

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **The Glade Community Primary School**

Brandon, Suffolk

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124563

Headteacher: Mrs G White

Reporting inspector: Alan Andrews  
OIN: 6436

Dates of inspection: 21<sup>st</sup> – 24<sup>th</sup> January 2002

Inspection number: 193783

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Knappers Way Brandon Suffolk
Postcode:	IP27 ODA
Telephone number:	01842 811580
Fax number:	01842 814645
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Tony Priest
Date of previous inspection:	28 <sup>th</sup> April – 1 <sup>st</sup> May 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
6436	Alan Andrews	Registered inspector	English Art and design Design and technology Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are the standards? How well are the pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
13851	Doug Binfield	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
10090	Kath Beck	Team inspector	Foundation Stage Mathematics Information and communication technology Geography History	

7694	Martyn Richards	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education Religious education English as an additional language Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to the pupils?
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The inspection contractor was:

Quinset

‘Draycott’]  
Chappel Road  
Great Tey  
Colchester  
Essex. CO6 1JP

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

The Glade Community Primary School is situated in the Suffolk town of Brandon. It educates children in the four to nine age range and is smaller than most other primary schools. Currently there are 185 children on roll. All four year old children start school in September, but attend part-time in the morning until the term in which they become five. The children come from a mix of private and rented housing. Achievement on entry to school is generally below that typical for their age, especially in language, number and social skills. Children are divided into eight classes. This includes 16 children in two small classes that form an Area Support Centre for statemented children who have a variety of special needs, such as Down's syndrome and autism. Children in the Centre are drawn from a wide geographical area. They play a full part in the daily life of the school and some are integrated into other classes according to their abilities and needs. Few children come from ethnic minorities, although the percentage of children with English as an additional language is slightly higher than in most schools. The school also admits a small number of children from the families of American service personnel. The percentage of children identified as having special educational needs in the mainstream of the school is similar to most schools. The percentage of children known to be eligible for free school meals is also similar to the national picture.

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

The Glade is an effective school facing its many challenges with energy and optimism. Determined leadership has brought substantial improvement in standards by the end of Year 2, particularly in English and science, although this is not sustained into Year 4. Standards in art and design and technology are high, but children's achievements in mathematics and information and communication technology could be better. Day to day management of the school is good. A calm, positive climate for learning is created. Much of the teaching is good and some is of a high quality. The integration of children from the Area Support Centre into the general life of the school is very good. Parents have a high regard for the school and its work. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards have risen substantially since the last inspection.
- Very good provision for children in Foundation Stage and the Area Support Centre
- Much of the teaching is good or very good and some is excellent.
- The school has very good links with parents who appreciate its many strengths.
- High standards in art and design and design and technology.
- Good leadership from the headteacher and governors with a clear sense of educational direction.
- Children's very good attitudes and good behaviour.
- The school makes very good provision for children's welfare, guidance and personal development.

#### **What could be improved**

- Attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the children leave the school.
- Attainment in information and communication technology.
- The rate of children's progress in Year 4.
- The learning of children with English as an additional language.
- Ensure the annual governors' report to parents contains all that it should.

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

### **HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION**

The school has made significant improvements in many areas since the last inspection in 1997. Key issues have been tackled rigorously and mostly with success. The management of the school is good. Clear educational targets are set for the children and the school development plan is now a useful tool for improvement. The efforts of teachers are co-ordinated and their effectiveness is monitored. Standards have risen in English, mathematics, physical education and science, although there is further work to be done in mathematics. Standards in art and design and technology have risen dramatically and are now of a high quality. However, statutory requirements are not yet met in information and communication technology and standards are below those expected nationally.

Curriculum planning is now more thorough and detailed to ensure that children build skills systematically. Assessment of their attainment and progress is good and most teachers use the information gained effectively when planning children's work. The overall quality of teaching in

mainstream classes is now good and often very good, but there is some unsatisfactory teaching in Year 4 that hinders children's progress.

## STANDARDS

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

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

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

This table shows that the school's 2001 results in national tests at the end of Year 2 in reading, writing and mathematics were well below average compared to the national picture as well as to similar schools. In mathematics, the school was in the lowest 5% when compared to similar schools. However, the figures need to be treated with considerable caution because children from the Area Support Centre, all of whom have statements of special educational needs, are included in the results. The school is proud of the work of the Centre, but is right to point to its impact on national test results. The number of children from the Centre involved in the tests varies from year to year. In 1999 there were none, in 2000 there were four and in 2001 there were 10, which was an unusually high number. Most, but not all, these children are from outside the school's recognised catchment area. In 2001, there were eight such children in a year group of 46. The results of the remaining 38 children shows that in writing they were well above the national average, in reading they were in line with the national average and in mathematics they were below average. The same picture emerges when the results are compared to similar schools, except that in mathematics they were well below average. In all three subject areas, the number of children reaching the higher levels within the tests was above that nationally. The overall results of the mainstream children since 1997 show significant improvements, although there was a fall in 2001 that the school was expecting because it tracks children's progress carefully.

The school's mainstream targets for reading, writing and mathematics in the 2001 tests were all exceeded, including those for brighter children. The whole school targets with children from the Area Support Centre were also met or exceeded.

Lesson observations and scrutiny of work from children in the present Year 2 show attainment in English and science to be in line with the national average whilst in mathematics it is below the national average. There are examples of high quality work in art and design and technology. Children's achievements in history and geography are good, but in information and communication technology they are unsatisfactory.

Children's progress accelerates in Year 3, but this is not sustained in Year 4 where achievements in English, mathematics and science are below that expected for their age. There continues to be examples of high quality work in art and design and technology, but children's achievements in history, geography and information and communication technology are below that expected for age nine.

Children in the Foundation Stage are on course to meet the early learning goals in all the areas of experience and will exceed them in personal and social development.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES



Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Children enjoy school and are enthusiastic about their work.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good overall, but with many examples of very good or excellent behaviour. A calm atmosphere prevails in the school
Personal development and relationships	Relationships are very good. Children co-operate with each other well. They undertake responsibility sensibly.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The level of unauthorised absence has been reduced.

Children arrive at school on time and show pride in their work. They are happy to help one another and are polite and respectful to adults. Lessons and other activities start and finish on time. These features contribute positively to children's learning.

### TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Overall, teaching is good. It is very good in the Foundation Stage and the Area Support Centre. It is sometimes very good in the mainstream of the school and is particularly strong in Year 3. However, some unsatisfactory teaching in Year 4 holds back children's progress. The daily literacy and numeracy lessons are mainly taught well. Strengths in teaching stem from imaginatively presented tasks that challenge children to think hard and to make good progress in their learning, including those from families of American personnel. Examples of high quality teaching were seen in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, history and physical education. Very little teaching of information and communication technology was observed and teachers do not provide enough opportunities for children to use computers, particularly in literacy and numeracy. In a small number of lessons within the mainstream, teachers' expectations of what children can do are too low and tasks are not sufficiently well matched to their needs and interests. In addition, teachers sometimes lack enough subject knowledge and there is an over reliance on worksheets that limit the intellectual challenge for children. The mainstream teaching of children with special educational needs is satisfactory overall, although it is better at the Foundation Stage. Children with English as an additional language make progress, but their needs are not identified with enough precision to allow well-focused programmes of work to be planned for them.

### OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Very good in the Foundation Stage and the Area Support Centre. Satisfactory in Years 1 to 4.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good in the Area Support Centre. Satisfactory overall in mainstream classes, but with strengths in the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Unsatisfactory. Children's needs are not identified precisely enough to enable well-focused programmes of work to be planned for them.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for children's personal development is good. Satisfactory arrangements are made for children's spiritual and moral development. The arrangements to promote children's social and cultural development are good.

How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good. Children's health and general welfare are catered for really well.
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Parents are pleased with the school and hold it in high regard. Its caring and supportive environment helps children to feel secure and happy in their work. Parents are particularly pleased with the work of the Area Support Centre and how it is integrated into the mainstream. They see the benefits this brings to all children. The school's curriculum gives priority to literacy and numeracy, but does not meet statutory requirements with regard to information and communication technology. It is enriched by links with the community, study visits to places of interest and a small, but appropriate, range of out of school clubs. In particular, the curriculum in the Foundation Stage and Area Support Centre successfully promotes children's independence as well as their social, literacy and numeracy skills. Throughout the school, children's personal well being receives considerable attention. Good procedures help teachers track children's academic progress. Children with special educational needs are enabled to experience success, but those with English as an additional language sometimes struggle to cope because their needs are not identified precisely enough.

### HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Strong leadership provided by the headteacher enhances the school's capacity to improve.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors have a clear understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses and are determined to raise standards further.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Good. School analyses its performance carefully and sets appropriate targets for improvement.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. Money is directed appropriately towards raising standards.

Strengths in leadership stem from the headteacher's emphasis on team building and the need to raise standards. The chair of governors acts as a critical friend to the school and this is very helpful. Co-ordinators are generally enthusiastic about their roles and most have clear ideas about the action needed to improve provision and raise standards in their areas of the curriculum. Considerable building work has been carried out in recent months and accommodation is very good. There is a satisfactory level of teaching staff and the teaching assistants make a valuable contribution to children's progress. Resources are satisfactory, but the school does not have enough computers for children to have frequent access to learn and acquire computer skills quickly. The budget is managed well. The headteacher and governors apply the principles of best value effectively. Overall, the school gives satisfactory value for money.

### PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children like school and make good progress.</li> <li>• Provision for the Area Support Classes.</li> <li>• Teaching is good.</li> <li>• Children are well behaved.</li> <li>• Leadership and management are good.</li> <li>• Parents are well informed about their child's progress.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangements for homework.</li> </ul>

Inspectors fully support the parents' positive views. Homework arrangements are appropriate and contribute well to children's learning.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. Attainment on entry to school of most children is below that typical for their age, especially in language, number and social skills. However, children in the Foundation Stage are on course to meet the early learning goals in all the areas of experience, except personal and social development where they will exceed them. This has much to do with teachers' high expectations and provision of creative tasks that capture children's imagination and promote very good attitudes to learning. Children make very good progress as teachers match tasks very well to children's needs. Children do particularly well in their personal, social and emotional development. This is because teachers have very high expectations that children will work and play together happily for a good period of time. The very attractive classroom environments promote children's confidence and self esteem as they can move between activities freely and find all the resources they need easily. In addition, the praise and encouragement children receive makes them confident in their learning so that they are able to express their ideas and talk confidently to each other and adults.
2. Observation of lessons and scrutiny of work shows that in the current Year 2 attainment in English and science is in line with the national average whilst in mathematics it is below average. At age nine, children's attainment in English and science is below average and in mathematics it is well below average. This fall in attainment reflects the lack of progress made by children in Year 4.
3. Results in national tests in 2001 for children aged seven were well below average in reading, writing and mathematics when compared to all schools. The same picture emerged when the results were compared to schools with children from similar backgrounds, except that in mathematics the results were in the lowest 5%. These figures include children from the Area Support Centre all of whom have statements of special educational needs. The number of children from the Centre involved in the tests varies from year to year. In 1999 there were none, in 2000 there were four and in 2001 there were 10, an unusually high number. Most, but not all, these children are from outside the school's recognised catchment area. In 2001, there were eight such children in a cohort of 46. The results of the remaining 38 children show that writing was well above the national average, reading was in line with the national average and mathematics was below average. The same picture emerges when the results are compared to similar schools, except that in mathematics they were well below average. In all three subject areas, the number of children reaching the higher levels within the tests was above that nationally. The overall results of the mainstream children since 1997 show significant improvements, although there was a fall in 2001 that the school was expecting because it tracks children's progress carefully.
4. The school's mainstream targets for reading, writing and mathematics in 2001 were all exceeded, including those for brighter children. When children from the Area Support Centre were included, the targets were also met or exceeded.
5. The school is putting considerable effort into analysing data to find reasons for its results and so improve standards. Children's progress is checked carefully. However, the information gained from the analysis of data is not always used

effectively enough to help plan work for children with English as an additional language and, consequently, they do not make as much progress as they could.

