

INSPECTION REPORT

COSTESSEY INFANT SCHOOL

Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120800

Headteacher: Mrs C M Forsyth

Reporting inspector: Mr Peter Howlett
23744

Dates of inspection: 4th – 8th June 2001

Inspection number: 195339

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
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	5 to 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Beaumont Road New Costessey Norwich
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Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr John Denby
Date of previous inspection:	2 nd June 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
23744	Peter Howlett	Registered inspector	Science, information and communication technology, physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
15181	Meg Hackney	Lay inspector		How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
30677	Peggy Waterston	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, mathematics, history, music, religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
31285	Timothy Andrews	Team inspector	English, art and design, history, special educational needs	
23044	Val Singleton	Team inspector	Geography, design and technology	How well are pupils taught?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is an average sized infant school for boys and girls aged four to seven years. Currently there are 219 on roll. Children can start school from the beginning of the academic year in which they are five. The children under five are in three reception classes, mostly organised by age. The school is situated in a residential area on the northern outskirts of Norwich. The school serves predominantly urban areas, where a significant number of households have some degree of social disadvantage. Pupils come a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and many come from relatively disadvantaged backgrounds. Approximately 17 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is slightly below the national average. Most pupils are of white UK heritage and only four pupils speak English as a second language. Attainment on entry is below levels expected nationally, and has declined since the previous inspection. About 37 per cent of pupils are on the school's register for special educational needs, for a variety of learning and behaviour difficulties. This is well above the national average and higher than at the time of the previous inspection. None have a statement of special educational need.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Costessey Infant School is a caring and welcoming school that provides a secure learning environment and a sound education for its pupils. Standards in literacy and numeracy are rising, albeit from a low base. Teaching and leadership and management are satisfactory, but have some shortcomings. The school uses its budget prudently and gives satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The behaviour of pupils and their relationships with one another are very good.
- Opportunities for pupils' personal development are good and provision for their moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The school looks after its pupils very well and its procedures for ensuring their welfare are very good.
- Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good, enabling these pupils to make good progress.
- The school fosters positive views among the parents.

What could be improved

- The quality of teaching, so that pupils' learning is more purposeful and challenging.
- Standards in English, particularly in writing.
- Standards in information and communication technology.
- Curriculum planning in subjects other than English and mathematics.
- Procedures for the assessment and monitoring of pupils' achievements and progress.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made steady improvements since the last inspection in June 1997 and has made satisfactory progress in addressing most of the key issues identified in the previous report. Appropriate attention has been given to addressing the key issue in relation to raising standards in English and mathematics. The performances of pupils in the national tests in reading, writing and mathematics have improved substantially since the very low results in 1998. The school has successfully developed opportunities for promoting pupils' personal development. Monitoring procedures have improved and these have led to some improvements in the quality of teaching and education. The school development plan is better and the impact of curriculum co-ordinators on the work of the school has improved. The school is soundly placed to improve further.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A
 above average B
 average C
 below average D
 well below average E
 lowest 5% nationally E*

This table shows that in the 2000 national tests at the end of Key Stage 1, results were well below the national average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. When compared to schools with a similar intake, results were also well below average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. Although the performance of pupils in reading and writing tests has been consistently well below the national average over the past four years, since 1998 the rate of improvement in results in all the national tests is better than the national trend. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in reading and writing are below those expected nationally, but they are in line for mathematics and science. However, a significant number of pupils only just reach the expected level and too few attain the higher levels. Given the standards on entry, most pupils achieve satisfactorily against their prior attainment in literacy, numeracy and science. Pupils attain at the expected level in art and design, and in physical education. Standards are below those expected in information and communication technology, design and technology, geography, history and music. It was not possible to judge standards reached in religious education, due to insufficient evidence. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress for their ages and abilities. The few pupils with English as an additional language make satisfactory progress.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils like coming to school. In lessons pupils listen carefully and show a willingness to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. The school is a quiet and orderly place. In lessons pupils know the routines well and settle down to work quickly. Pupils respond well to the very consistent behaviour routines around the school. They behave well at lunchtimes, break times and in assemblies.
Personal development and relationships	The personal development of pupils is good. Relationships within the school are very good. Pupils generally show respect for each other and their teachers. Pupils collaborate well in their learning and play and work together harmoniously.
Attendance	Satisfactory. The attendance rate is broadly in line with the national average.

This positive behaviour and relationships make a strong contribution to the quality of pupils' learning in the classroom.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 89 per cent of the 52 lessons observed. It was good or better in 29 per cent, but unsatisfactory in 11 per cent. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but with some weaknesses. It is better overall in Key Stage 1 than in the Foundation Stage, though unsatisfactory teaching was observed in both. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is satisfactory and sometimes good. This has led to higher standards being achieved. The unsatisfactory lessons generally were due to weaknesses in planning for the afternoon activities, and the low expectations for some pupils in these lessons. Pupils are well managed in all classes, and teachers have high expectations of the pupils' response and behaviour. This results in good learning and a positive response to tasks set. Pupils with special educational needs are taught effectively, enabling them to make good progress against their prior attainment. Homework is used well to support learning. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, when 30 per cent was judged unsatisfactory. The teaching of personal and social education is now a strength and pupils make good gains in their learning as a result.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Provision for personal and social education and extra-curricular activities is good. The school rightly gives high priority to teaching literacy and numeracy and the National Strategies have been successfully implemented. However, there are shortcomings in how the school plans work in other subjects at both Key Stage 1 and the Foundation Stage.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school has effective systems to identify, assess, support and monitor these pupils, which enable them to make good progress. Teachers plan appropriately to meet their learning needs.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The very few pupils in this group receive support in class from the teaching assistants and specialist help once a week.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	The school provides a strong foundation for pupils' personal development. It places high priority on pupils' social and moral development and promotes them well. Provision for cultural development is good and for spiritual development it is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a very good atmosphere of care and concern for pupils' welfare. Child protection arrangements are good. The school has started to develop a system for tracking pupils' progress through the school.

The school has worked hard to develop effective links with parents and provides a welcoming environment.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The school's ethos is good and the headteacher and staff successfully promote a calm and caring atmosphere. Effective steps have been taken to raise standards in literacy and numeracy, but the school is not rigorous enough in finding out what works well and what needs to be improved in other subjects.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. The governing body is supportive and plays an active role in the management of the school. It meets its statutory responsibilities, but governors are not sufficiently involved in monitoring the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has made a sound start in its analysis of performance data, but it needs to develop further measures to evaluate gains in pupils' learning over time. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating teaching in the core subjects are satisfactory but the school is not rigorous enough in its evaluation of what works well and what needs to be changed.
The strategic use of resources	Good. Finances are managed well. The school is efficient and ensures that its budget is spent sensibly. It has sound knowledge of the principles of best value and gives satisfactory value for money.

