

INSPECTION REPORT

HOWARD INFANT AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Kings Lynn

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120894

Headteacher: Mrs J Brettell

Reporting inspector: Mr John Earish
23216

Dates of inspection: 12th - 14th February 2001

Inspection number: 195018

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Nursery

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 3 to 7 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Parkway
Gaywood
King's Lynn
Norfolk

Postcode: PE30 4QJ

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Appropriate authority: Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mr Christopher Gray

Date of previous inspection: March 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23216	Mr J Earish	<i>Registered inspector</i>	Science; Information and communication technology; Special educational needs; Equal opportunities.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils achievements; How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
12387	Mrs D Willson	<i>Lay inspector</i>		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?
27736	Mr J Collins	<i>Team inspector</i>	Foundation stage; Mathematics; Design and technology; Religious education; Music.	How well are pupils taught?
1085	Mr J Laver	<i>Team inspector</i>	English; Art and design; Geography; History; Physical education.	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Howard Infant and Nursery School is situated in the Gaywood South ward of Kings Lynn. There are 104 pupils on roll, with a further 30 children attending the nursery part time. The great majority of the pupils live in public sector housing on the Fairstead and Gaywood Estates, which have recently been designated as an area of high deprivation. Many live in over crowded accommodation. There is high unemployment amongst the parents, and 52 per cent of the pupils are entitled to free school meals. This is well above the national average. At present there are 83 pupils on the special educational needs register, which is well above average in national terms. Thirteen pupils have full statements, and this is well above national figures. Attainment on entry to the school for children under five is very low compared with that of children of a similar age.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a caring school where pupils feel happy and secure. Teaching is good, and standards have improved steadily since the last inspection. However, standards of the current Year 2 are below average in English, mathematics and science. This reflects the fact that just over a quarter of the cohort have full statements of educational need. Standards in physical education, and art and design, are above national expectations. The headteacher, staff, and governors all work closely together in partnership. Although the school has above average income, it provides good value for money.

WHAT THE SCHOOL DOES WELL

- Standards achieved in art and design and in physical education are good.
- Pupils make good progress in lessons, and children under five make very good progress.
- Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported and make good progress.
- Teaching is good or better in nine out of ten lessons
- Pupils' attitudes and relationships are very good, and their behaviour is excellent.
- There are very good procedures for monitoring and supporting academic progress.
- The headteacher, governors and staff provide strong purposeful leadership, which underpins the school's drive for improvement.

WHAT COULD BE IMPROVED

- Standards in English, mathematics and science by the age of seven.
- Pupils' attendance.
- Attracting and retaining teachers.
- Parents' involvement in the work of the school
- The governors' annual report to parents.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in March 1997. Standards have improved steadily in English, mathematics and science, with consistent improvements in the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and the higher Level 3 by the age of seven. The quality of teaching has also improved significantly. Other positive aspects of the school's work have been sustained. The level of support for children under five has also significantly improved. This was considered insufficient at the last inspection. There is purposeful leadership from the headteacher and deputy, and all now strive to achieve high standards in all things. Nearly all the issues identified by the previous inspection have been successfully addressed. The exception is to increase the level of parental involvement in children's learning. The school has tried many ways to involve parents in the life and work of the school, but their contribution remains poor.

STANDARDS

The table below shows the standards achieved by seven year olds based on National Curriculum test results.

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

<i>Key</i>	
<i>well above average</i>	<i>A</i>
<i>above average</i>	<i>B</i>
<i>average</i>	<i>C</i>
<i>below average</i>	<i>D</i>
<i>well below average</i>	<i>E</i>

This information shows that in the Year 2000 standards in mathematics and writing are average when compared with those of similar schools and below average in reading. When compared to those of all schools nationally they are well below average. A scrutiny of data for the last four years indicates that the percentage of pupils reaching Level 2 and the higher Level 3 has steadily improved. Inspection findings show that standards achieved in English, mathematics, science are below average. In all other subjects, standards are in line with those found nationally, except in art and design and in physical education, where they are above expectations. In religious education, pupils' attainment matches the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Overall, the attitudes of pupils to their learning are very good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Exemplary throughout the school in lessons, and at all other times.
Personal development and relationships	Very good overall. Pupils work and play together very successfully, and have respect for each other and for adults.
Attendance	Poor.

Pupils enjoy coming to school, and work and play together happily. Their attitudes to learning are very good, and have a positive effect on both the quality of the education and the standards achieved. Levels of attendance are very low compared to those in other schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

The quality of teaching, reported at the previous inspection as satisfactory, has been improved. In the present inspection, teaching in 88 per cent of lessons was good or better, including 34 per cent of lessons where teaching was very good or excellent. No unsatisfactory lessons were observed. In English and mathematics all lessons were good or better. A particularly good feature of teaching is the skilful way in which work is planned to provide suitably challenging work for all age groups of pupils, especially those with special educational needs. This is possible because teachers know their pupils very well and monitor their progress carefully. Teachers generally have a good knowledge of the subjects that they teach. Basic skills in numeracy and literacy are well taught, and teachers give pupils good opportunities to practise the skills in other areas of the curriculum.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of the learning opportunities is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' social and moral is very good, and underpins the work of the school. There are good opportunities for pupils to appreciate their own cultural traditions and those of other societies. Spiritual development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares for its pupils very well, within a safe environment.

The contribution made by parents is poor. Staff and governors are trying many ways to involve them in the life and work of the school. Pupils have a good range of opportunities for learning, and statutory requirements are met. Good links between subjects have been made so that skills learned in numeracy, literacy and information and communication technology can be developed further in other lessons. A particular strength of the school's care for its pupils is the very good monitoring of academic performance and personal development, and the very good support and guidance they receive.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy manage the school well and provide clear educational direction.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are knowledgeable and are very active in supporting the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Staff and governors are very good at critically appraising their work and in seeking ways to improve.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes good use of available finances.

The headteacher and governors share a clear view of the future development of the school and work in close partnership. Governors are experiencing problems in attracting permanent staff. This uncertainty has not had an adverse effect on standards, but the situation is unsatisfactory as it is clearly placing undue pressure on the headteacher. Overall, the standard of accommodation is good. The school has the benefit of a very attractive nursery, which provides light, airy and spacious accommodation for the under fives. The range and quality of learning resources available to support the curriculum is satisfactory overall. The principles of best value are satisfactorily applied through the use of cost comparators and effective tendering arrangements.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The behaviour of the children. • The way the school is led and managed. • Teaching is good. • Parents feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or problems. • The school working closely with parents • School expects children to work hard and achieve their best. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Homework. • The range of activities outside lessons.

Inspectors' judgements support parents' positive views. Pupils enjoy school, and form very good relationships with their teachers and one another. Parents feel comfortable about approaching the headteacher and staff with suggestions and problems, and teachers are actively supporting new initiatives to involve parents more closely in the life of the school. There is only limited provision for extracurricular activities after school. However, there are activities at lunchtimes, visits to museums and places of interest, as well as fieldwork on the Royal Estate at Sandringham. Homework tasks are appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Attainment on entry for children under five is very low when compared with that normally expected for children of a similar age. Many children have very poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal independence. By the end of their time in the reception classes, all children, including those with special educational needs, have made very good progress in all areas of the curriculum, but have below average levels of attainment in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world. In the areas of creative, physical and personal development the children achieve the goals expected of them. This is largely due to very good teaching and the support of classroom assistants and the nursery nurse, who are well briefed in their roles. Planning is very good, expectations are very high, management of children is very good, and the interaction between children and adults is very effective.
2. Results of the National Curriculum tests for 2000 show that, when compared with all schools, the attainment of seven year olds is well below the national averages in reading, writing and mathematics. When results are compared with those of similar schools, standards are below average in reading and average in writing and mathematics. However, there has been a steady increase in the numbers of pupils achieving Levels 2 and 3 since the last inspection in 1997. The most recent results show that 78 per cent of pupils gained Level 2 or above and 53 per cent gained Level 2B or higher. Nineteen per cent achieved the higher Level 3.
3. Inspection findings support the test evidence, and show attainment to be below the national averages in writing, reading, mathematics, and science. Standards in physical education, and art and design, are above national expectations. In all other subjects it is in line with national figures. There was insufficient evidence to allow a secure judgment of standards in history or geography. Attainment in religious education is in line with the expectations of the locally Agreed Syllabus.
4. These findings reflect the unusual composition of the current Year 2. This cohort has 85 per cent of pupils on the special needs register, with just over a quarter having full statements of educational need. This is unusually high even for this school, where 45 per cent are on the special needs register and 16 per cent have full statements. However, standards in the current Year 1 are closer to the average for the age group where significantly fewer pupils are on the special needs register or have full statements. The inspection did not show a significant difference in attainment between boys and girls.
5. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported, and have full access to the curriculum. They benefit from support in the classroom with the special needs teacher, and during separate lessons in the special needs room. Teachers clearly identify appropriate tasks and opportunities for them within their planning, and they are making good progress. There are good examples of this in mathematics, science and English, where work is well designed for the needs of these particular pupils. Pupils make very good progress in relation to their prior attainment in the foundation stage, and good progress at Key Stage 1. They are keen and enthusiastic about work, and join in all classroom activities.

