social development, is good. Satisfactory provision is made for their spiritual and cultural development. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection, when there was unsatisfactory provision for pupils' spiritual awareness and their understanding of other cultures.

37. This is a happy, caring school, which offers its pupils a welcoming and secure environment as a good basis for their spiritual development. This aspect is provided for in assemblies, religious education lessons, and opportunities for prayer and reflection which form part of the daily act of collective worship. A further valuable dimension to pupils' spiritual awareness comes from opportunities to listen to the works of well known composers, and the quality of singing in assemblies. There are good opportunities for

reflection in circle times and in some areas of the curriculum such as art, music, English and science. However, the potential that all subjects of the curriculum can make to pupils' spiritual development has yet to be fully explored. The school needs to identify these opportunities in its planning.

38. The very good relationships that exist and the good example set by adults who work in the school, support pupils' moral development. Concern for the physical and emotional well being of others and respect for each other's feelings is evident in all aspects of school life. The school's motto: 'think of others first' is known to pupils and was seen in practice throughout the inspection. As a result, all pupils, including those with special educational needs, feel valued, respected and included. In their dealings with pupils, adults promote values of honesty, fairness and truthfulness. Teachers give a very good lead, showing care and concern for their pupils, and in encouraging reflection on the consequences of their actions. In most lessons, teachers control behaviour through positive encouragement, stressing principles of fairness and respect. They encourage discussion during circle times, which are sensitively managed so as to deepen pupils' understanding of issues of concern, such as the importance of the individual within the school community and care of the environment. Pupils' achievements and good behaviour are appropriately celebrated, and pupils are aware of the rewards and sanctions policy.

39. The school works hard to promote pupils' social development and pupils respond well. The very good working relationships between adults set a good example to pupils. Teachers provide many opportunities for pupils to work together in mixed gender groups and to co-operate in their work. This results in a harmonious working atmosphere in most lessons. Older pupils are made aware of their responsibilities towards the younger ones, and as a result they carry out their duties in a mature and caring way. Good examples of this were seen in the dining room and playground. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate and contribute to the community in which they live. Taking part in inter school sporting competitions, Arts Weeks and entertaining the 'Magdalen Happy Circle' are some fine examples of this. Pupils' social development and sense of achievement are further promoted by opportunities to take part in drama and musical performances, residential trips, and festivals such as Mothering Sunday and Christingle with the local community. Pupils are also encouraged to contribute to the wider community through fundraising for many charities such as The Red Cross, McMillan Nurses' Appeal and Children In Need. The school was recently visited by children from a Romanian orphanage to which the pupils had made generous donations. In this respect, as in others, the school is successfully helping its pupils to develop as caring and mature members of society.

40. Pupils are encouraged to appreciate British culture and traditions and to develop their knowledge of them, for example through well planned visits to places of cultural and historical interest such as the Victorian School, museums and the theatre. The school makes good use of local community activities such as music festivals, art competitions, country dancing and carol concerts to support pupils' understanding of their heritage. Pupils are also given increasing opportunities to develop their understanding of the richness and diversity of other cultures and faiths, mainly through the religious education programme and assemblies. This area of pupils' development has been significantly enhanced since the last inspection, particularly through the revised programme for religious education. Pupils take part in a multicultural day with other schools to increase

their awareness of Britain as a multi-cultural society. Building on this good progress, the school now needs to further develop opportunities across the curriculum to increase pupils' understanding of non-European cultures. Greater provision of books and of multicultural music, art and dance will help in this respect.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

41. Procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils' welfare are very good. The school has written its own child protection policy, adapted from the Norfolk Local Education Authority module and is clear and concise. The child protection officer is well aware of her duties and the school keeps very good records of child protection matters. There is a link governor with responsibility for child protection who liaises very fully with staff.

42. The school puts a very high priority on health and safety. An annual health and safety audit is carried out and any health and safety items drawn to the school's attention are immediately rectified.

43. Pupils are very well cared for by staff on a day-to-day basis. The caring ethos of the school ensures that all pupils are fully supported at all times and their welfare and progress is monitored carefully by staff.

44. There are very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour, and for eliminating oppressive behaviour. These ensure that any occasional instances of poor or challenging behaviour are very quickly picked up and dealt with. Pupils know, understand and respect the few school rules and are very anxious to obey them. The high level of support and encouragement given to pupils by the head teacher and staff ensures that the school is a safe, secure and caring community. The very effective pastoral system ensures that pupils' welfare is given a high priority, and pupils are able to make good progress as a result.

45. The school has effective methods for promoting and improving attendance. The school secretary monitors the attendance registers and immediately contacts parents if any absences are unexplained. The school has recently moved to an electronic system of recording attendance.

46. There are very good procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher maintains a register of special needs and ensures that this is kept up-to-date. There are good procedures for placing pupils on the register, keeping parents informed, and reviewing progress regularly. The school fully meets requirements outlined in pupils' statements of educational needs. The last inspection report commented favourably on the supportive atmosphere within the school and the good relationships between children and adults. These strengths have been maintained.

47. The school's assessment procedures are much improved since the last inspection, and they are now good. Nationally validated tests are undertaken in all years in English and mathematics, so the school can track pupils' progress from a recognised baseline of achievement. Being so small, the school can use the data relatively easily at individual

level for each pupil in the various year groups. This provides a good body of evidence about each pupil's progress in these subjects. In addition to these mechanisms, teachers use the National Curriculum criteria which describe different levels of attainment. They employ these to highlight what pupils can and can't do, to establish where the pupils are in relation to these levels. When pupils are older, these assessments are shared with them so they too have a clear idea about what they need to do to improve. What the pupils cannot do is made clear to them, and become their individual targets for improvement. Once they can demonstrate that they can achieve these targets, the next stage for improvement is identified. Evidence of these targets and achievements remains in pupils' files. For example, the mathematics ones are constantly in the pupils' sight in their numeracy folders, so they can keep them in their minds as they work. Targets are also identified in the front of their literacy books.

48. Assessment in foundation subjects has also improved well since the last report. Teachers have taken on board the National Curriculum levels for all foundation subjects and assess pupils' achievement against these at key points in the curriculum. These are mostly at the end of a unit of work. Tests are used to identify how well pupils have learned the content of the unit. This aspect of assessment of foundation subjects is more secure and systematic than that found in most schools of this type. Teachers have worked very hard to secure these improvements to assessment, and pupils' achievements and progress are benefiting accordingly. Reports to parents are now securely based on objective evidence of attainment and achievement.

49. In the core subjects, there is some evidence of teachers amending the curriculum in the light of the outcome of assessment. For example the recent search for funding to split the Year 3/4/5/6 class for literacy and numeracy was based on judgements about pupils' progress being hindered by teaching this very wide age range together. Now that the split has been achieved, the effectiveness of the measures is being closely monitored and has become one of the targets in the performance management assessment for one of the teachers. Outside the core subjects there is little evidence of assessment informing the development of the curriculum, but the whole area of assessment has taken on a much higher profile in the school than at the time of the last inspection. The school needs to identify its able and talented pupils through its assessment and to provide a more effectively differentiated curriculum for these higher attaining pupils.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. The school has very good links with parents, and this is clearly shown in parents' response to the pre-inspection questionnaire. The overwhelming majority of parents who replied felt that they would be comfortable about approaching the school with problems, that the school works closely with them, that they are kept well informed about how their children are progressing, and that their children like school. The inspection findings concur entirely with these views.

51. The school has very worked very hard to ensure that communication with parents is very good, and parents are kept well informed about the work of the school.

52. The school has produced a brochure, which is informative, well written, and gives parents all the information they need about the ethos of the school, lesson timetables and details of the curriculum. In addition, the school produces a half termly newsletter giving up-to-date details about activities which the school promotes and items which concern the children. The school has recently consulted parents through a questionnaire on how they wished to have information disseminated to them, and has taken their views into account.

53. Annual reports to parents are clear and concise, and they give full information to parents on progress made by pupils and on target setting. Each year group has two parents' evenings a year where parents are given a timed appointment to see staff to discuss the contents of reports. In addition, parents are free to contact the school at any time if they have matters of concern that they wish to discuss. The school has provided a useful notice board at the entrance to the school, giving parents information on activities and events.

54. The school encourages parents to come in to help, although relatively few parents take the opportunity to do so. The small number of parents who do take part help with paired reading, in supervision of pupils on school outings and in the organisation of out of school games clubs. The Parent Teachers Association is a lively body, which arranges social functions such as barbecues and discos and last year raised £1,000 for school funds. Its work is much appreciated by the school.