There are sufficient well-qualified teachers and learning support assistants. The accommodation is satisfactory overall. However, two outdoor classrooms are in need of modernisation, and there is no outdoor learning environment available for children in the Foundation Stage. Overall, there are adequate resources, except for information and communication technology.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school is well led and managed • Children like to come to school • Children make good progress • The good behaviour in the school • Teaching is good • The school expects their children to work hard and do their best • The school helps their children become mature and responsible • The school works closely with parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The range of activities outside lessons • Homework arrangements

The inspection team agrees with many of the positive views of the parents, but judges that there are some shortcomings in teaching and management that result in pupils not always making good progress in their work. Some parents have concerns about the range of activities provided outside lessons and homework arrangements. The inspection team judges that homework arrangements are appropriate and that the school, given the ages of the pupils, provides a good range of extra-curricular activities.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Most children's attainment on entry to the reception classes is below that expected in all areas of learning, with particular weaknesses in language and communication skills. By the time they enter Year 1, most children do not reach the expected standards in the areas of communication, language and literacy, or in knowledge and understanding of the world. However, some of the goals in mathematics are achieved, and children reach the expected standards in creative and physical development. Children achieve best in their personal, social and emotional development. Children's achievement in the Foundation Stage, in all areas of learning, is satisfactory, and sometimes good against their prior attainment.
2. Results in the 2000 national tests and tasks for Year 2 pupils were well below the national average in reading and writing, and in line with the national average in mathematics and science. When compared to schools with a similar intake, results were also well below average in reading and writing, and average in mathematics. There were particularly good gains in mathematics from the results in 1999. Results in reading and writing have been consistently well below the national average over the last four years, but have risen quite sharply since 1998. The performance of both boys and girls has improved. In the latest tests there was no significant difference in the girls' and boys' performance.
3. In reading, there was still a significant number of pupils working at level 1 or below compared with the national picture. In writing the difference was not so marked, although many only just reached the expected level 2. In mathematics, there were fewer lower attaining pupils than nationally. The percentage of pupils attaining the higher level 3 was close to the national average in mathematics and science, and below it in reading and writing. Standards in reading are generally too low and the potentially higher attaining pupils do not do well enough in reading and writing.
4. The targets set for the percentage of pupils attaining level 2 or above in the 2000 tests and tasks were 70 per cent in reading, 75 in writing, 60 in spelling and 85 in both mathematics and science. Although these were sufficiently challenging, they were exceeded in all areas apart from spelling. The school received a DfEE achievement award for improvement in the national tests.
5. Unpublished results for 2001 show this improvement has been sustained. Results in reading indicate more pupils reaching the higher level 3 and the school has exceeded its target for the percentage of pupils achieving level 2 or above in mathematics. Inspection evidence supports that standards in reading and writing are below those expected nationally, whilst attainment in mathematics and science is broadly in line with expected levels. However, there is insufficient evidence of pupils working at levels above those expected for this age. Given the below average standards on entry to the school, pupils achieve satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment throughout the key stage.

6. In order to address the weaknesses in reading and writing, the school has introduced a new phonics programme of work and a scheme to extend the language skills of the more able pupils. Elements of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being introduced into the reception classes and a number of literacy activities used with the lower ability pupils. These are beginning to impact positively on pupils' learning, and standards are seen to be improving in Year 1.
7. Pupils who have special educational needs attain standards which are satisfactory for their age and abilities. Observations in class, discussions with teachers and analysis of individual education plans during the inspection showed that these pupils make good progress in relation to their prior attainment. They achieve well when they are withdrawn for focused support, and teachers take account of the targets on their individual education plans when planning work in class, so that they can successfully complete the tasks set. They also receive good support from the teacher assistants during lessons. The very few pupils who have English as an additional language make satisfactory progress. They receive support in lessons from the teaching assistants and are taught by a visiting specialist once a week.
8. By Year 2, pupils' speaking and listening skills are generally satisfactory. Most pupils are confident in class oral sessions. They are not afraid to make mistakes when suggesting answers, and speak clearly and fluently. They also listen carefully. Reading skills overall are below those expected nationally. Most pupils read from texts accurately and, in general, with understanding. A weakness is that many tend not to self-correct. Nevertheless, pupils are acquiring sound strategies to improve their skills. The more able also independently use non-fiction books to support their learning. The standard of pupils' writing is inconsistent across the age range. By the end of Year 2 it is below national expectations, whereas in Year 1 a good proportion of work is moving towards the expected standards. In all classes, pupils are writing for a variety of purposes. This is due to the impact of the National Literacy Strategy and other school initiatives. However, weaknesses in handwriting inhibit pupils' attempts, and result in poorly presented work. Generally, pupils' grasp of spelling and punctuation is not significantly better in Year 2 than in Year 1. Nevertheless, good development in pupils' understanding of narrative, dialogue and poetry was evident.
9. In mathematics, by Year 2, pupils add, subtract and sequence numbers to 100, work with multiples of 2, 5 and 10, and measure in centimetres. They name two- and three-dimensional shapes and identify reflective symmetry. There is no evidence to indicate that pupils check their own work, nor do they use and apply their mathematical knowledge to solve problems. As a result, standards in these aspects of mathematics are lower than in the others.
10. Pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding are broadly satisfactory by Year 2. Pupils have a sound understanding of basic scientific facts. They know the dangers of mains electricity, can make a simple electric circuit to light a bulb, and know that some items are attracted to magnets. They understand the difference between natural and man-made materials, and between living and non-living things. They identify similarities and differences between animals and sort them by a variety of observable attributes. They have a sound understanding of different habitats. Pupils' skills in investigative science have improved, and are now satisfactory, because they have more opportunities to carry out experiments.

11. By Year 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding and use of information and communication technology are below expectations, because they have insufficient opportunities to develop their skills. They know how to switch on computers and load specific programs, but are less confident in saving or printing their work independently. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of the keyboard and use of keys, icons and tool bars. However, pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use simple word- processing tools to present and amend their work. They have limited experience of changing the appearance and layout of text. Pupils can enter data into a table and make simple interpretations of the results. However, they do not know how to plan and record sequences of instructions to control movement. They use programs to find out information, but their knowledge and understanding of the benefits of using information technology inside and outside school are below expected standards.
12. Overall standards in art and design and in physical education are satisfactory. In design and technology, geography, history and music, overall standards are below the nationally expected level, though pupils achieve satisfactorily in many of the aspects covered. There was insufficient evidence to form a secure judgement about standards in religious education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. From the time when pupils join the reception classes, most pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a good attitude towards school. This has been well maintained since the last inspection. The importance placed on the personal, social and health education programme is making a strong contribution towards helping pupils at the Foundation Stage to settle quickly into school routines. Most pupils are interested to learn and to be involved in a range of activities. In all classes most pupils are enthusiastic and keen to talk about what they are learning. Pupils understand the school's code of good behaviour, which is consistently promoted by the school, and they respond well to their teachers' high expectations.
14. The school is an orderly environment where pupils show respect and care for each other. In most lessons, pupils of all abilities participate willingly, but in those lessons where teaching is insufficiently challenging some of them lose interest and become restless. Many pupils are keen to answer questions and to contribute their ideas and observations. This is particularly evident in those lessons where the topic is well planned to interest and involve pupils fully in the activity. A good example was seen during a personal, social and health education lesson in a reception class, where pupils were excited by a story about the emotions and actions of children at a birthday party. The majority of pupils were keen and confident to contribute their own ideas and feelings about the characters and their different situations. Most pupils listen well to their teachers and to each other during lessons, and this makes a strong contribution to their academic and personal development.