6. Children are pleased to talk to visitors about their work and matters that interest them. They listen attentively in lessons, answer questions sensibly and communicate meaning clearly. By age seven and nine, children's speaking and listening skills are in line with the national average. Their use of vocabulary is satisfactory, although they are sometimes reluctant to offer opinions or express views.
7. Children enjoy reading and listening to stories. By age seven, most read satisfactorily and there are a number with good reading skills. The use of letter sounds to tackle new words is encouraged appropriately and children can recall the details of stories just read. By age nine, children's enthusiasm for reading has lessened and their reading skills are generally below that expected for their age. Brighter children read fluently and with expression, but others are unsure and read with hesitation. Some children show a good understanding of authors and books they have written.
8. The school has worked hard to raise standards in writing with considerable success in 2001. However, progress is sometimes slow because many children have difficulty with this area of their work. By age seven, most children's writing skills are in line with national expectations. Their use of capitals and full stops is developing satisfactorily and there is a growing understanding of how to sequence events in the right order. They write for a range of purposes and some children show an imaginative use of vocabulary. Children's writing skills continue to develop in Year 3, but by age nine they are below those expected nationally. This is because the writing tasks do not always capture their interest and more work could be accomplished in the time available.
9. In mathematics, children's attainment is below average at age seven and well below average at age nine. Children undertake rapid mental and oral work, solve problems and find different ways to calculate using the four rules of number. However, the activities in Year 4 and some activities in Year 1 are not always matched appropriately to children's needs and there are low expectations of what they can do. This hinders their progress.
10. Many improvements have been made in the school's programme of science work and children's achievements by age seven are in line with those expected nationally. At age nine, children's achievements are still below expectations. Children enjoy practical activities and are able to put forward their own explanations for their results. However, the over use of worksheets in some classes and too few opportunities for sustained scientific investigation impedes children's progress.
11. Attainment in information and communication technology is well below that expected nationally at age seven and nine. The school has followed national guidance and introduced a scheme of work, but statutory requirements are not met. This is because there are few opportunities or resources to teach information and communication technology skills explicitly. Teachers have procedures to track the

activities children have undertaken and these show that some children have covered very little work in the past year.

12. At age seven and nine, children's attainment in art and design and technology is well above that found in most schools. Children build up skills systematically and much of their work is of a high quality. It is often displayed attractively around the school and this adds considerably to the learning environment. Attainment in geography and history is good at age seven, but below that expected nationally at age nine. Attainment in physical education at age seven is similar to that expected nationally. No physical education lessons were seen in Year 4, but the levels of gymnastics work in Year 3 indicate that attainment is set to be in line with the national picture at age nine. All children have the opportunity to learn how to swim and most can swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school. This is a good level of performance. Children's attainment in religious education is similar to that found generally at age seven and nine, and meet the requirements of the locally agreed programme of work. The school's music provision is satisfactory, but not enough musical activity was seen during the period of the inspection to make firm judgements about attainment in the subject.
13. Attainment of children within the Area Support Centre, all of whom have statements of educational need, is understandably low. However, they make very good progress towards the targets set out in their individual educational plans. Activities are rich and varied with a successful emphasis on literacy, numeracy and the development of children's independence and social skills.
14. In the mainstream, the percentage of children identified as having special educational needs is similar to most schools. The provision includes access to the Area Support Centre and this is used to good effect. In addition, the headteacher withdraws groups of children for reinforcement of basic skills work and this too benefits the children. The special needs co-ordinator is a full-time class teacher and the system of support relies heavily on the programmes of work provided in lessons by class teachers. The programmes are matched appropriately to the children's needs and their self-esteem is maintained. They make good progress in the Foundation Stage and satisfactory progress in Years 1 to 4. The work of the teaching assistants is valuable in helping children to make progress.

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

15. Children in the Foundation Stage are enthusiastic to come to school because there are many interesting things for them to work on. Some become absorbed in their individual activity, such as painting, or play out real life situations, such as *The Chinese Takeaway*, for extended periods of time. By speaking to each other politely,

waiting patiently for their turn to talk or to take part in an activity, the children show they have a very good understanding of the impact of their actions on others. They show respect for the values and beliefs of others, especially when tasting celebration food for Rosh Hashanah. Relationships between the children and adults are very good. Children are trusted to make important decisions about their work, to behave well and to do their best. This enables children to grow in maturity. In addition, children are confident in their discussions with adults which help them to make progress in their learning and develop their personalities.

16. Children's attitudes to learning are very good and have improved since the last inspection. Children enjoy school and show an enthusiastic approach to lessons and other activities. They listen attentively and contribute well to discussions in class. This was illustrated during a Year 3 history lesson, when children's questions and observations helped them understand the significance of man's first landing on the moon. A high degree of co-operation is shown when children are working in small groups on written and practical tasks. Children in the Area Support Centre classes respond positively to the varied tasks set and participate fully in whole school activities. A positive feature is that children of all ability levels work hard and take pride in their work. Such attitudes contribute well to learning and are much appreciated by parents.
17. Behaviour is good overall. A calm atmosphere prevails in the school. In the vast majority of lessons high standards are seen including many examples of very good or excellent behaviour. However, in 2 lessons seen, children's interest was not fully captured and some children became distracted or interrupted the progress of others. Behaviour is good in the playground and children are extremely well mannered in the dining hall. Children show respect to adults and one another and are polite to visitors. Inappropriate behaviour, where it occurs is dealt with immediately and effectively. Last year there were no permanent exclusions but there were four fixed period exclusions. The few incidents of bullying that arise are dealt with quickly and effectively. The children from ethnic minority backgrounds play a full part in the life and work of the school. Parents are understandably pleased with the standards of behaviour.
18. Relationships throughout the school are very good. Teachers and other staff ensure that the school's friendly approach and effective learning environment is maintained. Children appreciate this and are ready to help one another as they undertake different activities in lessons and at play. An outstanding feature is the friendship and high degree of co-operation shown by all children, including those in the Area Support Centre and those from families of American personnel.
19. Children are supportive of each other in lessons and in the playground and parents are very appreciative of the kindness they show. They are alert to each other's feelings and know what are the right actions to take if feelings are hurt. They apologise when they need to and they are very polite to teachers and visitors. They respond well to stories they hear, or read, deepening their appreciation of human feelings and reactions. They enjoy the cultural experiences the school provides, singing and painting with particular enthusiasm.
20. The provision for children's personal development is good. The personal, social and health education programme provides many opportunities for children to talk about their own experiences and to express views in whole class discussions. There is a full programme of activities that help to widen social skills and promote self-confidence. This includes participation in the well-planned assemblies, school clubs and concerts. Visiting speakers and involvement in fund raising for charities provides opportunities to learn about the experiences of others. There is a helpful programme

of educational visits to support work in the curriculum, for example to the Norwich Castle Museum.

21. Children are encouraged to take on responsibilities such as small tasks in class and around the school. Older children help the younger ones as part of the paired reading scheme and under the big brother/sister arrangements to promote reassurance and good behaviour.
22. Attendance is satisfactory and in line with the national average for primary schools. The school has been successful in reducing the level of unauthorised absence from 1.1% at the time of the last inspection to 0.2% last year. Punctuality is very good. During the day lessons and other activities start and finish promptly. All these features make a helpful contribution to learning opportunities.

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

23. The overall quality of teaching is good. Almost three quarters of the lessons seen across the school were good or even better. This is a significant improvement since the previous inspection when almost a quarter of the teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory and less than a quarter was found to be good. Teaching is particularly strong in the Foundation Stage and in the Area Support Centre. It is also strong in Year 3, but some unsatisfactory teaching in Year 4 holds back children's progress.

Particular attention has been given to monitoring the quality of teaching and raising teachers' expectations of what children can do. This emphasis is proving to be beneficial. The number of teaching assistants has been increased since the last inspection. Teachers generally deploy them effectively in lessons and they make a valuable contribution to children's learning.

24. Teaching in the Foundation Stage is always good, often very good and sometimes excellent. This is because;
- all adults have very good understanding of the needs of children of this age;
  - planning is detailed so that teachers and teaching assistants are clear about what is to be taught, how and when. This means children can make the most of all the activities and extend their learning, especially in speaking and listening;
  - activities are imaginative, stimulating and capture children's interests so that they concentrate for long periods of time;
  - expectations of what children can do are high;
  - all adults listen carefully to the children. This means children feel valued, their contributions to class discussions and conversations are important. Children are confident about the decisions they make and their self-esteem is high;
  - skills in literacy, numeracy and social behaviour are taught effectively. Skills such as the sounds letters make and how they are recorded on paper are applied in other areas of learning. Children can practice them during their play activities, writing in the 'writing den' or reading the menus in the *Chinese Takeaway*;
  - children are managed well. There is always a purposeful working atmosphere where children are happy and cooperative. Sometimes children can get restless and teachers involve them in singing or games activities before redirecting the task;
  - assessment is used very effectively to track children's progress. Interactions between adults and children during lessons take children's learning forward at a good rate;
  - the information children have been learning during the day is conveyed clearly to parents who are invited to share this with their children. This, together with sharing reading books enhance children's rate of progress.
25. Teaching in the Area Support Centre is very good and sometimes excellent. This stems from:
- extremely good relationships with the children and a clear understanding of their needs and how to meet them;
  - careful planning and lots of short activities that hold children's interest;
  - high expectations of what children can do and a kind, but firm, approach that motivates them to do their best;
  - very good team work between teachers and support staff that enables children to have a considerable amount of individual attention;
  - tasks that are imaginatively presented and include a sense of purpose as well as enjoyment.
26. Many lessons in the mainstream have a clear structure. They are generally planned well and often begin with an explanation of what is to be learned and how this links with previous work. Resources are prepared carefully and are readily available when required. Teachers have an expectation that children will:
- work hard and do their best;
  - behave well so that there is a positive working atmosphere;
  - listen carefully so that they know what they have to do.
- Most children respond positively to these demands and they take a pride in their achievements.