55. Induction procedures for parents of reception pupils are very good. Parents are invited to come to the school for several visits, accompanied by their children. They are warmly welcomed and given a wealth of information by the head teacher and staff. Parents of pupils with special needs are invited to annual reviews, are fully involved in target setting and are kept closely informed of their children's progress.

56. The school has recently rewritten its Home School Agreement and parents are pleased that the school actively invites them to become partners in their children's education.

57. In response to the questionnaire a significant minority of parents said they did not feel that behaviour in the school was good. The inspection team found this to be linked to specific instances of challenging behaviour. Overall, behaviour in the school is good.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The overall leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff are good. The headteacher provides thoughtful and caring leadership and the commitment she shows to the inclusion of all pupils contributes strongly to the good ethos of the school. This is a good improvement since the previous inspection. The headteacher is well supported in this approach by the other permanent member of staff who shares some of the responsibility for managing the curriculum in this small school. There is a temporary member of staff teaching in the Year R/1/2 class who has taken on the management of several subjects of the curriculum. She is conscientious in her work and has been given a good level of support from the rest of the staff. The headteacher

effectively co-ordinates provision for pupils with special educational needs. There is good liaison between the headteacher, classroom teachers and support assistants. The support provided by outside agencies is well managed by the school. The special needs governor is fully involved, and keeps the governing body well informed.

59. All staff share a commitment to raising standards still further, and they have a good understanding of the areas for development in their subjects. For example, the headteacher has already identified some weaknesses in the ICT curriculum and this is targeted in the school development plan. The school is working hard to raise standards of attainment for boys in reading and writing and has initiatives in place to bring this about this. However, it has not done enough to improve provision in the Foundation Stage. The way in which the staff work as a team contributes positively to the standards attained.

60. The head teacher monitors the curricular provision and the quality of teaching through a variety of means. Teachers' planning is scrutinised to ensure the curriculum is appropriately covered and classroom observations assess the quality of teaching. However, this requires greater rigour, particularly with regard to setting targets for improvement in teaching and in ensuring these targets are met.

61. There are several reasons why the school is effective. The teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. Attention is paid to setting targets for improvement, and termly targets are set in English and mathematics. Teachers identify the percentage of their class who are expected to achieve the target, and record the outcome. Pupils also have their own individual targets. As a result, tasks are well matched to the needs of all pupils in English and mathematics, including higher attainers and those with special educational needs, and pupils make good gains in their learning. Good tracking procedures show that pupils of all abilities generally reach, and often exceed, the targets set for them on the basis of their attainment when they start school.

62. The way in which the governing body fulfils its responsibilities is very good, and this represents good improvement since the previous inspection. They are supportive and have a good understanding of their roles. Governors monitor the work of the school through their committees as well as through well considered programme of visits. They have ensured that the key issues from the previous inspection, when the school was considered to have serious weaknesses, have been well addressed. There has been good improvement in the curriculum, ensuring that all subjects are covered appropriately, and the quality of teaching has improved significantly, with nine per cent of teaching unsatisfactory and over half of the lessons being good or better.

63. Assessment is in place for all subjects, and the school is using it well to inform planning in English and mathematics. Support staff are very well deployed. The quality of education has improved significantly. The school is continuing with its efforts to improve the building by enlarging the library area. All statutory requirements are met.

64. The school makes good use of funds available to it. The management plan is a clear, working document and is based on an audit of the school's current position. The involvement of staff and governors means that educational priorities identified are relevant. The procedures for monitoring, and evaluating the extent to which these priorities are achieved, are well focused on improving standards as for example in pupils' writing for a range of purposes, which is a focus for this year.

65. Educational developments are supported through careful financial planning. The governing body's finance committee monitors the budget carefully to ensure that funding is available to meet the school's priorities. Funds carried forward to the next financial year are deliberately allocated to maintain the maximum number of classes as the year groups vary significantly in size. There are good structures in place to ensure the strategic management of resources. Recommendations from the last auditor's report have been fully implemented. The school applies the principles of best value well in its use of resources. Results from national tests are compared with those of other schools, and governors invite tenders and explore options before making decisions. This is helping the school to achieve its objectives. A very good example was the purchase of the mobile classroom, which has allowed pupils from Year 3 to Year 6 to be taught English and mathematics in two classes rather than one. This has helped to raise standards in these subjects. All grants and extra funds are used effectively for their intended purposes and for the benefit of all pupils.

66. Good financial control is complemented by efficient school administration. The school secretary provides an efficient service and a warm welcome to pupils, parents and visitors. The caretaker is efficient in ensuring that the school is well maintained. Satisfactory use is made of staff, accommodation and learning resources. Support staff are well used to support the learning of pupils with special educational needs and are efficient in the performance of their duties. However, better use needs to be made of staff and resources to support learning in the Foundation Stage, and of the library to develop the independent research skills of older pupils.

67. Although good use is made of new technology for administration purposes, the school has correctly identified the need to develop pupils' understanding of information and communication technology within the subject itself and across the curriculum.

68. At the time of the last inspection the school was reported to be providing unsatisfactory value for money. The school now gives satisfactory value for money. This judgement takes into account pupils' personal circumstances and prior attainment, the quality of education provided, pupils' attitudes, behaviour and personal development, improvement since the last inspection, and the outcomes of education in terms of standards achieved. It also takes into account the unit cost of education, which is high for a school of this type.

69. The match of staff qualifications and experience is better for Years 3 to 6 than for Years R/1/2. The same is true for the non-teaching assistants; this help is better in the later years than in Years 1 and 2. The school has recruited a temporary teacher so that the head teacher can teach literacy and numeracy in these morning lessons. The school benefits greatly from additional teaching provision, for example for music, to cover aspects of the curriculum where teachers are not confident. Other adults also help teachers. An ICT technician, for example, provides well for pupils' learning in this area of the curriculum. The school secretary usefully doubles as a learning support assistant in the afternoons to help one of the pupils with special educational needs. Administrative assistance in the school is good. The temporary teacher is a committed part of the school team, but her reinduction into the profession has not been monitored with sufficient rigour to enable the school to provide completely for the current needs of all pupils in the YR/1/2 class. Induction of staff into the school is an area for improvement.

70. The school uses the adjacent village hall for activities as widely varied as school lunches and musical performances. Without this facility, accommodation would be unsatisfactory. Assemblies occur in the school library, which is a vestibule space, a thoroughfare to the playground, and used for a wide variety of activities such as working with learning support assistants and reading to adults. The school appreciates that this space is too small and inadequate as a library and has plans to develop it. The school gardens and playground provide a good, well-kept environment. It is equipped well for pupils to play and to learn, an example being the pond, where pupils study wildlife for science projects.

71. Learning resources are broadly satisfactory. Teachers generally have sufficient resources to deliver the current curriculum satisfactorily. The school is very short of books, though. More books are needed for the teaching of reading and for pupils' general use as fiction and nonfiction materials. Taken together with the inadequate space for the library, the lack of books makes library provision inadequate for the current needs of the school. The school's decision to make this a priority for improvement is timely. Recently acquired new computers make the school's provision for ICT good.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

- In order to raise standards and enable pupils to make further progress, the governing body, head teacher and staff as a whole team need to:
- Improve the provision and teaching for children in the Foundation Stage by:
(Paragraphs: 1,21,22,29,74,75,76,81)
 - * Carrying out improvements identified in the school development plan.
 - * Ensuring that time is provided for relevant structured play activities.
 - * Ensuring the areas of learning are covered in a manner appropriate to the needs of this age group.
 - * Ensuring that all time is used effectively to develop children's skills and competencies.
 - * Ensuring that teaching is monitored and supported to enable improvements to be made.
- Improve standards and provision in ICT by:
(Paragraphs: 7,123,125,126,127)
 - * Carrying out improvements as indicated in the school development plan.
 - * Improving the use of ICT across the curriculum.
 - * Ensuring that planning is detailed enough to enable all class teachers to implement it successfully within the classroom.
- Monitoring teaching to ensure improvements are secured by:
(Paragraphs: 61,67,70,75,99)
 - * Ensuring that monitoring of teaching is more rigorous.
 - * Ensuring that targets are followed up and improvements secured.
 - * Ensuring that planning is detailed enough to help inexperienced teachers.
- In addition the school needs to:-
 - * Ensure that new members of staff have a clear understanding of curricular requirements through an appropriate:
(Paragraphs: 67,70,74)
 - * Improve standards in history by the end of Year 2.
(Paragraphs: 6,119,121)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	21
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	17

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	1	9	8	2	0	0
Percentage	4	4	43	40	9	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. [When the total number is substantially less than 100, add] Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than one [two, three, etc] percentage point[s]. [Where the total is close to or greater than 100, use only the first sentence.]