15. Behaviour in lessons, in the playground, at lunchtime, and while pupils are moving around the school, is very good. This confirms the views of most parents. Through the school's positive ethos, pupils have a clear sense of the difference between right and wrong. They are very polite, and most are friendly and helpful to visitors. The personal, social and health education 'thinking skills' programme ensures that pupils have a good understanding of the way to treat others and the impact of thoughtless actions. Staff listen carefully to what pupils have to say, and this is reflected in the way pupils show respect for their teachers and for property. No evidence was seen during the inspection of any form of harassment between pupils, who feel safe and confident that any issue would be handled well by the school. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are happy and settled. There have been no exclusions during the last academic year.
16. Relationships amongst pupils and between pupils and all adults in the school are very good. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, work and play well together. In all classes pupils share resources willingly and sensibly. Most pupils are co-operative and involved when they are working with partners and in small groups. All pupils are familiar and confident with the daily routines of school. Pupils were seen supporting each other well in classrooms, at lunchtime and in the playground. The very good relationships within the school contribute very effectively to pupils' progress and towards raising standards.
17. Pupils' personal development is good and relates closely to the school's positive and caring ethos. Most pupils are keen to help and take responsibility for special jobs such as delivering registers, collecting money for biscuits, placing straws in milk cartons and clearing away resources. Pupils were seen confidently taking part in role-play during assemblies and contributing well to the dialogue. Since the last inspection the school has improved its provision for personal development through its personal, social and health education programme.
18. Attendance is satisfactory and unauthorised absence is below the national average. The majority of pupils are punctual. Registration and lessons start on time and there is an efficient and well-ordered start to the day. This has a very positive effect on pupils' attitude towards learning and on their progress and personal development.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. Of the 52 lessons observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory or better in 89 per cent. It was good or better in 29 per cent, but unsatisfactory in 11 per cent. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, but with some weaknesses. It is better overall in Key Stage 1 than in the Foundation Stage, although unsatisfactory teaching was observed in both. Teaching of English, mathematics and science was satisfactory and sometimes good. The three unsatisfactory lessons observed in the Foundation Stage were due to weaknesses in planning for the afternoon activities and in physical education. The three unsatisfactory lessons in Key Stage 1 were also due to weaknesses in planning for the afternoon activities, and to low expectations in a geography lesson. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection, when 30 per cent of lessons observed were judged unsatisfactory.

20. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and of all subjects in Key Stage 1, though there are some insecurities in music. The teaching of personal and social education is a strength. The literacy and numeracy strategies are taught soundly throughout the school, which has had a positive effect on raising standards in English and mathematics. The whole-school approach to teaching phonics is improving pupils' reading skills. A good emphasis on investigations and experiments is developing pupils' scientific skills well. Basic skills are also taught well to pupils with special educational needs in withdrawal groups, and in the additional literacy support groups. As a result, they make good progress. In lessons, the learning support assistants work effectively with pupils to improve their numeracy and literacy skills. The very few pupils with English as an additional language are taught by a specialist once a week, so they make satisfactory progress in learning English. The limited access to computers affects the achievement of pupils in developing skills in information and communication technology.

21. There are specific weaknesses within teachers' planning. The literacy and numeracy strategies are planned in detail, but are not consistent in style across the school, and some are unclear. A well-planned lesson, in Year 2 literacy, linked whole-class work and group work within the overall theme, so pupils' learning was reinforced. In most other planning, learning objectives are not focused tightly enough, so activities do not always help pupils move on sufficiently in their learning. Planning for the afternoon activities, particularly, often focuses on the learning of the group with whom the teacher is working, and activities planned for the other pupils are too often undemanding and lack a purpose or challenge. Also, sometimes, far too many different tasks are planned. For instance, in Year 2 physical education, there were too many activities for any to be refined. The planning for some subjects identifies the factual knowledge to teach, but does not always identify the skills that need to be taught in sufficient detail, as in Year 1 design and technology, so pupils did not learn how to make their moving objects in proportion to each other.

22. Expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and pupils respond well, so there is a positive learning ethos. Expectations of achievement are satisfactory in literacy and numeracy lessons, with some good examples of the work set being matched well to the different ages, abilities and interests of pupils, so all are challenged appropriately. However, it is in the afternoon activities, particularly, that expectations of what pupils can do and achieve, too often, are not high enough. Pleasant experiences are offered, but too many pupils are not having to think, sustain concentration or resolve a problem. Therefore, learning is restricted and this is unsatisfactory.

23. Teaching methods are generally sound. Learning objectives are shared with pupils at the beginning of lessons, so they know what they are going to do. Good use is made of role-play, drama, and music to develop pupils' thinking skills, as when Year 1 explored what it would be like to sail on 'The Mayflower'. By having pupils work in pairs, the teacher successfully developed their understanding of symmetry in Year 1 numeracy. A valuable discussion in Year 2 promoted pupils' understanding of sorting and classifying animals. When pupils are not actively involved, such as when Year 1 watched a video with no teacher intervention, or they sat for 30 minutes discussing 'land' and 'sea' around a world map, then interest wanes. Most teachers use the end of the lessons to share pupils' learning.

This is most effective when pupils have to report back about a specific aspect, which identifies how well they have achieved the learning objective. This was seen to good effect in literacy lessons. When teachers just hold up pupils' work on occasions, and no critical evaluation is made, then pupils are not helped to understand how they could improve their work.

24. Pupils are well managed in all classes and the very good relationships result in pupils' willingly undertaking all that is offered. Even when activities lack challenge, behaviour rarely deteriorates. Teachers and assistants provide very good role models; they have a calm, gentle approach and they respect what pupils offer. A Year 1 teacher's good sense of humour kept pupils interested and involved. Good routines are established in classes, so pupils know what to do, and there is a minimum of fuss when moving into pairs or groups, for example. Positive reinforcement is given for pupils' effort and achievement, though this can be too uncritical at times. Good management is a strength overall.
25. In the well-taught lessons, a brisk pace keeps pupils involved, motivated and working throughout. Some lessons lack a sense of urgency, with little excitement engendered in learning. All resources are prepared, so time is not wasted. Learning support assistants and parent helpers are well briefed, so that they offer good support. Assistants are used well in some lessons, even during whole-class sessions, when they sit with certain pupils to help them understand or keep them involved. In some instances, they were used well at this time to record which pupils responded, and how.
26. All teachers complete records regularly, but often these are not sufficiently evaluative or critical to help improve future planning. The methods used across the school are inconsistent, so it is difficult for teachers to build up an overall picture of strengths and weaknesses in learning. Some good questioning during the shared sessions at the end of lessons helps teachers assess how well pupils have achieved.
27. Homework is used well to support pupils' learning. All pupils take home a reading book regularly, practise spellings and take turns in borrowing mathematical games. Often, pupils have to conduct some simple research. Teachers have introduced home/ school activity books that indicate the targets the child has been set, so that parents can support them effectively at home. This is a good initiative.