27. The national initiatives on literacy and numeracy have been introduced satisfactorily and teachers feel they are helping to raise standards. The teaching of science is generally satisfactory with some excellent teaching in Year 3 that captures children's interest in the subject. The teaching of art and design and technology is often very good and contributes significantly to children's creative development. However, very little teaching of information and communication technology was seen during the period of the inspection and teachers do not provide sufficient opportunities for children to use computers, especially in literacy and numeracy lessons.
28. There were examples of very good teaching in English, mathematics, science, art, design and technology, history and physical education. Features of this high quality teaching, most often seen in Year 3, include:
- imaginative and demanding tasks that motivate children and challenge them to think hard;
  - high expectations of what the children can achieve in the time available;
  - well organised group work that enables children to work together and to learn from one another;
  - skilful questioning that assesses children's progress and deepens their knowledge and understanding;
  - on-going feedback to children so that they know how to improve;
  - really good use of time with tasks often undertaken at a brisk pace.
29. Overall, the teaching of children with special educational needs in the mainstream of the school is satisfactory, although it is good at the Foundation Stage. Most of the teaching is carried out by class teachers who are often helped by teaching assistants. Activities are chosen to reflect the needs of the children and to stimulate learning. This is particularly successful at the Foundation Stage. Relationships are very good and children are usually keen to please and to do their best.
30. In the small number of unsatisfactory lessons seen, weaknesses resulted from:
- tasks not matched appropriately to the needs and interests of the children;
  - a lack of subject knowledge and low expectations of what children can do;
  - the over use of worksheets that limit the intellectual challenge for the children.
31. The school has a small number of children learning English as a second or additional language. Staff try hard to support these children, but their lack of specialist skills in this area of work, hampers the children's progress in lessons.

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

32. The overall learning programme for the children is satisfactory. There are particular strengths in the provision made in the Area Support Centre classes and in the reception classes. There have been considerable improvements since the last inspection when a number of weaknesses were noted. Teachers' planning is now satisfactory. It is much more thorough and detailed, with a strong focus on the learning expected in each lesson. There is less inconsistency from class to class in the programme offered and all statutory requirements are met. The work programme

is organized and monitored far more thoroughly than previously, although more needs to be done if the children learning English as an additional language are to make satisfactory progress.

33. While the school has improved its equipment for information and communications technology since the last inspection, children still have too little opportunity to use computers in their work and to develop their skills. Statutory requirements are still not met in this area.
34. The school lays a proper emphasis on the important skills of literacy and its careful introduction of the national strategy in this subject has helped raise standards. Its strategies for teaching numeracy, however, are not fully effective in some classes. With the exception of information and communication technology, all required national curriculum courses are taught and religious education is provided in accordance with the programme set out by the local authority. Provision for art and design technology is particularly good.
35. Whenever possible teachers enliven children's learning by using real objects for study in subjects such as science and religious education. Practical investigations have a prominent role in science and mathematics in some, but not all, classes. Visits to places of interest such as Grimes Graves flint mines and West Stow Anglo-Saxon village excite the children and help make learning real for them. In a good programme of personal and health education, children learn about safety, about personal relationships and about how communities best work together.
36. The Foundation Stage curriculum is a very good one. It offers a rich, broad and varied range of activities and experiences that motivate them to make good progress and reach the expected early learning goals in all the areas of experience. There is a very strong emphasis on developing children's emotional, personal and social development, especially when the children first start school. The curriculum takes into account the need for interesting activities in and out of the classroom. The outside area is in need of development. The school has identified this and has drawn up plans for implementation in the near future. Children are taken on exciting and interesting visits into the locality to find out more about life in the wider world.
37. Teachers in the Foundation Stage provide a wide range of practical activities such as, counting, role-play, talking, observing, planning, working on the computer, painting, printing, writing and singing to meet children's learning needs. Many activities require children to cooperate with others to develop their social skills. This they do very successfully. Detailed plans show a clear understanding of the purposes of the activities and intended learning. They also indicate what the children will do. Support staff know their role well and are very effective in implementing the curriculum and extending children's learning.
38. Many of the tasks allow children to make the most of them whatever their ability. A particular strength is the way in which teachers allow children to make important decisions about their work and plan out what they are going to do. In turn, teachers listen carefully to the children and allow them decide what they are going to do and when. Children also make decisions about the way equipment is set out in the outside area. The classroom environments are colourful, stimulating and reflect the high value teachers place on children's efforts. This too promotes children's self-esteem and confidence so that children make good progress.
39. Staff are aware of the importance of making sure all the groups of children in the school, including those from families of American personnel, benefit fully from what it

offers. A careful check has been made to see whether boys progress as well, or better than girls in the school. These show that while there is some variation from year to year, overall there is no marked advantage to children of either gender. Able children also make satisfactory progress and the proportion of children who reach above-average standards in national tests is very creditable.

40. The overall provision for children with special educational needs in the mainstream of the school is satisfactory and complies with the National Code of Practice. Emphasis is rightly placed on identifying such children as early as possible. Their individual educational plans are written well and include realistic targets for them to achieve. Most of the support is given within class lessons and relies heavily on the programmes of work provided by class teachers. The programmes are matched appropriately to the children's needs and they are motivated to do their best. Relationships are usually very good and children's self-esteem is maintained. The work of the teaching assistants is valuable in helping the children. Full advantage is taken of the resources in the Area Support Centre. Some children join the Centre for literacy and numeracy lessons. This means they have the benefit of working in small groups and the experience and expertise of the Centre's staff to help them. In addition, the headteacher withdraws groups of Key Stage 1 children for weekly reinforcement of numeracy work. Other children who require additional help in literacy are given daily support including before school. This too is of benefit to the children and enables them to make quicker progress.
41. All the children in both classes of the Area Support Centre have statements of special educational need. The curriculum provided for them is very good and meets requirements of the National Curriculum. The children have individual programmes of work and realistic targets to achieve. An appropriate emphasis is given to literacy and numeracy skills. The work is planned carefully with a wide range of tasks to hold children's interest and help them to concentrate. Emphasis is given to practical activities and visits to places of interest. This helps to make the curriculum exciting and meaningful to the children. When appropriate, some children join mainstream lessons and benefit considerably from this. All the children in the Centre normally take the national tests at the end of Key Stage 1 along with the mainstream Year 2 children.
42. A small number of children have joined the school learning English as a second or additional language. Provision for them at present is unsatisfactory. A teaching assistant works with them regularly outside the classroom, to help develop their skills, especially in spoken English. While they make headway through this work, their needs are not identified with enough precision to allow well-focused programmes of work to be planned for them. In some class lessons no plans have been made to ensure they understand the work and without additional support they sometimes struggle to cope. None of the staff have specialist skills or training in this area of work and while they try conscientiously to implement the advice they receive from outside specialists, their lack of expertise hampers the children's progress.

43. The school caters for children from a range of ethnic backgrounds and is a tolerant and harmonious community, with no evidence whatever of racial tension. Staff are alert to any possibility of unkindness and a very good antiracism policy has been written. Staff have received good guidance on how to deal with incidents which might have a racial undertone and children from racial minority groups play a full part in school life.
44. The school offers a small but appropriate range of out of school clubs, including chess, French and sports. These are available to children in both key stages. A choir is established on an ad hoc basis for concerts or performances.
45. Good links have been established with the local community. Local experts, for example in the craft of flint knapping, visit the school to demonstrate their skills. A local priest has described his working week and the school has good links with the local police force. Every year the choir visits a local home for the elderly. Staff from the Forestry Commission at the local Country Park also help with the school's annual Environment Day.
46. Good links have been built up with feeder playgroups and nurseries. Staff visit these each year to meet new entrants and playgroup leaders are invited to pay return visits. The school has good links with its local middle school and is involved at present in a project to examine how well children progress in their writing. Membership of a local "pyramid" of schools helps break down isolation in this rural area and provides an opportunity for schools to work together in developing some of their policies for example drugs education.
47. Overall provision in spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. As at the time of the last inspection, the school makes satisfactory provision for the children's spiritual and moral development. Arrangements to promote their social and cultural development are now good and this represents an improvement in provision. Parents are rightly appreciative of these aspects of the school's programme.
48. Daily worship makes an important contribution to spiritual development, giving children the chance to reflect on their own behaviour and values and to learn respect for those of others. Assemblies were a strength in the last inspection and remain so now. At other points in the school day children are moved by the plight of characters in the stories they hear, or look with wonder at new aspects of the world. The plastic animals being slowly revealed amazed reception class children, as the ice in which the models were encased melted. Opportunities like these help them realize something of the range of feelings and experiences that are part of being human.
49. The school day offers many occasions for extending and reinforcing children's sense of right and wrong. They are expected to tell the truth and to be fair to others in their work and play. They apologise when they are in the wrong and teachers set a good example by apologizing when they too make mistakes.

50. Children look after each other very well. A “big brother” arrangement operates at playtimes to make sure new or vulnerable children have a special friend to look after them. Again parents rightly comment on how helpful this is to less confident children and how it helps the others grow in social maturity. Older and younger children come together for paired reading and all the children are sensible when taking responsibility for day to day tasks in the classroom. The children learn something of their wider social responsibility through the many charities the school supports each year.
51. Children have a wide experience of the arts, music and literature. Displays of work, paintings and interesting objects around the school are of a very good quality and this rich visual environment has a positive impact on the children’s own work. Children’s work in art is especially good, but the school also promotes literature and dance very effectively. There are regular visits from theatre groups and the school runs a successful Book Fair each year.

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

52. Very good support and guidance is provided for the children. This reflects the high priority that the school places on children’s welfare and safety. Parents are particularly pleased with this aspect of the school’s work.
53. Health and safety procedures are implemented in a consistent manner. A governor and the headteacher undertake regular safety inspections. The curriculum includes provision for the children to be well taught about the importance of personal hygiene, safe play and road safety. The classroom assistants and midday staff make an important contribution to children’s welfare. Accidents and illness are dealt with competently by staff trained in first aid. There are appropriate procedures on child protection and any issues arising are dealt with in a careful and sensitive manner.
54. The monitoring of children’s personal development is satisfactory. Class teachers and other staff know the children well and appropriate records are maintained. This provides a good basis for teacher’s discussions with parents at consultative meetings and for the annual written reports. More regular reviews take place with parents of children with special educational needs about their individual learning plans.
55. Good systems are in place for promoting high standards of behaviour. The school has clear policies, including anti-bullying measures. Strong emphasis is placed on racial harmony and on children showing a high degree of tolerance for others. Children help to set their own class rules and soon become familiar with the expectations under the Behaviour Code. Rewards for particularly good and improved behaviour are celebrated in class and at weekly assemblies. In the small number of cases where problems arise a special behaviour programme is established to enable the child concerned to move towards agreed targets for improvement. Effective staff training arrangements help with behaviour management. The big brother/sister scheme enables older children to help younger ones on behaviour by setting a good example and giving advice.
56. Procedures for promoting regular attendance are very good. Clear advice is given to parents about the school’s expectations and procedures relating to absences. Registration work is undertaken efficiently and individual pupils’ records are kept up to date throughout the year. Certificates are issued to children and classes with good attendance records. Any unexplained absence is followed up by telephone on the first morning that this arises. Punctuality is also carefully monitored each day. There is close co-operation with the education welfare officer who visits the school regularly.