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)	47
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	4

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	1

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	0

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	1

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

The requirement to report on attainment at the end of Year 6 is lifted because the number of boys and girls are ten or fewer.

Where numbers are omitted from the table of results at the end of Year 2, it is because there were fewer than ten boys and girls in the year group.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year 6 Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	5	5	10

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	9	9	10
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	90(86)	90(86)	100(100)
	National	83(82)	84(83)	90(87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys			
	Girls			
	Total	9	9	10
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	90(86)	90(86)	100(100)
	National	84(82)	88(86)	88(87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	43
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes:
YR-Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Average class size	19

**Education support staff:
YR- Y6**

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	40

Financial information

Financial year	2000/001
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£

Total income	163417.00
Total expenditure	158568.00
Expenditure per pupil	3524.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	6451.00

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
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
Number of questionnaires returned

47
24

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	50	46	0	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	38	4	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	58	25	12	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	50	46	4	0	0
The teaching is good.	67	33	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	54	46	0	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	79	21	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	75	25	0	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	46	0	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	67	33	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	62	33	4	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	22	0	4	9

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

72. Children are admitted to the reception class in the year in which they have their fifth birthday. Older children attend fulltime from September and some of the younger children attend on a parttime basis until January. The children are accommodated in a class that also contains pupils in Years 1 and 2. Evidence from baseline assessment shows that attainment on entry varies year on year, but is broadly average.

73. The curriculum is not sufficiently adapted to suit the needs of the Foundation Stage children, and remains unsatisfactory, as it was at the time of the last report. As a result of a lack of structured play activities, children do not develop all the Early Learning Goals, children's achievement is generally unsatisfactory, except in aspects of literacy and in mathematics, where it is satisfactory. The inexperienced teacher needs more help in order to provide an appropriate curriculum for these children.

74. Teaching is unsatisfactory overall in the Foundation Stage. Planning is not detailed enough for all areas of learning and children spend too much of their time sitting on the carpet or in unfocused activity. This means that children do not acquire all the necessary skills to help them reach all the Early Learning Goals and are not sufficiently engaged in productive activity. In most whole class sessions the main input from the teacher is directed at Year 1 and 2 pupils and as a result the reception children lose interest and become fidgety. Although group activities are often planned satisfactorily to meet their needs, the rigid interpretation by the classroom assistant means that children do not learn as well as they could. There are too few opportunities for them to show their own initiative or learn through appropriate challenges. Teaching needs to be monitored with more rigour in order to secure improvements.

Personal, social and emotional development

75. Children enter the reception class with average personal and social skills, but by the time they leave the reception class they are unlikely to achieve the Early Learning Goals. This area of the curriculum is not rigorously planned for, and there are many missed opportunities when personal and social skills could be further developed. This means that achievement in relation to their prior abilities is unsatisfactory. The children sometimes work and play well together, but at times when activities do not fully engage them they squabble with each other. They sit quietly for long periods of time on the carpet but often the teacher's discussion is aimed at Year 1 and Year 2 pupils, so they lose interest and become fidgety. They generally move between activities quite well but are not encouraged to clear away after activities; the classroom assistant usually does this for them. Their levels of concentration are very variable but this is linked to the activities which are provided for them; when they are at the appropriate level children enjoy them and stay on task well, but at other times they can be disruptive. The teacher prescribes activities, which the classroom assistant interprets quite rigidly. The effect is that there are limited opportunities for the children to make their own choices and begin to take responsibility for their learning. As a result, teaching is unsatisfactory.

Communication, language and literacy.

76. By the time children leave the reception class they will reach the Early Learning Goals in some aspects of this area. They enter school with average skills, and are generally integrated satisfactorily into the school's literacy strategy, which has been adapted for this age group. Children join in a shortened carpet time, and then engage in appropriate activities closely supervised by the classroom assistant. They enhance their knowledge of initial sounds through activities, which involve passing a pebble round where they have to name an object beginning with a particular sound. This knowledge of letter sounds helps them with their reading, and they are beginning to recognise initial sounds in everyday words used in the classroom. They enjoy books, handle them correctly, and know that print carries meaning. For example, one child confidently pointed to the words as she made up her own story for the book that she was reading. The children are learning to form their letters correctly, and copy their own names. However, they have only limited opportunities to write independently, using play situations, or to negotiate plans and activities, as there are very few opportunities for them to work together independently or use their own initiative. Additionally, opportunities to use their speaking skills through roleplay are limited. Overall achievement in this area is satisfactory, but there are not enough opportunities for children to develop their free writing skills or use language to clarify their thinking or modify their ideas.

Mathematical development.

77. The children are becoming familiar with numbers to ten through a variety of counting activities and matching numerals to the relevant number. They are learning to recognise and complete patterns. Occasionally they are able to continue the pattern and make their own. They sing number rhymes, carrying out the actions well, and they make good use of their fingers in attempting to count back from ten. They are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goals by the end of the reception year. Achievement is satisfactory. Teaching is satisfactory overall. Sound use is made of the numeracy strategy to develop children's awareness and understanding of number. The work is planned to meet the needs of the children, and practical activities reinforce learning. For example, the children counted the number of letters in their names and selected the same number of circles in which to write each letter. In the plenary sessions the class teacher ensured that the reception children were able to show what they could do. The main weaknesses in the teaching for the reception children are ensuring that the pace of the lesson is maintained and there are sufficient practical activities to interest and challenge them.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

78. Generally, the children have a sound general knowledge of the world about them when they start school but they are unlikely to achieve the required standard by the end of the reception year. This area of the curriculum is planned according to the subjects of the National Curriculum, which is not appropriate for this age group. For example, in a science lesson they had to sit quietly for a considerable amount of time while much of the lesson was beyond their ability. Then, while the rest of the class were preparing for their group tasks they sat and completed jigsaws which were not in any way related to the science lesson. Eventually they were allowed to take part in the practical activity and

discovered that their heart did beat faster after exercise. Through previous work they have gained some understanding of foods they like and enjoy. They prepared a plate of food showing some of the elements of a healthy diet. In geography and religious education lessons there was again too little input directly relevant to these young children. They sat too long on the carpet and were not provided with activities appropriate to their learning needs, though they did eventually paint a picture of their own home. They have been involved in looking at celebrations such as Harvest Festival and Sukkot. During the inspection children were given opportunities to use the computer, but there was limited support to help them use the programmes. Too many of the activities provided are inappropriate, lacking challenge or stimulation, and work is not planned to meet their specific needs. Overall, children's achievement in this area of learning is unsatisfactory.

Physical development.

79. Children in the reception class are well coordinated, move with sound control of their bodies, and use space appropriately. Children ride bikes, run and skip during outdoor play activities. They are learning to use small equipment such as bats and balls. They handle small tools such as scissors and glue sticks with precision, and generally have sound hand control when writing and drawing. The Early Learning Goals are likely to be attained by the children by the end of the reception year, and their achievement is satisfactory. No actual teaching of physical education was observed during the inspection. However, it is obvious that in the school overall there is good provision for the development of pupils' physical skills.

Creative development.

80. Children have opportunities to sing songs and handle percussion instruments correctly. They explore colour, texture and shape through the use of collage, paint and modelling materials but have limited opportunities to develop their own ideas and use their imagination. For example, little use was made of role-play during the inspection, and the role-play corner was not stimulating, and did not support other areas of learning. Children were given some opportunities to paint freely but not to mix their own paints, as the colours were already mixed. By the end of the reception year the children are unlikely to attain the Early Learning Goals, and their overall achievement in this area of learning is unsatisfactory. Teaching is unsatisfactory. There are too few opportunities for children to make their own response to the activities on offer and an overall lack of stimulus to develop their imagination. Better planning in this area could provide more opportunities for children to develop their creative awareness and improve their level of achievement.

ENGLISH

81. Inspection evidence shows pupils' standards at the end of Year 2 are average in all aspects of English. By the end of Year 6, pupils currently in the school are above average. Pupils achieve as they should in Years 1 and 2 and achieve well between Years 3 and 6, particularly in the older years. Boys especially do well when judged against their prior attainment. In some years, Year 2 for example, boys are the highest attaining pupils in their year groups, which is unusual in English. In writing too, the lower attaining boys in Year 6 are above average for boys. Attainment in Year 5 is below average overall because of the higher than average proportion of pupils with special educational needs in the year group. Reading is below average and pupils' handwriting is weak. In Years 1 and 2 more girls than boys have special educational needs, some of which are related to behaviour, and this sometimes has an adverse effect on their attainment and progress in English.

