

INSPECTION REPORT

ST FELIX ROMAN CATHOLIC SCHOOL

Haverhill

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124769

Headteacher: Mr C Rawlins

Reporting inspector: Mrs E W D Gill
17766

Dates of inspection: 4th – 6th June 2001

Inspection number: 193693

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary aided
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	School Lane Haverhill Suffolk
Postcode:	CB9 9DE
Telephone number:	01440 703775
Fax number:	01440 710768
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body, St Felix Roman Catholic Primary School
Name of chair of governors:	Dr P Stephenson
Date of previous inspection:	February, 1997

© Crown copyright 2001

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

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

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17766	Eira Gill	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9092	Ron Elam	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23674	Wendy Simmons	Team inspector	English Geography History Music English as an additional language	How good are the curricular opportunities offered to pupils?
18083	Judith Howell	Team inspector	The Foundation Stage Science Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs	

The inspection contractor was:

Phoenix Educational Consultants
 "Thule"
 60 Joy Lane
 Whitstable
 Kent
 CT5 4LT
 01227 273449

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

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	5
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	10
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	14
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	20
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS	23
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	24
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	28
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	29
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	33

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is an average sized First school with 224 pupils between three and nine years on roll. Although there is a reasonable balance of boys and girls in the school overall, in Year 2, there are 26 boys and 11 girls. In the Nursery class, there are 19 children aged under four years and 31 under six in the Reception class. The school is sited in Haverhill and serves the Catholic community of the town and surrounding villages. There is a rising roll with 42 per cent of pupils being baptised Catholic and 58 per cent of other denominations. The percentage of pupils eligible for free school meals is below the national average. Approximately 16 per cent of pupils are on the special educational needs register which is broadly in line with the national average. There are no pupils with a statement of special educational need and this is below the national average. The number of pupils from a minority ethnic background is below the national average and there are no pupils who speak English as an additional language. Children's attainment on entry to the school is average. However, there is a broad range of ability and there is also some variation of attainment on entry between different year groups.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. The leadership and management of the school are very good and the quality of teaching is good overall with a quarter of lessons being judged very good. These factors have had a significant impact on the good improvement in standards that are well above average. In March 2001 the very high standards attained over the previous three years were recognised by the Secretary of State for Education and Employment and the school received an 'Excellence Award' from the department. The findings of the inspection show similar high standards. The school gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- The very good leadership and management of the school by the headteacher, deputy headteacher, key members of staff and the governors promote continuing high standards for the pupils.
- The quality of teaching and learning is good overall.
- The very good provision for music.
- The very good attitudes of the pupils to school, their good behaviour and personal growth have an impact on the very good relationships observed in the school.
- Provision for the spiritual, moral and social development of the pupils is good overall, and very good in the spiritual aspect, which promotes a calm atmosphere that is conducive to learning.
- The parents' involvement with the school is very good and contributes to the pace of the pupils' progress.

What could be improved

- Aspects of the teaching of writing skills in Key Stage 1.
- Assessment procedures in the subjects detailed in this report, for example, art.
- Preparing the pupils for living in the cultural diversity of British society.
- The procedures for carrying out health and safety risk assessments for school activities.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was inspected in February, 1997, and the present headteacher was appointed shortly afterwards. The school has made good improvement overall and has a very good capacity for further improvement. Most of the weaknesses identified at that time have been addressed successfully. Standards in English, mathematics, science and music have risen to a high level and the quality of teaching and learning has made very good improvements. These considerable improvements in standards and teaching are due to the very good monitoring procedures carried out by the headteacher as well his determination to give the co-ordinators a higher profile in the school. It is very evident that the co-ordinators are aware of their

important role in moving the school forward. The planning now includes a range of activities in English, mathematics, science, music and design and technology that allows pupils to develop their initiative and independence well, although it is still underdeveloped in some subjects, specifically for geography and history. The teachers' management skills when supporting the assistants are now good, and effective training has become an established process. The teaching assistants believe they are truly valued by the school. The key issue in the last inspection concerning the underdevelopment of multicultural education is still an issue in this inspection.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with				<i>Key</i>
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	A	B	A	A*	very high A* well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	A	A	A	A	
Mathematics	B	A	A	A	

The results show that the seven year olds attained well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in comparison with all schools in the national tests for 2000. Over the last three years, the school's performance has been above or well above the national average with boys performing better than girls. The findings of the inspection are that, by the age of seven, standards in reading and mathematics are well above average and, in writing, standards are average. The difference in the judgement on writing compared with the test results is because in this particular group of pupils, there are twice as many boys as girls. A few of these boys have difficulties with their behaviour, which affects how much work they do. In music, standards are well above average and, in science and design and technology, standards are above average. In all other subjects, standards are average. On entry to the school, this particular group of pupils were judged to be of average ability in all areas of learning. Their achievements, therefore, by the age of seven, in English, mathematics, science, and design and technology are good and, in music, very good. In all other subjects, achievement is satisfactory. This includes pupils with special educational needs. The school's targets include raising the proportion of pupils who attain the higher Level 3 in writing and science in the tests for seven year olds.

By the age of nine, when pupils leave the school, standards in English, mathematics, science and music are well above average and achievement is good and, in music, very good. In design and technology and physical education, pupils attain standards that are above average with good achievement and, in all other subjects, standards are average and pupils achieve satisfactorily. Attainment on entry is average overall but, by the time the present group of children enter Year 1, most are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals in communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. In all other areas, the children are on course to achieve the Early Learning Goals.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good: pupils throughout the school have very good attitudes to learning and most show enthusiasm for their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good: all pupils behave well in and around the school and playground. Some pupils in Year 2 call out inappropriately in some lessons.
Personal development and relationships	Very good: there are plenty of opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility for their own learning.
Attendance	Good: higher than the national average.

Very good attitudes towards learning were observed in Year 3 when pupils worked on the computers independently. They persevered with problem solving when no adults were immediately available to help. The very good relationships between pupils and with adults contribute to the quality of work in lessons. Year 4 pupils show maturity when helping the younger pupils with their reading.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Ninety-eight per cent of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better, 29 per cent was very good and two per cent was unsatisfactory. It is good overall. The teaching of English, including literacy, is good in Key Stage 1 and very good in Key Stage 2. In mathematics, including numeracy, teaching is good in both key stages and, sometimes, very good. The major strengths in teaching and learning throughout the school are the teaching of music, which is very good, and the teaching of the basic skills in English and mathematics. This has a very positive impact on pupils' learning which is often very good in aspects of these subjects, particularly in their own knowledge of how they are learning. Teaching and learning are good in all other subjects, except in art, geography, history and ICT, where they are judged to be satisfactory. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one ICT lesson when the time allocated was too short and the resources were organised inappropriately by the teacher. As a result, the pupils' learning was affected and they made insufficient progress. In English, planning by the teachers does not include opportunities for pupils to draft and re-draft their writing, which has an impact on their achievement in this aspect. There are few pupils working at the higher Level 3 in writing, for example, in Year 2. The quality of teaching and learning for pupils with special educational needs is good. The quality of teaching and learning of the more able and gifted pupils is good in mathematics, science, design and technology and music where this group is really stretched. However, in writing in English in Key Stage 1 and in other subjects throughout the school, it is satisfactory.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory although it is good for children in the Nursery and Reception classes. Strengths are in the very good provision for music and the good implementation of the literacy and numeracy strategies, which has raised standards in English, mathematics and music. Allocation of time to the teaching of ICT, geography and history is low and this is one factor contributing to only average standards in those subjects.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good: there is very effective support for pupils that is carefully planned and organised to address the targets in pupils' individual education plans.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good: provision for spiritual development is very good, for moral and social provision, it is good and for cultural, it is satisfactory. This has a noticeable impact on the good behaviour in the school. Cultural development is satisfactory as the aspect relating to the multicultural diversity of British society is underdeveloped.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Satisfactory overall: procedures for child protection and the welfare of the pupils are appropriate. Teachers ensure that the pupils are aware of any health and safety dangers during lessons such as science and physical education. However, the school does not carry out a sufficiently regular risk assessment although this is a statutory requirement. Assessment of the pupils' progress in the Foundation Stage, and in English, mathematics and science throughout the school is good. Assessment in some of the other subjects in the curriculum is insufficiently developed.

- Links with parents are very good. Parents make a good contribution to the learning of their children and to the progress that they make.
- Apart from music, there are few opportunities for pupils to take part in activities outside lessons. This limits, for example, the sporting achievements of pupils who may have a natural ability.
- There has been good progress in developing a common format for planning work.
- Visits made by pupils in order to enrich the curriculum are limited. Opportunities to invite people into school who may have specialised knowledge or talents are not exploited.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Very good: the headteacher has a very clear vision for the school and is well supported by the deputy and all teaching staff who carry out their responsibilities effectively. This has a very good impact on improving the school and maintaining the high standards.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good: members of the governing body show a keen interest. They are knowledgeable about the strengths and weaknesses of the school and undertake appropriate training. Most governors are able to offer their own professional knowledge to support the school's development well.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good: the headteacher and deputy have analysed the results of statutory tests effectively. The organisation of Years 3 and 4 into ability groups for English and mathematics is having an impact on maintaining high standards.

The strategic use of resources	Good use is made of resources and all extra funding that the school has been given or applied for. There are very good links between the school improvement plan, the professional development of teachers and the budget.
--------------------------------	--

The school is staffed appropriately and the co-ordinators of subjects are well qualified to manage their responsibilities. The co-ordinators are very effective and have the impact of raising standards in their subjects. Learning resources are satisfactory overall. Accommodation is adequate and the outside environment is suitable for games lessons. The governing body applies the principles of best value appropriately.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The teaching is good. • The school is well led and managed. • The school has high expectations of their children. • They are comfortable discussing problems with staff. • Their children make good progress. • The school works closely with them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team supports the positive view expressed by the parents. The team agrees that there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to be involved in activities outside lessons.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Children enter the Nursery class with levels of attainment that are average in all the areas of learning. From this starting point, children make sound progress and broaden and consolidate their knowledge in all areas of learning. By the end of the Reception year, most children achieve appropriately and are on course to meet the Early Learning Goals at the end of the Foundation Stage in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development. In communication, language and literacy and in mathematical development, the children are on course to exceed the Early Learning Goals. This reflects the skilful teaching, where children are provided with well-planned opportunities in the Nursery that engage them in the learning process from an early age. By the end of the Reception year, children are confident and take part in discussion eagerly. They have a keen interest in stories and can listen carefully for extended periods of time although, at times, they do need reminding to take their turn when speaking and to listen to others. Children participate fully in all activities and are enthusiastic about their learning.

2. The results of the National Curriculum tests for seven year olds in 2000 showed that pupils attained well above average standards in reading, writing and mathematics in comparison with other schools. When standards are compared with similar schools, standards were very high and in the top five per cent for reading and well above average in writing and mathematics. This was an improvement in reading from the previous year and, since, 1997, the trend in results has been above the national average. Boys have outperformed the girls in the national tests over the last three years. The assessments in science made by teachers for pupils aged seven years in 2000 show that the percentage of pupils attaining the expected Level 2 was very high, but at Level 3, standards were above average.

3. The findings of the inspection show that, by the age of seven, pupils' attainment in reading and mathematics is well above average, in writing it is average and in science, attainment is above average. The difference between these findings and the national test results for writing is due to a range of factors. There are fewer pupils who are working at the higher Level 3, there are a higher number of pupils with special educational needs in this group and there are twice as many boys as girls. A few of these boys have difficulties with their behaviour, which affects how much work they do. In music, by the age of seven, pupils' attainment is well above average. In design and technology, pupils' attainment is above average and, in all other subjects, attainment is average. No judgement can be made on attainment in physical education as only one lesson was seen in dance in Year 1. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are achieving well in English, mathematics, science and design and technology, and very well in music. In all other subjects, their achievement is satisfactory. This is a good improvement since the last inspection as the only subjects judged to be above average at that time were English and music. This is a direct result of the improvement in the quality of teaching and learning. The findings of the inspection show very little difference between the achievement of boys and girls except in writing at Key Stage 1 where boys do less well than girls.

4. By the age of seven, standards in speaking and listening are above average. Most pupils concentrate and respond to questions appropriately. They are developing their expressive language skills during the literacy hour, in particular, when the teachers challenge the pupils to use more interesting and technical words. Most pupils read very confidently and with fluency, and standards in spelling and handwriting are above average. Standards in writing are broadly average by the age of seven although pupils' skills in writing instructions are better than in

stories. However, the sentence structure even in their instructions lacks ambitious use of words and the use of connectives is limited to two or three words such as 'and', 'but' and 'next'. In mathematics, standards are well above average. Pupils calculate mentally very quickly and can handle three digit numbers with ease. They can measure accurately and have constructed different types of graphs. They can name common shapes and have worked with Venn and Carroll diagrams. Pupils enjoy science, particularly the enquiry aspect, when they explore how toy cars roll down ramps and how they can make a difference to how far the cars travel by altering the height and surface of the ramp. Pupils in Year 2, however, find it difficult to write down the results of their experiments clearly. In ICT, in the limited time available for them, pupils show their ability to use the tools of the computer satisfactorily and can write and print out a story. They can use the CD ROM to find out about aspects of history; some can make simple graphs and all pupils have had experience of using programmable toys. In art, pupils have enjoyed creating three-dimensional pictures using materials and are developing some understanding of well-known artists. The pupils particularly enjoyed walking around and evaluating each other's work. In design and technology, pupils are reaching above average standards as they make well thought out products showing a good understanding of the characteristics of materials. Although pupils' attainment is average in geography and history, their skills and knowledge are not developing steadily due to a low allocation of time to the subjects and lack of assessment. Pupils' achievement in music is very good and they enjoyed choosing instruments to represent the characteristics of different planets. No physical education was observed in Year 2 although the Year 1 pupils thoroughly enjoyed their dance lesson and performed at an above average level.

5. By the age of nine, standards are well above average in English, mathematics, science and music and achievement is good. In design and technology and physical education, standards are above average and achievement is good. In all other subjects, pupils are attaining average standards in the lessons observed and their achievement is satisfactory. The pupils with special educational needs are also achieving at the same levels. This is a very good improvement since the last inspection as the only subjects judged to be above average were English and music in Year 4. The most important factor affecting these improvements is the focus on improving the quality of teaching and learning.

6. In English, including literacy, pupils show that their vocabulary is very good and most can explain their ideas clearly and know how to adapt their speech in formal and informal situations. The proportion of pupils reading at an above average level is high and their reading diaries show they are developing independent opinions about different authors. Pupils' spelling skills are of a very high standard due to the very good teaching of this aspect of English. The pupils' grasp of punctuation and grammar is very good and their writing ability is above average because of the very good quality of teaching and learning in writing. Additionally, there is a good balance of boys and girls in this year group, behaviour is good and concentration levels are much higher than those of pupils in Year 2. Therefore, they produce much more work. In mathematics, including numeracy, pupils' ability to calculate mentally is very good and well above average. During the inspection, the large group of more able pupils were using two or three methods of calculating multiplication of two digit numbers by two digits. Their verbal explanations of how they reach the answers show that they are becoming true mathematicians. Pupils have covered the whole range of the mathematical curriculum during the year thoroughly and their achievement is good. In science, pupils are developing well their observation and prediction skills of the behaviour of materials and respond to the challenges set by the teachers with enjoyment. Achievement is good in science for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. In ICT, although standards in all the different aspects are average, pupils are underachieving compared with English, mathematics and science because the good efforts the

school has made to improve provision for ICT have not had an impact on standards. Pupils enjoy their time on the computers and do not waste any time. Achievement is satisfactory.