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

28. The school meets its legal responsibilities to teach all the subjects of the National Curriculum and the locally agreed syllabus for religious education. The school provides a broad range of learning opportunities for its pupils, but there are still weaknesses in how subjects are planned and the school cannot ensure satisfactory balance in the curriculum. There has been some improvement in curriculum planning since the last inspection because the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been satisfactorily implemented; and planning for other subjects is being developed using the nationally recommended schemes, together with published schemes and commercially produced material.

29. The school has long-term plans in place for all subjects, but there is no overall curriculum plan to ensure coherence and to identify what is to be taught in each half term to each year group. Most subjects lack effective medium-term plans which identify what should be taught and how. So it is not clear how the school plans for the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in a progressive way. Teachers plan the week's work for each year group in some detail, particularly for English and mathematics, but objectives for lessons are not always identified, nor are the details of how learning is to be assessed. Other short-term plans, for science and non-core subjects, are less clearly defined. However, the school uses commercial schemes which it follows closely for several subjects, for example in mathematics, religious education, music and physical education. Provision for the non-core subjects, which are mainly taught in the afternoons, is not always satisfactory because of the frequent use of group activities rather than specific teaching. There is an over-emphasis on pupils working orally, or responding with creative activities, to the detriment of recording results and findings. The school lacks sufficient information and communication technology resources to enable it to teach the curriculum effectively.
30. Planning for progression in the Foundation Stage is weak, because it does not specifically address the stepping stones to the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. The guidance for the reception year from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies is used appropriately. However, planning for children's development in other areas is unsatisfactory. This is because the teachers plan activities which, though related to stepping stones, do not ensure children progressively build on their skills and understanding.
31. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have been successfully implemented and are having a positive impact on standards. There has been a steady rise in pupils' attainment in English and mathematics since the last inspection.
32. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. The school's policy reflects the requirements of the code of practice and those of the local authority. Early identification of pupils requiring support is made and teachers' planning, particularly in English or mathematics, acknowledges that they should on the one hand experience the full curriculum and on the other that their individual targets will be met. Groups of pupils are withdrawn from class when they are taught by assistants trained in the chosen support programme. These sessions take place outside the times of literacy or numeracy lessons and the teachers ensure that pupils make good the missed activity in which the whole class were engaged at another time. Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is satisfactory. The very few pupils in this group receive support in class from the teaching assistants and specialist help once a week.
33. The school's range of extra-curricular activities enriches and extends pupils' learning. Parents contribute a small payment for their children's participation in after-school clubs, which are run by outside providers. Pupils are able to take part in French lessons, football and games clubs, and visit the school's weekly bookshop. There is also a good range of outside visits. Pupils go to the local church and to the shrine at Walsingham. Good use is made of the facilities available through the Norfolk Museum Scheme, and pupils visit Sheringham.

34. All pupils have equal access to the curriculum and are valued as individuals. Much of the provision for pupils' personal and social education arises incidentally, but it is also incorporated within broad topics. Various aspects of personal and social education are addressed when teachers focus upon developing thinking skills, as pupils are gathered together in a discussion or drama group. Sex education and drugs misuse are incorporated within pupils' science topics on life and living processes.
35. Links with the local community are strong and contribute to pupils' learning. There is regular liaison with the school's two pre-school settings, easing children's transition to school. The community is well represented on the governing body. The police and the school nurse visit. The Friends of the school help to organise events, which produce additional funding to enhance school resources.
36. There are constructive links with the junior school and other partner institutions. Year 2 and Year 3 pupils exchange visits two or three times a year, so that the junior school is familiar to the transferring infants and the Year 3 pupils can keep in touch with their previous school. Graduate students from the teacher training college of the University of East Anglia have placements in the school, which also facilitates the training of adults from Norwich City College in such subjects as child care. The school's large hall is used for the local infant schools' annual music festival.
37. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good, and this element of education has been well maintained since the last inspection. The school makes satisfactory provision for the spiritual development of pupils, and a few examples were seen such as pupils showing amazement when they discovered that one of their tadpoles was turning into a frog. Although most teachers plan to extend pupils' spiritual awareness and deeper understanding through activities and stories, opportunities are often missed for them to experience a sense of awe and wonder for the world around them. During assemblies pupils join in willingly with prayers and hymns and they have the opportunity to listen to well-chosen recorded music. The programme of themes for assemblies provides a suitable stimulus for pupils' spiritual development and self-knowledge. During assemblies and in some lessons pupils are encouraged to reflect on issues and to think about their own lives. An example was seen during a reception assembly, of children in awe as they danced to music from Israel, and dramatised and reflected on the miracle of Jesus turning water into wine for the wedding guests.
38. Pupils' moral and social development is good. From their induction into school, they are consistently taught to distinguish right from wrong and their good behaviour reflects this. The personal, social and health education 'thinking skills' programme provides pupils with a firm foundation for good relationships and the opportunity to discuss a range of moral and social issues such as bullying and the effects of their actions on others. Pupils learn how to work well in pairs and in groups. Through the school's involvement in supporting a number of local and national charities pupils develop an understanding of those people who are not as fortunate as themselves.
39. The cultural development of pupils is good. Visitors into school make a strong contribution to the curriculum; these include a theatre group and music group, a children's author and a group of puppeteers. Pupils take part in May Day celebrations each year, and have been visited by a group of Morris dancers. They visit such places as Walsingham, and the local environment is used well as a teaching resource.

Multi-cultural education is promoted well through inviting visitors to the school such as an African visitor who joined pupils for an assembly to tell them about life in his village. Festivals of other religions are celebrated during assemblies, and these include the Jewish New Year, Diwali, Hanukkah and Sweden's St Lucia's Day. During some lessons pupils listen to stories which illustrate a multi-cultural society, but opportunities are often missed for pupils to look at the positive influences of other cultures.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. As at the time of the last inspection, all pupils receive very good pastoral care and support from staff. Pupils with special educational needs, and the few pupils with English as an additional language, are very well supported to enable them to play a full part in all educational activities. Very close attention is given to pupils' welfare, and parents speak highly of the care their children receive. This is one of the school's strengths. All adults in the school know pupils well and respond positively to their individual, physical and emotional needs. This makes a strong contribution to raising pupils' self-esteem and encourages them to make progress. The school's clear focus on personal and social education, which includes an element of sex and drugs education, promotes pupils' awareness of the need to care for themselves and for others.
41. Child protection procedures are very good, with issues and concerns being well monitored and recorded. The headteacher is the designated person with overall responsibility, and she has recently attended a training course. All staff, including lunchtime supervisors, are fully conversant with procedures through clear guidelines. All pupils have access to outside support agencies. Good personal records are kept up to date and are used well to support pupils' needs and to maintain contact with parents. All pupils have individual portfolios.
42. The health and safety policy is carefully followed. The caretaker and staff, with the assistance of the local authority property services, are vigilant in ensuring that potential safety hazards are monitored and recorded. A formal risk assessment is completed annually. Satisfactory arrangements are made for first aid, with medical boxes in each classroom and qualified first aiders on site. Regular fire drills are organised, when the building is evacuated and the alarms tested.
43. Satisfactory procedures are followed for monitoring and improving attendance. Registers are completed accurately and consistently, and recorded weekly on the school's computer software. Parents are encouraged with regular reminders to contact the school if their child is absent and most are vigilant in doing so. The school is well supported by the school attendance officer who visits on a monthly basis. Very good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour are followed consistently throughout the school. Parents are very satisfied with the way the school promotes good behaviour and encourages pupils to value each other. An appropriate system of reward and celebration is in place to encourage pupils to do their best both academically and socially.
44. All pupils are well supervised in the playground and good procedures are followed to ensure their safety and welfare. Through the school's close links with the pre-school group very good arrangements are made to support children and parents at the time of their induction into the reception classes. Pupils in Year 2 receive good support from teachers in preparation for their transfer to Year 3 at the Junior School.