82. Test results over recent years show that standards in reading and writing in Year 2 have varied over time because of the nature and attainment levels of different year groups. In 2000, these were above average at the expected Level 2, with no pupils exceeding this level. Test results in Year 6 have been good for both boys and girls, exceeding the national average. When the three years 1998 to 2000 are taken together, results have been consistently above average at the end of Year 6 in English. This is a good improvement since the last inspection, when standards were average.

83. In speaking and listening, pupils' attainment is average by Year 2. Pupils listen well to the teacher, sometimes even when sitting for longer than appropriate on the carpet. Most pupils also listen well to each other, incorporating what they hear into their own thinking and amending their work accordingly. Pupils in Years 1 and 2, for example, could give and act out instructions, explaining how to make a sandwich. They often develop good levels of conversation with each other in groups and pairs. Pupils talk fluently to adults about the books they have read and in the literacy hour were using an appropriate range of vocabulary to give instructions for making pizzas. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 likewise listen attentively to their teachers. They worked well together on their tasks as they tried to understand the difficult language involved in a literacy worksheet. Their speculations about what words meant were sensible. Pupils in these years listen well to each other and teachers allow opportunities for extended answers to questions, giving pupils enough time to explain ideas. This is an improvement since the last inspection where these opportunities were very limited.

84. Speaking and listening are particularly strong in Years 5 and 6, where pupils' excellent levels of interaction in a literacy hour project, were used highly effectively to create very good playscripts based on Alice in Wonderland. These are very strong aspects of pupils' achievements by the end of Year 6, when speaking and listening are above average. This represents good progress across the school in speaking and listening and an improvement since the last inspection, when standards in this area were average by Year 6. The school now provides pupils with good opportunities to develop their speaking skills in various areas of the curriculum. A very good example of this was seen in a history lesson based on Ancient Greek life. In addition to the historical aspects, pupils in Year 5 and 6 were creating short dramatic plays based on myths they had studied and performing these to Year 3 and 4 outside the playground in order to recreate the environment of an 'amphitheatre'. These performances were good. They showed a high level of understanding of both the mythical content and of pupils' abilities

in drama. Some pupils had created these plays very effectively, using rhyming couplets with the help of an adult. Younger pupils in this class made masks of imaginary Greek characters, for example of people who had survived the battle of Marathon, or who had lost relatives in the fight and they were learning to project their voices across a long distance outside. This not only gave good practice in projecting their voices, but also gave them a good opportunity to link what they said with the expressions they had created on the faces of their characters.

85. Pupils' attainment in reading is average at the end of Year 2. Higher attaining pupils in Year 2 are able to discuss fiction and nonfiction books they have read, often using a good range of vocabulary and accurate grammar. Higher and middle attaining pupils read with good intonation and expression. They use their knowledge of letter sounds to pronounce unknown words and can make hypotheses about meaning from the context. The attainment of boys in Year 2 is above average for boys and they show positive attitudes towards reading, speaking of their enjoyment of books of all kinds. Lower attaining pupils who are well below average in reading, are very tentative in their delivery, guessing inaccurately at what words say, and are unable to use an appropriate knowledge of the sounds of letters to be able to pronounce

86. Attainment in reading is above average at Year 6. This also represents an improvement from the last report, where standards in reading were average. Higher, middle and lower attaining pupils in Year 6, whose reading was heard, were all very competent in the mechanics of reading and in their comprehension of the books they read. Pupils' fluency is good and they read expressively, incorporating aspects of their drama lessons very effectively and read with expression. All could describe the parts of stories they had covered and were able to speculate imaginatively about what might happen next. They could offer opinions about characters, making very good links with the "real" world of experience for example about emotional aspects of their reading. Older pupils use their reading to very good effect across the curriculum, with Year 6 in particular reading well for information, research and for pleasure. Reading in Year 5 is much weaker, below average overall, and matches the known weaknesses of the year group. Reading in Years 3 and 4 is in line with expectations for pupils' ages.

87. Standards in writing are average by the end of Year 2. Pupils learn to form letters through a sound focus on this in handwriting lessons. The content of pupils' writing in Years 1 and 2 is appropriate for their abilities. They were writing instructions competently in a literacy lesson seen. Most spell simple words correctly and use capital letters and full stops with some consistency. Pupils' writing is also in line with expectations in Years 3 and 4, where most pupils were able to recognise inaccuracies in written text and could correct it so that it was accurately punctuated with capital letters, full stops and speech marks. They could not recognise the omission of apostrophes though. Written responses to the task in a literacy lesson in Year 4 were hindered by the pupils' lack of understanding of words in the work sheet, which were too hard for them.

88. By Year 6, pupils' writing is above average. As with reading, the work of lower attaining pupils in Year 6 is average. In their writing of playscripts for the Alice in Wonderland adaptations, pupils in Year 5 and 6 could use adverbs well to produce effective stage directions indicating how characters should deliver their lines. Lower attaining boys in Year 5, working with the teacher in their group activities, made excellent progress in understanding how to give such directions for the speakers in the play. Their achievement at the end of the lesson, when they acted out their scene, was

an excellent example of putting these directions into action as, for example, when they spoke their lines angrily or sarcastically. It also showed excellent inclusion of the pupil with special educational needs, who played the role of the dormouse well. Other middle and higher attaining pupils were writing their playscripts and stage directions well, quite independently of the teacher. In this lesson, a classroom assistant used ICT very effectively with a Year 5 pupil with special educational needs, who has recently made very good progress in writing.

89. Almost all pupils have very positive attitudes towards speaking and listening, reading and writing. They speak with confidence and assurance and enjoy most opportunities to use language in all its forms. Lower attaining pupils are somewhat more diffident, but when encouraged, will use what they know to appropriate effect. As they get older, pupils' own very considerate attitudes and high degree of independent working are key factors in creating a very pleasant, purposeful, highly focused working environment for their English lessons.

90. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is satisfactory. It is good overall in Years 3 to 6, and occasionally some very good and excellent teaching was seen in Year 5 and 6. In these older years, pupils have benefited very greatly from the school's recent opportunity to divide Years 3 and 4 from Years 5 and 6 for their literacy learning. Teachers are much better able to ensure that the content of lessons is more finely targeted at the requirements of the National Curriculum for different year groups. Teachers in Years 3 to 6 have a good overall understanding of the National Literacy Strategy and its broad objectives. They plan well to ensure that their projects fulfil the demands of the literacy hour and also interest and engage pupils to maximum effect. Such an example lies in the current Year 5/6 project about Alice in Wonderland. Pupils engage fully in the teachers' planned objectives and are very excited by additional factors such as the theatre visit associated with this lesson and the opportunities for drama, which are well integrated into their curriculum. This excellent teaching creates a bubble of lively enthusiasm for the subject, which is infectious and inspirational for pupils. The example of teaching the use of adverbs through stage directions to indicate how something is done is typical of the degree of thought and consideration by the teacher of how to make learning interesting and relevant to pupils. Another such example was the adaptation of the curriculum plan to include reading of the story "When the Whales came", the play pupils were soon to see in the theatre. Pupils were being very well prepared for what they would see, with the visit itself providing an opportunity to encounter the world of theatre. These very good links are well considered throughout the curriculum at this level, with many examples where aspects of English are reinforced in other subjects. Teachers encourage pupils well with good one-to-one sessions that are well targeted to meet their individual needs, in addition to the usual group sessions in the literacy hour. In Year 4, for example, good explanation of the difficult language of a work sheet enabled pupils working in pairs to understand what was required of them.

91. English is well co-ordinated. In addition to good planning for the literacy hour, pupils have guided reading lessons, which successfully contribute to their achievements in reading and their enjoyment of it. Handwriting lessons make sure that pupils develop appropriate script. Longterm plans ensure that each year group can cover the requirements for their year, usually through joint plenary sessions with another year, followed by work planned for individual years. In all aspects of pupils' reading and writing, assessment is now used very effectively to identify pupils' attainment in relation to the National Curriculum targets and to track their progress. Targets for improvement

are shared with older pupils so they are clear about what they need to do. Attainment in speaking and listening is also monitored, especially in Years 3 to 6. The resourcing issues mentioned in the last inspection, relating to the quantity and quality of reading books, still remain. The school is aware of these needs and is seeking to secure funding for an extension to the small library and an associated improvement in the numbers of books. At present these are still too few, and the library, being frequently used for lessons, assemblies, withdrawals and as a thoroughfare, is not a place for pupils' quiet reading or for reflection.