7. By the age of nine, pupils' attainment in art and design is average and achievement is satisfactory. Pupils have built on the skills and techniques acquired when they were younger and experiment with a suitable range of methods. Pupils can use pastels well to create bold shapes and patterns. Their understanding of the use of colour and painting from memory and the imagination are underdeveloped. Pupils have good skills in design and technology, label their designs effectively and can write the sequence of actions they need to complete their product clearly. In geography, their attainment is average and their achievement is satisfactory. Pupils have limited opportunities to develop their enquiry skills although their work on weather showed that they are very competent when given time to explore and research independently a range of books and the Internet. The same pupils' work on France focused mainly on gathering lists of facts and was over-reliant on the use of commercial worksheets. A scrutiny of the pupils' work in history showed that their knowledge of Saxons and Vikings is too general and their attainment is average. However, during the inspection week, the pupils showed their good potential when they worked co-operatively on a mini archaeological dig. This was true enquiry learning and, in this particular lesson, the pupils' attainment was good. In music, pupils' attainment is well above average. They know the names and values of notes and can sing up and down the scale with accuracy. Their singing is well above average. Pupils in Year 4 are reaching above average standards for their age in physical education and their achievement is good.

8. Overall, pupils with special educational needs achieve well in the light of their previous attainment. This is most apparent in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills. Progress is supported by the use of individual educational plans and these are used to set targets of small achievable steps in the development of key skills. There is clear evidence of good achievement as shown in the results of the end of Key Stage 1 national tests. Setting arrangements in Years 3 and 4 for literacy and mathematics enable pupils with special educational needs to make steady progress, consolidate their skills and, with regular practice, attain standards that are good for their abilities.

9. The achievement of more able and gifted pupils is variable. It is good in mathematics, science, design and technology and music where these groups of pupils are really stretched. However, in writing in English in Key Stage 1 and in other subjects throughout the school, specifically in geography and history, it is satisfactory due to a low allocation of time in these two subjects. As a church school, a high percentage of time is allocated to the teaching of religious education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Throughout the school, the pupils' attitudes towards learning are very good. This includes pupils with special educational needs. They usually concentrate well and show interest in what they are doing as was seen particularly in a Year 1 lesson designing and making a pizza. When drawing shapes with logo computer program during an ICT lesson, Year 3 pupils showed they are prepared to persevere with problems when no adults are immediately available to help. Year 1 and 2 pupils demonstrated their confidence in front of their classmates when they explained how they had worked out a hard mathematics problem during a numeracy lesson. Reception year pupils are starting to show maturity and settled to work quickly and concentrated on the task of forming letters.

11. Children settle quickly to the daily routines of the Nursery class and grow in confidence. They quickly become independent and respond to the activities provided with enthusiasm. When playing or working together, they co-operate well and support one another in their learning. Developing personal responsibility in learning is strongly encouraged by the Nursery teacher and

teacher assistant and, by the time they enter the Reception class, most children can organise themselves well. They behave well and show positive attitudes to their learning.

12. Most pupils with special educational needs have good attitudes to their learning. Both within their own classes and when withdrawn for extra support, they work hard. In general, they accept correction well and are willing to practise areas that have been identified as part of their individual educational plans. Most pupils listen well in whole-class teaching at the beginning of literacy and numeracy lessons and this forms the basis for much of their individual activities during the rest of the lesson. As they mature, they begin to develop more independent learning skills. There is considerable evidence of successful practice in the school in the management of behaviour. In many cases, improvements in academic standards have helped to raise pupils' self-esteem and have led to all round improvements in behaviour as well.

13. Overall, pupils behave well in the classroom, at play and lunch times. They are open, well mannered, polite to adults and to each other, courteous and welcoming to visitors. They move around the school in an orderly way even when not directly supervised. They wait patiently for other classes when going to and from their rooms at the beginning and end of the day and for assemblies. They show respect for property, for example, when using the computers and take care collecting and putting away instruments during music lessons. Most pupils behave very well but, in a few of the lessons seen, the progress of some pupils was limited by their inappropriate behaviour. Some pupils call out inappropriately or do not pay attention to other pupils, although the teacher usually regains their attention. In Year 2, a few of the boys interrupt other pupils or occasionally wander around the classroom. In this class, the teacher has to work very hard to maintain the attention of all the pupils successfully. No bullying occurred during the inspection and the school has appropriate procedures to deal with any aggressive behaviour that may take place. The three exclusions in the past two years were of pupils showing extremely poor behaviour.

14. Relationships between pupils and with adults are very good and contribute to the quality of work in lessons. Pupils get on well with each other when playing games in the playground. Lunchtime is a positive social occasion when all pupils behave sensibly and chat with their friends when seated at the tables. In the classroom, the youngest respect each other's space when sitting close together on the carpet. Even amongst the youngest children in the Nursery, they do not interfere with each other's work when working closely together. Good co-operation was seen when working in pairs in a Year 3 and 4 ICT lesson. In a Year 4 history lesson, the pupils showed very good teamwork as archaeologists searching for artefacts in layers of soil. In the Nursery, many of the pupils have already developed good social skills, taking turns and not grabbing toys or equipment that others are using. Nevertheless, some pupils in the Reception class are still learning that they must put up their hands to answer questions. Boys and girls and pupils from different cultural backgrounds work together very well when doing group work in the classroom and when playing at break and lunch times.

15. The pupils' personal development is also very good. Since the last inspection, the school has increased the opportunities for pupils to take on responsibility for their own learning. They are able to work independently. When Year 1 and 2 pupils were making a collage in an art lesson, they were capable of making their own choice of materials and some had brought in items from home. Year 2 pupils sought information about animals from non-fiction books and Year 4 pupils are also able to search CD-ROMs and the Internet. Year 4 pupils show a mature approach when helping the younger pupils. This was apparent when they helped pupils in the Reception class to select books in the library and heard them read. Other pupils behave responsibly when they take on many tasks both within the classroom, such as getting out and putting away equipment, and outside, such as taking the registers to the office. The pupils also benefit from collecting for charities during the year.

16. Attendance is good and is at a similar level as at the time of the previous inspection. Last year, it was over 95 per cent and makes a significant contribution to the standards achieved by the pupils. Absences are usually due to the inevitable childhood illnesses, although many parents insist on taking their children on holiday in term time. In addition, a number of pupils have poor attendance, being absent for more than four weeks in the year. Unauthorised absence is very low. Pupils are generally keen to come to school and, overall, punctuality is satisfactory. Nevertheless, there are usually several pupils arriving after the bell has sounded although normally only by a few minutes. Registration takes place promptly at the start of the day.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

17. Overall, the quality of teaching and learning is good. All the parents indicated in their response to the questionnaires that teaching is good or very good and were totally supportive of the teaching at the pre-inspection meeting. The quality of teaching is good in the Foundation Stage and good overall for pupils aged five to nine years. Ninety-eight per cent of the teaching observed was satisfactory or better, 29 per cent was very good or better and two per cent was unsatisfactory. This represents a very good improvement from the findings of the last inspection when 20 per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory. The proportion of very good teaching has also increased from a very low percentage. This has made a very positive contribution to the rising standards. There is a significant improvement in teachers' lesson planning that leads to the progressive development of pupils' knowledge and skills. This is the result of the support all teachers now receive from the school's more consistent planning of the curriculum as well as the clear schemes of work that are being developed for teachers to follow.

18. The quality of teaching and learning for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall. Both teachers in the Nursery and the support assistant know the children well as individuals and are skilled at developing warm relationships. Consequently, the children settle happily into school and move into the Reception class with good attitudes to learning. The activities provided are purposeful and meet the needs of the children well. The Nursery teachers' very good knowledge and understanding of the needs of young children are clearly evident in the effectiveness of their teaching methods. There is a good balance between structured and free play activities, which assists the children's personal independence. All aspects of the relevant areas of learning are given due attention, including an emphasis on the development of personal responsibility and initiative. In the Reception class, the teaching of literacy and numeracy takes full account of the needs of young children and prepares them well for their learning in Key Stage 1. The management of children is very good in the Nursery and all adults work effectively as a team. In the Reception class, the management and control of children are generally satisfactory. However, at times, when the activities are less formalised, the organisation is not as effective and, consequently, the children become fussy and take a little time to settle. The use of assessment to monitor the development of the children is good and sufficiently systematic to identify the children's strengths and weaknesses in their learning as they move through the Foundation Stage.

19. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good throughout the school. More than a quarter of the lessons were judged to be very good and three lessons were judged to be excellent. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in music, good in other subjects except in art, geography, history and ICT where teaching and learning are judged to be satisfactory. The teaching and learning of English in Years 3 and 4 is judged to be very good. No judgement could be made on the teaching of physical education in Key Stage 1 because only one lesson of dance in Year 1 was observed. However, the quality of teaching and learning in that lesson was good.

20. The quality of teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs is good overall both in lessons and in small group or individual activities. Teaching is sympathetic and,

in most cases, challenging to ensure that pupils make good gains in their learning. There is substantial evidence across the school of teachers using a range of methods that enable pupils with special educational needs to learn effectively. Activities are sufficiently varied to match the range of attainment of pupils. Setting in literacy and mathematics in Years 3 and 4 enables smaller groups of pupils to be appropriately supported. This also applies to those gifted pupils in mathematics who may attain unusually high levels in the national tests. A very good ethos for learning is established through the very good relationships between pupils and adults. In most classes, the work set for the pupils maintains their concentration and reinforces their learning. Within class and when withdrawn, pupils with special educational needs are well supported by the teacher assistants. Teachers plan work that is appropriate for these pupils and ensure that they are fully integrated into the work of the class. The assistants know the needs of the pupils well and contribute much to their learning. This is an improvement from the findings of the last inspection when the teachers' management of the support assistants was judged to be a weakness and was a key issue. The quality of teaching and learning of the more able and gifted pupils is good in mathematics, science, design and technology and music where these groups are stretched. However, in writing in English in Key Stage 1 and in other subjects throughout the school, specifically in geography and history, it is satisfactory. This is because of a lack of assessment and good planning in the last two subjects, which results in teachers not identifying those pupils who need more challenging tasks.

21. A significant strength of the teaching is the very good and, sometimes, excellent teaching of music throughout the school by the subject manager. Her excellent subject knowledge and understanding of how to teach skills in a lively and energetic manner has a very positive impact on the pupils' very good learning. Although the time allocated to music is low, nevertheless the teacher's excellent planning and assessment of the pupils' skills ensure high standards of attainment. A further strength is the teaching of the basic skills in English and mathematics. This is consistently good and sometimes very good or excellent. For example, the mental mathematics session for the higher attaining group in Years 3 and 4 was inspiring for the pupils and observer. Very high expectations and excellent use of several different simple resources ensured that all pupils were totally challenged and making every effort possible to calculate difficult problems for pupils of their age. The teaching of spelling is very good throughout the school with very good attention paid to the teaching of sounds matching the letters and the regular testing of the older pupils. This is why standards are so high in spelling.

22. Although teaching and learning are satisfactory overall in ICT, in Year 2, there was one unsatisfactory lesson. The time allocated to the lesson was too short and the resources unsatisfactory so that pupils could not see the text on the whiteboard or the computer monitor. An area for development in English throughout the school is in writing where pupils do not have enough opportunities for drafting and redrafting their work. Few pupils in Year 2 are attaining the higher Level 3 in writing.

23. The teaching of literacy is good throughout the school. All teachers ensure that there are good opportunities for improving the pupils' skills in speaking and listening in the sessions of teaching designed to enable the pupils to discuss any problems or to celebrate success. The format of the literacy hour has been established well. Teachers across the school have a very good understanding of how to teach reading. Pupils have a good understanding of how they are progressing and have targets written in the front of their books. However, these do not really affect the pupils' progress in the short-term. Teachers give pupils opportunities to practise their literacy skills through descriptive writing in history and there are satisfactory links with ICT when pupils have the opportunity to practise their word processing skills.

24. The teaching of numeracy is good in both key stages. Teachers use the very good resources for teaching mental mathematics in the opening sessions very effectively and the oral

and mental work is well established. In a very good lesson in Year 1, the teacher's constant repetition of mathematical vocabulary ensured that pupils thought very quickly and accurately and their learning moved forward well. In this lesson also, the more able pupils' learning progressed rapidly and, by the end of the lesson, they were able to order four three digit numbers accurately. This is very good achievement for pupils of their age. Good planning for the numeracy hour and well-made resources by the teacher in a Year 2 class had an impact on pupils being able to self-correct their mistakes. The setting organisation in Years 3 and 4 is having a very positive effect on the very high standards being achieved by the whole group and the teaching of numeracy in these three classes is consistently good and, occasionally, excellent. Teachers ensure that pupils practise their numeracy skills in other subjects, for example, in design and technology when they measure paper or wood and in ICT, where pupils in Years 3 and 4 used their knowledge of angles to guide the turtle icon around the screen.

25. Throughout the school, most teachers have good skills of management and control and this is maintained in nearly all lessons. The behaviour policy is followed consistently by most teachers and behaviour is generally good, although, in Year 2, several boys call out inappropriately and the teacher finds it difficult to control them. However, this usually only happens in the opening part of the lesson. Pupils are well used to routines and are ready for a prompt start. This is particularly noticeable when there is the changeover for the setted lessons in Years 3 and 4 where pupils immediately go to a different classroom without any fuss and settle down immediately.

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

26. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities are satisfactory and are good for children in the Foundation Stage. Broadly, this reflects the school's aims satisfactorily. The curriculum includes all areas of the Foundation Stage, and all subjects of the National Curriculum and statutory requirements are fully met. Religious education was inspected separately as part of a Section 23 inspection.

27. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Foundation Stage are good. The planning for children is appropriately detailed in both the Nursery and Reception class and takes full account of the six areas of learning as recommended in the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage. Overall planning is linked to the themes, such as 'Ourselves', 'Homes' and 'Transport'. The daily routines in the Nursery have two distinct aspects: direct teaching time in areas such as music, religious education and physical education and general activities when the children have the opportunity to choose their own activity with the teacher and teacher assistants providing direction and support where necessary. In the Reception class, the teaching of literacy and mathematics is based appropriately on the national strategies for young children. A strong emphasis is placed on providing first-hand experiences for the children and on helping them to acquire language skills. There is good provision for personal and social development in the Nursery that prepares children well for entry into the Reception class.

28. Since the last inspection, progress in developing the curriculum is good overall. A key issue was to improve the depth and challenge of the curriculum by planning activities that allow pupils to show their initiative and independence in learning. In English, mathematics, science, music and design and technology, this has been successfully developed. Nevertheless, there is still some way to go in aspects of pupils' work in history, geography and art. There has been further improvement in the range of activities for mathematics and ICT, which were noted as restricted in 1997. The grouping by ability in English and mathematics shows considerable progress in meeting the needs of more able pupils in particular. The provision for special

educational needs remains good. The range of extra-curricular activities has not developed enough since the last inspection, when it was described as narrow. Twenty-two per cent of parents who replied to the questionnaire indicated that there are not enough extra-curricular activities. The findings of this inspection agree with the views of the parents. The most significant development concerns the very good progress in developing a coherent and common format for planning work. Overall, planning is now good.

29. The total weekly teaching time is adequate to meet the needs of the curriculum. The time allocated for individual subjects is variable. In English, a higher than average amount of time is allocated to teaching and learning and this is a significant factor in why standards are so high. This is especially noticeable in reading, where pupils read as part of the literacy hour whilst also having an additional daily slot for quiet reading. Furthermore, reading skills are integrated into pupils' learning in most other subjects.

30. In mathematics, teaching time is slightly lower than average. In science and music, it is much lower than average. However, in all of these three subjects, this is not hampering pupils' attainment. This is because the quality of teaching and learning is of a very high standard, and work is challenging and very well paced for the time available. Furthermore, the school has strong assessment systems in place for these subjects, which means that pupils are grouped according to their understanding and work is planned specifically for their needs.