6. Pupils make good progress in English. By the age of seven pupils learn to listen well both to the teacher and to each other. Speaking skills are less developed. Although several pupils can talk with reasonable confidence about their work, many pupils have a very limited vocabulary and a poor command of standard English for their age. Pupils learn to read with increasing fluency, but rarely with expression. There is an increasing range of writing as they move up the school, although writing skills are the weakest component of many pupils' basic English skills. Higher achievers develop an interest in evocative language, and this was seen in individual and group poems about the seasons and the weather, some of which were combined with artwork. Higher achievers write in simple sentences, which become more accurate in their structure. However, most pupils continue to make frequent errors in punctuation and in spellings of simple words, and many still do not write with a consistently accurate script.

7. Good progress is largely due to the good quality of teaching during the Literacy hour, and the new monitoring and assessment procedures. New medium and long term planning for literacy have been introduced to aid and inform short term planning. Reading schemes have been assessed, along with phonics materials. Small group reading has also been introduced to improve fluency, expression and comprehension. Books are being added to the reading scheme as relevant materials of good quality are found. All these initiatives are having a positive effect on the quality of teaching and learning.

8. Pupils make good progress in mathematics. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100. They know the properties and names of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes very well including that of a hexagonal prism. The pupils recognise simple fractions such as halves and quarters, and many are secure in telling the time on the hour, quarter past, half-past and a quarter to the hour. The pupils are able to describe position well and they understand the principle of symmetry satisfactorily.

9. Good progress in mathematics is the result of good teaching, and a number of initiatives that have been put in place since the last inspection. These include the effective introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy, a thorough analysis of past results and areas of weakness, more effective criteria for determining what pupils have achieved, and the setting of individual targets.

10. Progress in science is good. Pupils have a good understanding of different properties of materials, including those that are transparent, translucent or opaque, and were amazed to discover that some can be used to bend light to produce a spectrum of colours. They link this well to their own experiences of rainbows. Work in science is also well integrated with other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils' mathematical skills of measuring help them record distances accurately when investigating forces, and recording tasks enable pupils to practise their handwriting. Teachers plan their lessons and carefully identify what is to be learned. They try to ensure that the work planned is interesting and builds on pupils' natural curiosity about their environment. Good scientific habits are encouraged from an early age.

11. Pupils make good progress in information technology, which results from detailed planning and the inclusion of information technology in most subjects. Pupils develop good basic skills and the ability to use a range of software. They acquire satisfactory research skills, using CD ROM, and software is used well to support learning in most areas of the curriculum. The school has been successful in providing software and peripherals to support children with special educational needs

12. A particular strength of the school's care for its pupils is the very good procedures for monitoring and supporting academic progress. The school successfully uses assessment data and target setting in individual education plans and statements to set appropriately challenging targets for individuals and groups of pupils with special educational needs. All these pupils make good gains in knowledge, skills and understanding because of good teaching, detailed planning and effective support. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy and the National Numeracy Strategy is also having a positive impact on their attainment. Their very good attitudes to school help to promote effective learning, and they form very positive relationships with adults and other children.

13. Overall, the school has good arrangements for monitoring and promoting attendance. There are very good procedures for monitoring and analysing attendance; the headteacher checks registers every day and if no reason for absence is received within a few days, efforts are made to find out the reason for this. However, attendance for the last reporting year was very low in comparison with that of other schools. Pupils' poor attendance has a detrimental effect on their standards of attainment, as they are not able to make regular, uninterrupted progress in their work.

14. The contribution made by parents is poor, and many do not support their children's learning at home. This has negative effect on pupils' prior attainment before entering the foundation stage, and on their subsequent progress. Staff and governors are trying many ways to involve them in the life and work of the school, including long term initiatives in partnership with the community education officer.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

15. The school continues to be a calm and orderly environment where pupils' attitudes and behaviour remain a significant strength of the school. These make a considerable contribution to both their learning and to levels of attainment. When asking pupils in the playground how they felt about school, they responded with remarks such as 'it's brilliant' and 'it's fantastic'.

16. From an early age, children in the nursery develop very positive attitudes to school, and these continue throughout their time in school. Children under five listen attentively to their class teacher, to learning support assistants, and to each other. They choose activities sensibly and are developing skills of independence and initiative. Their behaviour is excellent; they respond quickly to teachers' instructions, and are developing very good relationships with each other.

17. Overall, the attitudes of pupils to their learning are very good. During the inspection, all lessons seen were good or better, and a quarter of them were excellent. Pupils enjoy being at school, settle quickly to their work and are eager to learn. They listen well to their teachers and work hard, even when they find it difficult. Pupils show high levels of interest in their work, concentrate well and complete tasks sensibly. For example, pupils in a Year 1 science lesson were given the opportunity to carry out a range of experiments using 'air pressure' as a force. They were very focused on their work and took real enjoyment from their success in coping with this challenging task. Pupils maintained high levels of concentration, and worked co-operatively and collaboratively.

18. Pupils have maintained their excellent standards of behaviour. This reflects the school's aims and has a positive effect on the quality of learning. Pupils learn, at an early age, the difference between right and wrong, and respond well to teachers' very high expectations of acceptable behaviour. They are polite and courteous, and are very eager to enter into conversation about their work or their time at school. They move around the school in a sensible manner and show respect for property. During lunchtimes, pupils display excellent behaviour in the dining hall, creating a pleasant social occasion. Pupils understand the impact of their actions on others and respond well to discussions on resolving any differences. They play well together in the playground, and no incidents of inappropriate behaviour were seen during the inspection.

19. Relationships throughout the school are very good. All staff work together as a very strong team and provide very good role models for pupils. Pupils relate very well to each other, sharing resources and equipment sensibly, and organising their work without any fuss. They show warmth, openness and mutual respect, which promote a purposeful climate where learning can flourish. For example, a boy in a Year 1 class kept the place for a girl in a queue while she was speaking to an inspector. On returning to the line she voluntarily gave the boy a hug.

20. Pupils respond well to opportunities for their personal development. From an early age, they learn to clear away quickly and sensibly after lessons. They are able to work on their own individually, and in small groups, with little support from their class teacher. They undertake duties around the school such as returning registers and monies to the school office staff.

21. Attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils with special educational needs are very good overall. Pupils generally work hard, enjoy the individual attention they receive and work well within groups. Occasionally, pupils are passive and show a lack of confidence in their abilities. Pupils have very good relationships with teachers and support staff. Generally, they are secure and happy at school, and some show growing abilities to work independently. They are well integrated into classroom life, and the good role models of other pupils ensure they are happy and are achieving well. Teachers are aware of building up self-esteem and the importance of teaching pupils systematically how to work independently and in an organised way. This is supported by good classroom organisation in all classes.

22. Attendance for the last reporting year, 1999 / 2000, is poor at 90.6 per cent, and very low in comparison with that in other schools. Unauthorised absence at 3.9 per cent is well above the national average. Analysis of attendance for last term shows an average attendance of 90 per cent, and this term it is looking to be lower than that. The great majority of pupils come to school on time, but a significant number arrive late. Registration is effectively organised, and pupils settle quickly to their work. Pupils' poor attendance has a detrimental effect on their standards of attainment, as they are not able to make regular, uninterrupted progress in their work.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

23. Teaching is good, and a secure foundation for the school's drive to improve standards. There has been considerable improvement since the previous inspection, particularly in the nursery where teaching

is now very good. Teaching in the Nursery was judged to be unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Although the quality of teaching

varies, this is only between satisfactory and good teaching, or between good and very good teaching. Teaching is always at least satisfactory, and in 50 per cent of lessons at least good; in well over a third it is very good or excellent. Teaching at the Foundation Stage is slightly more effective than in Key Stage 1.

24. In most lessons pupils are keen to learn and do their best. They work hard, fast, carefully and with a sense of pride in achievement. They are thinking learners, increasingly taking responsibility for their own learning as their confidence, self-esteem and aspirations grow. Further improvement is achieved by emphasis on independent work, and coherent planning to ensure that it is at a suitable level. Overall, pupils make good and often very good progress as they move up the school from the nursery to Year 2.

25. The teaching of literacy and numeracy is particularly good, with more than ninety per cent being at least good, and almost 50 per cent being very good or excellent. The key strength of the teaching is that it is consistently effective across years and classes. The way teachers use opportunities in all subjects to practise and enrich the pupils' skills increases the impact of the teaching.

26. Teachers develop the listening skills of the pupils very effectively, and they are working to improve the speaking skills so that more progress will be made in reading. Recent focus on developing writing has had a positive effect, and evidence shows it to be of a higher standard than reading.

27. The intervention of a specialist teacher and the classroom assistants provides in-class support of good quality, and pupils' progress is increased through highly focused outside-class sessions. The school provides a very good start in helping keen but disadvantaged pupils.

28. The school provides well managed and skilled support for pupils with special educational needs, or for those who arrive in school with very limited previous education. This additional support is effective within classes and also through highly focused small group work elsewhere.