57. Procedures for the monitoring of academic performance are good. The school has been successfully developing a system to track children's progress from joining the reception class to the end of the infant stage. Children's progress is checked frequently in all subjects and in literacy it is tracked very carefully. Most teachers are using this well to plan work to meet children's needs and set targets for improvement. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
58. The number of children with English as an additional language attending the school is increasing. The school does not have procedures to assess the progress of these children in their acquisition of spoken and written skills in English. This hinders their progress, as teachers do not know enough about what the children know and can do or what they need to do next. Class teachers maintain records about the personal development of each child. Such information is very helpful for discussions with parents and in the preparation of the annual written reports.

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

59. Very good links with parents are established when the children first start school. Parents receive good, clear information about the school and what children require. At the end of each day, parents receive information about what children have been doing and how they can help their child at home. For example, children took home a note saying, *'Today we have been learning about China. Ask me about it'*. In addition, children take home books to share with their parents. This does much to enhance children's rate of progress and involve parents in their child's learning, both at school and at home.
60. Parents are very pleased with the school. They say that the children like school, behave well and make good progress. The provision made for the special needs of children in the Area Support Centre is highly commended. Parents indicate that teaching is good and that the school is well led and managed. They feel that the school has established very good relationships with parents. About one fifth of parents responding to the questionnaire do not feel that the right amount of homework is set. Inspectors support parents' positive views. Inspection evidence is that appropriate arrangements are in place for homework and that this contributes well to children's learning.
61. The school has very good links with parents. This is helped by an open and friendly approach that enables any concerns to be discussed informally with teachers or other staff. There is close consultation with parents of children in the area support classes about individual strategies and programmes of work. Regular newsletters are sent to parents about school events and activities. Parents are well informed about children's progress at termly meetings with the class teacher. The annual written reports contain good quality information about children's achievements as well as outlining areas for further development.
62. The school brochure is a high quality document that provides full information about the school. A helpful account of the work of the governing body and of the achievements

of the school is set out in the governors' annual report. However, this does not fully meet legal requirements as there is no reference to:

- progress on the action plan from the last inspection;
- information on security;
- arrangements and facilities for pupils with disabilities;
- implementation of the special education needs policy;
- comparative national data for the Key Stage 1 national test results;
- professional development undertaken by teaching staff.

63. The impact of parents' involvement on the work of the school is very good. Many parents help in the school such as with reading, word processing and school clubs. The support given by parents to the work that children undertake at home, especially reading, makes an important contribution to the progress made. The close co-operation of parents with children in the Foundation Stage classes and in the Area Support Centre is a very influential factor in the children's learning and development. There is a high level of attendance at consultation meetings with teachers, school concerts and other special events. The Friends of Glade organise a full programme of fundraising and social events. The proceeds are used to provide additional facilities and equipment for the benefit of the children.

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

64. The previous inspection found some serious weaknesses in the ways in which those with management responsibilities contributed to the quality of education provided by the school and the standards achieved by the children. It judged leadership to be sometimes weak with a lack of clear educational direction. Soon after the inspection a new headteacher was appointed. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and governors are now good and enhance the school's capacity to improve. Clear direction is given and there is a successful emphasis on teamwork and the need to raise standards which the school is doing.
65. The governing body is knowledgeable about the school's strengths and weaknesses and has become increasingly influential in helping to raise standards. It has appropriate committees that meet regularly. The relationship between governors and staff is good. Together, they have recently reviewed and redrafted the school's aims and objectives. The chair of governors acts effectively as a critical friend to the headteacher and this is appreciated. A timetable for governors to visit the school has been devised and they write a brief account about what they have seen. These are available for other governors and teachers to read. This is good practice because it helps build a good partnership between governors and staff.
66. Day to day management of the school is good and enables everyone to get on with their tasks. Visitors are made to feel welcome. Staff and governors are rightly proud of the environment and atmosphere in which the children work. The school's ethos of treating children as individuals, valuing their efforts and endeavouring to assist them in any particular areas of difficulty, are reflected successfully in its daily life and very good relationships.
67. The headteacher rightly places emphasis on the importance of monitoring, evaluating and improving the quality of teaching. She has put in place a programme of formal observation of lessons that includes oral and written feedback to teachers together with points for development. This is linked appropriately to the school's performance

management system and is part of the school's drive to raise standards and quality of education. However, it does not always lead to sufficient improvement in teaching and there is still work to do, building on the teachers' determination to do well and increasing their skills so that all teaching is at least good.

68. Co-ordinators are generally enthusiastic about their roles and most have clear ideas about the action needed to improve provision and raise standards in their subjects. They help prioritise developments, monitor a small number of lessons and give guidance to colleagues.
69. The management and organisation of the Area Support Centre is very good. The children play a full part in the life of the school and this benefits everyone. Parents recognise the value of the Centre and are justifiably pleased with the way it helps all children in the school to care for one another. Special needs provision for other children in the school is satisfactory overall and national requirements are met. It includes access to the Centre's resources so that it is seen and used by mainstream children to good effect. The special needs co-ordinator is a full-time class teacher and this makes it difficult for her to have management oversight of the provision. However, she is experienced in this area of work and holds termly meetings with individual teachers to check children's progress, review dates and discuss concerns. She also liaises closely with the link governor for special needs and with support agencies outside the school when appropriate.
70. The accommodation is very good. Considerable building work has been carried out in recent months. The bungalow that was attached to the school has been fully incorporated into the school. This and two additional classrooms have provided good working areas. All the space is used effectively. It is clean, bright and well looked after. Areas outside the classrooms provide space for small group work. Specialist areas include a small newly established computer suite, kitchen, teachers' room, library, adventure playground and swimming pool. The extensive grounds provide a substantial resource for natural and environmental studies. One of the outdoor areas for the Foundation Stage is rather bare at the moment and there is no sheltered area for all weather use. This is a priority for development and appropriate plans have been drawn up to improve it.
71. Overall the school's resources are satisfactory. The school has improved its resources in English, science and for special educational needs. They are adequate in all other subjects except information and communication technology. The school has many software programmes for the younger children but it does not have enough computers for children to have frequent access to learn and acquire computer skills quickly. The lack of computers and their current location in school makes it very difficult for teachers to incorporate information and communication technology into lessons, especially literacy and numeracy. There are four computers in the new computer suite, but these are not used often enough enhance skills steadily. The lack of software for children to acquire skills in modelling means the school cannot meet statutory requirements in the subject.



72. There are an appropriate number of teachers and together they provide the necessary curriculum coverage. Teachers in the Area Support Centre, Foundation and Year 3 are particularly skilled. Two teachers share the teaching in the reception class and this works exceptionally well. Since the previous inspection the number of teaching assistants has been increased and shared across all classes. Their contribution to the general life of the school, as well as to children's attainment and progress, is substantial. The school has a well-planned induction programme for new teachers.
73. The required performance management system is in place. However, this and the general monitoring of teaching does not always lead to sufficient improvements in teaching. The school rightly gives a high profile to training for all staff. Since the last inspection, the emphasis has been on literacy and numeracy. This has had a positive impact on standards. All teachers have undergone training in information and communication technology. While this has improved teachers' own use of computers, it has had little impact on children's attainment.
74. When the school was last inspected, there were significant weaknesses in the way in which its budget was used. The school's spending priorities did not always relate to the strengths and weaknesses in its work and had too little impact on raising standards. The school gave unsatisfactory value for money. There have been improvements in this area since that time. Checking on the school's performance is much more rigorous and the development plan ensures all major areas of school life receive attention over a three year cycle. However, the planning process does not draw on a sufficiently robust analysis of the provision made for different groups of children, such as those with English as an additional language. As a result provision in this area of work is unsatisfactory.
75. A recent audit testifies to the school's good financial management and controls. The school is acting appropriately on the small number of recommendations made.
76. Recently the governors have used some of the funds available to them to increase the number of teaching assistants on the staff. This has been a very appropriate priority and has helped teachers manage complicated lessons such as those in literacy and numeracy efficiently. Additional funding has also been allocated to equipping the newly converted building and this provides very valuable extra areas for study and for teachers' use. Last year ended with a substantial surplus of income over expenditure. This money was carried forward. In the present year, therefore, the school has been able to budget wisely for a much smaller surplus, while still ensuring that a reasonable sum is held in reserve for unforeseen circumstances.
77. The governors have a good understanding of how standards at the school compare with those in schools nationally and with those in schools with a similar intake of children. While appreciative of the improvements that have been made in recent years, they are keen to raise standards still further. They set challenging targets for the children and check their achievement carefully. The governors seek good value, often by inviting tenders, for major developments and always try to ensure that the children receive the best possible benefit from the money spent. At present they are developing a scheme to show whether the additional expenditure recently committed to improving teaching assistance is having a direct effect on children's attainment. Governors and staff work well together to construct the annual development plan, but as yet there are no procedures for inviting parents or children to contribute their ideas about how they feel the school might be improved.

78. Taking into account the school's improved standards, its good management and its relatively high costs, it now gives satisfactory value for money.

### **WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?**

79. To continue raising standards the governors, headteacher and staff should:
1. Raise attainment in mathematics at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the time the children leave the school;  
Paragraphs: 2, 3, 9, 27, 114 - 124
  2. Take urgent action to raise achievement and provision for information and communication technology. Ensure that the curriculum meets statutory requirements;  
Paragraphs: 11, 27, 33, 71, 73, 145 - 151
  3. Accelerate the rate of children's progress in Year 4 through raising the quality of teaching;  
Paragraphs: 2, 23, 73, 106, 114, 123,125, 130,139
  4. Improve the learning of children with English as an additional language.  
Paragraphs: 31, 58,

#### Minor issues

Make sure the governors' annual report to parents meets statutory requirements by including:

- progress on action plan from the last inspection;
- information about school security;
- arrangements and facilities for children with disabilities;
- implementation of special educational needs policy;

- comparative national data for Key Stage 1 test results;
- Paragraph: 62.

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	51
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	7	14	16	10	3	1	0
Percentage	14	27	31	20	6	2	0

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

### Information about the school's pupils

#### Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	185
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	26

FTE means full-time equivalent.

#### Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	16
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	40

#### English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

#### Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	20
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	12

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

%
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#### Unauthorised absence

%
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School data	5.6
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	24	22	46

<b>National Curriculum Test/Task Results</b>		<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	15	16
	Girls	17	18	18
	Total	32	33	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	70 (73)	72 (78)	74 (84)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

<b>Teachers' Assessments</b>		<b>English</b>	<b>Mathematics</b>	<b>Science</b>
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	15	17	17
	Girls	16	16	19
	Total	31	33	36
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	67 (76)	72 (81)	78 (86)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### **Ethnic background of pupils**

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	2
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	141
Any other minority ethnic group	0

*This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.*

### **Teachers and classes**

#### **Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.5
Average class size	22.5

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y4**

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	203

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	0
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	0
Total number of education support staff	0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	0
Number of pupils per FTE adult	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2.6
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

### **Exclusions in the last school year**

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2000-2001
	£
Total income	349,052
Total expenditure	438,649
Expenditure per pupil	2,507
Balance brought forward from previous year	-406
Balance carried forward to next year	14,804

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*



## **Results of the survey of parents and carers**

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	173
Number of questionnaires returned	53

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	49	42	6	4	0
My child is making good progress in school.	51	47	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	51	4	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	28	49	21	0	2
The teaching is good.	53	43	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	49	8	0	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	58	38	2	0	2
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	64	34	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	43	51	2	2	2
The school is well led and managed.	62	34	0	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	47	49	2	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	49	15	2	4

**Numbers may not be exactly 100 as they are rounded.**

## **PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES**

### **THE WORK OF THE AREA SUPPORT CENTRE**

80. The school has two Area Support Classes that currently take sixteen children between the ages of four to nine, all with severe learning difficulties, such as Autism and Down's syndrome. The children are drawn from a wide geographical area and many of them are transported to and from the school daily by taxi. In addition to their lessons in the support classes, children are integrated successfully into the mainstream school for activities such as assemblies, playtimes and lunchtimes and into classes according to their needs and abilities. Similar arrangements were in place at the time of the last inspection.
81. The curriculum within the support classes is rich and varied, but with a successful emphasis on literacy, numeracy and the development of children's independence and social skills. Attainment is understandably low, but children make very good progress towards the targets set out in their individual educational plans and this is an improvement on the findings of the last inspection. The younger ones listen with enjoyment to stories. Some know that printed words have meaning and most are able to recognise main features within illustrations, pointing excitedly in answer to the teacher's questions. They handle books with care and show growing independence when putting them away in the right place. Some are able to recognise numbers to ten and beyond. They sing nursery rhymes with enthusiasm, usually recalling the main lines correctly. They role-play going shopping and are beginning to identify coins and to distinguish differences by size and colour. Older children also listen to stories attentively. They sit calmly and answer questions when asked. During the story of *Beowulf and the Dragon* they had great fun making the noises of the dragon. Some children can read simple words and identify key words from a list. They are beginning to recognise 100s, 10s and units and to count to 100 with growing confidence. In writing, some can suggest words and simple sentences to the teacher that they then copy.
82. Much of the children's work in both support classes stems from visits to places of interest, such as a riding school, a fire station and an Anglo-Saxon village. Teachers use these visits skilfully to provide a wide range of learning opportunities that the children really enjoy. They learn to share, take turns and to look after one another. Their practical work has included making kites, puppets, masks, miniature gardens, musical instruments and vehicles with moving parts. Photographic evidence shows these have been constructed well and have provided a host of opportunities for language and number development. The children are justifiably proud of their efforts.

83. Teaching within the support classes is very good and sometimes excellent. Teachers and teaching assistants work really well together. Classrooms are colourful and stimulating, full of children's creative work. Tasks are matched closely to children's individual needs and, when appropriate, they have one to one attention. Relationships are very good and this helps build children's confidence. Lessons are planned carefully with lots of short activities to hold children's interest. Occasional frustrations are dealt with in a kind but firm manner and with the minimum of fuss, so that they do not disrupt the class. Teachers have high expectations of what the children can achieve and often challenge them to think hard. In the best lessons, tasks are imaginatively presented and there is a sense of purpose and fun. Children have very good attitudes towards their work. They adhere to established routines and behave really well. This helps their progress because time can be used productively.

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

84. All children are admitted to reception classes in the September of the academic year in which they become five. Children whose birthdays occur between September and December attend full time and spend the morning with a Year 1 class where work in literacy and numeracy is very carefully planned to meet their needs. In the afternoon, they join a reception group to enjoy all aspects of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The rest of the children attend part-time until they become five and then they attend full-time. Two teachers, who work for two and a half days each, teach the reception class.
85. Children make a very good start to their education in the Foundation Stage. The standard of teaching is very good, sometimes excellent and children make very good progress.
86. Achievement when children first start school is generally below that expected for children aged four. Many are on course to meet the early learning goals in all the areas of learning, except personal and social development where they are on course to exceed it. This is an improvement since the previous inspection, when children's speaking and listening skills were judged to be below that expected for children of this age. Children with special educational needs are catered for well and helped to play a full part in all the areas of learning. Close links with parents help the children to settle into school and become involved in their progress. Brief notes such as, *We have been learning about a famous artist called Vincent van Gogh today. Please ask me about it* are very effective in enhancing the rate of children's progress and involving parents in their child's education.
87. Planning for the Foundation Stage curriculum is thorough and enables all children to enjoy a broad and varied range of interesting learning experiences. Children's progress is assessed regularly and teachers use the information well to plan work that meets their needs.

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

88. Most children are on course to meet and some to exceed the early learning goals in this area of the curriculum at the end of the reception year. Staff place strong emphasis on teaching this aspect of the curriculum really well. They provide exciting activities that motivate children to want to learn and play together happily. This develops their confidence, self-esteem and independence. As a result, they concentrate well because their interest is engaged. Children are encouraged to make important decisions about the work that they do. They are made aware of the activities that are available and move between them, signing their name to say they have taken their turn. The children are well aware of the routines and do their best to keep to them. Many concentrate for long periods of time, sometimes becoming absorbed in their work. One child was observed painting; using brushes of different kinds and sizes and mixing the colours she wanted. She stayed on this activity for over half an hour, trying out new ideas until she was satisfied with the result.
89. Children have a good sense of right and wrong. The routines enable children to know and understand why the number of children taking part in each activity is restricted. This is to ensure all can have a turn and make the most of each learning opportunity. Children respond well to teachers' high expectations that children will play and learn together very well and take turns. They take responsibility for keeping the classroom tidy and taking messages to the school office and are proud of doing this.
90. Children are taught good manners and they use them during lessons. One child was heard to ask if he could join in an activity. He said, *Please may I join in your game?* A child replied, *How many children are allowed in this group?* He answered, *Two.* The child replied, *How many are already in this group?*  
*Two.*  
*Well, I'm afraid you can't then.*
91. Children learn to respect the different needs and beliefs of others well through the celebration of special occasions that occur in:
- families;
  - Judaism, such as Rosh Hashanah and Hinduism such as, Divali;
  - The Chinese New Year.
- This does much to enhance children's personal and social development.

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

92. Very good teaching enables children to communicate effectively. In role-play situations such as the *travel agent, the library, the post office surgery or office*, children learn to communicate clearly for specific purposes. They invite visitors, confidently, to join them in their games. Most speak clearly and audibly in full sentences. Children listen carefully to their friends during their games, taking it in turns to play out their idea. In whole group sessions, they listen attentively to their teacher so that they know what they have to do. They enjoy listening to tape recorded stories and try to follow them in a book.
93. Stories, poems and rhymes enhance children's pleasure at playing with words as well as developing their confidence to talk in small or large groups. A particularly inventive idea is to encourage the children to imagine the dialogue between characters in famous paintings.
94. *Snack time* is used very well to engage children in social conversations with adults and other children. They enjoy talking about their news, discussing what they have been doing during the morning, or asking each other questions about their likes and dislikes

95. Many children know that print conveys meaning. Some children make a very good start with reading and are already reading simple stories.. The reading corner is an attractive place for them to browse through a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books. Books made by the teacher, showing the work children have been doing capture their interest. Photograph albums with pictures of the locality promote discussion from questions such as, *Where is this?* These books and albums successfully promote early reading skills. Children take books home to share with their parents that enhances the rate of progress in reading.
96. Children are encouraged to write as soon as they wish. The writing corner encourages children to try out their developing literacy skills with confidence. Children are encouraged to write for a variety of purposes such as shopping lists, menus, and orders in the *Chinese Takeaway*, speech bubbles relating to conversations between characters in famous paintings or nursery tales such as *The Enormous Turnip*.
97. Older children in the reception and Year 1 class follow the literacy strategy and are confident in their reading ability and use their knowledge of letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words.

### **Mathematical development**

98. Teaching is very good and children are on course to meet the early learning goals. Teachers take every opportunity to include mathematical development into all the areas of learning. In the class with the youngest children, at snack time, children are invited to select two items to eat. In role-play situations such as the greengrocer's children have the opportunity to use money to buy items. They learn number rhymes; make patterns of numbers with small bricks and identify shapes such as circles, triangles, rectangles and squares. In the older reception group, children can recognise coins up to one pound and buy items, selecting the appropriate coins up to 20 pence. The oldest and most able children count confidently to 100 in tens. Teaching promotes children's enthusiasm and confidence for learning mathematics and this enables very good progress.

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

99. Teaching in this aspect is very good and children are on course to meet the early learning goals. It is often taught through the provision of real experiences. An imaginative task enabled children to find out the properties of ice. The teacher froze small plastic animals into four blocks of ice. The children were able to feel the ice and talk about how cold it felt. They were surprised by the way it slipped around the table as it began to melt and that it was also solid. They knew the ice might break if dropped on the floor. Children were eager to know how the teacher had frozen the toy into each block. They were amazed to find that the ice melted more quickly in warm water than in cold water. Previously children have looked at books and found out about the polar lands. They used this information well to make up a story about a polar bear. This, together with the work about China helps the children to understand the wider world.
100. Parents and the community contribute well to this area of children's learning. In a recent project about the post office, an elderly couple called in to collect their pension. This made the role-play very real for the children. Parents and the teaching assistant ensure that learning in the classroom is extended outside. For example, children in the *Chinese Takeaway* learned about ordering materials and delivery of items with some children 'driving' the delivery van. A visit to the local market has given the

children a greater understanding of places to buy fruit, vegetable, clothes, and flowers other than in a shop. One of the market stallholders is to visit the school shortly so that children can ask questions and find out more. In addition, children know how to be librarians and run a travel agency. Photographs of different local landmarks, collected together in albums, are placed in the reading area for children to browse at leisure. These imaginative ideas help the children to learn a great deal about their locality.