31. In geography and history, the allocation of time is low. This is a factor in why pupils are only achieving average standards and yet, in several other subjects, they attain well above the average. It is significant that in these subjects, assessment systems are inadequate. As a result, teachers are not identifying pupils or matching work according to their different capabilities. Thus, when it comes to using this small amount of time, they are not able to make best use of it to challenge and develop learning. In addition, there opportunities are missed for pupils to develop research and enquiry skills for themselves, which also has an impact on their attainment.

32. The amount of time for pupils to have 'hand on' experience on computers is also low. In addition, there is some variation in how this time is organised. For example, in Year 2, pupils were being taught how to use CD ROMs; one class had twenty minutes whilst the other class had more than double the amount of time. This inequality is having an impact on standards, as some pupils are underachieving. The allocation of time for ICT works better at Key Stage 2, where there are more computers. This allows more pupils to learn effectively in a short amount of time.

33. In physical education, pupils at Key Stage 1 have broadly average time for the subject, but at Key Stage 2, the time allocated is lower than other schools. Furthermore, opportunities for extra-curricular physical activities are insufficient. This results in pupils not having enough exercise. Additionally, talented, able and gifted pupils do not have a chance to shine or excel in sport and motivate others. In art and design and technology, pupils receive an average amount of teaching time. The main reason why there is low teaching time in some subjects is because, as a church school, a very high percentage of time is allocated to the teaching of religious education.

34. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school has a well co-ordinated approach to special educational needs. It meets the requirements of the Code of Practice and complies fully with statutory reporting requirements. Pupils have good access to the curriculum and none is disappplied. This is achieved by the effective support provided for pupils with special educational needs. Support in class and in withdrawal groups is carefully planned and organised to address the targets set out in pupils' individual educational plans so that it is of maximum benefit to all pupils concerned. The special educational needs co-ordinator maintains good links with the class teachers and teacher assistants to ensure curriculum continuity and in the use of short-term targets for pupils. There are no pupils who have a statement for special educational needs.

35. The National Literacy and National Numeracy Strategies have been implemented well. Teachers are confident in how to use the strategies and have expertise in teaching basic skills. Nevertheless, there are missed opportunities, especially at Key Stage 1, when teachers do not model writing for pupils as part of their sentence work in literacy lessons. The school has responded well to the analysis of test results and teachers' assessments. The development of pupils' writing skills remains an identified and appropriate priority, particularly for pupils in the current Year 2 and as they move further through the school. The National Numeracy Strategy is having a good effect on pupils' attainment throughout the school and the teachers organise the three parts of the numeracy lesson well, which is having an impact on the high standards. Literacy and numeracy skills are effectively promoted in other subjects.

36. There are good policies for all subjects. The school has made good use of guidance from the national schemes to provide useful units of work. Co-ordinators are now in the process of adapting these units of work into progressive programmes of study, which more closely match the needs of pupils in this school. Currently, there are no minority groups in the school. The school has not sufficiently recognised the need to be prepared for them if any should attend in the future. There is no policy, or formal guidance, for the support of pupils with English as an additional language or other minority groups.

37. The aims of the school show a satisfactory commitment to equality of opportunity in education. Sometimes, this is good. For example, where teachers' skilful questioning and classroom assistants' good support ensure that pupils of all abilities are able to make contributions to lessons. There is good provision for pupils with special educational needs. The provision for more able pupils is of variable quality. Although in most aspects of English, provision is good, in writing, at Key Stage 1, there are not enough opportunities for more able pupils to extend their ideas. In mathematics, science and design and technology, more able pupils are really stretched. In these subjects, there are better identification procedures and provision for able, talented and gifted pupils. However, there is no whole school overview or policy. As a result of this weakness, pupils are not given equal opportunities to excel. This is especially evident in art and physical education. Where pupils are very talented at games and athletics, they have very few opportunities to participate in team sports or athletics after school and extend their skills further. Girls' and boys' attainment is carefully monitored and they are given equal opportunities. All policies and staff recognise the need to give equal opportunities to all pupils.

38. The school provides a limited range of activities for pupils outside lessons and this is a minor weakness. Sport is restricted to a 20 minute games session for Year 4 pupils only. Furthermore, there is not enough equipment in the school to support wider sports activities. Pupils have initiated and run a disco dance and arts and crafts club themselves. These are supervised by teaching staff and is good practice, but teachers are not regularly available to pupils. Extra-curricular music activities are very good and a real strength of provision. These successfully help to enrich pupils' learning while also extending enjoyment and skills for pupils of all abilities. Links with parents, and members of the community, to run clubs are very limited. For example, a local team was playing a cricket match after school in the school's grounds and the school missed the opportunity to make links to enrich pupils' knowledge and enjoyment of the game.

39. The enrichment of the curriculum by first hand enquiry, educational visits and visitors is generally underdeveloped. However, the school is seeking to develop this to give more pupils the chance to enjoy these experiences. One of the most recent and successful links was a visit to a local supermarket. This resulted in good learning about different breads and fruits and packaging and marketing. Participation in the Sudbury and Haverhill Festivals is a good experience for pupils but open to a limited number. Filming, as part of the Haverhill Arts Festival, was shared with four pupils which gave them a very good insight into how ICT operates in the wider world. Opportunities to meet artists, authors and people with local historical knowledge are not

exploited. The range of special events, such as book weeks, concerts and drama productions promote pupils' personal development satisfactorily.

40. The school makes good provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Useful units of work ensure that good emphasis is given to the teaching of health issues and drug awareness. The school does not teach sex education. Outside speakers, such as the representative from the police force make useful contributions to pupils' understanding of personal safety. Teaching about aspects of citizenship is good. From this, pupils have learnt about what makes a community and how clubs have rules that are similar to those for society as a whole. Displays around the school show that pupils are being helped to think and develop their understanding about 'choices' and the consequences of these in their lives.

41. The links with the wider community are satisfactory and help to contribute to pupils' learning. Connections with the parish result in the pupils attending several church services during the year and the priest leads assemblies and masses in the school. The choir and instrumental groups take part in local events such as the music festival and a concert in the Arts Centre. The pupils benefit from a few visits to places of interest in the surrounding area such as the local town, country park and private railway. Local businesses are very supportive and donate money and time such as producing the very attractive prospectus. The lack of sporting activities means there is almost no contact with pupils in other schools. In addition, the school does not take full advantage of other contacts. For example, senior citizens have lunch in school each month but, although they may entertain, the pupils do not have the opportunity to talk to them.

42. Contacts with other educational institutions are good. The middle school to which most pupils go is on the adjacent site. Trainee teachers visit the school as part of their training and students from the local upper school undertake work experience. The teachers in the school have joint training sessions with colleagues from other schools in the local pyramid. The school is currently seeking a partnership with a local private school to improve the teaching of ICT and citizenship.

43. Provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. This matches the findings of the last inspection. There has been further improvement for pupils to demonstrate responsibility around the school. From the headteacher down, there is a very clear vision and expectations for very high standards for pupils' spiritual development. Moral and social development is good. Cultural development is broadly satisfactory. The last inspection identified the need to develop pupils' understanding and awareness of the richness and diversity of British society and their appreciation of other cultures. Since then, progress in developing broad multicultural awareness is satisfactory. However, development in helping pupils to become aware of the diversity of British society is unsatisfactory.

44. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is very good. There is a strong ethos of valuing every individual within the school and that everyone is special. Assemblies are filled with excellent spiritual moments, as pupils think about the teachings of Jesus, sing and listen to music. The times for reflection are very quiet, calm and still; furthermore, the use of a candle and closed curtains makes the experience very special. In music and English, pupils are encouraged to express their feelings about numerous pieces of music, poetry and fiction. Opportunities for spiritual moments are missed in artwork. The inspiring teaching fosters spirituality. For example in mathematics, the opening mental mathematics sessions for the more able in Years 3 and 4 are inspiring for the pupils who are encouraged to become real mathematicians. In a Year 1 dance lesson, one boy showed a huge sense of pride as he imitated the movement of a worm and contrasted this by delicately unfolding his arms as a butterfly.

45. The school makes good provision for pupils' moral development. All adults in the school are very good role models for pupils, and set very high standards, enabling pupils to develop very

good relationships, and treat everyone and everything with respect. There are clear expectations of good behaviour, to which the majority of pupils respond very well. The school has worked hard to develop staff's understanding of assertive and positive approach to the management of pupils' behaviour. Pupils show a very good awareness of right from wrong. Moral development is enhanced through the selection of texts in literacy teaching. For example, when pupils read 'Princess Pizza' they talked about being rude and disrespectful and how it is best to remember to say, 'please' and 'thank you'.

46. There is good provision for pupils' social development, and parents agree that the school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. The school has a warm, caring, 'family' feeling where pupils are encouraged to develop very good social skills. Pupils with special educational needs are integrated very well in this very happy school and take part in all activities. The school provides pupils with opportunities to work cooperatively and to learn to share resources and equipment. They actively raise funds for different charities, including Barnardos. Extra-curricular activities are not supporting pupils' social development enough.

47. Cultural provision for pupils is broadly satisfactory. Pupils' understanding of the many cultures in the world is enriched through the work about multi-cultural music and some stories from around the world. For example, in Years 3 and 4, pupils know about rainforests in different continents. They remember bits of the story of Rama and Sita as part of their work on the Indian festival of Diwali. Pupils know the story of The Pied Piper and, in history, have written about the tomb of Tutankhamun. They study the style of famous artists, such as Turner and Van Gogh. They have studied Anglo Saxons and the Romans as part of their wider historical culture. They have satisfactory knowledge of their heritage in Suffolk. Although the school provides awareness of the artistic elements of other cultures, it is not successful in helping pupils to understand that Britain is a multicultural society. For example, posters around school show many children around the world, but emphasis on different children in Britain is weaker. Pupils are not prepared enough for their life in a multicultural society and work in geography does not support this development enough.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

48. Overall, the school has satisfactory procedures for child protection and for ensuring the welfare of the pupils. The headteacher is the designated officer for child protection and the school follows local procedures. The staff have received guidance on how to deal with any situations that may arise and know to whom they should report in the school if necessary. The provision for first aid is generally satisfactory and records are kept of any treatment with letters home to parents as appropriate. Nevertheless, the certificate for the named first aider has expired although the school has arranged further training this term. The governors consider health and safety issues in one of their committees. Outside contractors are used regularly to check the fire extinguishers, electrical items and physical education equipment. The teachers ensure that pupils are made aware of health and safety issues during lessons such as science, physical education and design and technology. However the school could not provide details of any risk assessment that has been carried out. Under health and safety legislation this has to take place regularly. The school reminds parents to exercise care when bringing and collecting their children. Most parents were seen to drive their cars sensibly, but a few insist on using the school car park at the start and end of the day. The need to reverse when pupils are nearby creates a potential hazard.

49. Assessment procedures and the use of these to guide teachers in their planning are satisfactory and reflect the findings of the last inspection report. However, since the last inspection in 1997, there has been a very good improvement in baseline assessment for the children in the Foundation Stage and further good improvement in making use of national test

results to set targets for improvement. Furthermore, pupils' progress in English, mathematics and science is now carefully tracked as they move through the school.

50. Children in the Foundation Stage are very well cared for and it is evident that they feel at ease in the Nursery and Reception classes. Assessment and record keeping procedures are very good and have been updated recently to take account of the changes to the Foundation Stage curriculum. An entry profile is written within the first half-term in the Nursery. Targets are set, reviewed and shared with the parents. Baseline assessment is carried out in either the Nursery or Reception class during the academic year in which children are five. Regular assessments continue to be carried out to monitor their progress and, in the Reception class, there is regular assessment of reading, phonic skills and mathematical skills. The new procedures for on-going observations of the children at work and play are well documented and, once securely in place, will provide both the Nursery and Reception teacher with a very good overview of the children's achievement in all areas of learning.

51. The use of assessment to guide curricular planning across the school and within some subjects is not applied consistently and this is a weakness. However, this is recognised by the school and the school improvement plan correctly identifies the need to raise standards in teaching and learning through assessment.

52. Assessment is good in English, mathematics and science. It is regular and identifies pupils' specific strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, it is easy to access and is used to inform the next stage of teachers' planning. In addition, it provides an overview for whole school monitoring. In these subjects, assessment information is used very effectively to group pupils and to plan work, which meets the needs of differing abilities. The assessment of spelling is excellent and is having an impact on standards achieved.

53. In design and technology, the school is just starting to trial a new system for assessment, which looks helpful and effective but has not had time to have any impact. In physical education, information and communication technology, art, geography and history, simple assessment procedures are insufficiently developed and this is a weakness. Lack of assessment in these subjects is having an impact on the pupils' achievement that is satisfactory in ICT, art, geography and history rather than good. As there are no records of the pupils' progress in their skills and knowledge, the teachers are unable to plan effectively and the work is not always meeting the pupils' learning needs.

54. In English, mathematics and science, some targets for pupils' development in books and in their reports, are too general. All too often, the assessment record in the front of pupils' green folders has not been filled in, although teachers have this information. Marking in English is often very perceptive in identifying what pupils need to work on but time to modify and develop writing is insufficiently allocated, especially in Years 1 and 2. Targets are set for pupils' progress, but there is some inconsistency in how these are recorded and monitored. Very effective use is made of test data to inform school development and curricular planning. The school has recently produced a whole school marking policy but this is not used consistently.

55. In music, assessment is very good and is having impact on pupils' very good attainment. The teacher has a simple and effective way of monitoring progress and setting challenging targets. Furthermore, in music lessons, the teacher assesses pupils constantly and helps them to learn quickly. She has simple procedures. For example, she has re-written the National Curriculum attainment targets so that pupils can understand them easily. Each level is displayed around the room. She focuses pupils' attention on the level that they are working on and what they have to do in the lesson to achieve the next higher level.

56. The care and support of pupils with special educational needs are good. The whole school ethos is well reflected in the way that it ensures that pupils with special educational needs have opportunities to take part in all school activities. Their contributions are valued in class discussions and their achievements are well recognised. Pupils' needs are quickly identified when they enter the school and appropriate arrangements are made for the regular review of their progress. The progress of pupils is assessed against the targets in their individual educational plans, which are regularly reviewed by their class teacher and the special educational needs co-ordinator. The school's register for pupils with special educational needs has yet to be linked to an efficient tracking system to record the standards these pupils achieve and the progress they make as they move through the school. Effective use is made of agencies outside the school to provide help and support for individual pupils and their specific educational needs.

57. The monitoring of, and supporting of, pupils' personal development are good and rely mainly on the teachers' and support assistants' knowledge of the individual pupils. The staff in the Nursery and Reception classes keep very good records, although there are few formal records in other years. Throughout the school, the staff constantly reinforce the pupils' personal development. The personal, social and health education programme develops positive attitudes towards other children and adults both in the classroom, in assembly and in the playground. The inspectors saw several instances in assembly and in displays of their work, of pupils being reminded of the need to make choices about behaviour. The pupils' personal qualities are enhanced by the various tasks they perform around the school. The teachers discuss pupils' attitudes with parents at the termly meetings.

58. The procedures for promoting discipline and good behaviour are good. Appropriate rules are on display in the classrooms and in the playground, and teachers refer to them as necessary. The school's approach to behaviour has a good balance of rewards and sanctions. Pupils were able to quote examples of what they should and should not do. All the staff, both teachers and support assistants, have received training in assertive discipline. Good behaviour is rewarded by praise and any inappropriate behaviour leads to the action being condemned rather than the pupil. The inspectors saw a consistent approach being adopted throughout the school. Nevertheless, in Year 2, the teachers are not always successful in preventing some calling out from a few pupils during parts of lessons. Any instances of bullying are rare and the school takes appropriate and quick action if any occurs. The pupils who show any sustained difficulty with behaviour are monitored and supported well through the school's special educational needs system.