45. The school has a comprehensive policy for assessment, though it is due for review in the light of the proposed updating of teachers' medium-term plans. Procedures overall are satisfactory, but assessment is not used well enough to inform teaching and planning. Teachers' assessment of pupils' learning is consistently completed for literacy and mathematics. Here, it is thorough and aimed at establishing clear objectives for pupils' learning. Teachers record the achievements of individuals, a group, or of the class against specific criteria. The results give a clear view of what might need to be targeted overall for the class. These targets are trialled appropriately for a year before they become a permanent part of planning, or are modified in the light of new information. The information helps in tracking and setting of personal targets for each pupil. However, the information is not stored centrally in such a way as to provide a profile of pupils' attainment and progress to date. It does not identify what pupils need to do to achieve the next level in the subject. Procedures are not yet as fully developed as this for science and information and communication technology. Formal assessment procedures have not been established in the foundation subjects and religious education.
46. As well as the formal collection of assessment evidence, an assortment of work is placed in a portfolio for each pupil, which builds up throughout their time at the school. It is meant to reflect their development and growth. However, the contents are not selected systematically or consistently. For instance, whole test scripts are kept whose information has in any case been stored elsewhere, and also, the evidence from class work is not assessed against National Curriculum criteria, or matching for all pupils. Therefore, despite the effort spent in assembling these, the portfolios are of little value. Their sheer bulk makes it difficult to extract any useful information. There is also a school portfolio, which consists of work that provides examples of work at different National Curriculum levels, to help teachers assess similar work. However, it is of limited value as there are no reasons given for the judgements reached, nor are there examples of diagnostic or other marking aimed at helping pupils improve. The school marking policy recognises that younger pupils need more one-to-one contact with teachers, whereas written comments are appropriate for older ones. During the inspection, however, scrutiny of pupils' written work revealed inconsistencies in the way teachers are implementing the policy, particularly in relation to written comments for older children.
47. The school's arrangements for the assessment of pupils with special educational needs are good. Links with the playgroup are used initially to identify children who might need support before they enter school. All children are screened early in their first term using the Bury Infant Check, which the local authority has adopted to identify those requiring support. Once a pupil is on the register for special educational needs, teachers draw up each pupil's individual education plan in consultation with the co-ordinator. A review of the individual education plans takes place each half term. The school maintains good links with, and regularly uses, outside agencies for specialist advice and support.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. The school has developed a good partnership with parents who speak very highly of the education provided. Although most parents support the work of the school well, there are some who do not assist with their children's learning at home. Most parents feel welcome in school and comfortable to ask questions or discuss any problem with staff. Most parents have signed the home/school agreement. During the inspection many parents were seen bringing children into school, looking at the displays of work in classrooms and speaking with teachers. The school has a large number of parents who help regularly in classrooms, maintain resources and assist when pupils are taken out on visits. In addition the 'Grannies and Grandads' volunteer group provide regular valuable help by listening to pupils read in classrooms. Good arrangements have been made this year for parents to join their children for a morning reading session once each half term.
49. Most parents make a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning at school and at home by listening to them read and assisting with homework topics. This additional help makes a positive impact on pupils' progress and achievements. For those pupils whose help at home is limited the school encourages a good relationship to develop between them and the 'Grannies and Grandads' group. The school pays good attention to involving parents of children with special educational needs, and they are invited to attend all review and assessment meetings. The Friends group, which consists of a small number of parents, is active and supportive. Through the organisation of fund-raising activities, the school is provided with a number of additional learning resources. An individual member of the Friends is assigned to each class to provide specific support for that particular group of pupils.
50. The quality of information which the school provides for parents is good. The majority of parents feel well informed about how their children are getting on at school. Regular newsletters, which contain helpful information about organisational issues and arrangements for school events and activities, are sent to parents. A large noticeboard in a central area contains relevant information of interest to parents and the local community. Class teachers provide clear details of topics to be covered for the term and these are sent home in pupils' reading bags. In addition, some teachers display helpful information about the curriculum outside their classrooms, for example, 'the letter sound we are learning this week', and 'ideas for extra literacy support'. All pupils have a home/school reading record and many parents are using these well as a communication between home and school. Most parents attend the regular open evenings when they have the opportunity to see pupils' work and to formally discuss their children's progress with teachers. The recent activity day organised for 'Froggie Frolic Maths', and a curriculum evening for literacy, received some parental support. In addition parents have a daily opportunity at the start and end of the school day to talk informally with teachers.
51. The annual reports for parents are satisfactory and most parents are happy with the amount of information they receive. Reports are hand-written and very personal to the individual pupil. They contain a satisfactory amount of information about general progress within each subject of the National Curriculum, but no indication of attainment against national standards.

Pupils are involved well and have the opportunity to write their own comments about what they enjoy learning and where they think they need to improve. All pupils receive a comment under the heading 'Next steps in learning' to provide an appropriate target. Parents are invited to write their own comments in response to the report, and many do so. The prospectus is attractive and provides good and helpful information about the school's organisation and the curriculum.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The overall quality of leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. There are some strengths in the management of the school but also some shortcomings. The previous inspection noted that the management and efficiency of the school required some improvement. Since then the school has made satisfactory progress in addressing the key issues, including those related to weaknesses in management.
53. The headteacher provides sound leadership in many aspects of the life of the school. The last inspection judged that the headteacher provided strong pastoral leadership. This remains so. The ethos of the school is good and the headteacher successfully promotes a calm and caring atmosphere. The school works hard to support its pupils and there is a strong commitment to maintaining a supportive and secure environment for pupils. The school's aims and values in this area are put into practice well, and parents have good confidence in the school. There is a clear emphasis on raising standards and the school has introduced a number of successful strategies to improve standards, particularly in literacy and numeracy. Teamwork is good and teachers work hard for the benefit of the pupils. For example, they have positive expectations of pupils' behaviour and esteem. They are successful in this; the school is an orderly community where instances of poor behaviour are rare.
54. Monitoring procedures have improved since the last inspection. Then the school did not have a systematic approach to monitoring standards and the quality of education provided. The school has made a sound start in its analysis of performance data. Target setting for pupils in English and mathematics is having a positive effect on raising standards. The school is developing systems for measuring and recording pupils' achievements from the time they start school, though it is not yet in a position to assess if pupils' results in the Key Stage 1 national tests genuinely indicate appropriate progress from assessments on entry. The headteacher has put in place systematic arrangements for monitoring and evaluating teaching in the core subjects. She observes all staff on a regular and frequent basis and provides them with appropriate areas for professional development. Similar monitoring arrangements enable curriculum co-ordinators in English, mathematics and science to promote developments in their subjects. The success of these arrangements can be seen in the steady improvement in the quality of teaching in these subjects since the last inspection. There has been some improvement in monitoring of provision in other subjects, for example in the quality of teachers' planning. However, there is insufficient rigour in this process and co-ordinators in other subjects have insufficient opportunities for classroom monitoring. In consequence, there are shortcomings in teaching and learning in many afternoon lessons when pupils are often offered too wide a range of activities. The school is not rigorous enough in its evaluation of what works well and what needs to be changed. For example, there has been insufficient evaluation of current practices in assessment, curriculum planning and teaching in the foundation subjects. In consequence, teachers' efforts are not always sufficiently focused on what is likely to have the greatest impact on raising standards.