101. In addition, children know how they have changed since they were babies. They identify old and new toys. Photographs of previous work shows that children know about how things grow
102. Children learn about computers and the importance of information and communication technology in daily life. They are taught how to use a microwave cooker safely and recognise other everyday items, such as washing machines, digital cameras, which rely on computer technology. Information and communication technology is used effectively to support mathematical skills in recognising numbers, making repeating patterns and moving blocks around the screen to build towers and shapes. Children know how to click the mouse to give an instruction to the computer and move items around the screen. Children designed and made 'garages' for their vehicles and took pictures of them with a digital camera.

### **Physical development**

103. Teachers make very good provision for children's physical development. This is often included in outdoor play activities, for example children were asked to imagine that the wall at the bus station had fallen down. The children were builders who had to repair the wall. They travelled to work by bus, car, bike, and scooter. They ride large toys well. They have good idea of a space and do not bump into each other. Other activities, both in the hall and outside, extend their coordination, control and ability. Activities in the hall give opportunities for children to climb, balance, throw, catch and kick when they want to. Teachers plan activities that offer appropriate physical challenges. They introduce the language of movement to children alongside their actions. There is a safe, well-planned and resourced learning environment. They make good use of the school's adventure playground. Children use and learn through all their senses. They particularly enjoy exploring the feely box that helps them to experience different sensations such as identifying rough or smooth materials without being able to see them. Children also play with a range of small objects, construction sets, and thread beads. Children use scissors and malleable materials effectively.

### **Creative development**

104. Creative development is taught very well. Staff provide many opportunities for children to use their imagination in art and music as well as express their ideas and personalities. For example, they:
  - join in with the children's role-plays, such as the *Chinese Takeaway* to help them extend their imagination and vocabulary. They prepare the children well for role-plays. As a result, children sustain their characters, such as chef or waiter for long periods of time. In addition children use the correct vocabulary as they play.

At times adults intervene to extend the activity. For example, a group of children were pretending to be members of the emergency services. The teacher arrived and informed them there had been an accident at the airport and the *paramedics were needed*. This immediately challenged the children to work out what they would do in their role. Previous problem solving situations included *The baby is missing* and *The wall at the bus station has fallen down! How are we going to repair it?* These imaginative problems involve children in activities both indoors and outdoors, which develop creative thinking as well as physical skills;

- encourage children to paint pictures to music, such as the *1812 Overture*, or in the style of famous artists, mixing the colours well. This allows children very good opportunities to express their ideas, choosing colours and different sized paintbrushes. It also does much to enhance children's cultural development;
- provide opportunities for children to weave, sew and create attractive material collages;
- help children to compose their own music, make instruments, and sing tunefully and expressively. Children gain a good grasp of rhythm by following teachers' good examples and joining in with action songs;

In the outside area, children used the cuttings from a Christmas tree to create successfully 'dens' to play in. This stimulated a high level of imaginative thought, speaking and listening and cooperative skills.

## ENGLISH

105. The previous inspection found attainment in English at the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 to be below national expectations. Sound progress was sometimes made in individual lessons, but in general, children's progress as they advanced up through the school was also below national expectations. A key issue within the report was to raise standards and improve progress in the subject. The school's curriculum planning is now better and it has worked hard successfully to raise teachers' expectations of what children can do. At the end of Key Stage 1, the overall results in national tests of the mainstream children since 1997 show significant improvements in reading and writing. However, there was a slight fall in the 2001 results which the school was expecting because it tracks children's progress carefully.
106. Children begin school with language development that is generally below that expected nationally for their age. Progress is linked to the quality of teaching and in Year 1 this ranges from satisfactory to good. Scrutiny of work shows that Key Stage 1 children build steadily on the very good start made in the Foundation Stage. They make satisfactory progress over time, with some good progress by many children in Year 2. Progress accelerates in Year 3, but falls in Year 4. Scrutiny of work and lesson observations together, show that at the end of Year 2, children's overall achievement is in line with most schools. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The momentum of progress in Year 3 is not sustained in Year 4 and by age nine children's achievement is below that expected nationally. Mainstream children with special educational needs make satisfactory progress as they move up through the school.

107. The school's 2001 targets for the percentage of mainstream children to achieve the national expectation in reading and writing at the end of Year 2 were exceeded. The targets for the percentage of children to reach higher levels of achievement were also exceeded.
108. The national initiative on literacy has been introduced satisfactorily and teachers feel it is helping to raise standards. Texts are chosen well and appeal to children's interests. Most teachers take the opportunity to reinforce literacy skills in other lessons. For example, in a Year 3 art lesson on pattern making for wallpaper designs, children were encouraged to use words such as "*rotating*" and "*translating*" when discussing what they were doing.
109. Children are pleased to talk to visitors about their work and matters that interest them. They are polite and respectful. By age seven, their speaking and listening skills are in line with those expected for their age. This is an improvement since the last inspection. In lessons, they listen carefully to adults and to other children. Most are able to speak confidently and to communicate meaning clearly. They answer questions sensibly, but do not often develop their replies by using their own experiences to illustrate a particular point. Their use of vocabulary is satisfactory, although in discussions they are sometimes slow to offer opinions or express preferences. By the age of nine, children's confidence has increased further and they are beginning to use their own experiences to develop their answers to questions. Their speaking and listening skills are in line with those expected for their age, although in class discussions they sometimes have little to say about their work.
110. Children enjoy reading and listening to stories. Most read regularly at home and reading diaries are used effectively as a means of dialogue between parent, child and teacher. This encourages children to read and helps them to know how to improve. The exception is in Year 4 where reading diaries are often untidy and contain only limited evidence of teacher or parent input. By age seven, most children read satisfactorily and there are a number whose reading skills are good. This is an improvement since the previous inspection. The importance of recognising and using letter sounds is emphasised appropriately and this helps children work out new words. This is particularly helpful for children with special educational needs. Children know the difference between fiction and non-fiction books and most can recall the details of a story just read. They also know what an author is, although few are able to name one or talk about well-known stories. Children's enthusiasm for reading is continued in Year 3, but by age nine it has lessened and their reading skills are generally below that expected for their age. Brighter children read fluently and



with expression, but others are unsure and read with hesitation. One child in the Year 4 class was struggling to read a book that was far too difficult for him. Most children show satisfactory understanding of main characters and story lines, although they find it difficult to predict story outcomes and reasonable alternatives. Some children have a good knowledge of authors and of the books they have written. Many children know about the use of an index, glossary and contents page, but do not use and develop their research skills often enough in Year 4.

111. The school has recently concentrated on raising standards in writing with considerable success in 2001. Spelling is a current priority and is reinforced through homework, although children still make simple errors. Handwriting is mostly uniform and children's work is generally presented satisfactorily. However, many of them have difficulty with writing and progress is sometimes slow. By the age of seven, most children's writing skills are generally in line with those expected nationally. This again is an improvement on the previous inspection. There is a growing understanding of how to sequence events in the right order and children's knowledge of basic sentence structure, including the use of capitals and full-stops is developing satisfactorily. Children write for a range of purposes, such as shopping lists, poetry and stories. Some of the work is of a good quality and shows imaginative use of vocabulary. For example, in a poem about fireworks a Year 2 child wrote:

*Sparklers glowing,  
Rockets zooming and exploding,  
Catherine wheels spinning,  
Flowerpots sparkling,  
Bangers banging,  
Flames dancing,  
Guy burning.*

Children's achievements in writing continue to improve in Year 3, but by age nine progress has slowed and their writing skills are below those expected nationally. This is because the writing tasks do not always motivate them enough. As a result, children's writing often lacks imagination and they could accomplish more in the time available.

112. The structure provided by the literacy hour has given teachers clear guidelines about the organisation of lessons and this is proving beneficial. Teaching overall is good with some very good teaching observed in Years 1 and 2. Resources are prepared well and lesson plans are usually clear about what the children are to learn and how. Children have good attitudes towards the subject and behave really well. The best teaching stems from:

- very good relationships and an expectation that children will work hard and do their best throughout the lesson;
- well chosen texts and activities that appeal to children and hold their interest. An example of this was seen in a Year 2 lesson in which children successfully identified similarities used in the language of traditional tales;
- very good control and management, including the effective use of praise and encouragement that helps build children's confidence;
- good links to children's individual targets for improvement;
- skilful questioning that challenges children's thinking and assesses their understanding;
- effective use of support staff to help children who need it most;

- the productive use of time. An example of this was observed in a Year 1 story lesson during which children settled quickly, listened attentively and were given lots of opportunities to make their own observations, which many did.
113. Weaknesses in teaching occur when activities are not matched appropriately to the needs of the children. There is an overuse of worksheets that do not really interest them and the presentation of tasks lacks imagination. As a result children struggle to do their best and progress is slower than it should be.

## **MATHEMATICS**

114. At the time of the last inspection, standards of attainment were judged to be below the national picture, but improving in relation to the local authority and national tests. Results, however, caused concern and the need to raise standards of attainment in mathematics became a key issue. The school has made good progress since 1997 and has increased the number of children reaching expected levels of achievement significantly. However, attainment remains below the national picture at the end of Year 2 and there is further work to be done. Considerable work needs to be done at Year 4 where standards are well below those found in other schools nationally.
115. With many schools now enabling the majority of its children to reach the national expectation<sup>1</sup>, the school is facing its challenge of high numbers of children with special educational needs in a determined way. Improvement between 1997 and 1999 was at a much faster rate than in other schools nationally. In the past two years, the number of children reaching expected levels has dipped, but results are much better than they were at the time of the last inspection.
116. National test results in 2001 were well below those in other schools nationally and similar schools. These figures have to be treated with caution as almost one third of the children taking the tests that year had a statement of special educational needs. This is considerably more than in most schools.
117. Each year, the school and local authority set two set targets for the percentage of children to achieve the national expectation at the end of Year 2, one including all the children with statements of special educational need and one without. In both cases, the targets were exceeded. The targets for the percentage of children to reach higher levels of achievement were also exceeded.
118. The school's targets in 2002, lesson observations and the scrutiny of work show that achievement is below average at the end of the infant stage. However, children make satisfactory progress over time and the school is on course to meet its targets. At age nine achievement is well below the national picture as teaching is unsatisfactory. In particular teacher's expectations are too low.
119. Children's progress is dependent on the quality of teaching and this varies as they move through the school. The very good start they make in the Foundation Stage is not built on consistently in Year 1, where some teaching is of a high standard and the rest is unsatisfactory. In Year 2, children make good progress and this is accelerated in Year 3 but it falls away in Year 4. Teachers plan work so that children build on what they have learned before. This allows children to find different ways to solve

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<sup>1</sup> Expected levels at age 7 are 2c, (lowest) 2b (average) 2a (highest) higher attaining children often achieve level 3.

problems, calculate accurately using the four rules of numbers and understand the different properties of shapes, space and measures. However, at the end Years 2 and 4, children do not formally record their work often enough to demonstrate their understanding clearly to their teacher.