59. Overall the procedures for monitoring and promoting good attendance and punctuality are satisfactory. The keenness of the pupils to come to school and the good relationships with parents result in little absence for most pupils. The school reminds parents in the newsletter of the need for regular attendance and the importance of arriving on time. Registration takes place promptly at the beginning of the day with the registers returned to the office. The secretary keeps a record of pupils who may have to leave early, although no note is made of pupils arriving late. The headteacher sees parents who wish to take holidays in term time, but many parents still expect to take their children out of school. Most teachers do not keep running totals of absences. This lack of regular statistical monitoring limits the identification of the need to give specific

attention to particular classes or pupils. The education welfare officer visits the school each term and this enables the headteacher to discuss any problems.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

60. In their responses to the questionnaire and at the meeting with the inspectors, parents showed that they are very pleased with all that the school does. The inspection team supports all of their positive comments. Parents say that the school is well led and the teaching is good. Their children like coming to school and make progress from the level of support they receive. The school expects them to work hard and helps them to become mature and responsible. They consider that their children receive the right amount of homework to do at home. The school works closely with parents and they feel comfortable approaching the school with any questions. These reactions are similar to the comments made at the time of the previous inspection. A significant number of parents are dissatisfied with the range of activities outside lessons. The inspection team supports that concern as there are not sufficient opportunities for all pupils to develop their talents and interests.

61. The induction programme for the children who begin school for the first time is good and provides parents with the opportunity to meet with staff and learn about how the Foundation Stage is organised. A booklet provided for parents contains useful information about the daily routines and the curriculum their child will receive in the Nursery class. A further booklet is provided for parents as their child moves into the Reception class. Parents are given the opportunity to meet with the Reception teachers at regular intervals through the year to discuss their child's progress. In addition, parents are invited into the Nursery once a fortnight to work alongside their child. In Reception, the parents join their child for a weekly reading session.

62. The school has established very good links with the parents and these contacts are effective. The headteacher sends newsletters home two or three times a term outlining the various activities that the pupils are involved in, providing general administrative information and, for example, encouraging good attendance. Every term, the school provides parents with an excellent outline of what is to be taught in each subject and how parents can help at home. Other letters go home referring to more specific matters. In addition to the prospectus and governors' Annual Report to parents, the school has also produced brochures for Nursery and Reception class parents. Every morning and afternoon, there are very good opportunities for parents to see the teachers. Teachers go outside at the end of the day when parents are collecting their children. The inspectors saw many conversations taking place and it is apparent that parents feel very welcome to come into the school. The annual report on progress is sent home in the summer term. This report generally provides a good summary for all subjects, together with targets to help the pupils to improve. Nevertheless, in a few instances, the comments are very general with little detail of what the pupils know and can do.

63. The parents of pupils with special educational needs are kept fully informed of their child's needs and progress at all stages. Parents make a good contribution to helping their child work towards their targets and are responsive to any advice given. Virtually all parents attend the review meetings. Views of the parents were recently sought in a questionnaire on how the school could support children with special educational needs and their parents further. Parents are provided with a very useful pamphlet entitled 'Working in Partnership', that contains helpful information about the process and provision for pupils with special educational needs.

64. Parents' involvement with the school makes a very good contribution to its work and to the attainment of the pupils. Pupils are happy in school and work hard and want to learn. These attitudes reflect the extent to which parents encourage their children to respect the school and education process. Parents are keen to support their children and almost all come to the formal meetings with teachers in the autumn and spring terms to discuss their progress. The information

evenings explaining the teaching of literacy, numeracy and other subjects are also very well attended. The Nursery and Reception classes encourage parents to visit each fortnight and many were present one morning during the inspection. The home school association is very supportive arranging both fund raising and social events. Few parents come to help in the classroom on a regular basis although many more are willing to help on trips out.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

65. The headteacher, who was appointed four years ago, provides very good leadership and management. He is very well supported by his deputy and key members of staff. This is an improvement from the last inspection. The parents indicated by their response to the questionnaire that they believe that the leadership of the school is very strong. The headteacher is a very good role model for the staff and pupils. He has a very clear vision for the school's improvement and this is expressed verbally and in documentation as well as being shared by members of staff and the governors. The headteacher has raised standards through a range of very positive strategies. For example, on his appointment, he raised the profile of all subject co-ordinators in the school in order that they could focus more on their responsibilities and take a leading role in raising standards in their subjects. In this quest, he has been very successful. In discussion with the co-ordinators, there is clear evidence of very effective professional development as a result of the headteacher's consistent support.

66. The headteacher's purposeful development of the school is clearly indicated by the very good improvements that the school has made since it was last inspected. The school has addressed the major weaknesses identified by the previous inspection and has also responded very well to new national initiatives. For example, the teachers' subject knowledge in mathematics, design and technology and ICT has improved significantly. There are now many opportunities for pupils to take initiative and to show independence in the way they approach their learning. Good training has improved the learning support assistants' effectiveness. However, the pupils' understanding and awareness of the richness and diversity of British society still has not been addressed. Good quality subject policies and schemes of work provide a common structure for planning, monitoring and co-ordinating the curriculum and pupils are achieving well as a result. Pupils' achievements since the headteacher's appointment have made a very good improvement in English, mathematics and science and in most other curriculum subjects. The DfEE has recognised this and the school has received an Excellence award recently. The headteacher has also been very effective in improving the standards in teaching. In the last inspection, 20 per cent of teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory compared with only two per cent in this inspection. This is very good improvement. The headteacher is actively pursuing a large amount of funding to link the school with a local independent school when the focus will be on pupils working together using ICT programs and email. The funding will enable the school to buy more resources for ICT.

67. The aims and values the school promotes are fully reflected in its work. It is very evident that the joint priorities are to ensure that the pupils are educated within a supportive, caring, Catholic ethos and that standards are continually being raised. The team spirit and shared commitment shine through every aspect of the school and have been particularly enhanced by the business meetings held once a fortnight when the headteacher, teachers and support assistants get together for effective discussions. These meetings have been introduced by the headteacher to develop quality liaison between teachers and assistants. The school was awarded the Investors In People certificate in 2000 that recognised the efforts the school has made to improve standards in every aspect. The very good management ensures that all pupils are included well in all activities offered by the school and are given every opportunity to succeed regardless of their gender, abilities or ethnic origin. However, there are not enough opportunities for gifted and talented pupils to extend their skills further in physical education and ICT, for example.

68. The management of the provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The special educational needs co-ordinator carries out her responsibilities effectively. She is experienced and provides good leadership and support for pupils with special educational needs. She has been instrumental in implementing a series of actions that has had a good impact on developing the expertise of staff in meeting the pupils' needs. The support assistants are suitably experienced and qualified. They know the pupils they work with well and provide them with good support. The accommodation, being open-plan, can create difficulties at times as when working in small support groups outside the classroom. However, this is looked into on a regular basis and ensures that appropriate progress is being made by the pupils. Funds allocated for pupils with special educational needs are used to good effect.

69. The management of the provision for children in the Foundation Stage is very good. The Nursery class teacher has the overall responsibility and brings a wealth of experience to her post of responsibility. The staff working with children in the Foundation Stage, operate very well as a team. The quality of relationships is very good. The accommodation for children in the Nursery is good. The classroom is self-sufficient, bright, attractive and well organised into different areas of learning for the children. However, the outdoor play area adjacent to the Nursery is not used sufficiently to allow children free access to outdoor activities. The Reception class was relocated away from the Nursery class in order to accommodate the larger numbers of children in the year group. However, it does present problems, as the children do not have access to the outdoor play area. Teachers working in the Foundation Stage have tried to make alternative arrangements to help overcome this problem, by joining the children together for two short periods of time during the week. However, overall, the children do not get the full benefit of this resource. Resources overall are good and meet the needs of young children well, although outdoors there is no clambering equipment for the children to explore.

70. There is rigorous monitoring of teaching and learning by the headteacher. His regular formal and informal visits to each class are followed up by discussion and a written evaluation when areas for development of teaching skills are discussed. As a result, the quality of teaching has improved very considerably since the last inspection. All teaching staff are given middle management responsibilities as co-ordinators and are given regular time slots to review planning and support their colleagues in the classrooms. However, not all of the co-ordinators have allocated time to monitor the teaching of their subjects. The co-ordinators show a considerable commitment and knowledge of what the priorities are for their subjects. The policy and procedures for performance management are well implemented and targets have been set for the headteacher by the governing body. Teachers have also had their targets prioritised and dates for review have been organised.

71. The school's improvement plan is very well designed. There are clear links with the performance management systems in place and the professional development of the teachers. The targets are costed clearly and the success criteria are directly related to the raising of standards. The success criteria are clearly described in terms of raising standards in the national tests and will be straightforward to measure in terms of the school meeting its targets. The school has set targets for the Year 2 pupils and has exceeded them as a result of effective teaching.

72. Governors support the school well and, through their good relationships with the head teacher and staff, make a significant contribution to its positive ethos for learning. They are well led by the Chair who visits the school regularly to talk through current issues with the headteacher. He knows the strengths and weaknesses of the school well and is an effective 'critical friend'. Governors support the school well and several give professional advice in their own capacity. Two meetings per term are held as well as separate meetings for sub-committees. All business at these meetings is well documented and there is clear evidence of good governance. All governors attend training sessions and are very knowledgeable as a result. They

monitor the work of the school both formally and informally. For example, they observe in lessons and write reports for the headteacher. A very good contribution made by the governors to the school is their individual links with subjects. This link is particularly helpful when policies need to be written or reviewed and it actively supports the co-ordinators. Governors are actively pursuing improvements to the accommodation and links with the community.

73. As at the time of the previous inspection, financial management is good. The financial planning follows the school's educational aims and priorities. The governing body, guided by the headteacher, is fully involved in the setting of the budget at the beginning of each year. The school improvement plan sets targets for improvement and identifies the costs that will be incurred. The school makes effective use of additional grants for pupils with special educational needs and other specific purposes. Teaching and support staff are used effectively. In particular, since the last inspection, the school has improved the liaison between teachers and the assistants in the classroom. In addition, the headteacher is closely involved in monitoring the performance of staff and in taking classes to provide time for the co-ordinators to support their curriculum.

74. The administrative officer gives high quality support to senior management and governors and monitors expenditure carefully. Satisfactory use is made of new technology with computerised administrative and financial records although the internet is not fully used. The systems in place enable the headteacher and governors to monitor spending during the year. The principles of best value are applied in finding the cheapest supplier for both goods and services. The school has not introduced procedures to assess how well it is doing in comparison with other schools. Co-ordinators have control of their own budgets which are related to a bidding process based on the priorities for curricular development.

75. There is a sufficient number of suitable qualified and experienced teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the curriculum. All staff have appropriate job descriptions and the system for the performance management of teachers is in place and is being extended to support staff. Staff are deployed appropriately and the match of staff to co-ordinating roles maximises their experience and expertise. The special educational needs co-ordinator and non-teaching assistants provide good support for those pupils with special educational needs. Staff who are newly appointed to the school receive sound support from the appropriate induction arrangements. Staff development is linked to the school improvement plan but also takes account of the individuals' needs. It is effective in improving both teaching and learning. Training for the implementation of the national literacy and numeracy strategies has been successful in providing a structured and effective programme of learning which has had a positive impact on both the quality of teaching and learning. Student teachers are welcomed from the local colleges and it is clear that the school is an effective provider of initial teacher training.

76. Accommodation has improved since the last inspection and the teaching area for the Nursery children has been extended considerably. The school uses all the space, for example, a bank of four computers has been installed in one of the wide corridors. Although some classrooms are small, most teachers are clever at ensuring that the seating arrangements suit the teaching activity. The outdoor play areas are suitable for games and play and there is a very large playing field. Trees have been planted to relieve the monotony of the grassed areas but these have yet to grow to any noticeable height. Ambitious plans are in place to use the extensive grounds to build a Church and thus make very significant links with the community.

77. Resources are satisfactory overall. They are good in English, mathematics, design and technology and music and have an impact on the high standards. There are too few computers to have a full impact on standards in ICT and, in physical education, new equipment and large apparatus are needed to enable the pupils to participate in a larger range of activities.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

78. In order to continue to improve the quality of education provided by the school the governors, headteacher and staff should:

(1) **Improve the standards of writing in Key Stage 1 by:**

*planning more opportunities in the teaching of writing for pupils to draft and redraft their work;

*teachers modelling writing for the pupils;

*ensuring that there is enough time for pupils to work on their targets during the week. ***

(Paragraphs 3, 4, 22, 35, 37, 90, 100, 101, 102, 103)

(2) **Improve standards in ICT, history and geography by;**

* writing simple but effective assessment procedures;

* reviewing the time allocation given to these subjects;

* planning more opportunities for independent enquiry and for pupils to show initiative; and

* writing a policy for more able and gifted pupils so that they are appropriately challenged.

(Paragraphs 4, 7, 9, 20, 28, 31, 32, 37, 51, 53, 67, 134, 135, 140, 141, 142, 144, 146, 148, 151)

(3) **Prepare pupils for life in an increasingly diverse and multicultural British society.**

(43, 47, 66, 109, 137)

(4) **Ensure that a full health and safety risk assessment is carried out for all activities.**

(Paragraph 48)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Widen the opportunities for extra-curricular activities and include linked visits with the curriculum.
(Paragraphs 28, 33, 37, 38, 41, 67, 109, 127, 134, 144, 166)
- Plan the use of the outdoor play area for the Foundation Stage more effectively in order to ensure that the children have daily outside play opportunities.
(Paragraphs 69, 88)

*** indicates that the school has already included this development in the school improvement plan

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	42
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	28

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
7	22	50	19	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	19	205
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	14

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	35

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.7
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	23	43

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	19	20
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	43	42	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	98 (93)	100 (95)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	20	20	20
	Girls	23	23	23
	Total	43	43	43
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (91)	100 (95)	100 (89)
	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	
Black – African heritage	
Black – other	2
Indian	
Pakistani	
Bangladeshi	
Chinese	
White	169
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage		
Black – African heritage		
Black – other		
Indian		
Pakistani		
Bangladeshi		
Chinese		
White	1	
Other minority ethnic groups		

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.62
Average class size	29.4

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	75

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.4

Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	16.6

Number of pupils per FTE adult	13
--------------------------------	----

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/01
----------------	---------

	£
Total income	419,655
Total expenditure	408,223
Expenditure per pupil	1,767
Balance brought forward from previous year	12,491
Balance carried forward to next year	23,923

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	224
Number of questionnaires returned	124

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	59	37	2	1	0
My child is making good progress in school.	70	27	1	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	56	40	2	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	47	37	8	2	2
The teaching is good.	80	20	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	56	38	5	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	74	22	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	77	19	1	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	61	32	3	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	68	27	0	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	72	25	2	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	32	31	20	2	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

79. The school has maintained the good provision for children in the Foundation Stage since the previous inspection. Assessment made of the children on their entry to the school shows their attainment to be broadly average for their age. However, there is a wide variation year on year and the children admitted a year earlier showed above average attainment on entry. From this starting point, the children make satisfactory progress and broaden their knowledge in all areas of learning. By the time they are ready to start in Year 1, the majority of the children are on course to attain the Early Learning Goals in their personal, social and emotional development, knowledge and understanding of the world and in their physical and creative development. In communication, language and literacy and mathematical development the children are on course to reach above average standards. The well-planned curriculum in both the Nursery and the Reception class gives children a wide range of relevant experiences. This, together with the good teaching, helps them to make good gains in their learning. Staff know the children well and ensure that the activities are well matched to their individual learning needs.