55. Co-ordination of special educational needs is good. Procedures are well established throughout the school and result in these pupils making good progress. The governing body closely monitors the school's arrangements for special educational needs. Governors receive a formal report once a term and a nominated governor maintains a continuous informal link with the co-ordinator. The school satisfactorily manages the learning needs of those pupils for whom English is an additional language.
56. School development planning is satisfactory. It has improved since the last inspection, particularly in its identification of clear priorities and objectives. These priorities are appropriate and provide sound direction to the development work of its work. There is good consultation and staff make sound contributions to the development and implementation of the plan. Although it is a comprehensive document, its very detailed format makes it difficult for the governing body to monitor progress towards meeting its priorities. Whilst the school has put in place sound procedures to review progress, it does not yet give sufficient consideration to ways of evaluating the success or otherwise of planned actions. For example, it identifies appropriate actions and strategies to raise standards, but does not effectively measure success against targets specified in terms of pupils' attainment.
57. The governing body continues to give satisfactory support, and plays an active and purposeful part in the management of the school. The governing body is soundly organised and has well-defined and appropriate committees with clear terms of reference. Governors are knowledgeable about the school, and the members of the governing body are appropriately involved in planning, decision-making and policy making. The governing body plays a positive role in the financial development of the school, through careful planning and monitoring. All its statutory responsibilities are fulfilled. There is an effective working relationship between the management of the school and the governing body.
58. The school is efficient and manages its strategic resources well. It recognises the principles of best value in its purchasing. Money allocated by specific grants is efficiently spent for the good of the pupils. For instance, the school recognised a need for more assistants in support of special educational needs. A strong contribution to the efficiency of the school's financial management is made by the administrative officer, who works closely on a day-to-day basis with the headteacher. A significant improvement since the last inspection has been the adoption of computerised ordering and accounting procedures. Staff are regularly provided with updates of the budgets for which they are responsible and governors receive regular updates on overall expenditure.
59. Staffing levels are good. The school has a sufficient number of suitably qualified teachers to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum and keep class sizes below average. The school employs a good number of support staff, and teachers use them effectively to support pupils working in groups. Well-trained classroom assistants and support staff, together with parent volunteers, make a useful contribution to raising standards, especially of pupils with special educational needs. Staff development is sound, based upon balancing individual needs with those of the school development plan. There are appropriate arrangements to support newly qualified teachers and teachers new to the school. Procedures for the appraisal of staff are appropriate and the school has introduced the new performance management arrangements satisfactorily. However, information from performance management processes does not yet adequately inform priorities in the staff development programme.

60. The accommodation, set within a pleasant site, is satisfactory overall. However, there are weaknesses. The two outdoor classrooms are in need of modernisation and have an adverse effect on the quality of pupils' learning. There is no outdoor learning environment available for children in the Foundation Stage and this hinders their physical and creative development.
61. Overall, there are adequate resources appropriate to support pupils' learning in all age groups. They are mainly in good condition and easily accessible. Teachers make effective use of them. Those for special educational needs are good, and assistants have been specially trained to use them. The school has improved the provision of books since the last inspection. The library has a good and sufficient range of non-fiction to support topic work and complement the class libraries. A good start has been made in improving the provision of computing equipment in classrooms, but there are too few machines available to ensure pupils make good progress in this area of learning.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

62. In order to further improve standards, the headteacher and governors should address the following key issues:

i) Improve the quality of teaching in order to raise standards by:

- ensuring pupils' learning is more purposeful and challenging in all lessons, but particularly in afternoon sessions;
- making pupils' learning more purposeful by ensuring activities are clearly linked to learning objectives ;
- reducing the range of activities in specific lessons; and
- providing more challenge and pace in pupils' learning by ensuring activities take full account of the needs of more able pupils.

(See paragraphs 21, 22)

ii) Improve pupils' writing skills by:

- providing more opportunities for pupils to write in other subjects; and
- developing pupils' handwriting skills and ensuring that they apply these in their written work.

(See paragraph 77)

iii) Raise standards in information and communication technology by:

- planning opportunities for information and communication technology to support pupils' learning across the curriculum;
- improving planning to ensure progression in the development of skills;
- developing measures to assess pupils' attainment and monitor their progress against national standards; and
- improving the range and quality of resources.

(See paragraphs 116,117)

iv) Improve curriculum planning :

- at the Foundation Stage, by ensuring that activities are planned to address the stepping stones to the early learning goals in all six areas of learning; and
- in subjects other than English and mathematics by ensuring that medium-term planning clearly identifies what pupils need to learn.

(See paragraphs 29, 30)

v) Improve assessment procedures by:

- developing systems for measuring and recording pupils' achievements from the time they start school;
- improving ways of setting targets for pupils and tracking individual progress, linked to small steps within the National Curriculum levels; and
- improving how co-ordinators use assessment information to analyse the strengths and weaknesses in pupils' attainments in their subjects.

(See paragraphs 45, 46, 53, 54)

OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- Improve the outdoor learning environment for children at the Foundation Stage. (Paragraph 61)
- Revise the format of the school development plan so that the governing body can monitor the work of the school more effectively. (Paragraph 56)
- Improve how the school monitors its work and evaluates its actions. (Paragraph 54)
- Develop assessment procedures in the foundation subjects. (Paragraphs 29, 45)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	52
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	29

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
0	4	25	60	11	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	YR – Y2
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	219
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	37
Special educational needs	YR – Y2
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	81
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	3
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	14
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	24

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.0
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	35	26	61

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	25	32
	Girls	21	24	25
	Total	45	49	57
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	74 (64)	80 (72)	93 (83)
	National	83(82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	28	31
	Girls	21	24	23
	Total	42	52	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	69 (77)	85 (82)	89 (84)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	218
Any other minority ethnic group	1

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes**Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y2**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7
Average class size	24.3

Education support staff: YR – Y2

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	140

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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.