29. Staff throughout the school are very good at helping each and every pupil succeed. This grows from the ethos of the school, which values each child, seeking to understand and meet individual needs. This concern is warm and celebrates even small successes, and congratulation is linked firmly to real achievements and framed within what each child can and should accomplish next. What each pupil brings from his or her unique background is recognised for its special contribution towards the life of the school.

30. The consistency of teaching is based upon helpful school policies. The planning of learning and teaching is good, and very closely linked to good assessment procedures. Teachers know very clearly how each pupil is progressing and they act swiftly when they spot a problem or if learning slows. Marking is sometimes inadequate and does not always lead to pupils fully understanding how they might improve.

31. Teachers use open questions well, enabling pupils to think for themselves and giving them feedback which encourages them to move forward.

32. Lessons have clear and appropriate objectives, and these are broken down into learning activities which meet the wide range of abilities and stages in learning. All teachers have good class control, and behaviour is excellent. Pupils work hard because they find the work interesting and demanding.

33. In the course of the inspection there was one excellent lesson. In this lesson the teaching led the pupils into an excellent discussion on the text they were reading and resulted in very good progress. Their work rate was rapid, and the quality of the work they achieved was very high. The teacher had the complete attention of the class, and inspired them with the confidence that they could achieve what they had been asked to do. At the same time, she explicitly taught and demonstrated the required skills. Vocabulary was developed very well, which enabled all pupils to add colour to their writing whatever their ability. Pupils evaluated their own work and this led to further improvements.

34. The use of classroom assistants is very good. Learning support assistants and other adults help pupils very well. All adults work very closely together, and pupils benefit from this. The effective interaction between pupils and adults is one of the contributory factors to the good progress made by pupils.

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

35. The school's curriculum for pupils under five and between the ages of five and seven is broad and balanced. It provides good opportunities for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, to experience the range of National Curriculum subjects and also to develop the social, moral and personal skills which are prominent in the school's mission statement. The curriculum for children under five provides the full range of experiences which enable pupils to meet the early learning goals. For pupils between the ages of five and seven, priority is rightly given to improving their basic English skills, although curriculum provision is also good in other areas such as art and design and physical education.

36. The quality of provision for pupils with special educational needs is very good overall, and pupils are making good progress in literacy and numeracy. Class teachers are aware of literacy and numeracy needs through good diagnostic assessment, and the school provides generous levels of support. The requirements of the special educational needs Code of Practice are generally well met.

37. Curriculum planning has improved since the previous inspection. Developments in long-term planning ensure a better balance than before in terms of coverage. Work done in the reception class is now linked better to work done in Year 1. Curriculum planning has improved in particular subjects such as design and technology and English. Medium-term planning is now more consistent across the school and is monitored by co-ordinators. There are now agreed criteria for short-term planning, although teachers are allowed some flexibility within this framework. Schemes of work have improved since the previous inspection, and governors are now more involved in monitoring curriculum provision.

38. The school has effective strategies for teaching both literacy and numeracy skills, as evident in the good progress which pupils make in their learning, not just in specific literacy and numeracy lessons but also in other subject areas. For example, key words are constantly reinforced in science. Good listening skills are encouraged in music, mathematics and assemblies. Teachers sometimes use class registers to practise pupils' mental mathematics skills. Children in the nursery are encouraged to count each other as they leave or enter the building. Pupils in science lessons are taught to measure distances carefully when doing experiments on movement.

39. Because of the young age of the pupils, and problems in reaching satisfactory staffing levels, the school has limited provision for extracurricular activities after school hours. However, there are activities at lunchtimes, and visits to museums and places of interest, as well as fieldwork on the Royal Sandringham Estate. Homework tasks are appropriate to the age and ability of the pupils.

40. Provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is good. Pupils are taught the principles of healthy living: for example in under fives classes and in science they are taught about healthy eating, and in physical education they are taught about the effects of exercise on their bodies.

41. The community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. Outside visitors such as the police and the fire service come into school to talk to pupils about their work. Pupils visit local churches and shops. However, there is relatively little parental involvement in activities except on the 'Fun Run' day.

42. Relationships with the school's partner institutions are good. Teachers from the nearby junior school come into the infant school to introduce themselves to Year 2 pupils. Of particular value are the good links that exist with the local special schools, and this contributes to the very good provision for the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs.

43. The school's overall provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory, as at the time of the previous inspection. Assemblies meet statutory requirements by providing for a brief period of worship and reflection of a Christian nature. In one assembly there was a period of reflection on the creation and the environment. Other assemblies cover topics such as 'new beginning' and 'keeping promises'. There is a celebration of joy and sharing, and prayers for the community are held. Pupils collecting candles generate a calm atmosphere in assembly, and the role of candles in the celebration of Candlemas is highlighted. There are relatively few planned opportunities for pupils to reflect in lessons, though they are encouraged to appreciate the wonder of natural phenomena, such as the weather and the seasons, through poetry and art around the school. Further opportunities are sometimes missed: for example there is limited use made of music in assembly.

44. The school's provision for moral development is very good, which is an improvement on the previous inspection. Teachers are excellent role models in their committed, caring approach towards pupils. The school rules are displayed prominently, and pupils are encouraged to be respectful and caring towards each other in the spirit of the values of fairness, mutual tolerance and honesty, which are highlighted in the school's mission statement. The school is a very well

ordered community. All pupils are encouraged to take responsibility, for example acting as register monitors. Moral issues such as care for the environment are dealt with well in assembly. Through a series of drawings and pieces of writing, pupils are encouraged to consider how people can be kind to each other.

45. The school's provision for social development is closely linked with its moral provision. Social provision is very good, and this is an improvement on the previous inspection. Pupils collaborate well in lessons and behave well towards each other. Pupils are enthusiastic about the school precisely because it is an orderly, sociable environment. They enjoy taking part in supplementary activities such as local excursions, for example to the museum and to Sandringham. As well as complementing their studies in school, these activities teach pupils to socialise.

46. The school's provision for cultural development is good, which is an improvement on the previous inspection. For example, in art and design lessons pupils are introduced to the work of modern artists such as Jackson Pollock and Paul Klee, which act as an inspiration for their own work. Each term a dance or music group comes into the school. In a recent music session, pupils were introduced to the potential of stringed instruments. A puppet group has also visited the school and worked with the children. The pupils' awareness of living in a multicultural society is promoted well, for example through collections of musical instruments from a range of cultures, and an impressive display of beliefs and celebrations from China.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

47. The school is a caring community where pupils flourish in an atmosphere which supports, encourages, and values them as individuals. All staff know and care for their pupils very well, and make themselves easily accessible at all times.

48. Overall, the arrangements for ensuring the health, safety and general well being of all pupils are very good. Pupils with specific special needs are very well supported by staff, who in their lunchtime provide extra help in improving physical co-ordination through a program of tasks and exercises. The care for children who are unwell, injured or in need of specialised care is well supported by the availability of a well-equipped medical area. The school has very good procedures for child protection. Training for all staff is up to date, and any pupils who may be causing concern are very carefully monitored. Procedures for lunchtime supervision are very good, with someone on duty at the 'first-aid station' throughout the session. Although there are sufficient staff trained for the emergency first-aid certificate, training for the full certificate needs up-dating. The co-ordinator responsible for health and safety issues has received recent training to fulfil her role, and a full risk assessment has been carried out. The site manager quickly attends to any concerns raised by the staff.

49. Overall, the school has good arrangements for monitoring and promoting good attendance. There are very good procedures for monitoring and analysing attendance; the headteacher checks registers every day and if no reason for absence is received within a few days, efforts are made to find out the reason for this. A record is kept of all telephone calls. The headteacher is very clear that any pupil arriving after nine o'clock will be deemed late. Each term, the school analyses the overall attendance figures. In the school newsletter, parents are regularly reminded about the need for regular attendance

and punctuality Also, the local authority has recently produced a good informative leaflet promoting good attendance at school, and this is to be circulated to all parents. However, the school says it is no longer well supported by the educational welfare office in its bid to improve attendance. This is having a detrimental effect on the school's efforts to raise parents' awareness of the need for their children's regular attendance.

50. There are very good arrangements for monitoring and promoting good behaviour. The school's very high expectations of good behaviour are consistent throughout the school. This provides a very calm working atmosphere, which enables pupils to work and play in a purposeful and happy environment. Any pupils with behavioural problems are closely monitored. Staff meet regularly on a weekly basis to monitor concerns and to discuss individual progress.

51. Overall, the procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress, and the use of this data to guide curricular planning, are good. Good use is made of Baseline assessments, the Bury Test, and teachers' notes and observations to guide curricular planning. Careful comparisons are made between baseline information and results at the age of seven. For example, analysis showed that there was a weakness in spelling. Results were carefully examined, a strategy for improvement was devised, and progress has been achieved. Writing has now been identified as an area for development and strategies are being tried in order to improve pupils' writing skills. Good record keeping has enabled teachers to track and plot improvement over the past four years.

52. There are very good procedures in place for monitoring and supporting academic progress. This is a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teachers keep regular and rigorous notes on pupils' progress, particularly in English and mathematics. Regular staff meetings take place each week to discuss the progress of individual pupils. This information is collated and used to write very detailed half termly reports on each pupil's academic progress and personal development.