80. The children are admitted to the Nursery for either a morning or afternoon session after their third birthday. Most transfer to the Reception class to start their full-time attendance at the beginning of the term in which they become five.

Personal, social and emotional development

81. The children make sound progress in their personal and social development and by the time they leave the Reception class they are achieving the Early Learning Goals in this area. Children settle very quickly in to the Nursery and into the routines of the class. The very well organised procedures help the children to develop self-confidence and assurance and to take care of their own needs. Good systems are in place to allow children to choose some activities, find the right equipment and use their initiative. Children in the Nursery play and work together well and show consideration for others. Their behaviour in the classroom and when moving around the school is good. They are starting to tackle jobs, such as undressing themselves in readiness for physical education lessons in the hall, without too much help, although it does take time. In both the Nursery and Reception class, the children respond well and apply themselves to tasks with enthusiasm. Most children listen to others' views with respect and learn to express their thoughts using the appropriate language. This was most noticeable during an assembly, when the Nursery and Reception children came together and one child described patience as 'waiting nicely'. Children in the Nursery are well aware of teachers' expectations and adhere closely to rules governing, for example, the number of children allowed in an area at any time. Children thrive in the Nursery and grow in confidence. By the time they enter the Reception class, they are ready and eager to explore new learning. They settle quickly to the more structured activities, such as literacy and numeracy, and most children show ability to concentrate for appropriate periods of time. There are, however, a few children in the Reception class who do not always do as they are told and need reminding to take their turn when speaking and to listen to others. The children are enthusiastic about their learning both in the Nursery and Reception class.

82. The area of personal and social development is strongly promoted in all areas of learning and the planning is comprehensive for this element. Good teaching and learning in both the Nursery and Reception classes ensure that well-established routines and the caring nature of the provision allow all children to feel secure and to grow in confidence. The adults provide very good role models for the children, always treating each other and the children with courtesy and respect. This leads to trusting relationships and helps the children to develop an awareness of others. The adults also promote children's personal independence effectively. For instance, in

the Nursery, the daily group activities include opportunities for children to explore, make choices and initiate their own ideas. In addition, there are many moments for fun and for reflection, which strengthen the relationships between adults and children.

Communication, language and literacy.

83. Children make good progress in this area of learning and most children are on course to exceed the recommended Early Learning Goals by the time they end the Reception year. In the Nursery, there is a wide variation between children's skills in expressing themselves, although there are several who are fluent and demonstrate that they have a broad vocabulary. Individuals are generally confident when talking with visitors and talk freely about what they are doing and the things that interest them. All adults use talk to good effect and are good active listeners. Throughout all the areas of learning, both the Nursery and Reception teacher, and teachers' assistants talk to the children individually and in small groups to develop the knowledge and skills necessary to communicate effectively. They show children that they value their efforts at communicating. In the Nursery, activities are planned which encourage children to give verbal responses to questions and also to extend their vocabulary. Children join in role-play activities with enthusiasm using the appropriate associated language. For example, when acting out the role of a fire fighter, a child explained, 'there was a bomb and it exploded'. Their interest in language is reinforced well through stories and action songs that require them to experiment with words. Most children listen attentively and in the Reception class become more confident in their use of a growing vocabulary when participating in discussions. All children enjoy listening to stories and readily share books with adults. In the Reception class, the children handle books well and many are beginning to recognise familiar words in simple reading books. They begin to hear and say the initial sound in some words and learn to use their knowledge in order to read and write simple regular words.

84. Teaching and learning in this area of learning are good. Skilful teaching in the Nursery introduces children to an awareness of writing for different purposes. For example, paper and pencils are available for children in the 'Fire Station' role-play area for them to note down any calls received and to pass them on to the 'fire-fighters'. By the summer term in the Reception class, the planned literacy work is linked to the National Literacy Strategy framework for young children. It is well used by the teacher to meet the needs of all children. Many children can write their names and use the words on the word wall to support their writing. Older children are already beginning to show an awareness of how full stops are used and write freely. For example, one child wrote, 'I sleep in my bed. It is cosy. I play with my toys.' The range of writing is good. They write a list of the ingredients for 'The Giant Sandwich', keep a diary of events over the period of a week and produce little books entitled 'All about Me'. However, the children who find learning more difficult, still need an adult to act as a scribe for them. Teacher assistants are used effectively and provide valuable support to small groups of children.

Mathematical development.

85. During the Foundation Stage, the children make good progress in their mathematical development and, by the time they end the Reception year, most are on course to reach higher standards than those found in most schools. They recognise and write numbers from one to 20 and count much higher than this. With support from the teacher they count in tens up to 100 and many children are able to find one more or one less than a number from one to 10. The higher achieving children add and subtract numbers up to ten and some go beyond to adding numbers up to 20. Many children use the correct language for comparing quantities, such as heavier and lighter and order items by length and height. Children in the Nursery are provided with a wide range of practical experiences, such as matching colours and shapes, building with bricks and filling different containers with water and sand. Mathematical development is effectively

promoted through the use of number games and songs both in the Nursery and Reception class. Correct mathematical vocabulary is used from the outset and all activities build upon the children's understanding. The more formal activities for mathematics are effectively introduced to the children in the Reception class through the framework for teaching numeracy. The work is well planned both in the Nursery and Reception class and the activities cover a suitable range of practical tasks that meet the needs of all children. Classrooms are also used effectively to display numbers and give sorting and counting opportunities. Teaching is good in this area of learning in both classes and often the children's artwork reflects the skilful methods of teaching mathematics. For example in the Nursery, the children have produced a collage depicting 'Five little men in a big Fire Engine'.

Knowledge and understanding of the world.

86. Many children have a good level of general knowledge and experience on starting school. During the Foundation Stage they make sound progress in all aspects of this area of learning and are well prepared for the programme of study in the National Curriculum subjects by the time they enter Year 1. The good curriculum offers them a wide range of experiences to extend their knowledge of the world around them. Activities are well planned to enable children to explore aspects of the environment and to relate the work to their own experiences. Discussion forms an important part of the work and children are encouraged to be observant and describe what they see. For example, in the Nursery, a 'discovery table' provides children with the opportunity to explore objects, such as springs, force meters and different materials that require pushing and pulling. In the Reception class, children build on this knowledge and draw pictures of objects that they can push or pull. In both the Nursery and Reception class, the children are provided with a range of opportunities that develop their understanding of the world in which they live. For example, they have had visits from a dentist, a police officer, ambulance worker and the park rangers. Teachers provide opportunities for children to find out about the environment in which they live by visiting the Church, the library and the Post Office. In the Nursery, they draw a simple route from their home to school, whilst children in the Reception class produce a simple map of Red Riding Hood's journey to her grandmother's house. They find out about past events by taking a book entitled 'Our Book of Jobs' home with them for their parents and grandparents to write in and share their own experiences with the children. Children in the Reception class produce their own simple family tree.

87. A wide range of construction toys and materials are provided for the children to explore and use their skills to make models. Children in the Nursery show very good 'making' skills and are very well supported by the teacher assistant. Her perceptive questioning, 'What do we need to make it move? 'How are we going to stop the wheels falling off?' really made the children think and, consequently, by the end of the lesson, the children developed a good understanding of how to join different materials and managed to produce a toy vehicle that moved. Appropriate opportunities are provided for the children to use information and communication technology across several areas of learning and there are examples of their work in art, literacy and mathematics. In the Reception class, they confidently learn how to give instructions to make a programmable toy move and one child was able to explain that he had to clear the memory by pressing CM before he could use the toy. The strong emphasis placed on developing the children's religious beliefs ensures that they learn about the significance of the special events in their own lives. In general, the children are introduced to a suitable range of cultures and religions, through listening to stories and music and using resources for role-play that reflect different cultures. The quality of teaching and learning is very good in the Nursery and good in the Reception class; lessons are planned well and all adults use good questioning skills to develop children's knowledge and understanding.

Physical development.

88. Children in the Nursery achieve broadly what is expected for children of their age. They show increasing control and skills when using the wheeled toys outdoors and develop an awareness of space around them. Although there is an attractive, safe outside play area attached to the Nursery, it is under used. The time outdoors is planned as part of the activities provided for the children, but, in general, it is only used at set times during the week and not as an extension of the indoor environment. Children in the Reception class do not have their own outdoor area due to the current location of their classroom and, although they join the Nursery children for the outdoor activities, it is only for two very short sessions a week. In one physical education lesson observed in the hall, children in the Nursery learnt to throw and catch a beanbag with growing confidence, but showed a wide variation in their skills. Teaching and learning were good when the younger children in the Nursery were skilfully introduced to 'parachute play' by the teacher who developed their physical skills when controlling a ball to keep it contained in the parachute. At the same time, she developed the children's social skills by reminding the children to work as a team. When using the wheeled toys outdoors, children from the Reception class show good control and co-ordination. However, there is very little balancing and climbing equipment outdoors to engage the children and refine their skills. Good opportunities are provided for the children to develop their manipulative skills in both the Nursery and Reception class. For example, when cutting and sticking paper to make pictures, modelling with scrap materials, engaging in small world play and using brushes for painting. Consequently, by the end of the Reception year, through good teaching and learning, most children demonstrate increasing skill and control in the use of pencils, scissors, construction sets and puzzles.

Creative development.

89. An appropriate range of activities, with well-focused support and encouragement from adults, means that children make sound gains in developing their creative skills and, by the end of the Reception year, are well on course to attain the Early Learning Goals. In the music lessons taken by the subject leader, the children achieve high standards. They have well-developed skills when listening to rhythms and are able to echo them by clapping. They learn to recognise simple notation and have an understanding of the associated timings. Children enjoy role-play in the 'Fire Station' and take great delight in dressing up and acting out the roles of fire fighters. In the Nursery, they play alongside others with the toy fire engines, police cars and ambulances and delight in acting out the roles of the people who work in the associated services. Children use paint imaginatively and print with different objects such as small wheels and their hands to create attractive pictures. In the Reception class, children learn how to mix colours to produce paintings of differentLY coloured dinosaurs. Children in both the Nursery and Reception class create detailed models using a wide range of well-chosen resources. They construct complex models with the construction equipment and use their imagination to support their play with them. The Nursery and Reception classrooms provide a stimulating environment for children to work in and this aspect of learning is well supported by the sensitive intervention of all adults who work with the children. The quality of teaching and learning overall is good and lessons are planned well.

ENGLISH

90. Standards in English are well above average by the age of nine. Pupils in the current Years 1, 3 and 4 are working well above the standard expected for their age. Overall, pupils in the current Year 2, are attaining above average standards. Although standards are lower in Year 2 than in other years, pupils' achievement throughout both key stages is good. This is because the Year 2 pupils started the school showing broadly average attainment, whilst in Years 1, 3 and 4, attainment on entry was higher than average. Thus, nearly all pupils have made good progress. However, a few more able pupils in Year 2 are not reaching their full potential in some aspects of

their writing. The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Overall, they make good progress and achieve well. The school shows good inclusion by making good overall provision for pupils of all abilities and, at Key Stage 2, this is very good. Furthermore, the school is monitoring the attainment of boys and girls very successfully. Overall, girls and boys achieve similar standards, but boys are weaker in aspects of writing particularly at Key Stage 1. There are no pupils who have been identified as especially talented or gifted in English and none for whom English is an additional language. The results of the end of key stage tests in reading and writing in 2000 were well above the national average and when compared to similar schools, attainment in reading was in the top five per cent of schools nationally. Over the last three years the trend in reading and writing test results is upward at a rate above the national trend.

91. Improvement in English since the last inspection has been very good. This is a direct result of very good leadership from the headteacher, co-ordinator and other senior staff who have implemented a very good plan for development. This planning shows strong evaluation of the school's strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, the targets for increasing test results are achievable but give a good degree of challenge. The school improvement plan identified the need to monitor and support teaching. The school has been very successful in improving the overall quality of teaching through monitoring. Teaching is now good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. In 1997, teaching was judged to be satisfactory with some unsatisfactory lessons. The findings of this inspection show no unsatisfactory teaching. In 1997, standards were judged to be better than average. Since then, there has been further improvement, which has resulted in well above average attainment by the age of nine. Assessment systems have improved from sound to very good. As a consequence, teachers are now able to plan work for their pupils and this is usually very well matched to their needs. Assessment results are used successfully to organise pupils into three ability groups for their teaching in Key Stage 2 and this is having a positive effect on how well they achieve.

92. In speaking and listening, the findings of this inspection show that pupils achieve above average standards at Key Stage 1 and well above average at Key Stage 2. There has been further improvement in this area of work since the last inspection when it was judged to be good. The quality of teaching is good and this influences pupils' good achievement. Teaching of these skills through the literacy hour and other subjects is very strong.

93. By the age of seven, most pupils speak confidently and audibly using a growing vocabulary. They talk in a range of situations and use accurate technical vocabulary in different subjects. A few pupils, in Year 2 do not use long sentences or imaginative and descriptive words in their normal conversations. However, when encouraged by the teacher, most have a wide range of interesting words to support their discussion and written work. For example, in a good lesson using the book 'Noises in the Night', pupils used words such as, 'spooked out', 'terrified' and 'horrified' to describe how the characters were feeling and one more able pupil added 'petrified' to the list. Pupils listen attentively to stories, rhymes and explanations but a few boys in Year 2 find it difficult to concentrate and listen to others and they start fidgeting, rocking on chairs or playing inappropriately with items on their tables. Consequently, this interrupts the flow of the lesson and hampers their learning. Pupils in Year 1 have very good speaking and listening skills. When these pupils started school, they showed that they were very able speakers. Learning is further developed by teachers' very good questioning of pupils as observed in the lesson about 'The Pizza Princess'.

94. In Years 3 and 4, speaking and listening are well above average. When starting school these skills were very well established and pupils have made good further progress. By the age of nine, they can talk in a wide range of contexts. They often know how to adapt their speech to formal and informal situations and can use grammatically correct English. More able pupils can vary expression and really engage the listeners' interest. In one very good lesson, the teacher

helped pupils to incorporate their factual research about the rainforests to frame arguments for and against cutting down the forests. Here, she challenged their opinions, which resulted in very good learning about how to debate. The strong support from a student, assistants and an additional teacher gives the pupils the chance to discuss the issues in small groups. Inclusion of pupils with special educational needs and more able pupils is very good due to the very good group organisation and management.

95. In reading, the findings of this inspection match the 2000 results. At the age of seven, pupils' attainment is well above average when compared to national results and even better when compared with similar schools. Pupils in Year 2 are achieving very well from their broadly average starting point when starting school. In other year groups, achievement is good. For example, in Year 4, pupils had scored above average standards in their national tests when they were seven years of age. Since then, they have made further progress and now the proportion reading above the expected average is very high.

96. The quality of teaching and learning in English is good at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. However, within this, there is some variability in the teaching of the different aspects of English. The quality of teaching and learning in reading is very good at both key stages and is supported by very good links with home. Pupils regularly borrow books from the school and local library. The school's partnership with parents is strong with very good information about how to support their children's reading. However, the reading diary contact with parents acts more as a list of books read rather than as a means of two-way communication between teachers and parents. One of the best features of home and school reading is the regular written reviews of books. These show that pupils are developing independent opinions and have a very good interest in reading a wide range of fiction and non fiction books. Pupils talk confidently about authors, including Jacqueline Wilson, Anne Fine and Frank Rogers.