Financial information

Financial year	1999-00
	£
Total income	405571
Total expenditure	412743
Expenditure per pupil	1877
Balance brought forward from previous year	7299
Balance carried forward to next year	127

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	219
Number of questionnaires returned	130

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	75	22	2	0	1
My child is making good progress in school.	55	42	1	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	51	45	0	0	4
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	36	54	9	0	1
The teaching is good.	62	34	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	47	47	4	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	72	24	3	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	55	43	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	42	50	7	1	0
The school is well led and managed.	56	40	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	56	38	3	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	29	47	12	0	2

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

63. At the time of the inspection there were 66 children in the Foundation Stage, taught in three reception classes. Most children start school at the beginning of the year in which they are five. Children born in the summer can attend part time in the autumn term. This year, 12 pupils began school at the beginning of the spring term. The statutory baseline assessments are administered within six weeks of children entering the reception classes and some parents are able to share pre-school reports with the school. The school also uses a recognised infant check. In addition, parents are invited to complete a statement about their child before entry to school. These arrangements mean that the school has sound information upon which to base the children's early learning experiences. Useful profiles, containing annotated examples of each child's work, are maintained. Standards of attainment on entry are currently below those expected nationally. Children's gains in their learning are satisfactory, overall, and sometimes they are good. Those with special educational needs receive good support and achieve well in relation to their prior attainment. This is a similar picture to that seen during the previous inspection.
64. The classrooms are large and have been organised to make good use of available space, but the carpet area in one room is too small for children to be taught effectively and in comfort. The lack of a suitably equipped outdoor learning area restricts children's opportunities, especially for physical development and imaginative play. The staff have worked hard to make the environment bright and welcoming, and children are introduced to the routines and expectations of the school in a warm and sensitive manner. The teacher and classroom assistants work well together and provide appropriate activities and experiences for children working towards the recommended early learning goals.
65. Teaching is satisfactory overall and sometimes good. However, three lessons were considered unsatisfactory, because the activities in which the children were engaged lacked a sufficiently clear focus to enable them to progress. Planning for children's learning does not always focus clearly on moving them forward in their skills, knowledge and understanding towards the early learning goals. As a result, children's progress is sometimes slower than it should be. This lack of a clear focus in the planning also means that accurate assessments of children's progress cannot be made, so as to ensure that the next stages in their learning build upon what they know, understand and can do. The school is fostering good links with parents. The children take books and mathematical games home to share, and clear guidance is given to parents and carers about how to help their children at home.
66. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable about the needs of children in the Foundation Stage and manages the department efficiently. She ensures good liaison with pre-school settings and appropriately involves parents in their children's learning. Provision in the Foundation Stage requires further development so that it is seen as a separate primary school stage rather than simply as the reception part of the infant school.

Personal, social and emotional development

67. The personal and social development of nearly all children meets expectations by the time they are five. Teaching in this area is good. Teachers and learning support staff place considerable emphasis on the development of personal and social skills so that children are enabled to make the most of the learning experiences they are offered. Social skills are developed well through role-play and drama, by the example the staff set the children, and by the efforts that are made to foster caring for others and consideration for the needs of all. The children are forming good relationships with their peers and with adults. They listen to instructions and are patient when listening to each other, co-operating well in groups. Their attention to tasks is well sustained when they are working in supervised groups but concentration is less good when they are engaged in independent tasks. Children treat property appropriately, following well-established routines when settling to work and in tidying up at the end of lessons.

Communication, language and literacy

68. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy, but the majority are unlikely to achieve many of them. They enter school with speaking and listening skills which are often below those which are expected. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory overall and sometimes it is good. In a good lesson seen, the teacher shared an amusing story which the children enjoyed and in which they recognised rhyming words. The related group activities had been planned with clear objectives, enabling children to make good progress at appropriate levels for their abilities. Teachers use fun activities such as word and letter sound recognition games well, enabling children to extend their sight vocabulary and recognise sounds within words. Where teaching has shortcomings, the pace of the lesson is slow and activities lack a clear focus for learning. Teachers plan using the National Literacy Strategy guidance for reception classes. Although children are beginning to recognise letters by sound, they do not yet readily turn to phonics as a strategy to help them to read. Some children have a developing sight vocabulary, while others guess at words using picture clues. They enjoy listening to stories, looking at books and sharing them with their parents and other adults. Some children are able, with help, to write a few words.

Mathematical development

69. Children's progress towards the achievement of the early learning goals in mathematics is satisfactory, and some of the goals in this area of learning are likely to be achieved. All the teaching seen was satisfactory. Teachers use opportunities such as calling the register to involve children in mathematics for real purposes. They use practical activities and mathematical games well to help children to develop mathematical concepts, but most children lack confidence in numerical activities. They are able to use number names to count in order, in unison, and most children recognise and order numbers to ten. They are developing their ability to count the correct number of objects reliably. The older children count in fives and tens.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

70. Children's opportunities for development in this area of learning are too limited, and insufficiently focused, to enable them to achieve the early learning goals. Overall teaching in this area is satisfactory but there are shortcomings. Where teaching is not satisfactory it is because, although children are provided with a variety of experiences, these are not always well enough matched to previous experiences to help them make gains in their learning. The children have regular opportunities to play in the sand tray, use construction equipment or engage in role-play. However, these activities often do not have a specific purpose, nor are they used to any extent to develop language. Children engaged in focused activities, such as painting or modelling with malleable materials in response to a story, tend to finish 'their work' quickly in order to do something they prefer, rather than try hard to achieve worthwhile results. This is because teachers praise whatever children produce and thus they are not challenged to do their best. Expectations of what children should be able to do are not always high enough. Children have ample opportunities to use small tools, such as scissors and paintbrushes, and to shape and join the materials they are using. They use their senses to look at and discuss foods, working together to make sandwiches and cook buns. There are few opportunities for them to use computers. There are examples of good practice in this area of learning. As part of the early morning routine, the class discusses and completes a weather chart. This provides an opportunity for listening to, and using, spoken language and develops awareness of what is happening around them. Children had been on a listening walk in the school grounds and returned to draw pictures and write a few words about what they had heard.

Physical development

71. Most children will achieve the early learning goals in this area. However, there are shortcomings in provision and in teaching so children do not have sufficient opportunities to make good, rather than, satisfactory progress. The school lacks an outside learning area in which children have opportunities to use a range of large and small equipment to travel around, over, under and through, or to take part in directed or imaginative play. When the weather is suitable, groups of supervised children take turns in riding various wheeled vehicles in the playground for about 20 minutes per week. They do this safely, having the control to avoid crashes.
72. Teaching in this area of learning is satisfactory. There are two designated physical education lessons per week in which children have the opportunity to use gymnastic equipment and to engage in activities such as aiming bean bags at objects from progressively greater distances and throwing and catching. When teaching is good the children are challenged to improve their performance and demonstration is used well to make coaching points and enable children to evaluate what their peers can do. In an unsatisfactory lesson, children's activities lacked the kind of control which enables them to develop their capabilities. Children move sensibly around the school and use the play areas showing some awareness of space and of each other.