53. There is very good use of assessment procedures to identify pupils with special educational needs. The headteacher maintains a register of these pupils, and teachers are fully aware of their differing needs. There are very good procedures for placing pupils on the register, for keeping parents informed, and for reviewing progress regularly. The school meets the requirements outlined in pupils' statements of educational needs, and supports the pupils to achieve the targets within them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. There is a distinct difference between parents' views of the school and the extent to which they have entered into partnership with it. No parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector prior to the inspection, but a small number of responses to the questionnaire were received. The views of those parents were positive. They all indicated that their children liked school, behaviour was good, the school was well led and managed, and that teaching was good. The great majority felt comfortable at approaching the school with concerns, and believed that the school works closely with parents.

55. Overall, the school provides satisfactory information for parents. The school brochure gives them good detailed information, but the governors' annual report does not meet statutory requirements. Parents receive satisfactory information about day-to-day routine matters but they do not receive any

information about what their children are to learn in school, to enable them to help with their children's learning. Annual reports to parents contain good information about their children's progress, but targets for improvement to their work are not always precise.

56. There is a close collaboration between the school and the parents of pupils with special educational needs, and together they produce individual educational plans containing achievable targets, which result in good progress.

57. The school has tried many ways to involve parents in the life and work of the school. Currently, it is trying to get parents involved with helping their children prepare for school. A community education officer is running a weekly workshop for those parents whose children are starting full time education the following term. This is a long-term initiative and funding has been established for the next ten years. However, the contribution of parents to their children's learning at home and at school is poor. Some parents support their child's reading at home but this is not widespread. Consultation afternoons and evenings for parents to hear about their children's progress are not well supported, and efforts to involve parents in curriculum workshops have not been successful. Good efforts have been made by the school to improve the rate of attendance, but these too have had little effect. Attendance remains very low when compared to that of other schools. A few parents help in school, and there is no active parent teacher association. No parents attended the most recent governors' meeting with parents, or the pre-inspection meeting with the registered inspector. Recruiting parents on to the governing body is very difficult despite the best efforts of the governors. They have recently been successful at recruiting a new parent governor, but there is still one vacancy to be filled.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

58. The leadership of the school is good and provides a clear sense of purpose, which is a major factor in the school's successful development. There are clear and appropriate aims, which are strongly reflected in the daily life of the school and are evident in documentation and development priorities. The school is successful in achieving these aims.

59. The governing body is committed to the school's well being, and has a good understanding of its roles and responsibilities. It provides good support to the headteacher through a well-defined committee structure, with clear terms of reference and an appropriate programme of meetings. Governors are kept fully informed through the headteacher's detailed reports, and monitor the work of the school through individual visits.

60. The personal leadership of the headteacher is good. It inspires a strong sense of loyalty and motivation in staff, and enables all to make a contribution to school development. The purposeful leadership of the deputy supports the headteacher. With her support, and the support of all the staff and governors, the headteacher has created an ethos in which all who work and learn in the school community feel valued and respected, and strive to achieve high standards in all things. The effects of this leadership and management are significant in the good progress the school has made in many areas of its work since the previous inspection. The governors' annual report is clearly written, but it does not meet statutory requirements in all respects.

61. One of the significant strengths of the leadership of the headteacher and deputy is the degree to which it has created a shared unity of purpose within the school, focused on developing positive attitudes to learning and improving standards of attainment. The structure of management responsibilities works well in promoting communication and consultation, and in monitoring progress and implementing change.

62. The school is well led and managed on a day-to-day basis. Good communication systems ensure that all staff are kept informed, and well-established routines contribute to the smooth running of the school. Staff are highly committed to their work, and there is a deep sense of pride in the achievements in the school.

63. Following the last inspection in March 1997, an action plan was prepared in response to the key issues identified for future improvement. Most of the points contained in these key issues have been successfully addressed. They are as follows:

Key Issue 1 – ‘Raise standards in English by:

- *improving the teaching and resourcing of reading*
- *planning more opportunities for speaking and listening.*’

64. Progress has been good. New medium and long term planning for literacy have been successfully introduced to aid and inform short term planning. Reading schemes have been assessed, along with phonics materials. Small group reading has been introduced to improve fluency, expression and comprehension. Books are being added to the reading scheme as relevant materials of good quality are found. More opportunities for speaking and listening have been incorporated within planning.

Key Issue 2 – ‘Raise standards in design and technology by:

- *increasing opportunities for design and technology*
- *offering a wider choice of materials and techniques.*’

65. Progress has been good. The school has adopted QCA¹ scheme of work, and has increased the amount of time and opportunities for design and technology. There is now a wider range of materials and techniques being used or developed.

Key Issue 3 – ‘Improve the quality of teaching in the nursery.’

66. Progress has been very good, and the quality of teaching is now very good. At the time of the last inspection teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory.

Key Issue 4 – ‘Develop a common system of long, medium and short term curriculum planning which improves curriculum coherence and ensures continuity and progression.’

67. Progress has been good. Long and medium term planning formats have been agreed and adopted throughout the school. Subject coordinators scrutinise medium term plans to check for

¹ QCA Qualification and Curriculum Authority

continuity and progression. The staff have agreed criteria for short term planning, but the format is left to the class teacher.

Key Issue 5 – ‘Develop a system for evaluation the effectiveness of major spending decisions.’

68. Progress has been satisfactory. Each autumn, data on school performance is presented to governors for discussion and evaluation against benchmarks for schools of similar type. A business excellence model for school evaluation is being introduced to augment the systems already in place.

Key Issue 6 – ‘Regularly monitor and review attainment in order to raise standards.’

69. Progress has been good. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating the schools’ performance and taking effective action are good. The headteacher and the deputy have developed a clear view of the school’s strengths and weakness, and along with the governors they have identified areas for improvement in the school development plan. The school’s results have been very carefully analysed against national and local results, and adjustments have been made to the curriculum. All coordinators have written targets for monitoring standards within their areas of responsibility, which are reviewed and evaluated annually. New targets are then negotiated on the basis of this review.

Key Issue 7 – ‘Set in place a system of teacher appraisal in order to redefine management and co-ordinator roles.’

70. Progress has been satisfactory. Roles have been redefined and clear job descriptions have been written for each co-ordinator. Targets are agreed for all teachers, and they are reviewed at the end of each year. However, although governors set annual performance targets for the headteacher and deputy, neither has a specific written job description.

Key Issue 8 – ‘Develop new initiatives that will increase the level of parental involvement in their children’s learning.’

71. Although progress at developing new initiatives is good, these have yet to have a significant effect on parental involvement in children’s learning. A Key Worker has been appointed to work with mothers and pre-school children and their families. This is part of the ‘Sure Start’ initiative for the Fairstead and Gaywood Estates. A small group of parents meet in the school on a weekly basis.

72. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is good, and this has significantly improved the quality of teaching since the previous inspection, where it was judged to be satisfactory. This important role is shared between the headteacher and her deputy, and it has had a direct effect on the quality of learning and on the good progress pupils are making overall.

73. Planning for school improvement is good, and reflects the aims of the school. There is a clear framework for development planning linked to the budget cycle. Effective systems are in place to monitor progress towards development priorities, and they culminate in an annual review and update of the plan. The governing body already has a good understanding of the quality of teaching and of the standards attained by pupils of differing abilities and ages.

74. The school plans its expenditure effectively, and the governors are well informed about finance. Principles of best value are satisfactorily applied through the use of cost comparators and effective tendering arrangements, which ensure competition. Governors make good use of the detailed analysis of assessment results, including comparisons with other schools, to target their spending strategically. Good quality data supplied by the local education authority helps governors make these comparisons. Governors use this information to make careful financial plans to secure future improvements in standards.

75. Day-to-day financial control is good. Information and communication technology is satisfactorily used for administrative purposes. Information given to governors contains sufficient detail and enables them to fulfil their monitoring role and to have an oversight of the school's financial position.

76. The headteacher very effectively co-ordinates provision for pupils with special educational needs. The school cares well for those pupils needing particular attention in their learning and behaviour. There is good and regular liaison between the special educational needs co-ordinator, classroom teachers, classroom support assistants and nursery nurse. The special needs governor is fully involved in this area of the school's provision. Resources for special educational needs are good. Specific grants received by the school for additional support for pupils with statements of educational need are being used to good effect for the desired purpose.

77. The school has a team of hard-working and committed teaching and non-teaching staff. At the time of the last inspection there was a good number of staff, but now the school is currently experiencing great difficulty in recruiting new teachers. Over the last year, the headteacher has had to take on full-time teaching duties in order to provide consistency in teaching and learning because of staff vacancies. The school is at present seeking to find yet another teacher, so that the headteacher can return to her full time duties. This uncertainty has not had an adverse effect on standards, but the situation is unsatisfactory as it is clearly placing undue pressure on the headteacher. Well-trained learning support assistants make a very positive contribution to pupils' learning, and give very good support to teachers.

78. Policies, co-ordination, and support for staff training are good. Good quality arrangements for professional development are put into practice consistently. This contributes significantly to school development and to raising staff morale. The school's performance management policy is in draft form, and satisfactory progress is being made towards fulfilling the requirements for performance management. Specific job descriptions are in place for all subject co-ordinators, but are unwritten for the headteacher and deputy. However, performance targets are set for the headteacher and deputy, and these are reviewed annually by the governors. There are no policies in place for the induction of new staff or newly qualified teachers.