97. Teaching of reading in the literacy hour is very good, with plenty of opportunities for pupils to read aloud and independently. They are developing basic skills quickly and successfully. The amount of time allocated to reading is high and this is resulting in plenty of practice and improved attainment. In other subjects, reading is constantly being used as a tool to gain information. There are very high standards in teaching with plenty of challenge and development of skills. For example, from early on, pupils are learning how to use the 'Dewey' system to select books from the library. In personal reading, by the age of seven, they have a strong knowledge of captions, indexes and chapters. This work is supported by the use of information and communication technology. In Year 2, pupils know how to identify key words in paragraphs of writing and how to use these key words to find additional information using icons and menus in CD ROM programs. By the age of nine, pupils are able to find and make use of information from a range of sources and then pull this together. For example, pupils have read newspapers, Internet weather reports, holiday brochures and a range of information books as part of a weather project. This work is closely linked to writing, as by the age of nine, most are able to scan a text and make a few bullet point notes.

98. Teachers' knowledge of how to teach reading is very good. During the inspection week, 'big books' were read aloud by pupils and teachers so that they could learn how skilled readers use the punctuation and style of printed text to bring the text alive. Teachers use questioning very well to help pupils make quick progress in their learning, while also enjoying reading. For example, in Year 2, the teacher read the sentence "I heard a noise in the garden", and then she asked the pupils to try different voices. This resulted in very good learning, as pupils re-read the words using voices for quiet, firm, quivering and scared expressions. By the end of this part of the session, pupils had gained practical understanding of how to use punctuation clues such as, commas, speech marks and exclamation marks to help them to read with expression. Learning about how to predict words and read for real meaning is very good. In the very good lesson in

the mixed Year 1 and 2 class, when reading the poem 'Me Beside the Sea', the teacher encouraged the pupils to rearrange sentences and asked, "Why did the poet repeat the line?" She talked about the meaning of the word stanza and covered up words to help pupils to make accurate predictions.

99. In Years 3 and 4, teachers' knowledge of how to teach reading is very strong overall. A particular strength is pupils' understanding and development of new vocabulary. An example of this was seen in a good lesson. Here, the set of more able pupils read a piece of persuasive writing on the theme of 'being couch potatoes'. Learning was good, pupils could answer comprehension questions, discuss the use of connectives and use dictionaries to find word meanings, such as solitary and passive, to mean alone. In this good lesson, pupils worked solidly well above average overall, but, even so, some individuals were not sufficiently challenged and inspired. For example, there was an over use of worksheets and limited group discussion. Furthermore, there was no modelling of writing on the board to help pupils to select phrases from the text when justifying their own views about being a couch potato.

100. The findings of this inspection are that attainment for pupils at seven years is lower in writing than in the last national tests in 2000. The findings show broadly average attainment in writing while in the 2000 tests it was well above average when compared with all schools. The decline in writing in Year 2 is due to a range of factors. There are very few pupils who are working at the higher Level 3. The proportion working at the average Level 2 is just over 80 per cent. The school has correctly identified the need to develop writing skills and has good measures in place to address this and has a very good capacity to succeed. The findings for Years 3 and 4 match the above average attainment, which they showed in the national writing tests when they were aged seven. In Year 1, standards are well above average.

101. There are several reasons for this difference in attainment in writing in Year 2 compared with the rest of the school. This particular group has a higher number of pupils with special educational needs than other groups in the school. Several of these are boys who have difficulties with their behaviour and this is influencing how much work they do, despite their often better ability. The number of boys in Year 2 far exceeds the number of girls. Generally, the boys are less skilled than girls in writing narrative but achieve similar standards in their information writing. Overall, there are very few pupils working at the higher Level 3 in narrative writing, although in spelling and punctuation, pupils show above average standards. The organisation of the literacy hour does not give enough time for younger pupils to extend, correct and improve writing.

102. The quality of teaching and learning in writing is good overall at Key Stage 1 and very good at Key Stage 2. The use of the National Literacy Strategy is good overall, with very good planning for the teaching of spelling, grammar and handwriting, especially at Key Stage 2. However, there are too many missed opportunities in which teachers fail to model writing as part of the sentence work of the National Literacy Strategy. There has been good progress in the quality of teachers' marking of pupils' work, with plenty of developmental marking, which was considered weak in 1997. Marking gives praise and encouragement to pupils. Sometimes, pupils are set specific targets or ideas of how to make improvements to their work. However, time is not given for pupils to go back over their work and really concentrate on these targets during the week in which it is marked. Furthermore, opportunities for drafting and redrafting are too limited. Teachers are not modelling sentences enough in shared writing sessions. Additionally, there are fewer instances where teachers write for pupils while they dictate their ideas to develop their sentence work. All of these factors are contributing to why the pupils are not producing enough writing at the higher Level 3.

103. Pupils have had the opportunity to write for a good range of purposes at Key Stage 1, including instructions. This shorter style instruction writing is of a higher than average standard, but still the sentence structure of the more able pupils lacks ambitious use of words and is not often linked through variation in the use of connectives. These pupils use 'and', 'next' or 'then' but often repeat these over and over rather than trying a new one.

104. Handwriting at Key Stage 1 shows good overall letter formation and steady development of joined writing. In Key Stage 2, handwriting is often fluent and of a higher than average standard. Lower attaining pupils are still struggling with neat, joined scripts. However, across the school, formal handwriting practice lessons are resulting in very good progress overall. Presentation is usually of good quality; however, some pencils are not sharpened often enough. As a result, some work looks smudged. In Years 3 and 4 there are a number of average and more able pupils who are ready to use fountain pens. The handwriting of teachers and assistants in books and on the board is of variable quality. Sometimes, this is excellent, as in the mixed Year 3 and 4 class handwriting lesson. However, there are several examples in other classes that do not help pupils to aspire to best practice.

105. The teaching and learning of spelling is rigorous and very good throughout the school. Skills are developed progressively. By the age of seven, pupils are achieving above average standards in spelling as may can spell simple words correctly and make very good attempts at new words using letter sounds. The very good teaching of phonics is helping pupils to make very good progress. The excellent use of assessment, particularly in Years 3 and 4, is one reason why standards are so high. This is because pupils are regularly tested. Furthermore, their results are evaluated and pupils are grouped according to their ability and given weekly spelling lists to learn. In addition, one teacher in Key Stage 2 works diligently to link spellings to the literacy programme and topic work. This practice is excellent and leads to pupils having a very strong interest in words. As part of the rainforest writing, the teacher took root words, such as 'habit', 'tropic' and 'forest' and extended these in different ways so that pupils of average ability could practise more complex spellings. More able pupils were given harder words with what the teacher called 'hot spots'. This meant that pupils had to find patterns. For example, they looked for 'or' in carnivorous, decorated, opportunity.

106. The teaching and learning of punctuation and grammar are very good throughout the school. Pupils' work shows that, by the age of seven, they have a good understanding of how to use capital letters and full stops. More able pupils are beginning to use speech marks and most are developing an understanding of how and when to use a question marks. By the age of nine, they have a growing knowledge of verbs, suffixes, adverbs, adjectives and prepositions. Many know that words can be connected using an apostrophe. They know how to use speech marks and commas. In one good lesson for lower ability pupils in Years 3 and 4, the teacher helped pupils to read and identify possessive pronouns by linking the work to the book, 'A Letter to Greenpeace'. Here, there were very high expectations and very good relationships between the teacher and the pupils, which helped pupils to make quick progress.

107. Links with information and communication technology to support pupils' learning are satisfactory at Key Stage 1 and slightly better at Key Stage 2, where they have more computers. This allows groups to work with pace, independence and sustained interest on word processing and information retrieval skills. A particular strength is the use of support assistants in guiding pupils with special educational needs.

108. The curriculum is balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum. The format of the literacy hour has been well established. There are good policies for each area of English teaching. Joint planning is very good. Pupils have suitable targets to motivate them and give them responsibility for their own learning, but there is some inconsistency in the way in

which they are recorded and evaluated in pupils' books. The number and experience of staff for English work are good. Classroom assistants are usually deployed efficiently. Reports to parents give good specific information about how their children can improve. Resources for English are good as in the previous inspection, although there are few cassette recorders and headphones. There is a good range of books to support research and study skills. The library is well stocked and an attractive place to browse. It is very well used when older pupils help younger ones with their reading.

109. There is a special writing week each term that gives pupils opportunities to enrich their experiences. Furthermore, this week is used well to monitor the teaching and learning of writing. There are strong links with local schools and advisory staff to help with the evaluation of the school's work. There are too few educational visits and similar visitors to the school. However, the school has organised successful poetry days and World Book Day celebrations and has participated in the Haverhill Choral Speaking Festival and drama festivals to enrich pupils' cultural development. Nevertheless, the school has not given enough consideration to how to use books, writing, drama and visits to help prepare pupils for life in multicultural Britain. The choice of texts in literacy is having a very positive impact on pupils' moral development.

MATHEMATICS

110. The inspection's evidence shows that standards of attainment in the current Year 2 are well above the national average and this is a significant improvement from the findings of the last inspection when they were judged to be average. The results of the end of the key stage tests in mathematics in 2000 were well above the national average compared with all schools and to similar schools. Over the last three years, the trend in results is above the national trend. Explanations for the differences between inspection's judgements and the last inspection's findings are due to the good implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and the improvements in teaching following the headteacher's rigorous monitoring. The achievement of pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. The data for the last three years show that boys have attained better than girls. However, no significant difference in the attainment of boys and girls was identified during the inspection.

111. The standards for the current Year 4 are on course to be well above those expected for their age by the time they leave the school at nine years of age. This is significantly better than the findings of the last inspection when standards were judged to be barely average and is because of the successful implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy and good monitoring of teaching. The achievement of pupils in Year 4, including those with special educational needs, is good.

112. The quality of teaching and learning in Key Stage 1 and Years 3 and 4 is consistently good and, sometimes, very good. One lesson in Year 4 was judged to be excellent. All teaching promotes good achievement. This is a big improvement from the last inspection when teaching was judged to be 'just satisfactory'. All the weaknesses identified in the last inspection have been addressed. For example, teachers' subject knowledge is now secure and they have adapted well to the demands of the three-part daily mathematics lesson. In Year 2, very good methods of teaching ensured that the pupils guessed accurately which coins the teacher was holding in her hand when she described them by colour and shape. In the shopping game led directly by the teacher, the pupils were very enthusiastic to come out to the front and give change to the customer in the pretend shop. All the pupils were involved and showed their ability to calculate mentally very quickly and give change by the 'counting on' method. Their knowledge and understanding of coins and mental calculations improved. In the final session lesson, the teacher's good questioning and planning moved the pupils forward in their learning by encouraging them to give change from a pound coin. The pupils showed how they could think

logically and carefully to obtain the correct answer. Good planning ensured that the pace of the lesson was just right and the pupils worked hard and were very productive. In another Year 2 lesson, good resources prepared by the teacher led to the pupils learning well how to build up numbers along a number line. By the end of the lesson, the pupils were correcting their own work because they realised they had placed some numbers in the wrong place on the number line. The pupils were able to explain how they had discovered their mistakes and this illustrates their good numeracy skills.

113. In Year 1, the teacher's very good opening mental mathematics sessions with a constant repetition of appropriate mathematical vocabulary, such as 'next', 'before', 'largest' and 'smallest', ensured that the pupils were thinking very quickly and accurately. Very good resources were used in this lesson that allowed the pupils to choose their own three digit numbers from a fan shape of numbers. Small groups of pupils holding cards with numbers written on them were able to move into the correct order starting with the smallest number and ending with the largest number. This lesson was very well organised with two parents and a support assistant working with pupils while the teacher worked with a larger group of pupils. Using a small whiteboard, she taught the pupils how to order groups of three digit numbers. In this session, the pupils' knowledge of number moved forward considerably and they were working at a higher level than expected for pupils of their age. Good learning was evident in this lesson for all pupils.

114. In Years 3 and 4, the pupils are organised into three different groups for mathematics every day according to their ability. This system is working very well and has an impact on all the pupils' learning, which is improving daily. In the opening sessions, the teachers use a wide range of strategies and resources and this has a considerable impact on the way the pupils are learning their tables, for example, and how to work with bigger numbers. The excellent teaching of the higher attainers in Years 3 and 4 ensures that all pupils participate in the opening sessions totally. The teacher has very high expectations and pupils are expected to explain how they calculate their answers and to use a range of strategies. Their learning is very good. For example, in one lesson where there were mostly Year 4 pupils, most pupils calculated multiplication of two digit numbers by two digit numbers in different ways and explained how their methods worked for them. The teacher constantly assessed the pupils during the activity session and marked their work as he talked to them about their efforts. As a result, they are highly motivated and are becoming mathematicians in the true sense. A few of the very able pupils are using mathematical vocabulary and descriptors, such as 'The Associative Law', and 'The Distributive Law', with confidence.

115. The work scrutiny showed that all attainment targets are covered well. The co-ordinator has planned very carefully for all the year groups by adjusting the National Numeracy Strategy planning for each term very slightly to ensure that data handling is covered well. There was evidence to show that the pupils in Key Stage 1 had learned how to construct bar charts and block graphs as well as tally charts during the year. The pupils had also worked with Venn and Carroll diagrams using odd and even numbers with two digits. The pupils' learning of these diagrams was pushed forward in Key Stage 2 with good progress and continuity evident when pupils learned the vocabulary and symbols. The attainment target of shape and measure is covered well in both key stages with Year 4 pupils covering volume as well as translation and rotation in symmetry. Simplified work on Pythagoras' theorem had also been introduced using the playground as a practical base to work with for the higher attainers.

116. The National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented by the school very effectively. All the teachers are very competent in the opening mental mathematics session and ensure that the pupils are improving their numeracy skills constantly. There are good links with mathematics and ICT. The Key Stage 1 teachers ensure that all pupils work in pairs on the computer in their classrooms during mathematics lessons and, as a result, their skills improve. During the

inspection week, the chosen program was intended to improve their subtraction skills using money. In Key Stage 2, the ICT planning during the inspection was based on the 'Superlogo' program and the pupils needed to use the knowledge they had gained from learning about angles to move the turtle around the screen. Other links with mathematics are in English when pupils in Year 1 weigh ingredients for making a pizza; in design and technology, when pupils measure length to make their products and in science, when the pupils measure temperature at different times during an experiment.

117. Mathematics is managed by the co-ordinator very well. He is well qualified, very enthusiastic and has been responsible for introducing the strategy into the school one year earlier than in most other schools. As a result, the school is well ahead in its thinking about planning, about resources and the success of different methods of teaching. The school was recognised as a pilot school in the area and was visited by many teachers during the first and second year of implementation. The co-ordinator is an excellent role model for the other teachers and has worked very hard to help them with planning so that they are free to develop their teaching skills. This has been very effective. He is released for a day each half-term to monitor teaching and planning which is very useful for him to support his colleagues in areas they may feel need improving. Planning is based on the National Numeracy Strategy model and is good. Formal assessment of mathematics is carried out by the co-ordinator and the senior members of staff. It is very thorough and informs the school of the strengths and any weaknesses that need addressing. Day-to-day assessment of mathematics is also good. The teachers are constantly talking to the pupils while they work and mark their work on the spot. This is very effective for moving learning forward. Each week, the pupils are given an assessment sheet on the topic they have been learning and, during this session, the teachers work with individual pupils on any problems they have experienced. The parents have been kept informed of the numeracy hour since its implementation. Evening meetings were organised when parents came into school and were told of the different structure of the mathematics lessons. They were given hints about how to help their children. As a result, parents and pupils made games together that are loaned out constantly and this has an impact on learning because pupils become more confident in their mathematics. The contribution made by the parents to their children's learning is good.

118. The subject contributes well to the pupils' spiritual development in Key Stage 2 by the very good mental and oral sessions, particularly in the teaching group of higher attainers. In these sessions, the teacher inspires the pupils to enjoy the subject and to obtain insight into the underlying mathematical principles. The pupils' social development is affected positively by having to work together on problem solving activities. The pupils who have been identified by teachers as especially gifted in mathematics skills are extended by the setting arrangements in Years 3 and 4. The subject meets statutory requirements.