MATHEMATICS

92. Standards attained by pupils currently in Year 2 are average. Pupils in Year 6 attain standards above average. This represents a good improvement since the last inspection when pupils in Year 6 were attaining standards that were average. Pupils enter Year 1 with average levels of attainment in mathematics and achieve well overall as they move through the school. The better standards pupils are achieving are due mainly to improved teaching for pupils in Year 3 to Year 6, and the successful implementation of the Numeracy Strategy which has resulted in an increased emphasis on mental computation and problem solving activities. Displays round the school reflect the emphasis placed on developing pupils' interest in solving mathematical problems. These improvements together with the introduction of very good procedures for assessing and supporting pupils' learning, and a close analysis of test results to identify weaknesses in provision, are helping to raise standards. Although boys did not achieve as well as girls in the 2000 tests for eleven year olds, there was no evidence during the inspection of a difference in the attainment of boys and girls. Most teachers ensure that boys and girls are fully included in all parts of lessons, and that girls and boys work together in lessons.

93. The quality of teaching and learning is good in Years 3 to 6. The quality of teaching and learning in the lesson seen in the Year 1/2 class was satisfactory. This evidence, together with a close analysis of pupils' work, shows that teaching is good in Year 3 to Year 6, and satisfactory in Year 1 and Year 2. The main reason for this difference in the quality of teaching is that teachers in Years 3 to 6 are more experienced in teaching mixed age classes and make a better use of assessment to challenge all pupils at the appropriate level. In these lessons, there is a good balance between direct teaching and independent learning. Pupils respond well to teachers' high expectations and work hard with sustained concentration. They enjoy the subject and this, together with their very good behaviour, makes a positive contribution to their learning. Teachers explain tasks clearly, so that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, understand what to do. They make effective use of intervention strategies and continue to teach and challenge as pupils work. Where teaching has shortcomings, pupils are not well challenged through closely targeted questions, and the teacher does not continue to rigorously teach pupils as they work on group or individual tasks. In consequence, some pupils lose interest and waste time in idle chatter. Work is not well enough organised to ensure a good rate of progress for pupils of all abilities.

94. Throughout the school, there is a strong emphasis on mental computation, which is central to requirements of the National Curriculum and the National Numeracy Strategy. Pupils benefit from regular practice at the start of lessons, and their understanding of mental strategies is being well developed. In the most successful

lessons, teachers ensure that all pupils are fully involved in the mental session. They use a good range of teaching strategies and resources, such as digit cards, to allow all pupils to answer, and to quickly check their answers. In these lessons, teachers use carefully targeted questions to challenge pupils at an appropriate level, encouraging the reticent to play a full part. A very good example of this was seen in a Year 5/6 lesson on percentages, where a pupil with a statement of special educational needs was successfully challenged to think hard when working out that he needed to add 30 to 70 to make 100. A special feature in this lesson was the quality of support given to pupils with special educational needs by a well-organised, knowledgeable and focused learning support assistant. This support ensured the full inclusion of these pupils in the lesson and good progress in their learning. At the end of this lesson, it was clear that all pupils had made good progress in their understanding of percentages. Higher attaining pupils, for example, moved from their knowledge that $\frac{3}{5} = 0.6$ to being able to calculate that this is 60%, while most other pupils understood how to perform the same operation using simpler fractions.

95. All teachers understand the importance of asking pupils to explain their reasoning and even the strategies that other pupils might have used to work out a problem. A good example of this was seen where a Year 4 pupil was asked to explain the strategy another pupil might have used when correctly ordering 5062, 5206, 5260, 5602 and 5620. The pupil thought hard and her response was based on her good knowledge of place value in numbers to 10,000. Pupils of all abilities made good progress in this lesson, by the end of which most Year 4 pupils had a good understanding of place value in numbers to 10,000, and Year 3 pupils had consolidated their understanding of place value in numbers to 1,000. The teacher made good use of information technology to support pupils' learning.

96. Teachers are aware of the importance of teaching the correct mathematical vocabulary and do so effectively, so that pupils can understand problem-solving activities. Key vocabulary to be taught is identified on lesson plans, and, in this respect, the subject makes a good contribution to pupils' literacy skills. Most pupils present their work well and by the end of Year 6 they give information in an intelligible and organised way. However, most of the work in Year 1 and 2 is completed on worksheets, so that by the end of Year 2 pupils are not working at the higher level which expects them to organise their work and to check it. This also means that pupils cannot see the progress they are making in the presentation of their work, and it limits the effectiveness of the teacher's marking in showing them how they could improve. As a result, pupils who have moved into Year 3 are still experiencing difficulty in presenting their work in a neat, intelligible way.

97. Analysis of pupils' work shows that all aspects of mathematics are given due attention and that pupils' mathematical skills are further developed in other subjects such as science, geography and design and technology. There is an increasing use of computers to support pupils' learning in mathematics since teachers have received relevant training. For example, Year 5 pupils were observed using their increasing ICT skills to present spreadsheets having calculated holiday budgets. In shape space and measure, pupils in Year 2 use mathematical names for common two- and three-dimensional shapes and describe their properties, including number of sides and

corners. By the end of Year 6, most pupils have a good understanding of symmetry and of how to find the perimeter and areas of shapes, with higher attaining pupils using formulae to do so. Nevertheless, the school is looking for ways of further improving pupils' practical understanding of this aspect of the subject through the medium of other subjects.

98. The headteacher, who coordinates the subject, provides good guidance and support for teachers. She has good knowledge of the subject and has been responsible for the improvements made since the last inspection. There is a satisfactory range of resources which are efficiently used to support teaching and learning. There is a good tracking system in place to identify pupils who are underachieving, and these pupils are offered appropriate targets and support. This makes a positive contribution to learning. The headteacher and governors monitor the effectiveness of teaching on pupils' learning, but this is not yet sufficiently rigorous in helping to iron out the remaining inconsistencies in practice across the school. Homework is well used to support pupils' learning and to develop their independent learning skills.

SCIENCE

99. Inspection evidence shows that standards are broadly above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. Results for recent years show a similar picture. Teacher assessments for 2001 revealed that all pupils attained Level 2, the standard nationally expected for Year 2. The percentage of pupils in Year 6 reaching the expected Level 4 was in line the national average. This situation is similar to that in the previous inspection in terms of attainment, although provision is greatly improved. The school has improved its standards in line with the national trend. Children enter the school with average knowledge and understanding in science. Their achievement, therefore, is sound overall. Girls have generally performed better than boys over time. However, in such small cohorts, with a number of SEN pupils, frequently boys, this is not surprising.

100. Some of the strengths in science are the range of ways in which pupils learn to record and communicate their findings, and the way they are encouraged to undertake practical investigations. This is a significant improvement in provision since the last inspection, when the school was criticised for giving the pupils too many copying exercises. Year 1 and 2 pupils, for instance, design healthy meals to show what foods are good for the body. By Year 6, pupils have learned how to enter information into tables, draw graphs and produce annotated diagrams. In Years 3 to 6 pupils are encouraged to predict what might happen before they carry out their tasks. Pupils are doing well at obtaining and presenting evidence, but less well developed are their skills in reviewing work, and describing its limitations and ways in which it might be improved. In their study of life processes and living things, Year 1 pupils can name common parts of the human body, and recognise that plants need light and water to grow. They know that water comes up the stem and into the flower so that it can grow, and can name parts of the plant such as stem, leaves and roots. Most have a basic understanding of reversible change, for example water changing to ice. Pupils in Year 2 understand the need for a balanced diet and exercise. They know, for instance, that there are healthy foods such as vegetables and lean meat. They also know that sausages are not so good, as they contain 'unhealthy oils'. In their work on forces, pupils know how to construct a simple electrical circuit. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 understand that magnets have poles, which can attract or repel. They carry out simple investigations, using

appropriate vocabulary such as *apparatus* and *method*. Most complete simple graphs to show their results and describe some facts about magnets, for example 'like magnets repel'. Although Year 5 and 6 pupils work in the same class as the Year 3/4 pupils they are expected to work at a higher level. For example Year 5 and 6 pupils carry out investigations, make predictions and explain their methods clearly. They have a clear understanding of a fair test, label their diagrams clearly and reach sensible conclusions. For instance, they concluded in one experiment that the bar magnet was very weak. Over time they have covered and understood the evaporation process. They have worked on food chains and understand the predator/prey link.