79. Overall, the standard of accommodation is good. The school has the added benefit of a purpose-built nursery, which provides light, airy and spacious accommodation for the under fives. A well-equipped medical area affords good support for pupils, especially those with special needs. There are numerous, colourful, good quality displays around the school, and buildings and grounds are well maintained.

80. The range and quality of learning resources available to support the curriculum are satisfactory overall, and good for mathematics, science, music and design and technology. They are efficiently organised and easily accessible. A wide range of indicators shows that the school is effective. These include the quality of teaching, the improvement since the last inspection, the quality of leadership, and the good progress the pupils make.

81. Although unit costs are high the school gives good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

82. To sustain improvements, the headteacher, staff and governors should:

- raise standards in English, mathematics and science at Key Stage 1 by ensuring that the school's strategies for improving standards continue to be rigorously implemented, monitored and evaluated;
- seek ways to improve pupils' attendance;
- re-examine the strategies for attracting and retaining teachers, to underpin the good progress the school is making in securing higher standards;
- build on the existing initiatives for involving parents more closely, to provide better support for their children's education;
- ensure that the governors' annual report to parents meets statutory requirements.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	32
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3.1	31.3	53.1	12.5	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	15	104
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals		54

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1	12
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	12	73

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	25
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	15

Attendance

Authorised absence		Unauthorised absence	
	%		%
School data	5.4	School data	3.9
National comparative data	5.2	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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year:	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	20	16	36

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	15 [16]	15 [14]	17 [20]
	Girls	13 [16]	12 [16]	12 [14]
	Total	28 [32]	27 [30]	29 [34]
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	78 (70)	75 (72)	81 (74)
	National	84 (82)	85 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC Level 2 and above	Boys	15 [17]	17 [14]	17 [19]
	Girls	12 [16]	12 [20]	13 [12]
	Total	27 [33]	29 [34]	30 [31]
Percentage of pupils at NC Level 2 or above	School	75 (72)	81 (74)	83 (67)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	1
White	103
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes:

YR – Y2

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	5.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	26

Education support staff:

YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	162.75

Qualified teachers and support staff:

nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	58.75

Number of pupils per FTE adult	5
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FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	1999 2000
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	£
Total income	373645.00
Total expenditure	347645.00
Expenditure per pupil	2804.00
Balance brought forward from previous year	37000.0
Balance carried forward to next year	63000.00

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	130
Number of questionnaires returned	20

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	60	40	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	37	42	10	5	5
Behaviour in the school is good.	45	55	0	0	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	30	25	11	15	20
The teaching is good.	65	35	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	60	25	0	10	5
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	70	25	0	10	5
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	50	40	0	10	0
The school works closely with parents.	63	26	0	11	0
The school is well led and managed.	68	32	0	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	55	25	0	15	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	30	10	25	15

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

83. The provision for the foundation stage is a strength of the school. Very good teaching provides children with good opportunities to begin their educational journey. The picture presented now shows a vast improvement since the previous inspection, when teaching in the nursery was judged to be unsatisfactory. Now, children in the nursery and the reception class prosper under the very caring and effective guidance of dedicated and highly skilled teaching, which is well supported by an experienced nursery nurse and classroom assistants.

84. The purpose-built nursery is very well appointed, and the well-ordered atmosphere adds greatly to the children's feeling of security. The reception class is similarly well organised and every effort is made to increase the effectiveness of the children's learning. Many children begin with very poorly developed skills in speaking and listening, mathematics and personal independence. Assessment on entry confirms this. Despite the very good progress that has been made towards achieving their early learning goals, pupils starting in Year 1 have below average levels of attainment in communication, language and literacy, mathematics, and knowledge and understanding of the world. In the areas of creative, physical and personal development the children achieve the goals expected of them.

85. The curriculum is good. Teachers' planning is comprehensive and detailed, and is used effectively to improve progress and raise standards. The quality of learning reflects that of the teaching. All the children have a high commitment to whatever activity they engage in, whether learning in groups or through individual choice. Opportunities for independent learning are good. Children take full advantage of all the highly structured activities available to them, such as interactive maths, painting, construction kits and information and communication technology. Continuous assessment is very good, and teachers respond rapidly to support youngsters who work at different rates. This was noticeable in a large group mathematics lesson, where the teacher drew an answer from a child through skilful questioning, and used this opportunity to build the child's self-esteem as well as her learning. Also, the nursery nurse and classroom assistants are present during teaching sessions and often withdraw children to work in small groups to reinforce what has been covered in class. Assessment information also informs teachers where improvements may be made in future curriculum planning, to meet the needs of all children who work at different rates.

Personal, social and emotional development

86. The children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. They quickly develop confidence and grow in self-esteem, making very good progress in acquiring social skills. Children behave well and are aware of right and wrong. They are taught to be independent learners and to show respect for others by caring and sharing and through their willingness to take turns. For example, when preparing to go out and play they all help one another with their coats. The children's attitude to learning is excellent. They happily engage

visitors and share their games with them. When looking at books, two children overcame their shyness and readily talked about the stories they had heard. Even those children who lack language skills battle bravely to communicate and share. This was very evident when a young child was sharing her book with a visitor. The learning goals relating to personal and social development are generally achieved by most of the children by the end of the foundation stage.

Communication, language and literacy

87. Children are working very hard to overcome their early deficits in language and literacy. They listen very attentively and are very keen to offer their own ideas, even though many have difficulty in expressing them clearly. In one lesson, when a child sat on the 'chair', the teacher carefully helped him to construct a simple sentence, using prompts such as 'Can you think of a better word?' Other children are able to construct a sentence on their own, for example 'Gemma helped her daddy paint a chair'. This teaching builds up vocabulary and children's self-confidence, and enables them to make very good progress.

88. In both nursery and reception, children enjoy listening to stories, and readily share books with each other. They are very well supported by all adults, who tirelessly ensure that each children's efforts at communicating are valued. For example, children in the nursery use the 'shop' to good effect, practising their language skills in buying and selling, though when using the telephone they could think of nothing to say! As they become more confident they show a better command of language. One child described very clearly her enjoyment of the fair. 'The slides are my favourite and I like the caterpillar too, when they put the cover on it and it is all dark. It goes so fast, you think you are goanna' fall out'. Another child spoke about her favourite television programmes, though her speech was less distinct and controlled. Some children are good readers and are making very good progress. However, a significant number of are still at a very early stage of acquiring simple decoding skills. The teaching of reading is a high priority in the foundation stage, and phonics and the reading of whole words are regularly used to increase attainment.

89. The nursery teacher provides an interesting range of activities for teaching children to write their names. It involves selecting the initial letters, using fine motor skills in drawing round templates, and then painting the letter in three different colours. Finally, the children match these to their own names. Such enjoyable and varied teaching encourages positive attitudes to early writing. Throughout the school day children benefit from this form of highly structured and imaginative teaching, which is effective in raising standards. Despite making very good progress, a significant number of children do not achieve all of the learning goals relating to communication, language and literacy by the end of the foundation stage.

Mathematical development

90. The teaching for mathematical development is very good. All the staff give the children every opportunity to practise counting skills. For example, children count number of boys and girls at registration, as well as those having dinners or sandwiches. Children can express the idea of difference in quantities. One child said, 'I have more than him' when he compared the amounts of play dough each one had. This followed a very good lesson where the children had to compare the number of

pieces of pizza shared between two dolls. They also had to select the correct numerals for the pieces each doll had. During this lesson the teacher took the opportunity to use positional language such as 'next to' and 'beside'. The children are making very good progress in achieving their early mathematical goals. Nursery nurses and classroom assistants work closely with the teachers, and offer additional support for children with special needs.

91. All teachers have high expectations of the children and present them with challenging tasks, which are well matched to their individual needs. For example, the nursery teacher covered a number of objects with a cloth and withdrew one, and the children had to work out how many were left. This caused them to think carefully and many responded enthusiastically. The children make very good progress, but their language and reading deficit restricts the levels they achieve by the end of the foundation stage.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

92. Children's progress in their understanding of the world is very good. They know where to find everything in their well-ordered classrooms. When 'shopping', they understand the process of buying and selling very well. They try things on for size, give money, and wait for change. Scrutiny of the children's work shows how well they observe the natural world. Their study of mini beasts is particularly impressive. They carefully draw the creatures, and are helped to write simple descriptions about their finds. 'I found a woodlouse.' 'It was brown and has lots of legs' and 'I found a cuckoo-spit.' 'It was white and had a bug in it.' The teaching makes outstanding use of many cross-curricular links, in writing, counting, and observational drawing. The eventual outcome to this activity included a class poem on spiders. The children showed considerable skill in controlling a paint programme on the computer and produced very good pictures of spiders. The younger children in the nursery showed they could use the concept keyboard very well to control learning in alphabetical games.

93. The quality of work in design and technology is of a good standard, and children draw very good designs for wheeled toys. Festivals such as the Chinese New Year are celebrated, and are used to good effect to develop the children's awareness of the world around them. The children make very good progress, but their weaknesses in language and reading restrict the levels they achieve by the end of the foundation stage.