120. Teachers use a variety of techniques to help children learn. In most classes, the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented appropriately. In the best lessons, teachers present children initially with rapid mental and oral activities which enable them to count in tens, fives and twos up to 100. This is followed by clear teaching sessions in which children learn new skills, such as addition and subtraction and consolidate these by practising them. They carry out practical work, with other children in small groups, often with the supervision of an adult. This involves children in writing down sums such as  $7+3$  and  $13+7$ , finding the answers and making links between the patterns of numbers to enhance their rate of calculation. In some classes, teachers use the plenary session well to revise what children have learned and remind them of what they will be learning the following day. However, information and communication technology is not used well enough to enhance children's skills in the subject.
121. Teachers' enthusiasm for mathematics, especially in Year 1 and Year 2, is conveyed very well to the children so that generally attitudes are good. The practical activities are matched well to the children's age and ability and these help them to sustain their interest and concentration. Often children help each other, respond well to teachers' questions, quickly apply new ideas and show confidence in what they are doing. Once the pace of the lesson is lost or children find it hard to see what the teacher is showing them, they lose interest, become distracted and interrupt. This hinders their own learning as well as that of others.
122. Of the lessons observed, three were very good. The remainder were unsatisfactory. In the best lessons:
  - teachers' confidence and knowledge were very secure;
  - tasks were well matched to children's abilities;
  - the enthusiasm of the teacher and pace motivated children to want to learn more;
  - children were encouraged to try ideas for themselves building their confidence;
  - there was a range of tasks which involved visual, oral and practical activities;
  - teachers' promoted children's self esteem effectively so that they learned a variety of ways to solve problems.
123. The main weaknesses in the unsatisfactory lessons related to teachers' lack of subject knowledge, low expectations of what children can do and poor match of work to children's needs. This led to a lack of challenge in the work to sustain previous progress.
124. In all classes, teaching assistants were deployed effectively and did their best to enhance children's progress.

## SCIENCE

125. Standards in science were below expectations in both key stages when the school was last inspected and the quality of science teaching was unsatisfactory. Many improvements have been made since then. Science lessons now follow each other in a well-ordered sequence to ensure children's learning develops steadily. Teachers' plans for their work are far more detailed and have a sharper focus on what extra learning is expected in each lesson. It has since improved and is satisfactory overall, although some weaknesses remain. As a result of these positive developments, children's achievements by the age of seven are now in line with those expected nationally. However, standards are still below expectations at the end of Year 4. .
126. The results of national assessments in science indicate that standards at the age of seven in 2001 were well below expectations. However, these figures include the results of children in the Area Support Centre classes and therefore need to be treated with caution when comparisons of performance with other schools are made.
127. The science programme covers all the required areas of the national curriculum. Lessons seen during the inspection were in the study of materials, of living things and of forces. Most seven year old children can explain the differences between pulling and pushing and some can suggest why some objects are harder to push or pull than others. They can list many materials in common use such as metal, wood, concrete and explain that some are man-made, while others are natural. They understand that humans need a range of foods and exercise, to keep healthy. By the time they reach the age of nine, some appreciate that certain materials will dissolve in water and that water evaporates over time. They know through testing a range of spoons, that some materials conduct heat readily while others do not. They can explain that ice melts more quickly in a warmer environment than a cool one. However, much of their work is too simple for children of this age. Many do not take enough care over the presentation of their work and wrong spellings of important words are not always corrected.
128. In both key stages too little attention is given to learning how to set up and conduct simple experiments and children's skills in this area are underdeveloped.
129. Science lessons are generally satisfactory and occasionally excellent. The lesson seen in Year 4 was unsatisfactory. In the best of lessons teachers set high expectations for the children, interesting them in the work and challenging them to think hard. In the excellent Year 3 lesson children studied healthy foods. They had previously visited a local supermarket to see how different food groups are stored and packaged. In class, a large bag of foodstuffs was unpacked and put on display, with items grouped according to their main ingredients, carbohydrates, fats, proteins and vitamins. Children drew and labelled an imaginary lunch box they would like to take on a day's outing. They then made charts showing as many different foodstuffs from each food group as they could think of. After discussion with the teacher, they conducted a review of their picnics to see how far they provided a balanced diet. For a short while earlier in the afternoon they had a chance to browse in a collection of information books about food and diet and many of them used knowledge they had gained independently in this way to deepen their analysis of their own picnic box. One child, for example, volunteered the idea that iron is also important, that it improves the blood and that the supply of red and white cells to the body helped fight infection. The lesson closed with examining the "nutritional information" details found on food packaging, using a sample enlarged by overhead projection. In the next lesson in the series the school nurse will visit to explain why diet is important for the teeth and how to care for them. The teacher had a depth of knowledge of the subject that allowed

her to present very challenging ideas clearly. She planned a lively, engaging series of activities that captured and held the children's attention. As a result of her very high expectations and the children's sustained hard work, they achieved levels of understanding higher than usual for children of their age.

130. However, there are still some weaknesses in other lessons. Indeed, some of these weaknesses were noted in the last inspection. In particular, work in Key Stage 1 sometimes provides too little opportunity for sustained scientific investigation and there is some over-use of worksheets that limit the intellectual challenge for the children. On entering Key Stage 2 children accelerate sharply in science learning because the teaching in Year 3 is particularly good and standards are high. This is not sustained in Year 4 where much of the work is still superficial and where little opportunity is provided for children to show initiative or make decisions for themselves. In the lesson seen in this class children whose first language was not English, struggled because their particular needs had not been taken sufficiently into account. Science lessons across the school do not make sufficient use of computers to extend children's learning.
131. Children are enthusiastic about their work in science. They enjoy practical activities and are confident in putting forward their own explanations for their results. They generally work well together in small groups and are always well behaved. When the work is interesting and challenging they show very commendable powers of concentration.

## **ART AND DESIGN AND DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

132. Four lessons were seen during the period of the inspection, two each at Key Stage 1 and 2. Judgements were also informed by an examination of children's previous work, scrutiny of teachers' planning and an interview with the headteacher who is the co-ordinator for the subjects. The programme of activities is rich and varied and children benefit considerably from this. They build skills systematically as they move up through the school and much of their work is of a high quality. At the end of Key Stage 1 and Year 4 they are achieving well above the level expected for their age. In art, this represents a very significant improvement since the last inspection that found children's attainment and progress to be below that expected nationally. The improvement in design and technology is even more dramatic because the previous inspection found little evidence of children's work in the subject. As a result of this, the inspection judged that it had very low status in the school and did not meet statutory requirements.
133. Children's learning, including those with special educational needs, is often very good in lessons and over a longer period of time. It accelerates particularly strongly in Year 3 where some of the work is excellent. However, this really fast rate of progress is not sustained into Year 4.
134. Children at both Key Stage 1 and 2 are successfully developing their confidence in using equipment and handling a wide range of different materials and media. Their manipulative and control skills are often very good, for example when cutting, gluing and joining materials together. They generate interesting ideas and plan the design

and making of products with increasing imagination, some of which have moving parts. For example, children in Year 2 have used wood, card and glue to build model cars with rotating axles. They constructed them really well and during the process learned how to use a sawing board. Children tested the speed of their finished cars on a ramp and recorded the results, giving appropriate attention to making sure the tests were fair. They then changed the size of the wheels of their vehicles and added weights to see if they travelled further. In another example, children in Year 3 made wooden frames for photographs that they took home as Christmas presents. Many children have a growing understanding of the importance of refining what they make in order to bring about improvements. They think carefully about the order of their work and consider the materials and tools needed, making sensible choices. Particular attention is given to safety and children are aware of its importance, for example they are mindful of others when using scissors.

135. Children show very good skills in drawing, painting and colouring. This often helps them illustrate work in other subjects, for example in history studies about Florence Nightingale. As they move up through the school, their creative development is very good. They show growing confidence in the ability to represent what they see through pictures. They mix and apply colours with increasing skill and make really good progress in their knowledge and understanding of pattern, texture, shape and size. Examples of this were seen in a Year 3 lesson in which children were designing wallpaper patterns. One group of children quickly made stencils from card. They then printed with paint in an imaginative way using a variety of colours. The stencils were rotated to create interesting and pleasing results. Another group of children designed and cut out shapes ready for printing. They arranged them thoughtfully on paper and moved them around to see which positions gave the best results.
136. Children's work in art includes weaving, collage, printing, pottery and computerised pictures. The importance of the subject is enhanced through an annual art week that this year paid particular attention to the work of well-known artists. Children successfully studied the use of colour as well as a range of techniques, such as how artists make water appear to be moving. Year 1 children copied this technique effectively and produced very pleasing results. In Year 3, children studied the life and work of Pablo Picasso. In follow-up activities, they used oil pastels, crayons and soft chalks to produce work of a very high standard. It included the use of printing blocks to make an excellent series of faces in the style of Picasso's Cubist period. Such studies help children appreciate the variety of ways different artists represent their feelings and experiences.
137. Teaching overall is very good. Activities are prepared thoroughly with appropriate resources easily to hand, including reference books. This helps to ensure time is used productively because children can get on quickly with their tasks. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and share their enthusiasm with the children really well, often firing their imagination. This has a positive impact on their progress. Lessons begin with reminders about earlier work and questions are used skilfully to draw out what children know and understand. Good opportunities are provided for them to work together and this helps build their social skills. An example of this was seen in a Year 1 lesson during which children were working successfully in pairs learning to weave. The teacher showed considerable ingenuity because wire fridge shelf frames were used effectively as looms. During practical sessions, teachers sometimes stop the whole class in order to share a child's success and give ideas to others. This is good practice because it helps children feel their efforts are valued and enables them to learn from one another. All children have very good attitudes towards their work and behave really well. They often become engrossed in the activities and consistently do their best.

138. Displays of work around the school are often of a high standard. They celebrate children's achievements and help develop their visual awareness.

## **GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY**

139. At the time of the last inspection, children's attainments in geography are similar to that found nationally at the end of the infant stage and Year 4. In history, there was too little evidence to make a judgement. Since then, the school has made good progress so that attainment is now good in geography and history at the end of the infant stage. This is built on effectively in Year 3, but progress slows in Year 4 where attainment is below that expected for the age. Attainment has improved because the subjects are taught regularly in most classes. The school has implemented national guidance for teaching these subjects.
140. In some classes, history is taught appropriately through the literacy strategy. In Year 3, children wrote, plays about the *Gunpowder Plot*, instructions to build a Roman Road and a newspaper report of *Boudicca's revolt*. For other periods of history, much of the learning is made real for the children through visits to places such as *Grimes Graves, West Stow Anglo Saxon Village and Norwich Castle*. The school makes very good use of the immediate locality as it is a rich source of learning. Visitors to the school share their knowledge effectively and the school makes good use of the library and museum loan service so that children can handle real objects. To bring about greater understanding, teachers often show children links that can be made between the two subjects. For example, how settlements became established following the invasion of the Vikings.
141. At the end of the infant stage, children know much about the immediate locality and its historical importance. For example, children have explored Brandon and looked for houses built from flint. Children are aware that flint, mined locally, was an important industry in the eighteenth century as flints were needed in guns at that time. The road, where the school is situated, is named after the men who made the flints.