101. On the evidence obtained from of lesson seen, analysis of teachers' planning documents, a scrutiny of pupils' work, and discussions with pupils, the quality of teaching is sound across the school. By the end of Year 6, the achievement of pupils is satisfactory. Teachers plan the curriculum, using national guidance and select units for pupils in Years 3 to 6 to fit in with the topic being covered. They use assessment satisfactorily to evaluate pupils learning over a unit of work. The main weakness in this otherwise worthwhile assessment activity is that it does not take sufficient account of the different levels of attainment expected in Year 3 as opposed to Year 6. Teachers place emphasis on presentation of work and in setting it out in a scientific manner. There is an appropriate focus on the use of scientific vocabulary. Work is regularly marked, usually with praise and comments for improvement. In the lesson seen in the Year R/1/2 class pupils were involved in predicting the outcome of exercise on their heart rate. They listened carefully to their heartbeat before and after exercise and completed a table to show the results of their experiment. Although the lesson was satisfactory overall the teacher introduced too many variables and activities were rather long, which meant some children were inactive for parts of the lesson and lost interest.

102. Pupils have good opportunities to practise and extend their numeracy skills while working on science topics. For example, Year 4 pupils complete a graph showing the number of paper clips each magnet can hold. Pupils also develop their vocabulary through science by, for example, learning new technical terms. The school is beginning to introduce opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology in science, for example through the use of databases for their work on animals and their habitats.

103. Planning for science is sound and all aspects of the science curriculum are covered. The co-ordinator is new and as yet has had little impact on the subject. The school has made a good start to assessment in science, both through using assessment practices in national guidelines and in devising a test at the end of each unit of work to measure pupils understanding of the topic covered. Overall, resources are adequate.

ART AND DESIGN

104. One lesson of timetabled art was observed, and one where art was used in a history project to produce masks for use in plays about Greek myths. In addition, there was a scrutiny of displays, pupils' artwork, samples of work over time, and photographs of work in two- and three-dimensional media. Pupils also talked informally about their artwork. They spoke in particular of their creation of costumes and masks for school productions. All evidence indicates that pupils' standards in art are average at Year 2 and at Year 6. This is the same judgement as that recorded at the time of the last

inspection. Then, however, art was seen as part of the topic, integrated into history and geography lessons. This arrangement is no longer the only provision for art, which now has a discrete timetabled lesson of its own in the curriculum. This is an improvement, as the full range of the National Curriculum is now covered.

105. In all years, teachers place appropriate emphasis on the creative aspect of the curriculum and integrate suitable elements from the historical and critical side of the work. Pupils' skills in both two- and three-dimensional media develop satisfactorily across Years 1 and 2, with two-dimensional colour work prominently on display in the classroom to celebrate pupils' achievements in various wet and dry media. Pupils are very pleased to point out their work and talk about how they achieved it. These skills and pupils' developing knowledge and understanding continue to be refined in Years 3 to 6. In one lesson, for example, year 3 and 4 were developing abstract paintings based upon the work of Jackson Pollock, one of whose pictures was discussed with pupils to remind them of his style. The theme of this unit of work was 'Action', particularly people in action, and other tasks required older pupils to make shadow puppets to move in an articulated way against a screen. These were not so successful at first attempts, but pupils were considering possible improvements to their designs to make them work better. They were also sensibly discussing similar difficulties encountered when making "flip-books" to give the illusion of movement. In this lesson Year 3 pupils were using watercolour paint with a good level of control over this difficult medium, to give their small paintings the effect of movement. The same pupils in Year 3 and 4 also made good masks with a variety of facial expressions, to portray sadness, happiness and so on for characters in a Greek myth they had studied in history.

106. Teaching of art is satisfactory across the school. The curriculum is now planned around national guidelines so that pupils get a balanced experience of all aspects of the subject. Very little direct observational drawing work was observed in pupils' folders, however, although some painted portraits of themselves in Year 1 and 2 accompanied the topic on 'Myself'. More direct observations in pencil drawing, especially in Years 3 to 6, would help to improve pupils' ability to represent the world around them more effectively in two dimensions. Pupils now have many more opportunities in art lessons to choose from a variety of media. Art takes place in the afternoons, when all pupils in Years 3,4,5 and 6 are taught together. This limits opportunities for large-scale work, as the classroom is small for 34 pupils. Advantage is therefore taken of the summer months when pupils can get outside to do their work, to develop work in larger scale, often in groups. Photographs of their work show that they can work satisfactorily in this larger scale with three-dimensional media. This is a pragmatic solution to the accommodation difficulties, which also limit storage of any large items pupils may make. Pupils have some opportunities to use ICT, for example in Years 1 and 2 when creating profiles in the style of Mondrian

107. The co-ordination of art is good. The co-ordinator has been successful in getting art established with its own discrete time. Assessment is unusually good, accurately identifying pupils' levels of attainment to judge against the national picture and to see how well they are progressing in the subject.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

108. It was not possible to see any design and technology lessons during the course of the inspection. There is, therefore, insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching. However, a scrutiny of planning and previous work, and discussions with teachers and pupils, indicates that a full design and technology curriculum is provided. Such evidence also suggests that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6 pupils reach average standards and achieve appropriately. Standards of provision have improved since the previous inspection as the full requirements of the National Curriculum are now being covered. The school uses national guidelines in order to ensure this.

109. In Years 1 and 2, pupils have worked on making playgrounds. In order to do this they looked at the types of playground equipment, both in the school playground and in the adjacent village playground. They looked at photographs of different types of play equipment and materials used in their construction. After this they designed a model of their chosen piece of play equipment and explored the recyclable materials that they might require in order to construct it. They used a variety of processes such as cutting, sticking, gluing and measuring. Most are able to carry out simple evaluations of their models, for example, 'I would like to make it stronger with some wood for the body'. The make sound gains in their learning, for example, pupils in Year 1 create pictures for their designs whereas pupils at the end of Year 2 are using labelled diagrams.

110. Pupils in Years 3 to 6 have not yet undertaken any work in design and technology. However, over the last year academic year they have been involved in a variety of projects. They have made bread and constructed their own recipe. They enjoyed breads from different countries and located these countries on a map of the world. They made their own fillings for sandwiches and completed a variety of tables to indicate their likes and dislikes and their response to the different tastes and textures of breads. Most understand how to prepare food in a hygienic manner. When designing their purses they considered the suitability of a variety of materials. For example, "this material frays or this material does not stretch". Designs were well labelled and clearly showed the finishing touches. Most pupils were clear about what they could do to improve their work. For example, "I would make the button hole smaller". Pupils in Year 6 complete a project, which takes place at the secondary school. In summer 2001 the challenge was to make an Egyptian Land Yacht. They had the opportunity to use a variety of tools: tri-squares, chisels, coping saws, planes and hammers. The completed model indicated that they had used a variety of tools and techniques in the process of making. These experiences allow pupils to work collaboratively to solve problems, which helps promote good personal relationships. There is no evidence that ICT is used to support the subject.

111. The co-ordinator for the subject is new but has studied the documents and checked the resources to ensure they meet current requirements. She does not as yet have an action plan in place for the subject. However, she is aware that there is an appropriate four-year cycle in place to cover the four age groups in one class. Assessments are undertaken at the end of a unit of work and these are directly linked to the main objectives of the unit. However, although work is appropriately planned and assessments are undertaken there is still not enough emphasis on ensuring that tasks are well matched to the differing needs of pupils in the mixed age classes.

GEOGRAPHY

112. The school's timetabling arrangements gave no opportunity to observe teaching of geography. Although it is not possible to make secure judgements about teaching and learning, evidence was gathered from the analysis of pupils' work and teachers' plans and from discussions with staff and pupils. This evidence indicates that pupils attain standards that are broadly in line with what is expected by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and that rates of achievement are satisfactory for pupils at all levels of attainment.

113. Evidence shows that by the end of Year 2, pupils have a sound understanding of the local environment. Higher attaining pupils express views and opinions on features of the environment they find attractive or unattractive. Pupils take parthilocal surveys, as for example when they study the effects of traffic on the environment, and they discuss ways to make the village a safer place. Simple mapping skills are developed. Pupils draw maps outlining their routes to school, often labelling the features on the way. They are given an understanding of how a contrasting locality, such as a coastal village, differs from their own. They learn about different means of transport, how time and places differ, and how physical features influence the climate when following the route of 'Barnaby Bear' as he travels to contrasting localities.