Physical Development

94. Provision for physical development is very good and the children reach expected levels for their age. During their physical education activities they distinguish between small and larger parts of the body, and can balance well on their toes, fingers, backs and bottoms. When finishing their warm-up they jump, jog, skip, hop and stretch well, and sit cross-legged and straight without being asked. They make good suggestions on how to form 'crawling movements' before starting, and are very focused on their activities. They also listen extremely well to instructions and behave in a very mature way.

95. In the nursery, even the youngest children show very good control when using large three-wheeled vehicles. In the confined space available to them they usually avoid collisions, and are well

aware of their own space and that of others. The class teacher interacts well with them during these activities. For example, she instructs children who are using scooters to alternate their pushing leg. They then show equal stability and control. Fine motor skills are developed well in the classroom, and children show good skills in cutting, and painting. They manipulate the smaller bricks in construction kits and build up houses and towers. The children make very good progress, and the majority achieve their learning goals by the end of the foundation stage.

Creative Development

96. Creative development underpins many of the children's other activities. They use their imagination to predict stories, to create role-play in dressing up, and to construct toys from recycled materials. They create castles and roadways in the sand and greatly enjoy painting, and can name the three primary colours. Music plays an important part in the curriculum and all have the opportunity to make their own music, using a wide range of musical instruments. There are some particularly impressive three-dimensional self-portraits which have been made from play dough. Children make very good progress, and the majority achieve their learning goals by the end of the foundation stage.

ENGLISH

97. Standards in English for pupils at the age of seven are below the national average in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Pupils enter Year 1 from the Foundation Stage with standards in these areas which are below the national average. By the age of seven they all, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress in developing the various English skills in relation to their prior attainment at the age of five. This is particularly commendable in the context of the school having a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and also having several pupils who have joined the school from elsewhere after the age of five.

98. The national tests in 2000 for pupils of the age of seven showed that standards in reading and writing were below the national average for pupils achieving Level 2 or above. Girls achieved less well than boys in writing and spelling. However, the standards in reading and writing were in line with the expectations for pupils in similar schools. In this, they were similar to standards in science but better than those in mathematics. For higher-achieving pupils obtaining Level 3 or above, the English results were much better than those in similar schools. Since 1997 there has been an improving trend in results in terms of those achieving Level 2 or above in English. This applies to all areas of English, but particularly to spelling.

99. The evidence of the inspection confirmed that standards in English are below the national average. This reflects the unusual composition of the current Year 2. This cohort has 85 per cent of pupils on the special needs register, with just over a quarter having full statements of educational need. However, standards in the current Year 1 are closer to the average for the age group, where significantly fewer pupils are on the special needs register or have full statements. The inspection did not show a significant difference in attainment between boys and girls.

100. By the age of seven, pupils learn to listen quite well, both to the teacher and to each other. This is

evident, for example, in the first part of literacy lessons when the teacher is addressing the pupils as a whole class, and she is able to hold their attention well, for example when telling a story. It is also evident in assemblies when many pupils are able to recap the message of previous assemblies, which shows that many are developing good listening skills. Speaking skills are less developed. Although several pupils can talk with reasonable confidence about their work, many pupils have a very limited vocabulary and a poor command of standard English for their age. Pupils learn to read with increasing fluency, but rarely with expression, and many can cope only with books which are relatively undemanding in terms of the age level of pupils. Several pupils are unclear about the distinction between fiction and non-fiction.

101. Pupils do an increasing range of writing as they move up the school, although writing skills are the weakest component of many pupils' basic English skills. Pupils do begin to describe what they have done at school, and they begin to write both factual accounts, for example of events that are important to them such as birthday parties, and also stories. Higher achievers develop an interest in evocative language, and this was seen in individual and group poems about the seasons and the weather, some of which were combined with art work. Higher achievers write in simple sentences, which become more accurate in their structure. They also learn to write different endings to a traditional story like 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', or retell the story from a different standpoint. This work shows more command of descriptive language with a wider range of adjectives. However, most pupils continue to make frequent errors in punctuation and in spellings of simple words, and many still do not write with a consistently accurate script.

102. The quality of teaching in English is always good or better. Lessons are always well structured, the teaching is lively, and teachers hold the attention of pupils when introducing the topic. They explain their objectives well, and question pupils effectively in order to test their understanding. These qualities were seen to particularly good effect in a Year 1 lesson in which the teacher used the story of the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff' to extend pupils' reading skills, their comprehension, and their ability to predict. Teachers match work appropriately to the needs of pupils, so that they make progress, as was seen in a Year 1 lesson in which the teacher based writing activities around the theme of 'The Three Pigs'.

103. The attitudes of pupils are good in lessons. Although often dependent on the teacher for reassurance and ideas, pupils concentrate well, both as a class group and when working alone.

104. Leadership in English is good. The English policy and scheme of work have been improved since the previous inspection, along with assessment and planning. Most importantly, the quality of teaching has improved, and therefore there has been good progress since the previous inspection.

MATHEMATICS

105. Standards in mathematics for pupils by the age of seven are below the national average. Pupils enter Year 1 from the Foundation Stage with standards which are below the national average. By the age of seven they all, including pupils with special educational needs, make good progress in developing the various mathematical skills in relation to their prior attainment at the age of five. This is particularly commendable in the context of the school having a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and also having several pupils who have joined the school from elsewhere after the age of five.

106. The national tests in 2000 for pupils of the age of seven showed that standards in were well below the national average, but in line with the results achieved in similar schools. Standards for pupils achieving Level 2 or above were well below average, and below expectations for pupils in similar schools. The proportion of pupils achieving Level 2B or higher was above the average for similar schools.

107. In respect of higher achieving pupils obtaining Level 3 or above, results were in line with those in similar schools nationally. Since 1997 there has been an improving trend in results in mathematics in terms of the numbers of pupils achieving both Levels 2 and 3.

108. The evidence of the inspection confirmed that standards in mathematics are below the national average. However, the current Year 2 has 85 per cent of pupils on the special needs register, with just over a quarter having full statements of educational need. Standards in the current Year 1 are closer to the average for the age group. The inspection did not show a significant difference in attainment between boys and girls.

109. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported, and have full access to the curriculum. They benefit from support in the classroom with the special needs teacher, and during separate lessons in the special needs room. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment, and are keen and enthusiastic about work in mathematics.

110. By the age of seven, pupils have a sound knowledge of place value to 100, but there was no evidence of their solving problems to 1000. They know the properties and names of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes very well, including that of a hexagonal prism. They describe them well, for example a sphere having one side and no corners, and a cone having one angle (point) and two sides. The pupils recognise simple fractions such as halves and quarters. They are secure in telling the time on the hour, quarter past, half-past and a quarter to the hour. The pupils are able to describe position well, and they understand the principle of symmetry satisfactorily.

111. Year 1 pupils were also working on shapes and were very knowledgeable about their properties. In another lesson, pupils were working very well in comparing the capacity of different containers and had to predict which held the most or the least. The scrutiny of work showed that pupils had covered a very wide curriculum on number. However, the demands of the number tasks were not always sufficiently challenging.

112. The quality of teaching and learning seen throughout the school is good overall. In the lessons seen the teachers' planning was clear and logical and well suited to the needs of all the pupils. The pupils caught the teacher's enthusiasm and thoroughly enjoyed what they were doing. Their attitudes to work were very good and they made good progress, as did those pupils with special educational needs. These pupils were always given every encouragement to succeed and they responded very well. The work challenged the pupils and ensured their interest. They focused very well on all the tasks they were set. In all the lessons seen the mental arithmetic sessions were very popular and pupils did their utmost to answer correctly and quickly. However, the analysis of the pupils' books revealed that work was sometimes untidy.

113. The teachers are very secure with the national numeracy strategy, which they apply to good effect, though on occasion they adapt it to give better support to their pupils. The teachers use a good range of mathematical vocabulary and this results in pupils being able to explain their work, using the correct terminology.

114. The main teaching activities involve pupils practising their skills, and in this part of the lesson teachers manage pupils and resources most efficiently. Teachers use informal observations and more formal assessment strategies to assess the pupils' attainment. Assessment is used appropriately to set challenging targets for pupils throughout the school.

115. Pupils' achievement is tracked very carefully and teachers have a very good knowledge of individual attainment. The mathematics curriculum has been reviewed and the role of the subject co-ordinator is enhanced by her experience. Standards throughout the school are rising, though they are still below the national average.

SCIENCE

116. At the end of Key Stage 1, the results of the teacher assessments of seven year olds in the Year 2000 show that the proportion of pupils achieving Level 2 or above was below the national average, but the number reaching Level 3 was close to the national average. When compared with that of schools in similar contexts, the proportion of pupils achieving Level 2 was in line with the national average, and the proportion of those attaining Level 3 was above the average.

117. The evidence of the inspection shows that attainment in science is currently below average. The proportion of pupils aged seven who are likely to achieve Level 2 is below average. This prediction reflects the unusual composition of the current Year 2. This cohort has 85 per cent of pupils on the special needs register, with just over a quarter having full statements of educational This is unusually high even for this school, where 45 per cent are on the special needs register and 16 per cent have full statements. At the time of the last inspection standards were broadly in line national expectations. However, standards in the current Year 1 are closer to the average for the age group where significantly fewer pupils are on the special needs register or have full statements. The inspection did not show a significant difference in attainment between boys and girls.