SCIENCE

119. Standards in science in the current Year 2 are above average, which is an improvement since the school's last inspection when it was judged that pupils' attainment was 'in line with national averages'. The inspection's findings differ from the school's results in the 2000 end of key stage assessments made by teachers in science when standards were very high at Level 2 and above, but at Level 3 and above standards were above average. The difference in judgements should be treated with caution because standards in the present Year 2 class have been affected by an increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs in this particular year group. Evidence collected during the inspection indicates that significant improvements in attainment have been made in Key Stage 2 since the previous inspection and, by the age of nine, pupils' standards are now well above average. This is because there has been a strong emphasis on the teaching of experimental and investigative science and the progressive teaching of skills. Throughout the school, pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs and

the higher attaining pupils are achieving well. No significant differences were observed in the performance of boys and girls.

120. The quality of teaching and learning is good across the school and promotes good achievement. In the school's previous inspection, teaching was judged to be good to satisfactory at Key Stage 1 but at Key Stage 2, it was reported as varying from good to poor. All lessons observed in the current inspection were at least good. They were well planned, resourced and executed. Teachers are confident in their knowledge of the subject and this results in good learning. Throughout the school, particularly at Key Stage 2, teachers place an increasing emphasis on pupils undertaking their own experiments and investigating for themselves. This is leading to an improvement in pupils' enquiry skills. However, in Year 2, the emphasis on investigation shows a weakness in pupils' ability to record efficiently what they find. All pupils enjoy science and are inspired by the enthusiasm of their teachers. This was well illustrated in both the Year 3 and 4 classes where pupils were introduced to the differences between solids and liquids. The high expectations of the teachers were clearly evident in the challenge of the tasks set for all pupils that captured and maintained their interest and made learning extremely enjoyable. As the result of skilful questioning techniques, teachers assess the pupils' understanding and adapt the work accordingly. For example, after presenting the pupils with a collection of solids to sort according to their own criteria, the teachers added liquids of differing viscosity and asked questions such as, 'Is there something different about them? Are they the same in any way?' Consequently, teachers not only developed pupils' observational and prediction skills of the behaviour of materials but instigated lively discussions and made the pupils think for themselves and come up with their own solutions. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, learnt well from these lessons, as they were well assisted by the support assistants and encouraged to talk about and share their ideas. The level of interest was high and was maintained by allowing the pupils to explore and undertake an investigation for themselves.

121. A particularly effective aspect of science teaching is the opportunity for pupils to work together to discuss and develop their own ideas. An analysis of pupils' work shows that the well above average attainment by Year 4 is due to the very good teaching. By the age of nine, pupils' numeracy skills are applied well to their scientific work. For instance, during their work on 'keeping warm' pupils took regular readings of the temperature of cups of tea over a period of time, recorded their results and presented their findings as line graphs. In their work on light and shadows, they measured and recorded the length of the shadow at different times of the day, presented their results in a table and constructed a bar chart.

122. By the age of seven, teachers' planning ensures a suitable approach to investigative science that prepares them well for Key Stage 2. For example, in their work on forces, pupils in Year 1 are set the problem, 'Do heavy things slow down quicker than light things?' In Year 2, pupils explore how toy cars roll down ramps and find out what makes the difference to how far the car travels by altering the height and surface of the ramp. In this work, they make predictions and explain how they made their comparison fair. However, for many pupils in the current Year 2, their ability to record their work is not always of the same high standard. This was particularly noticeable in the analysis of the work from the previous two terms. Good language development occurs when pupils use specialist words such as 'amphibians' and 'rodents' and when teachers encourage pupils to discuss their ideas. This was demonstrated when pupils in Year 2 were introduced to the variety of living things within the environment. The teacher elicited ideas from the pupils about the characteristics of animals and plants by asking them to suggest different groupings while completing a 'mind map' on the board. After listening to their replies, she asked them to become more explicit about some groupings. For instance, not just to name an animal or plant, but to identify a category they could belong to. By the end of the lesson the pupils were

able to group the plants and animals according to observable similarities and differences, such as animals that have a tail or no tail, and plants that are green or not green. Management of pupils is good and, as a result, all pupils settle well to their work and make good progress.

123. Science is well supported by a school policy and a scheme of work that follows the nationally recommended guidelines and assists in planning for the mixed-aged classes of two year groups. The new assessment procedures are good and include an end of unit task. Science is well led by an enthusiastic subject manager who has carried out some monitoring of pupils' work and teaching in Key Stage 1. Appropriate links with numeracy, literacy and some information and communication technology (ICT) were evident during the inspection. The subject manager has identified the need to develop the use of ICT in science and to develop an 'outdoor classroom' for use in science. Learning resources for science are satisfactory. Progress since the last inspection is good overall. Teaching and learning have improved, pupils are now more independent and the assessment arrangements now in place are effective. The subject fully meets the requirements of the National Curriculum.

ART AND DESIGN

124. The standard of pupils' work in art and design, including that of pupils with special educational needs, is typical for pupils aged seven and nine years old. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. This is similar to the standards reported in the previous inspection. Standards were judged on the quality of the pupils' work on display and in the work provided for scrutiny as well as on their performance in the two lessons observed at Key Stage 1.

125. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall at both key stages. In Years 1 and 2, pupils investigate shape, form and texture in materials to create a three-dimensional form. Teachers introduce pupils to the works of famous artists such as Henry Moore and Andy Goldsworthy to provide a useful starting point for their work and to help them develop an understanding of how different materials can be used to create a relief collage. As a starting point for the practical work, pupils draw their own sketches of places they would like to visit, such as a beach, a forest and outer space. In the lessons observed, pupils used a wide variety of materials, such as pasta, shells, wool, paper and leaves effectively to produce their own imaginative collage. A particularly good feature of the teaching was the opportunity for pupils to collect and choose their own materials for their work. As they work, they describe what they think about their work and consider where they went wrong. The teachers also allow time for pupils to walk around, look at one another's work and to make comment. They found this difficult and needed guidance in what to look for. Lessons are well planned and organised with clear teaching points communicated at the start and effective support and guidance given on an individual basis once pupils are working independently.

126. The range of work planned for pupils in Years 3 and 4 shows that teachers have a sound understanding of what is appropriate for pupils to experience. They build on the skills and techniques acquired by the younger pupils and, as a result, pupils experiment with a suitable range of methods and develop the confidence to try out new techniques. For instance, the paper sculptures on display show examples of pupils using pastels skilfully to create bold shapes and patterns in their designs and use these to make a three-dimensional piece of work. A good feature of art and design is the strong link that it has with other subjects, such as science and design and technology. In work linked to design and technology, for example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 produce some good observational drawings of different fruit before using them to make a fruit dessert. Overall, however, pupils' drawing skills are satisfactory with some examples of good work by pupils in Year 4 when sketching the Nursery shed. Pupils at Key Stage 2 are encouraged to make best use of their sketchbooks and use different sketching pencils to create varied effect,

as in their sketches of African prints and Greek patterns. There is little evidence on display to indicate that pupils are developing their understanding of the effects of colour through painting or learning new techniques so that they can paint freely from memory and imagination. The opportunities and encouragement that teachers offer pupils to reflect on their work promote their ability to evaluate and improve their artwork.

127. The responsibility for art and design is shared between two part-time teachers who are well qualified and enthusiastic about the subject. They have worked extremely hard to produce lesson plans that match the units of work in the national guidelines and support the progression of skills. However, there is no consistent format for the systematic assessment and recording of pupils' skills to gauge their progress or evidence kept to show the range of their work. Resources for art are adequate with an appropriate variety of media and materials. There has been no opportunity for pupils to experience events that involve specialists or people who have an interest in art coming into school and sharing their knowledge and skills with them. Displays throughout the school are used well to celebrate the work of pupils and enhance their environment.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

128. Although only one design and technology lesson was observed during the inspection, an analysis of planning, pupils' work and discussion with pupils and teachers indicates that standards are above those found in most schools for pupils aged seven and nine. Achievement is good for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. This represents a significant improvement since the school's previous inspection where attainment was judged to match national expectations by the end of Key Stage 1, but at Key Stage 2 some areas such as construction, were said to be less well developed so attainment was 'restricted'. Standards have improved because of the effective response to the key issue for action from the last inspection and the knowledgeable leadership provided by the headteacher for the subject.

129. The evidence indicates that the quality of teaching and learning is good at both key stages. By the age of nine, the principles of design and making are well established. The medium-term planning for the subject is detailed and extremely well supported by the packs that contain guidelines and classroom ideas for each unit of work covered. These helpful resources ensure that teachers introduce pupils to a varied and increasing range of tools and materials for both designing and making. This helps pupils to build up their skills systematically through the school. This was clearly evident in the work analysis and when talking with pupils from Year 4. By the age of seven, pupils have good skills in designing and modelling using a variety of materials and tools. The teachers' good methods and organisation ensure that most pupils label their designs well, list the materials required and write a sequence of actions they intend to carry out in order to make their model. They make good, well thought out products that show a well-developed knowledge and understanding of the working characteristics of materials and of how mechanisms can be used in different ways. Some of the best work showed pupils investigating how different forms of vehicles are constructed and joined together. With the help and encouragement of the teachers, pupils used this information well to design and make their own versions by making cars with axles.

130. Good links with science and art were made by the teachers when lessons focused on developing the pupils' understanding of designing and making with food and the importance of healthy eating. The pupils designed and made a fruit dessert that involved using a range of simple kitchen tools and equipment. They drew detailed pictures of what the different fruits looked like when whole and when cut in half, described what they smelt like and how the fruits tasted after making the dessert. During their work on structures, pupils designed and made a stable free-standing photograph frame. Good teaching ensured that careful attention was given to the design and the project was completed by the teacher taking photographs of each pupils to place in the

frame. In the one lesson seen, the teacher introduced the task of producing different fruit flavoured drinks. Not only did the pupils have to consider the ingredients for the drinks but also the packaging that would be required to contain the drink. Good organisation by the teacher ensured that the pupils were provided with examples of commercial packaging to explore in order to look at the different ingredients the drinks contained and to raise their awareness of the impact of style. Pupils take great pride in sharing their work. For example, pupils in Year 4, having designed and made their own storybooks with moving parts spoke knowledgeably and with pleasure about how they had incorporated the different forms of movement in their books. This involved lifting flaps, pulling levers, using split pins to create a spinner and folding paper to make a 'frog' spring. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' performance and encourage them to strive for a good, well-finished product.

131. The headteacher as subject manager has made a significant impact on design and technology in the school. The scheme of work, based on the nationally recommended guidelines has been extensively extended and supplemented by the lesson plans and advice provided by the Local Education Authority. Although there is a new system of assessment planned, the staff is at present only trialling it. Resources for the subject are good and are used well, with good attention paid to safety. Progress since the last inspection is very good. Standards have risen, teachers' knowledge and understanding have increased and, consequently, specific design and technology skills are now being taught.

GEOGRAPHY

132. It was not possible to observe the teaching of geography as the school organises the teaching of this subject into blocks of time, which alternate with history. Judgements are based on discussions with pupils and teachers, and on the school's planning, records and samples of pupils' work. The indications are that standards are similar to those found in most schools for pupils aged seven and nine years old which is in line with the findings of the last inspection. Pupils achieve satisfactorily, including those with special educational needs. There are no differences in attainment between boys and girls.

133. The quality of teaching and learning at Key Stage 1 and in Years 3 and 4, based on the available evidence, is satisfactory. Planning is satisfactory, giving a range of experiences. For example, pupils in Year 2 study the local community and have a satisfactory understanding of the area. Most can locate different places on the local map of Haverhill and can draw different routes to school. Pupils can name different places around the world and recognise a few flags. They have discussed the similarities of different locations, such as life in St Lucia. They talk about Africa as a hot country and Antarctica as cold, but this shows that they are not familiar with the idea of different continents. Teachers are trying to develop practical activities although there is still some over reliance on commercial worksheets. The best work showed the attempts by pupils to draw representations of the colours and landscapes of hot and cold countries. In Year 1, pupils are developing an understanding of why castles were positioned in certain locations. This shows good links with their work in history.

134. There is satisfactory coverage of the curriculum. However, the development of skills is hampered by a lack of simple assessment procedures. Work is not often planned at different levels of difficulty to meet the needs of all pupils. Overall, the use of first hand enquiry work and visits to widen pupils' understanding is underdeveloped. Pupils have visited Walton on the Naze and Frinton on Sea. The amount of time allocated to geography is low. Resources are satisfactory, although there are too few atlases and cultural artefacts. Links with literacy and numeracy are good. Links with ICT are satisfactory.

135. Pupils are developing some independent enquiry skills, but overall these are limited. This was best in the work about weather in Years 3 and 4. Here, pupils researched and wrote about

holiday destinations all around the world. They used a range of books and the Internet to produce posters. This resulted in a good understanding of variation in temperatures and very good links with homework. Pupils had to check newspapers for information and visit travel agents for holiday brochures. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have also studied France. This work is not as good or exciting as the work on weather. This is because of the over reliance on commercially produced worksheets. Moreover, it showed few opportunities for pupils to show their initiative, as work mostly focused on gathering of lists of facts.

136. The co-ordinator is new to the school and in a temporary post and has not had time to make any improvements in this subject. There has been no direct monitoring of teaching. There has been some progress in developing field study work since the last inspection but unsatisfactory progress in developing assessment.

137. Pupils' understanding of different cultures is sometimes too stereotyped. For example, the pupils have studied life in Chembakolli, an Indian village. Although pupils have clearly given thought to comparisons of housing, water supply and differences in food, several pupils have been left with an impression that all Indian people are poor and do not attend school. Furthermore, work containing such facts is ticked by the teachers as correct. Marking shows little evidence of comments on how pupils can improve their work or develop their opinions. Geographical work is not having sufficient impact on helping to prepare pupils for their life in multicultural society.

HISTORY

138. Standards in history are in line with national expectations for pupils aged seven and nine years. This judgement takes into account the two lessons observed, an analysis of pupils' work, displays, scrutiny of teachers' planning and discussions with pupils. Pupils achieve satisfactorily overall including those with special educational needs. However, more able pupils are not given enough opportunities to extend their learning. There are no differences in attainment between boys and girls. The findings match those of the last inspection.

139. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall throughout the school. However, during the inspection, a good lesson was seen at Key Stage 1 and one very good lesson was observed at Key Stage 2. In these lessons, pupils really enjoyed learning and they showed very good attitudes and behaviour. In the lessons seen, the teaching and learning of pupils with special educational needs are satisfactory as work is planned for their different needs. Overall, there is little variation in the tasks given to different ability groups.

140. Throughout the school, there tends to be an over reliance on recording by using commercially produced worksheets. This is not sufficiently helpful in developing pupils' independent research and thinking skills. The quality of presentation of work is not as high as in other English written work. Nevertheless, links with literacy and numeracy are satisfactory. Drawing and artwork are not supporting the curriculum well enough. Marking does not help pupils to improve.

141. In Year 1, pupils' knowledge of castles is developing satisfactorily. Good learning occurred when the teacher helped pupils to 'brainstorm' and think about what makes a castle. Following this, pupils used reference books successfully to find facts. Pupils listened attentively, but the learning lacked excitement. There was no use of role play, photographic evidence or a television programme to inspire their imaginations. Nevertheless, there was good solid learning of new vocabulary and plenty of opportunities to read. The best feature was the very good, challenging questioning. The teacher asked lots of who, where, why type questions to help pupils to compare life in a castle with homes in the year 2001. Although the use of the CD ROM and a drawing program was planned, no pupils made use of these to support their learning.

142. By the age of seven, pupils have a satisfactory understanding about family history and changes in lifestyle in the last 80 years. They can compare different forms of lighting, cooking, washing and schooling. Skills are not developing progressively enough and this has resulted in some lack of challenge in the work offered. For example, from the Nursery up to Year 2, pupils repeat work about their family tree.