114. Planning, discussions and work accomplished show that, by the end of Year 6, pupils have been taught the full breadth of study required by the National Curriculum. They recognise the way people can improve or damage the environment and how decisions concerning the environment affect people's future quality of life. Pupils develop a good sense of citizenship. This is reflected in the way they look after the school grounds, which they keep litter free. They use suitable geographical vocabulary, because teachers identify key words to be taught in lessons. Work and displays indicate that pupils are developing a sound knowledge of physical processes, such as how a river works. In this work they study rivers of Britain and the world. For example, in their work on the Nile and the Mississippi, they can identify the localities these rivers run through. When studying mountain ranges such as the Alps and the Himalayas, pupils are taught to describe and contrast physical and human features, and learn that different localities may contain similar and different characteristics. Their cultural development, as well as their geographical understanding, is further developed as they are taught to compare their local village to a village in the Caribbean. Pupils report that they enjoyed working on a project on holiday destinations around the world, having compared climates and physical features that attract holidaymakers.

115. Pupils have mature attitudes to work and are capable of investigating information to support their work. More use needs to be made of this skill to support pupils' work. Teachers do not make enough use of assessment to ensure the systematic development of research and mapping skills as pupils move through the school.

116. The school makes good use of field trips and residential experiences to widen pupils' understanding and experiences. In this respect, the subject makes a good contribution to their social and cultural development. Adults who have accompanied pupils on these visits report that their very good behaviour strongly supports their learning.

117. The subject is managed as humanities, together with history. The scheme of work, based on guidance provided nationally, has been tailored appropriately to the specific needs of the school. There is a satisfactory range of resources, which are supplemented by books from the loan scheme to which the school contributes. As yet, the use of information technology as a tool for learning is underdeveloped.

HISTORY

118. Judgements about provision for history are based on one lesson observed in each Key Stage, analysis of work from pupils in all years, and observations of photographs of various activities. Although their written work in Year 1 and 2 show pupils recording what they have learned satisfactorily, with evidence of appropriate progress over time, the lesson seen with younger pupils shows that their attainment overall in history in Year 2 is below average. Here, pupils were expected to sit for too long listening to the teacher, contributing too little to the discussion about houses and dwelling places in times gone by. Their current project is about 'Myself' and integrates history and geography appropriately but with insufficient rigour to ensure progress in history, which is good enough. Too little emphasis was given in the lesson for pupils to develop a proper sense of the key elements of time in the past. The activity, which followed the plenary session, placed too much emphasis on pupils' writing skills, thus ensuring that they have recorded what the teacher has covered in the lesson. However, there was not adequate focus on the development of pupils' understanding of history. Pupils do not progress well enough in history in Years 1 and 2.

119. As they move into Year 3 and above, teaching is much better, and pupils rapidly begin to catch up on these shortcomings. By the end of Year 6, attainment in history is average. In their current project about Ancient Greece, pupils in Year 3, for example, have an appropriate sense of what creates history and understand that it is partly recorded through stories, some of which are myths. They recognise that their current studies of Ancient Greek myths are too exaggerated to be entirely 'true', but form a part of the historical evidence base, as do artefacts such as vases and boats from that period. As pupils move into Years 5 and 6 their concepts of history become more secure, and they remember their previous learning well. They use this to compare concepts about time, with appropriate development of their ideas of the changes time brings about. Pupils' earlier experience of thinking about history and geography as integrated ideas is useful. For example, they can appreciate the links between modern Greece as a place for holidays, its climate, and so on, and the history they are currently studying. Older pupils are also able to realise the constraints historic figures faced, for example that of having no telephone, so that runners had to be sent with news of battles, victories and defeats. In the Year 3/4/5/6 class, older pupils help younger ones to put these historic 'jigsaws' together in their thinking and do not deride them if their responses in class show they are only just beginning to learn these concepts. Learning is good in years 3 to 6, with pupils making good progress in key aspects of the subject.

120. The quality of teaching is the key factor in these differences. Teaching is good in Years 3 to 6 but was unsatisfactory in the lesson seen in the Year 1/2 class. Better lesson planning to create a secure understanding of the concepts of history is required, if pupils are to progress well in year 2. Lessons need to be organised so that pupils are more active, in searching for historical evidence for example, to develop their understanding. Although the teacher's resources were well prepared for the Key Stage

1 lesson, they were not used well enough to stimulate pupils' curiosity or enable them to research for themselves. In Years 3 to 6, the large age range is well catered for in the planning of lessons. The time allocated for history is well used, with activities linked, for example, to aspects of English such as drama, which reinforce pupils' understanding of history. The use of classroom assistants in the Year 3/4/5/6 lesson, to create plays on the theme of Greek myths with older pupils, for example, enabled them to understand better how these stories become embedded into history.

121. The co-ordination of history is good. The curriculum covers National Curriculum requirements and assessment against national criteria is good. A good range of interesting external resources greatly enhances pupils' experience of history. Their visit to a Victorian school, for example, greatly improves their understanding of this time in British social life and contributes to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Another local centre also provides opportunities for pupils to attend history-theme visits and is well used to support the school's curriculum in both history and geography. Pupils thus enjoy learning about the past and remember these trips and experiences with pleasure.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

122. Standards in information and communication technology are broadly average by the end of Year 2, and pupils achieve as well as expected. Standards are below average by the end of Year 6. Although there have been significant improvements in the teaching and provision for ICT these have not been in place long enough to enable pupils in Year 6 to achieve satisfactorily. This is an improvement on the findings of the previous inspection at the end of Year 2, but presents a similar picture for pupils at the end of Year 6. The school has worked hard recently to improve provision for ICT. There are now a good number of computers, members of staff have undertaken training, and the school has employed a technician to support the teaching of pupils in Years 3 to 6. However, staff still lack confidence in teaching the subject and need more detailed planning and hands-on experience to improve both confidence and expertise.

123. By the end of Year 2, pupils use the 'mouse' with confidence. They have used 'Splish' to make pictures and simple shapes on screen. They have also used 'Colour Magic' to create their own self-portrait based on the work of the artist Mondrian. Most have used 'flood fill' to create paintings. They know how to save and print their work and can accurately describe the process they have to go through, for instance to print landscape or portrait. They know how to use a programmable toy and can send it along a route. They use vocabulary such as 'click on, text, arrows'. Most are familiar with the programmes 'Talking First Word and My World' and know how to use them appropriately.

124. By the end of Year 6, pupils have used Logo and are familiar with databases. They have used word processing packages and the processor functions to change font and type size. They have worked on computer art, using a variety of tools. They are currently learning to use spreadsheets to calculate and enter budgets for a holiday for several different families. Some use the formula builder to enter and calculate the budget. Although they are developing competency in this, their pace of work is slow. There is still much with which they are unfamiliar due to a lack of sufficient experience across all elements of the subject over time. The school is beginning to develop a

balance between the teaching of skills and the application of the subject across other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils use their word processing skills to support writing by planning a questionnaire to enter on to a database. Mathematical development is enhanced through the many opportunities for pupils to use their skills to represent data in a range of graphs.

125. There is insufficient evidence to make a judgement on the quality of teaching, because only one lesson was seen during the inspection and the technician employed by the school took this. This lesson was well planned and the technician's good subject knowledge enabled her to build well on what the pupils already knew. However, her expectations of pupils' pace of work was too low, and time spent on hand ~~when~~ calculations prevented them from spending much needed time on the computers. Within the classrooms, teachers are attempting to develop pupils' ICT skills; computers are almost always switched on and a variety of programs are in use. Pupils are encouraged to make use of the computers but limitations in teachers' own knowledge and skills means that learning is not always effective as it could be.

126. The headteacher is currently the coordinator and she is providing good leadership of the subject. She is supporting staff well as they come to terms with putting into practice what they have learnt in their training. She has a good understanding of areas for development and this is clearly stated in the school development plan, where provision for improvements in ICT is detailed over a period of three years. . Assessment is one of the areas for improvement. Although pupils assess their own performance against set criteria, there is, as yet, no rigorous teacher assessment of pupils' performance to enable teachers to plan work matched to pupils' needs. The school takes every opportunity to develop pupils ICT skills through use of the wider environment. For example, pupils in Years 3 to 6 spend a weekend at Kingswood where the focus is on the development of ICT. They have opportunities to construct web sites and web pages during this time. Additionally, through good links with the high school, pupils have opportunities to be taught by the secondary school teachers. The subject is well placed for continued improvement.