118. A particularly good feature of science is the way in which the subject is managed and the curriculum is constructed. There is good equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, including those with special educational needs. Very good use is made of classroom assistants to support pupils' learning, and it enables pupils to benefit from working in smaller groups.

119. Pupils with special educational needs are very well supported, and have full access to the curriculum. They benefit from support in the classroom with the special needs teacher, and during separate lessons in the special needs room. They make good progress in relation to their prior attainment.

120. Pupils at Key Stage 1 make good progress in developing skills of scientific enquiry and learn to make simple hypotheses as part of their work. This is because of the way in which teachers plan their

lessons and carefully identify what is to be learned. Good scientific habits are encouraged from an early age. Teachers try to ensure that the work planned is interesting and builds on pupils' natural curiosity about their environment. For example, pupils have a good understanding of different properties of materials, including those that are transparent, translucent or opaque, and were amazed to discover that some can be used to bend light to produce a spectrum of colours. They link this well to their own experiences of rainbows. Work in science is also well integrated with other areas of the curriculum. For example, pupils' mathematical skills of measuring help them record distances accurately when investigating forces, and recording tasks enables pupils to practise their handwriting.

121. There are good opportunities for designing experiments. For example, pupils designed a fair experiment to determine the distance travelled by toy cars as part of an investigation about forces. They varied the slope of the ramps as well as its surface texture. However, they understood they could change only one thing at a time in order to keep the tests 'fair'. Higher attaining pupils were able to measure the distances travelled by the cars, and could see a link between the distance travelled and the height of the ramp.

122. Pupils' attitude to work in science is very good. Pupils in all years show good levels of concentration. They are generally attentive in class discussions, and ask thoughtful questions. They share equipment readily, and treat it with respect. Standards of behaviour are high, and pupils respond quickly to teachers' directions.

123. In all lessons seen, the teaching was good. Good features of teaching which were frequently seen included:

- * good preparation and use of resources;
- * a good knowledge and understanding of the subject, with clear demonstrations and explanations;
- * a variety of activities to interest and stimulate pupils, well matched to their abilities;
- * good links to other subjects, such as literacy and numeracy;
- * good management of pupils by the teacher and classroom assistants, particularly when pupils are involved in practical activities.

124. All these features have a positive impact on learning, and help pupils of all abilities to make good progress in acquiring skills, knowledge and understanding. The teachers share the purpose of the lesson with pupils at the start of the activities, and link this with a reminder of what pupils had already learned in previous lessons. Good classroom routines and high expectations of pupils' behaviour result in a good working atmosphere in which pupils are able to learn without disturbance. The teachers' secure knowledge of the subject and good assessment of pupils' prior knowledge enabled them to set achievable challenges for all. Pupils responded well to these challenges and concentrated hard on their activities. Teachers make good use of the plenary session to consolidate through well-directed questions what the pupils had learned. Good attention is paid to literacy skills, and particular attention is given to developing key scientific vocabulary.

125. Leadership in science is good. The co-ordinators have a good understanding of science, and a clear vision for the development of the subject. A good curriculum has been built around the recent recommendations from the Qualification and Curriculum Authority. Considerable work has been

undertaken to improve the curriculum since the last inspection, and opportunities for pupils to investigate and experiment are clearly identified within planning.

126. Assessment is very good overall. The teachers keep detailed records which allow the progress of every pupil to be tracked carefully. They use assessment data very well to plan subsequent work and to alter the composition of groups within classes.

127. Resources are generally of good quality, and are sufficient in range and number to meet the needs of the curriculum. Pupils and teachers make effective use of the available resources, including fieldwork in the immediate environment. The use of information and communication technology in science is satisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

128. Standards in art and design for pupils are above national expectations by the age of seven in the areas of knowledge, understanding and practical ability. This represents good progress for pupils of all abilities, including those with special educational needs, in terms of their prior attainment when joining Year 1.

129. Pupils are inspired by the work of modern artists such as Kandinsky, Klee and Jackson Pollock, and carefully make their own paintings in a similar style. This is particularly effective in developing pupils' cultural awareness. Their ability to experiment with colour and shape is good, and they work in a range of materials such as tissue paper as well as paint. Particularly effective are the large 'windy rain' paintings, which pupils produce in the style of Jackson Pollock, showing careful use of colour, texture, and style. Pupils make effective portraits of each other, as well as still life drawings of objects such as teddy bears and natural objects such as flowers. The self-portraits are particularly effective. Here, pupils draw upon the work they have done on symmetry in mathematics, and produce two-tone symmetrical pictures of themselves, using paper, chalk, charcoal and mirrors. Following the visit to the school by an owl-handler, pupils are able to independently reproduce pictures of the owls from memory, showing an accuracy and attention to detail well above expectations for their age. Lower achievers require assistance in painting flower pictures, but are then able to select the appropriate colour and use the correct brush strokes. Pupils in Year 1 can produce 'colour washes' in autumn shades, which they use as interesting backgrounds for leaf prints of varying of shape and colour. Pupils in Year 2 are shown examples of wooden and pottery sculptures as a stimulus, before producing good quality clay sculptures of their own. Pupils also use computer software effectively to experiment artistically. For example, pupils produce pictures of different sizes, styles and colours, using painting software, and others produce self-portraits and 'splatter paintings'. The large class paintings of the 'seasons', complemented by poetry, are of a particularly good standard.

130. Only two art lessons were observed during the inspection. The quality of teaching in art and design is never less than satisfactory, and is good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and high expectations, which are conveyed well to pupils and so improve their learning. Teachers also highlight appropriate vocabulary and question the pupils well to help them reflect upon what they are producing. Pupils are encouraged to evaluate their work, and to identify ways in which it can be improved. Pupils enjoy their art and design, and this combination of good questioning, high expectations

and the emphasis upon improvement was seen to particularly good effect in a lesson which used the work of Kandinsky as an inspiration.

131. The art and design co-ordinator is relatively new in post but provides good leadership. She has a clear vision of the importance of art and design to pupils' social, moral, emotional and cultural development as well as to their academic achievement. Resources for art and design are good. Standards in art and design are now better than before, so there has been good progress in the subject since the previous inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

132. Standards for design and technology are satisfactory and are in line with national expectations. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection, where the subject was considered to be below national expectations in making and designing. This has changed considerably. Teaching now is fully conversant with all the requirements of the subject. There are areas particularly well developed in the foundation stage, where standards are above expectations. Early design skills are developed through activities such as the production of wheeled vehicles. Pupils in Year 2 are making their vehicles and evaluating them against their original designs. These activities involve selecting and adapting a range of recycled materials, and the pupils are showing a good understanding of the use of axles. They fix these firmly and then test them to see if they work effectively. In Year 1, pupils are constructing robots using two moving mechanisms. Pupils clearly understanding of the need for design, and all they do their best to make their designs as accurate as they can. They test them and evaluate how successful they have been. There is also in Year 1 a collection of simple puppets, which pupils are using for a puppet theatre.

133. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Of the two lessons seen, one was satisfactory and one was very good. Teachers have good subject knowledge. Their planning ensures that knowledge, skills and understanding are presented in a logical sequence.

134. They teach basic skills satisfactorily and make good use of available resources. They engage and sustain pupils' interest and enthusiasm and develop their creative skills.

135. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are thoroughly integrated into design and technology activities and receive the same curriculum entitlement as all other pupils. They make satisfactory progress.

136. The school has a satisfactory policy and scheme of work. This is a considerable improvement on the findings of the previous inspection report, when they were judged to be poor.

137. However, although design and technology lends itself to cross-curricular links, this is currently better developed in the foundation stage that it is at Key Stage 1. The range and quality of resources has improved and is now good

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

138. Owing to timetabling arrangements, it was possible to observe only a single geography lesson being taught in Key Stage 1. There was not enough evidence found during the inspection to make a secure judgement on standards in geography and history, or on the quality of teaching in these subjects. Evidence scrutinised included pupils' work, teachers' long-term and short-term planning, photographic evidence, current displays, and discussions with staff and children. The work seen shows that pupils do develop some basic mapping skills, when making maps in connection with visits to the Royal Estate at Sandringham and the area around the school. These maps, which include elementary keys, show pupils to be developing a satisfactory geographical vocabulary. Younger pupils also learn to find their way around the school, using vocabulary such as 'left' and 'right'. Pupils investigate the effects of the weather on people and their surroundings, and discover some of the basic differences between the town and the countryside. In history, pupils discussing their own lives, and study the differences between 'then' and 'now' in people's everyday lives.

139. Pupils carry out fieldwork in geography and history wherever possible and are encouraged to search for similarities and differences. Information technology is satisfactorily used to support work in geography. For example, pupils use a floor robot to develop their mapping skills when programming a floor robot to follow a prescribed route.

140. Pupils identified as having special educational needs are thoroughly integrated into geography and history activities and receive the same curriculum entitlement as all other pupils.