143. In Year 4, pupils know about the development of transport in the last 100 years and talk confidently about how and why changes occurred. Their knowledge and understanding of Saxons and Vikings are very general. The best teaching and learning were seen in Year 4. The teacher had clearly spent time organising an exciting lesson. Pupils worked co-operatively on a mini archaeological dig using large plastic containers filled with sand and earth. Pupils commented that this kind of work was different from the usual. Here, the teacher had prepared an excellent recording sheet so that they could compare their findings. He explained the task clearly and circulated giving helpful, challenging comments, which made pupils think. By the end of the lesson, pupils had found and evaluated pieces of pottery, Roman coins, Victorian artefacts and modern day items. There were missed opportunities to link the good discussion about the passing of time with a visual time line.

144. The co-ordinator is very new and has been appointed as a temporary teacher. Thus, the long term development of the subject is weak at the moment. There is a satisfactory written policy, which supports teaching and learning. The national guidelines for history are used to plan the curriculum. However, the curriculum is quite narrow at Key Stage 1, for example there is no use of role-play or use of videos to inspire the pupils. Throughout the school, the amount of time which is allocated to history is lower than average. Assessment procedures are just developing, but are not helpful in identifying the different levels at which pupils are working. The progression of pupils' historical skills and knowledge is not incorporated in the school's own scheme of work. Information and communication technology resources are insufficiently used to support work. Opportunities to take part in real historical enquiry using artefacts, photographs and other resources are underdeveloped. Throughout the school, the use of visits and visitors to bring history to life is evident but limited. There has been limited overall progress in this subject since the last inspection.

145. History is supporting pupils' spiritual and cultural development satisfactorily. In Year 2, pupils have completed some work on King Edmund as part of the Danish invasion of East Anglia. However, opportunities to enrich their learning through studies about famous people and events in history are weaker. This is resulting in younger pupils not having a strong enough sense of events and people from a long time ago, recent history and the present day.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

146. Standards for pupils in Key Stage 1 are similar to those found in most schools, which is an improvement from the last inspection when standards were judged to be below average. Achievement is satisfactory for all pupils including those with special educational needs. However, these same pupils are achieving better in English, mathematics and science and this is because there are limited opportunities for the pupils to have 'hands on' work experience on the computers. In this key stage, there is only one computer per class of approximately 30 pupils and, although the teachers are punctilious in ensuring that the pupils take turns in a fair way, this still means a very small amount of time per week for each pupil.

147. By the age of nine, pupils' attainment is similar to that found in most schools, which is an improvement from the findings of the last inspection when attainment was judged to be below average. The achievement of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is satisfactory. Again, achievement for this year group in English and science is good and the underachievement in ICT is because the considerable effort the school has made to improve the

resources and teaching skills has yet to have an impact on attainment for Years 3 and 4. Most of the computers in use at the time of the last inspection have been replaced and very useful programs have been loaded on to the hard drives.

148. The quality of teaching is judged to be satisfactory overall although, within this, there is some variability with two good lessons and one unsatisfactory. This is an improvement from the last inspection when all teaching was considered to be unsatisfactory. Each week there is a direct lesson led by the teachers on a specific skill, which is then followed up by pupils using the computers in turn during the following week or two weeks. For example, a good lesson in Year 2 concentrated on how to use an encyclopaedia program by learning how to pick out the key words needed to search the different pages of the program. The teacher's good questioning skills and methods ensured that most pupils were able to understand what they needed to do to access the information. In the activities part of the lesson, good organisation had an impact on learning when a small group of pupils worked with a visiting student on the computer using and extending the skills they had just learned. The other pupils worked 'off computer' on a text circling the key words. The same lesson in another Year 2 class was unsatisfactory because it was too short and the pupils could not see the text on the whiteboard used by the teacher to look for key words. Additionally, the pupils could not see the screen when the teacher chose a boy to demonstrate how to use the program. Over the next two weeks, the pupils in each class will possibly be given 40 minutes on the computer in pairs to practise what they have learned in the classroom. This is very limited time to ensure understanding and development of skills. The pupils in this year group were observed on the computers during mathematics lessons when, each day, two pupils worked on the computer to improve their subtraction skills. They showed that they are competent in using the mouse and clicking the correct icons.

149. The scrutiny of work and a trawl of displays showed that, by the age of seven, pupils can use ICT to write, save and print out their drafts of a story. A few can change mistakes and print their work although none of the pupils has the facility for saving their work on their own disk. They have used the My World program to dress a doll using several different icons and they use the CDROM to find out about aspects of history or science. They can use the contents and index pages to search the encyclopaedia program. They can make simple graphs to show their friends' pets or favourite food and have had experience of using programmable toys. The teachers use ICT well for display headings and instructions for pupils.

150. In Years 3 and 4, the planning for the direct lessons was designed to increase the pupils' skills and knowledge of how to use 'Superlogo'. The pupils have previously had experience of 'Logo' and showed by their response to the teachers' questions that they have consolidated their learning well. The teacher's skilled questioning resulted in the pupils listening as they sat or stood around the computer she was using to teach them how to access the program and use the commands correctly. Her very good organisation ensured that all the pupils could see the screen very well and her good management and control meant that they all listened and did not fuss about the arrangements. In this key stage, there are four computers in a row which is very much more conducive to 'hands on experience'. Following the direct lesson, eight pupils remained on the computers with the support of a visiting student. The skills they had learned using 'Logo' were remembered and some of them were able to choose sensible angles to move the turtle around the screen to draw a recognisable shape. The well-prepared prompt cards for the commands, which were easily available for the pupils to read, ensured that all the pupils moved forward in their learning. At the end of the lesson, four of the pupils had completed a recognisable polygon. There were good links with mathematics in this lesson.

151. The work scrutiny and analysis of displays revealed that the pupils in this key stage have used art packages to use colour and to create mathematical patterns and have also used a music program for copying patterns in music. The display of word processing techniques shows that the

pupils can change the font and colours and can add pictures to their work. They have also mastered bubble paragraphs for illustration. They have collected information and put it into a database as part of their scientific investigations although there was no evidence of interrogation of the data. They can describe the different uses of ICT outside school. There are links with other subjects, for example, in English, the teacher used ICT to enable pupils to search for the long 'oo' sound in a text in a Year 2 lesson. In mathematics, there are good links with ICT when the pupils in Key Stage 1 have access to the computer in each lesson and in Years 3 and 4 their previous knowledge of angles in mathematics was evident in their lesson on 'Superlogo'. However, in other subjects, such as history and geography, the use of ICT is not developed fully.

152. This subject is managed well by the deputy headteacher who was responsible for ICT in her previous school. Together with the headteacher, she has made wise decisions about using the money offered from funding for resources and training. All staff, including learning support staff, are receiving training during this year. ICT is highlighted in the school improvement plan as a priority area for training staff and to improve the resources. Both priorities are related to improving the standards so that more pupils attain higher level skills. The headteacher is actively pursuing funding to enable links to be made with an independent school that will enable the school to buy more ICT equipment, which is needed, particularly in Key Stage 1. All strands of ICT are covered in the long and medium-term planning documents which, although they are based on the national scheme of work, have been expanded in the light of the needs of the school. Release time is given to the co-ordinator each half-term and she has undertaken some monitoring of the subject by observation and scrutiny of planning. There are plans for staff to get together to assess the pupils' work but, during the inspection week, there was no evidence of any assessment procedure in place. This weakness impacts on the pupils' attainment because the staff have no records of individual pupils' skills and knowledge. The subject contributes particularly well to the pupils' social development when they work together using the computers to solve problems.

MUSIC

153. Standards in music are well above those found in most schools for pupils throughout the school. Pupils really enjoy their music work and they are achieving very well. Specialised tuition is given by an unqualified teacher, who has excellent subject knowledge. She works with every class in the school for one session a week and, although pupils only have half an hour a week, the time is used to excellent effect. In addition to this, she runs two successful extra-curricular choir groups and two recorder groups for enthusiastic pupils of all abilities. A visiting specialist teaches guitar. Throughout the year, pupils have good opportunities to play in the school orchestra, which gives them the opportunity to perform to a wider audience. Pupils who attend the choir sing beautifully and singing is well above average. Girls and boys achieve similar standards.

154. There are several talented, able and gifted pupils. They are well supported by attending county run courses and by sharing their skills within the wider life of the school. For example, they play a range of instruments to the senior citizens who have a weekly lunch in the school. Additionally, pupils have taken part in the Haverhill Arts Festival. The choir has won several high awards at the Sudbury Music Festival. Pupils with special educational needs make very good progress because there is a very strong policy of inclusion for all pupils. Work is well planned for the wide abilities in the classes.

155. At the time of the last inspection, standards were judged to be slightly above national expectations. Since then, this has improved to a high level and thus, progress since the last inspection is very good. The school has increased opportunities to record pupils' work but, overall, links with information and communication technology are underdeveloped.

156. The quality of teaching and learning is very good, and often excellent. The teacher has excellent subject knowledge and understanding of how to teach skills in a lively and energetic

style. She has very high standards, but has the capacity to make pupils laugh. For example, in a very good Year 3 and 4 lesson she said, “Now come on, don’t slouch! I want you to open your mouths wide and sing, sing, sing, spit the words out and get your voices out of those wellie boots”. In the same lesson, she helped pupils to recapitulate and extend their understanding on musical notation by letting pupils combine notes on the magnetic board. Pupils know the names and values of notes and with her skilful guidance, using hand signals, they sang up and down the scale with accuracy.

157. The teacher plans an excellent range of work. For example, pupils in Years 1 and 2 shared their ideas about an extract from, ‘The Young Persons’ Guide to the Orchestra’. They then chose instruments to represent different planets, such as Pluto, with rhythms for slow, dark, sad feelings. They compared these with the hot, lively feeling for Saturn. By the end of the session, learning about pitch, timbre and texture was very good. Pupils know the names of a range of percussion instruments and understand how to hold the beaters correctly in order to produce the purest sound. The development of their technical and imaginative vocabulary is very good.

158. Work is developed progressively to a very good standard. For example, the teacher builds on the work as noted above and by the age of nine, pupils can talk about Britton as a famous Suffolk composer. They listened to ‘Dawn’ in a very good lesson. Following this, pupils described how the music made them feel, sad, calm, afraid and lonely, ‘like being at a funeral’. Pupils then used a range of percussion instruments including a rainmaker, electronic keyboard, shakers and tubular bells to compose and perform the story of the ‘Lonely Man’. The excellent discussion helped pupils to understand ostinato and develop more complex textures in their compositions.

159. Opportunities for real creativity and effort are evident in all lessons. Lessons are well planned and prepared, with a wide range of activities that offer appropriate challenges, although, on occasions, there is a tendency to try to do too much as the teacher’s enthusiasm takes over. Pupils really enjoy their work; they work together co-operatively and talk about pieces of music with real sensitivity. Pupils work quickly and show very good concentration. This is only spoilt by a few boys who feel rather inhibited and thus exhibit silly behaviour. However, the teacher is very skilled at getting them involved, by being firm and fair and praising whatever small effort they make which motivates them to join in.

160. Music is making a very positive contribution to pupils’ spiritual and cultural development in lessons and in assemblies. The co-ordinator is seeking to increase the range of multicultural instruments as part of her development programme. The choir are about to attend a concert by The London Symphony Orchestra at the Barbican. All pupils have had opportunities to play and make Gamelan instruments. There was an excellent spiritual moment when these pupils rehearsed ‘Food Glorious Food’. Here, there was a ‘tingle’ factor, which made the listener feel inspired. This was because the pupils, under the skilful guidance of the teacher, built the song up from a silent whisper to a rousing crescendo.

161. The subject is very well led. The quality and range of learning opportunities are good, with some strong links with literacy. The curriculum is very broad and well balanced. The use of assessment is very good. Constantly, the teacher evaluates pupils’ efforts and helps them to improve. She has placed cards around the designated room for music, which indicate to the pupils what they have to do to attain specific levels of skills. Pupils are very aware of their targets for development. Very good use is made of resources for teaching, including staves and notes, puppets for high and low notes and a wide range of recorded music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

162. Due to the organisation of the timetable during the inspection week, it was only possible to observe one lesson of dance in Year 1. No lessons in games or gymnastics were observed in Year 2 and no judgements can be made on the standards or the quality of teaching and learning in this key stage. However, in the dance lesson observed in Year 1, standards of attainment were above those found in most similar schools.

163. It was only possible to observe activities in physical education (PE) in games in Key Stage 2. This evidence, together with the analysis of documented swimming standards, shows that standards are above those found in most similar schools for pupils aged nine. Achievement for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, is good. This is an improvement since the last inspection when attainment was judged to be in line with expectations. This is because the role of the PE co-ordinator has been extended since the appointment of the headteacher following that last inspection. This has had an impact on standards throughout the school due to the focus on more detailed planning and ensuring that teachers have higher expectations.

164. In the Year 1 dance lesson observed, the pupils showed good co-ordination when working individually. The teacher's good questioning and use of pupils as models enabled these young pupils to evaluate each other's ideas and movements constructively. It was evident that when the whole class repeated some movements they had observed being modelled by their friends, their performance improved. The whole class showed quite remarkable maturity when interpreting the movements of a butterfly, a worm or a bee. No inappropriate behaviour was observed at all. The pupils enjoyed the contrast of moving around the hall very gracefully as a butterfly and then changing to moving on their stomachs very slowly as a worm. The teacher's good planning, quiet instructions and purposeful encouragement had an impact on the pupils' learning and they made a big physical effort to improve. No time was wasted in this lesson due to good organisation and the pupils' very good behaviour.

165. The quality of teaching and learning for Years 3 and 4 is good overall. All teachers stress the importance of warming up and cooling down at the beginning and end of lessons. It is very evident that all the pupils are knowledgeable about why they need to carry out these activities and can explain what is happening to their bodies. During an outside games lesson, the teacher's good organisation ensured that no time was wasted and pupils quickly moved into their groups to play the game. Pupils improved their throwing, catching, dodging and feinting skills considerably during this lesson due to the teacher's focus and energy in moving around the playground quickly giving each group coaching and encouragement. An athletics lesson in the hall, when pupils were being coached in their skills in javelin throwing, was very successful in moving the pupils' learning forward. The teacher's quiet insistence on pupils using the rubber javelins safely ensured that the pupils remained quiet but eager to have their turn. This was only the second lesson in this unit of work and it was very evident that pupils were improving their individual performances with each throw. A simple scoring system ensured that they could judge immediately their success in improvement. Many pupils can throw the javelin the length of the hall. Very good teaching ensured that the pupils had learned the correct stance for throwing and how to hold the javelin to improve their throwing distance. Pupils kept up their enthusiasm and willingness to improve due to the teacher's very good encouragement and constant, quiet coaching comments.

166. The management of this subject is good. The co-ordinator has written the scheme of work based on both the county and national schemes. The scheme is helpful and very detailed. The co-ordinator is given time each term to focus on the subject and she has used this time to complete the scheme of work, to write the medium-term plans for each year group and to

scrutinise the planning. This has been very helpful to her colleagues and has had an impact on standards, which have improved since the last inspection. She now intends to use her release time to monitor the teaching of the subject. There are no procedures in place to assess the pupils' progress in PE. The pupils have two lessons of PE a week and this is appropriate for Key Stage 1. However, for those pupils in Years 3 and 4, the allocation of time to PE is below the lowest percentage compared to all schools nationally. Although there is one club after school each week for games, the club can cater for 20 pupils only in Years 3 and 4. Several of these pupils are talented at games and athletics and have no other opportunities in school to participate in team sports or athletics after school and extend their skills further.