Children have good fieldwork skills as they can describe places, such as the park, in their locality. They can explain the main features of the area and compare them to places further afield. This is done through investigating photographs which track the travels of *Barnaby* or *Fred Bear* in the locality or holiday vacations of staff. In Key Stage 2, children know about St. Lucia and how it is different from Brandon. They know how St. Lucia was devastated by a hurricane and the impact this had changing its reliance on the banana industry to tourism.

142. In history, infant children understand time passing as they have looked at toys that belonged to their parents and grandparents, comparing them with their own. They know about historical characters such as, *Florence Nightingale* and *Samuel Pepys* as well as the main events relating to *The Great Fire of London*. In Year 2, children are taught historical enquiry skills very effectively. With the provision of a wide range of books, pictures and artefacts, children were able to work together to find out and describe well the difference between hospitals, clothing and the rich and poor at the time of *Florence Nightingale*.
143. The thorough coverage of the history and geography curriculum is not carried through from Year 3 to Year 4. Teaching observed in these subjects in the infant stage and early part of the juniors was good, sometimes very good and tasks were well matched to children's interests. Teachers go to great lengths to provide first-hand experiences or good reference material. Resources, such as information books, library topic loans, CD-Roms and historical objects enable children to carry out their own research. Videotapes are sensibly used to show 'authentic' footage of the period and to stimulate discussion. Children are often fascinated by what they see. Effective questioning by class teachers, who are enthusiastic and knowledgeable about their subject, helps to keep children interested and focussed on the topic. This is not the case in Year 4.
144. Since the last inspection teachers have invested considerable time to improving the teaching of history and geography, successfully raising standards at the end of the infant stage.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

145. At the time of the previous inspection, children's achievements at the end of the infant stage and at age nine were below those found in schools nationally, as statutory requirements were not met. The situation has hardly changed since then. Attainment is now well below that expected for both age groups. The school has followed national guidance and introduced a scheme of work but the lack of software to help children use computer based simulations and solve problems in Key Stage 2 means statutory requirements are still not met. A strength in the provision is that children use tape recorders often to listen to stories, operate photocopiers, video recorders and a digital camera.



146. The limited improvement since the last inspection stems from the lack of up to date computers to enable children to make good progress. The number of computers is less than that normally found in schools. Following building alterations, four computers were moved to a small suite which cannot house more than groups of eight children. In one class, children receive one lesson in information and communication technology every three weeks, but miss a physical education lesson to do so. There are few opportunities or resources to teach information and communication technology skills explicitly. Children and teachers take photographs with a digital camera and scan others into the computer. There are appropriate systems to protect children's safety when using the Internet.
147. Attainment is patchy, varying from class to class and depends on the confidence of the teacher as well as the ease with which teachers and children can access the computers. Some teachers use computers effectively to make resources, label displays, complete their planning and find information for lessons on the Internet. The work scrutiny shows that in some classes, children use the computer to draw pictures, sometimes in the style of famous artists such as Mondrian. Children have also made posters which combine pictures and text. A few children can type simple phrases, change the font and style of text. Teachers have procedures to track activities children have done and carry out assessments to record their progress. These show that some children have covered very little work in the past year.
148. Very little teaching was seen during the inspection and so it is not possible to judge the quality of teaching from lessons observed. Some group work was seen mostly led by volunteer helpers. However, the scrutiny of work and teachers' planning shows that over time, teaching is unsatisfactory. Few teachers include information and communication technology activities in their planning. Teachers do not maximise the opportunities for children to use computers, especially in literacy and numeracy. The subject is not taught for an appropriate amount of time each week. The school's policy to teach information and communication technology through other subjects is inappropriate. Computers are very valuable to enhance standards in other subjects, but skills need to be taught explicitly. Parents contribute significantly to helping children make progress in this subject as they give their time to assist groups of children to enhance and practice their information and communication skills under the direction of the class teacher.
149. Where children were observed working on computers, their attitudes were good. They listened carefully to instructions, helped each other when they got stuck and did their best to use the computer programs appropriately. A number of the children have computers at home and already know how to use them effectively. The school is doing little to add to these skills. The infrequent opportunities to use the computers mean children cannot build up their knowledge and skills rapidly. They have little chance to word process their work, find out information from the Internet or do more than design pictures for the front of their topic folders.
150. Monitoring of teaching has not ensured that the programme of work is fully implemented. There are difficulties with the new network and these take time to resolve. The computers in the suite have been out of action and this too has interrupted children's learning. Teachers have undergone training through a national initiative to improve teachers' skills. A recent audit shows that teachers feel more confident in their own skills but remain unsure about teaching the subject.

151. The status of information technology is not high enough and does not feature as a priority in the school development plan.

## **MUSIC**

152. Only one music lesson was seen during the inspection, so it is not possible to make firm judgments about overall achievements, or the quality of teaching, in the subject.
153. The lesson seen was in Year 2, where children were learning about the different ways in which sounds can be produced from a selection of instruments. This was a good lesson. Each child selected an instrument and told the class whether the instrument was to be blown, struck, or shaken. The teacher asked the children to agree on a symbol – a wavy line for example – which might stand for each group of instruments. The symbols were drawn on large cards fixed to the white board. A child acted as “conductor”, pointing to the different symbols, while children with the appropriate instruments played them. Most of the children had a good understanding of the variety of ways sounds can be produced and that a group of instruments could be represented by an abstract symbol. This is an important idea in music and a very early introduction to notation. The children were very interested and enthusiastic and they worked hard in the lesson. The provision of such a good range of instruments meant that no child was left out, or had to wait for a turn. The lesson was pitched at a good level and enabled all the children to move forward well in their musical development. Because the teaching was good, the children’s achievements were in line with those expected for their age.
154. Children have further opportunities to develop skills in music through their singing in assemblies, which is enthusiastic and tuneful. Hymns and songs are practised regularly and this brings improvements in their performance. Standards of singing are in line with those usually found in children of their age. Recorded music is also used in assembly. Children have learned a little about the composers of this music, such as Holst and the themes of the pieces chosen.

155. At present the headteacher acts as subject leader in music, since the previous holder of the post has relinquished it. None of the staff has specialist music skills, although a good training programme has been undertaken to enable them to provide satisfactory lessons. Coupled with detailed guidance on lesson planning, to ensure learning builds up well from one week to the next, this results in a satisfactory provision of music in the school.
156. A choir is assembled on an ad hoc basis whenever a concert is planned. Children take part in a combined Cathedral service at Christmas and sing to people in a local home for the elderly. At present there are no after-school music clubs, or instrumental tuition.
157. Music is not a strong element in the school's programme because of the shortage of teacher skills in the subject. However, a successful attempt has been made to ensure that children enjoy a thorough, if basic, music curriculum.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

158. When the school was last inspected, children's attainment in physical education was below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, although they had pulled up by the end of Year 4. Children in Key Stage 1 made too little progress in their lessons. They did not always understand what was required of them and their performance was not improving. There was no carefully structured programme of work to ensure that children's skills developed systematically from lesson to lesson.
159. Provision has improved significantly since the last inspection and children's achievements at the age of seven are now similar to those generally expected for this age. In games, Year 2 children show satisfactory levels of ball skills, while work in dance in Year 1 suggests that these children are also reaching levels appropriate for their age.
160. Although no Year 4 physical education lessons were seen, the levels of gymnastics work shown by Year 3 children indicate that standards in this part of the physical education programme are also in line with those usually found at the age of nine. The school pool provides an opportunity for all children to learn to swim. Most can swim at least 25 metres by the time they leave the school and this is a good level of performance. Standards have improved because there are now very good programmes of work for teachers to follow and the quality of teaching has improved.
161. In addition to games, gymnastics, dance and swimming the physical education programme includes athletics in the summer months. All three lessons seen in the inspection were satisfactory and one was very good. This was a Year 1 lesson on dance. Using a very evocative recording of seashore sounds, the children explored a range of expressive ways of moving to represent the moods of the music. They contrasted sharp, brittle movements – representing the seagulls' cries – with undulating rhythms for the breaking waves. The well-chosen recording captured the children's interest and the task they were given called for serious thinking and decision making as well as physical effort. It was a sign of the teacher's high expectations that even such young children were expected to be able to suggest some of the elements they particularly enjoyed in each other's performance.
162. Children enjoy their physical education lessons and look forward to them. They are prepared to expend strenuous effort when necessary and to think hard when planning sequences of dance or gymnastics movements. They are confident to try out new ideas and to suggest ways their own and others' performances could be improved.

163. Children have benefited from coaching visits provided by Ipswich Town Football Club and the school also provides an extracurricular sports club, open to children of both key stages. However, there are no interschool contests, area sports days or galas and this limits children's opportunities in physical education.

## RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

164. As at the time of the last inspection, children's achievements in religious education are similar to those generally found at the ages of seven and nine and meet the requirements of the locally agreed programme of work. This programme helps children learn that religious faith is a common feature of communities and that people who share a faith express it in their values, behaviour and religious observance.
165. Most of the seven year old children appreciate that people's lives are enlivened by special events such as birthdays, weddings and seasonal festivals. They can explain how these events are celebrated, with special songs, food and rituals. They understand that people with a religious faith also have festivals and gatherings that are important to them, such as Christmas, Easter and Sunday church-going. The children can explain what the inside of a church looks like at Harvest festival and what happens at that time. They have also learned a little about the life and ministry of Christ and can retell events such as the raising of Jairus' daughter.
166. By the time children leave the school they know much more about Christ's life and teaching. In an imaginative classroom activity they made a "passport" for Jesus, showing, for example, his place of birth, his parentage and his occupation. They have visited a local church and a parish priest has visited them in school to talk about his work in the parish. By studying a Parish Magazine, children have come to appreciate the wide range of activities churches promote each week – an indication of how believers express their values within day to day community life. They have looked at the biblical account in Matthew's gospel, of the nativity and retell the sequence of events confidently. However, less able children in Year 4 sometimes struggle in this work and do not finish. Not enough care is taken to make sure keywords are spelled correctly.
167. Overall the teaching of religious education is satisfactory and two of the four lessons seen were good. In a good Year 2 lesson, children were very attentive to the story of one of Jesus' miracles. After hearing it read, they watched a good dramatic reconstruction on video and were entranced by it. This was a short, well-planned and very engaging lesson. Lively presentation and the good use of the video captured the children's interest. As a result they could imagine how the characters might have felt about the events and the impact the miracle had on bystanders.
168. In most lessons, children are calm and responsive. Occasionally, children do not settle well to the work presented but generally they enjoy discussion and are confident to put forward their own ideas. They listen well and put effort into their work especially when it is presented in an imaginative way.