141. There is currently no co-ordinator for geography and history, due to staff shortages. At the time of the previous inspection standards in geography and history were judged to be in line with the expectations of seven year olds nationally, although there was inadequate guidance for teachers and there was a shortage of books in some areas of the geography curriculum. Improvements have been made in both subjects, and there are now good policies and a satisfactory curriculum in place. The range and quality of resources has also been improved.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

142. Information and communication technology is developing well in the school. Pupils make good progress, and attainment is in line with national expectations by the age of seven. This is similar to the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. Information and communication technology is fully integrated into other subjects in the school. Pupils have lessons in basic information and skills with their class teachers, after which they learn to use information and communication technology through the other subjects of the curriculum. The success of this strategy owes much to the leadership and management of the subject, which is good.

143. There were no opportunities to see direct teaching of information and communication technology during the inspection. Evidence was obtained by direct observation, from displays, from the scrutiny of pupils' work and teachers' plans, and through discussions with pupils and teachers. There is insufficient evidence to allow a judgement to be made about the quality of teaching.

144. Pupils manage the mouse with ease, know how to retrieve and save work successfully, and use information and communication technology for a range of purposes. In English, pupils achieve good standards in communicating and handling information through effective application of word processing skills. For example, pupils in Year 1 use commercial packages to type in simple text and change its colour, using the mouse. They sequence the story of 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears', positioning pictures in the correct order by using 'dragging and dropping' techniques. In Year 2, they continue to develop their word processing skills and know how to change the size of fonts, how to alter the quality of text by selecting bold, and how to drag text to new positions on the screen. More able pupils redraft their written work on screen, using the capital keys and full stops, and print the work without help from the teacher.

145. In mathematics, pupils use a wide range software to support most areas of their mathematical work, including shape, counting, data handling, matching and recognising numerals. For example, older pupils create databases to display information about their favourite toys. They print out graphs and use them to compare information and consider similarities and differences in the results. The youngest pupils successfully enter data to control a floor robot, and by Year 2 are able to program a device to follow instructions. They make the robot move set distances and back again, and record their instructions, using agreed notation

146. Learning is successfully extended in the majority of other National Curriculum subjects. For example, in geography, simulation software allows pupils to draw simple maps of imaginary towns. They carefully design their town by dragging and dropping icons, using a mouse, and add headings and comments before printing in colour. In art and design, pupils effectively experiment to produce pictures of different sizes, styles and colours, using a graphics and painting program, and others produce self-portraits and 'splatter paintings'.

147. Pupils' response to using information and communication technology is very good. They work co-operatively in pairs and can be trusted to use computers and printers sensibly. They are enthusiastic and work well together, settle quickly to their tasks, and are interested in their assignments. They are spontaneous in their support of each other, and competent users help those less confident to improve their skills.

148. Pupils with special educational needs work alongside other pupils, are very well supported, and make good progress in relation to their previous attainment. The school makes good use of tracker balls, touch screens and concepts keyboards for those who have coordination or communication problems. The school has sought help from the ACE Centre in Oxford to identify software which will extend the learning opportunities for these pupils, both in the classroom and in the special needs area.

149. There was no direct teaching of information and communication technology observed during the period of the inspection, but pupils were seen busily using the computers during many lessons. Teachers are secure in their knowledge of information and communication technology and how it enhances their subject, so their planning is good. Technical language is used appropriately by teachers, and supports the development of pupils' understanding. Pupils are very well managed, and their own enthusiasm is an important contribution to the good progress they make.

150. Assessment is satisfactory overall. Teachers use continuous assessment to support pupils' learning and plan subsequent work for them. A whole school system for tracking progress has recently been introduced.

151. The co-ordinator is very enthusiastic about the subject, and is working hard to set up new computers and provide help and advice to teachers to overcome software difficulties. She has wisely introduced the Qualification and Curriculum Authority guidelines, and is acutely aware of the need for appropriate software, peripherals and training to support developments within the subject.

152. Resources are generally of good quality, and are sufficient in range and number to meet the needs of the curriculum. However, the school is yet to be connected to the Information Superhighway.

MUSIC

153. During the inspection, only one lesson was seen. Overall, pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve standards normally expected of seven year olds. There was not enough evidence to enable a secure judgement to be made about the quality of teaching.

154. Provision for music is satisfactory. There is no specialist teacher, and class teachers take all music lessons. The single lesson observed was based on the nursery story 'The Three Little Pigs'. Both the planning and the lesson itself were good. The enjoyment came through the use of puppets to enhance the story, and the enthusiastic but well controlled use of the instruments. The pace was brisk and pupils were actively involved in the lesson. Pupils have a natural sense of rhythm and express this very effectively. Lessons are well planned and build on pupils' prior learning. The ethos promotes learning, and pupils are clear about the purpose of the lessons. Teaching takes place three times a week in fifteen-minute slots. This is an effective arrangement, since it gives young pupils a fresh and regular musical experience.

155. Music makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. It encourages them to reflect upon the mood of the music, to work together socially, and to listen to a variety of styles of music from different cultures and from well-known composers and performers. Music is also helping to develop pupils' skills in literacy through speaking and listening, and performing.

156. Co-ordination for music is effective and ensures that it is an enjoyable experience for pupils and teachers alike. The policy has been recently updated, and curriculum and planning is based on the Qualifications, Curriculum and Assessment Guidelines. These offer many ideas and good learning objectives. The teachers involve the pupils in as many ways as possible, including dance. The co-ordinator has devised a scheme of hymns for assemblies and songs which can be used as part of topic work. Resources are good and include a keyboard, a piano and an organ.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

157. Activities in physical education were observed in games, dance and gymnastics. Standards of performance, knowledge and understanding of pupils by the age of seven are above the expectations of pupils of a similar age nationally. This represents an improvement on the previous inspection, except in dance, in which standards were already good. When pupils join Year 1 their levels of physical co-ordination and skills are at or just below expectations for their age. The standards achieved by the age of seven therefore represent good progress in learning for all pupils, including those with special educational needs.

158. In gymnastics, pupils by the age of seven show a good awareness of the importance of safety when performing, and they learn how to stack away equipment carefully. The majority of pupils show a good ability to make controlled balances and movements on and off apparatus. When they hold a balance either on the equipment or on dismounting, they pay particular attention to features such as style and poise. In so doing they achieve standards that are higher than expected for this age group. In games, pupils learn to throw and catch with increasing accuracy. In dance, pupils achieve a good standard when creating a country-dance sequence, showing control and rhythm. They perform the dance as a whole class with enjoyment, demonstrating growing confidence and accuracy. They listen well to the teacher and refine their performance as they go along.

159. The quality of teaching in physical education is always good. Teachers question pupils effectively, for example to extend their knowledge and understanding about fitness and the importance on 'warming-up' activities. The lessons are short, but teachers' good classroom management is always good. It is complemented by clear instructions and good subject knowledge which are conveyed well to pupils, so that the time spent is always purposeful and leads to good progress in the acquisition of skills in the various activities. The teaching, which is lively and enthusiastic, motivates pupils and helps them to enjoy the lessons. Teachers give good feedback in gymnastics and dance so that pupils can improve their performance. Teachers have high expectations, and the activities are made progressively more challenging in order to increase the demands on pupils, for example when devising sequences of movement in gymnastics. Pupils are also encouraged to explore for themselves ways of moving along and over the apparatus, and most respond sensibly to this opportunity.

160. The co-ordinator provides good leadership in physical education. She monitors teachers' planning and resources, though not the quality of teaching. A good policy and an improved scheme of work are now in place to assist teachers, and this is helping to raise standards. The curriculum is also well organised, and provides for a regular programme of short activities on a daily basis. Because the overall standards have improved, there has been good progress in physical education since the previous inspection.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

161. Provision for religious education is satisfactory and standards are appropriate for the pupils' ages. This finding is similar to that of the previous inspection. The teaching of religious education takes place both in class lessons and in assemblies. These cover aspects of the Qualifications and Curriculum Assessment Guidelines and those of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus.

162. In Year 2, pupils have been learning about special religious books and have discussed the parable of 'The Lost Sheep'. They consider this to be a happy story with a celebration of joy at the end. They compare it with the parable of 'The Prodigal Son', where they identify a large element of suffering before the celebration of joy. Younger pupils compare Hinduism and Christianity and study important 'rites of passage' such as christenings. They understand the role of the priest and godparents, and the significance of the Bible, candle and water. By the age of seven, pupils' knowledge of Christianity has broadened as they learn more about the important festivals of Easter, Harvest Festival and Christmas. They know about the place of artefacts and symbols in relation to both Christianity and Judaism, and have a developing knowledge of rituals associated with religious celebrations.

163. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and plan interesting lessons with clear learning outcomes. Pupils are interested and generally maintain good levels of concentration. Pupils' attitudes to religious education are generally positive and behaviour is very good.

164. The curriculum is broad and balanced and meets the requirements of the local Agreed Syllabus. Provision for pupils' personal development is good. For example, school assemblies provide opportunities for pupils' personal development, particularly the spiritual, moral and social dimensions, and learning about other religions gives them opportunities for cultural development. Although there is a satisfactory range of books and artefacts featuring world religions.