MUSIC

127. Only one music lesson could be observed during the inspection, but it was possible to look at work from other activities such as pupils' compositions, singing in assembly and informal discussions about their music experiences. ~~Any~~ photographs of their performances in classes and in public situations such as plays and productions were also scrutinised. Overall, this evidence shows that pupils' attainments, at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, are average. This represents a good ~~improvement~~ from the time of the last report, when standards were below average. Pupils now make sound progress in all aspects of music in all years. This is because the school now provides a curriculum based securely around national guidelines, so all ~~area~~ of pupils' musical experience are developed well.

128. Because class teachers are less confident to provide teaching of the composing aspect of the curriculum, the school provides pupils with a specialist teacher for a large proportion of the year so that ~~they~~ now have access to good provision in this aspect of music.

129. The well-attended weekly afterschool music club also adds significantly to pupils' experience of music. Photographs show pupils playing instruments confidently in various public settings. In assembly, pupils sing hymns well, accompanying a cassette. There is, as yet, no evidence for the use of ICT to support learning in music.

130. In the lesson seen in the Year R/1/2 class, pupils showed good skills in listening. They were exploring the sounds they could make with simple tuned and untuned instruments, commenting on these sounds as they performed them. Even after a lengthy period sitting on the carpet on similar activities, these young pupils showed an ability to remain well focused on this listening and appraising task. They could also make sensible comments and associations with other sounds they knew, for example comparing sounds to raindrops or to a horse galloping. Pupils were also able to think about the sounds being produced by others well enough to try hard to produce a different sound of their own from the instruments. They enjoyed doing this and most concentrated well, given the length of the activity. Older pupils spoke with pleasure about their musical activities. They clearly have many opportunities to contribute musical performances in such activities as Harvest Festivals, Mothering Sundays and productions of plays etc in the adjacent Village Hall.

131. Teaching seen in year 1/2 was satisfactory. The planning of lessons in 1/2 years allows for a sound balance of listening, appraising, composing and performing at levels which are suitable for pupils of different ages. Pupils use notation when they are older to produce compositions. Overall the learning and teaching of music in the school are satisfactory.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

132. The school rents the parish hall for physical education lessons. Owing to this arrangement, no lessons were observed, because the hall is available to the school only on Thursday of each week, and the inspection finished on a Wednesday. As a result, no overall judgement on the quality of teaching can be made. Judgements are based on discussions with teachers and pupils, observation of pupils at play, and analysis of plans and teacher's records. Indications are that standards of attainment overall are in line with those expected for pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, when the quality of teaching was unsatisfactory, particularly in the use of large gymnastics apparatus. The school has worked hard to improve provision. Older pupils are taken to the Kings Lynn Sports Centre for instruction in gymnastics by qualified coaches, and have access to high quality apparatus there. Teachers report that the instruction is very good and that pupils achieve well in lessons. Pupils are taught to devise and perform fluent sequences on floor and apparatus. Some pupils find that they have a particular talent in gymnastics and go on to join afterschool clubs at the Centre. Provision for swimming is also very good. All pupils attend swimming lessons during the year and, because of the high quality instruction they receive, they achieve well and most attain standards above those expected by the end of Year 6. Pupils use their substantial swimming skills to take part in sponsored swimming sessions to fund class and school trips.

133. Evidence shows that pupils have regular lessons in gymnastics, games, dance and swimming. Athletic skills are taught in the summer term and pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 have opportunities for outdoor and adventurous activities during residential trips. A good

range of extra-curricular sporting activities supports the curriculum and develops in pupils a very good understanding of the need for fair play. This is evident when pupils play competitively in the school playground. The school's results in inter-school competitions reflect pupils' attainment in the subject. Teams represent the school in cross-country, football and athletics. These opportunities are designed to promote their physical development and social interaction.

134. Planning shows that pupils in Year 1 and 2 are taught to perform a range of movements involving running and balancing and to gain an awareness of space. They are taught to plan and perform simple skills safely. In games lessons, they learn elements of play that include running, throwing, catching and control, using hands and feet. In dance, they develop their response to music and other stimuli

135. Pupils in Year 3 to Year 6 develop good ball skills, as was observed when they were playing football at playtimes. They travel with, receive, and pass a ball with some accuracy and apply these skills well in small-sided games. They show very good attitudes to sport and play well. Boys and girls of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, are welcome to join in the games and are treated fairly and with respect. Pupils have been made aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies and understand the importance of warming up before exercise. In athletics, pupils are taught to employ running, jumping and throwing skills both individually and in combination. Discussions with pupils and staff show that dance is an area for development with implications for in-service training.

136. The headteacher coordinates the subject and has successfully improved provision since the last inspection. The school has adopted a good published scheme that supports teaching and learning. Good assessment procedures allow teachers to plan appropriate work for pupils. The parish field is well used for sports day and for extra-curricular activities. Good use is made of external coaching in swimming and gymnastics, as already mentioned, and also in football. The school is grateful to the parents' association, which helps with travel expenses, and to those parents who help with extra-curricular activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

137. Standards of attainment match the levels expected by the locally agreed syllabus at the end of Year 2 and Year 6. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection when, although standards were as expected at the end of Year 2, they were below average for pupils at the end of Year 6. Pupils in this age group showed a poor knowledge of other faiths, and were making unsatisfactory progress. The recently updated agreed syllabus supports teaching and there is good coverage. As a result, pupils' achievement is now satisfactory. Owing to the school's timetabling arrangements, only one lesson was observed during the inspection, so no judgement on the quality of teaching is possible.

138. Analysis of pupils' work and of the school's planning, together with discussions with staff and pupils, show that by the end of Year 2, pupils understand that places of worship are important to Christians and to other religious communities. Through planned visits, they are able to recognise the different parts of an Anglican church, and gain an understanding of the significance of baptism as a sign of belonging. Pupils are

introduced to major Christian festivals, such as Christmas, Easter, Harvest and Mothering Sunday, as well as to festivals from other cultures, such as the Chinese New Year. They know a range of Bible stories such as that of the Good Samaritan, and know that a major element in Christianity and other faiths is that of caring for one another. In the lesson observed, pupils sat for too long listening to the teacher, rather than being engaged through an interesting range of teaching strategies. This resulted in restlessness and a slow pace to pupils' learning.

139. By the end of Year 6, pupils can relate some of the concepts of different faiths to their own experiences and go beyond this to discover more about religious beliefs, ideas and structures. They are taught facts about Christianity and the other main faiths in Britain such as Islam, Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism and Sikhism. They learn about the lives of Jesus, Mohammad and Guru Nanak as religious leaders. Pupils know about different places of worship such as churches, temples, synagogues and mosques and the importance of these places to the different religious communities. From discussions with pupils, it was evident that they can make links between the celebration of festivals such as Harvest, Christmas, Eid and Diwali, and that they have a sound understanding of the nature of religious belief. However, they have difficulty in retaining knowledge of the different faiths studied. There is a need for a greater range of books and other research materials to support pupils' learning. This will help them retain more easily a knowledge of aspects they themselves have researched, rather than depend on teachers to provide them with facts about faiths, traditions and religious practices.

140. Pupils' learning and understanding are well supported by teachers' personal research, and by the sensitivity with which teachers approach Christianity, other faiths, and issues raised in lessons. Teaching in religious education lessons, circles and assemblies is used well to reinforce moral values and to provide pupils with recognition of their own value as individuals. Pupils with special educational needs are well included in all of these activities and are well supported by staff and pupils. As a result, they are confident in speaking and in offering their opinions.

141. Displays of artefacts and of pupils' work are well used to stimulate interest in the subject. These displays show that younger pupils realise the importance of key figures in their own lives, such as parents, teachers, doctors and others who help them. Older pupils are motivated through a very well displayed range of artefacts and pictures of religious traditions in a number of religious communities. This not only increases their interest in the subject, but also helps them to recognise that, although there are many faiths, there are traditions, practices and beliefs that link them together. Work on display reflects the school's understanding of the need to encourage respect for, and understanding of, other faiths and cultures. In this way, the subject contributes well to pupils' social development and to their growth as citizens of a multicultural society. It also makes a good contribution to their spiritual development as they think about self 'as a person with many characteristics', and begin to form their own religious beliefs having studied those of others.

142. The subject is conscientiously managed and this has helped to raise standards. Good assessment procedures are in place but now need to take more account of the development of independent research skills.