Creative development

73. Displays of children's work indicate that they are likely to achieve most of the early learning goals. Specific teaching in this area of learning was not seen during the inspection, although teacher-directed activities were planned and available. Children have ample opportunities to explore colour, texture and shape in two- and three-dimensions. They often use malleable materials, such as playdough, in response to stories or as part of a mathematical activity. Work on display shows they have painted pictures of animals and added materials such as fur to enhance the effect. Some children had painted daffodils from observation, and self-portraits had been completed and labelled. Patterns from other cultures had been printed on white cotton, using paint and patterned wood blocks to make repeating patterns. Children had made simple musical instruments during an exploration of sound. They like to join in with some of the words during singing assemblies. There are few opportunities for children to use their imagination, other than in a rather limited way in the role-play areas.

ENGLISH

74. The results of the national tests for seven year olds show that since 1997 the standards pupils achieve have been well below the national average. In 2000, these results in reading and writing were well below both the national average and the average of similar schools. However, since a low point in 1998, there has been a steady improvement against national figures. The results of this year's tests would suggest that results will be further improved, particularly in the percentage of pupils reaching the higher level 3. Inspection evidence supports this. However, though improvement have been made, standards in reading and writing are below those expected nationally, which was also the judgement in the previous report. Baseline results indicate that standards on entry to the reception classes are lower than those of earlier intakes. So, pupils are achieving satisfactorily in relation to their prior attainment throughout the key stage.
75. The speaking and listening skills of pupils are generally in line with those expected. Most pupils, including those with special educational needs, are confident in class oral sessions. They are not afraid to make mistakes in suggesting answers, when they speak clearly and fluently. They also listen carefully, often using others' answers to improve their own. In a Year 2 lesson, for example, pupils suggested descriptions of a snake's movements, progressing from slipping to sliding to slithering. More able pupils communicate well with each other in collaborative work. In Year 2, they showed good understanding and use of special terms, such as 'glossary' and 'blurb', when discussing books together.
76. Pupils' reading skills, overall, are below those expected nationally by the end of Year 2. However, the steps taken by the school to improve standards, in the use of grand-parents for shared reading, and by introducing good commercial schemes particularly to strengthen phonics, are beginning to succeed. Most pupils read from texts, matched appropriately to their attainment levels, accurately and, in general, with understanding. A weakness is that many tend not to self-correct as often as might be expected. Nevertheless, in lessons observed, pupils were acquiring sound strategies to improve their skills. In Year 1, for instance, they recognised and remembered how various combinations of letters produced the same sound. The more able were also able to explain their own strategies for spotting 'tricky' words.

In Year 2, most pupils made successful attempts at unfamiliar words using their accumulated phonic skills. The more able also independently used non-fiction books to support their learning, as seen in science. Pupils throughout the school show positive attitudes to reading. Most read regularly at home and are enthusiastic about books, not only when explaining their preferences, but also in describing what they have enjoyed recently.

77. The standard of pupils' writing is inconsistent across the age range. Overall in Year 2, it is below national expectations, whereas in Year 1 a good proportion of work seen was close to the expected standards. In all classes, pupils write for a variety of purposes. However, weaknesses in handwriting inhibit pupils' attempts, and result in poorly presented work. This also has a detrimental effect on other subjects such as science or history, in which pupils need to record their work. The school has introduced handwriting sessions in an attempt to rectify the problem. However, although the standard in the practice books is noticeably better, it has not been successfully transferred to the main areas of pupils' writing. Nevertheless, examples were seen of above average extended writing in Year 1. In their work on 'The Park of My Dreams', for example, pupils showed a relish for interesting turns of phrase and vocabulary, such as, 'This bakery is no ordinary bakery'. They also extended their sentences and developed them into sequences, in retelling the biblical story of Jonah, for example. Overall, simple punctuation was used appropriately, and basic vocabulary spelt correctly. Pupils use their phonetic skills to produce acceptable spelling of more adventurous vocabulary. In Year 2, the proportion of good quality writing seen was less than in Year 1. Generally, pupils' grasp of spelling and punctuation was not significantly better than in Year 1. Nevertheless, good development in their understanding of the balance between narrative and dialogue was evident in group work on the story 'Not Now Bernard'. In clearly written questions, linked to the story, pupils also showed a good understanding of the rationale behind its humour. Some effective use of information and communication technology was seen in pupils' work. In a poem on journeys, for instance, the writer was able to emphasise its form in an effective way, using short sentences on separate lines, which enhanced his description of claustrophobic feelings on a tube train.
78. Analysis of pupils' work indicates that they make at least satisfactory progress. However, in many lessons observed they did better than that due to their good attitudes to work; they respond quickly to instructions, and have a high level of self-discipline. They show a keen interest in their work and sustain their efforts over comparatively long periods of time. Pupils are also good at collaborating to move their work forward and they do not waste time waiting for their teachers to come and help them. The establishment of the National Literacy Strategy, and teachers' secure knowledge and use of the activities associated with it, are also major factors in promoting pupils' progress. Pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. Teachers plan well-differentiated work for them and make effective use of classroom assistants in literacy sessions. A number of initiatives have also been adopted for giving support in particular aspects, using modern programmes in phonics, for example.

79. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. It was good in about half the lessons observed. Otherwise it was satisfactory, except in one lesson where, although the teacher's work with her group was good, other children were not engaged in activities with sufficient educational emphasis. This highlighted a weakness in teachers' planning, when support activities provided for pupils with special educational needs take most of the teacher's attention to the disadvantage of the rest of the class. Generally, however, teachers' planning for literacy is satisfactory and they share the aims of lessons clearly with pupils. They give instructions and conduct oral sessions in appropriate language. Questioning round the class includes all pupils and incorporates the right challenges for individual abilities. Teachers also judge the timing of lessons well, getting the right balance between whole-class and group or individual work. Lessons are mostly conducted at the right pace. Teachers clearly understand the principles of the literacy strategy and apply them effectively. Sometimes, however, the shared sessions at the end consist too much of general praise of individuals' or group work without the opportunity for them to assess and describe their feelings about each other's efforts.
80. Teachers' own assessment of pupils' work is thorough and encompasses the attainment targets of the National Curriculum. Some results are recorded and used to inform future planning. All pupils have target books for literacy, which are reviewed half-termly. Examples of each pupil's work are collected in portfolios, but these are not assessed using National Curriculum levels, nor dated, so that it is difficult to judge what progress has been made. Assessment procedures are not consistent, so that it is not easy for the progress of individual pupils or that of a class to be monitored, or for attainment to be linked to national levels.
81. Resources for English are satisfactory, in mainly good condition and of an appropriate range for the age and abilities of the pupils, including those with special educational needs. The school has recently improved the reading areas of classrooms and allocated finance for updating book boxes. Pupils' experience of English is enriched by class visits to the school library and a bookshop held at the school every week, where they can buy books. Visits from authors and theatre groups are also organised. The recently introduced 'thinking skills' programme has valuable elements of drama and role-play, which help to promote pupils' speaking and imaginative skills.

MATHEMATICS

82. Standards of attainment have improved since the last inspection. In the 2000 national tests for seven year olds, the percentage of pupils reaching both level 2 and above, and the higher level 3, were close to the national average. These results indicate a continuing improvement in standards in mathematics since 1998. Unpublished results for 2001 show this improvement has been sustained and the school has exceeded its target for the percentage of pupils achieving national age-related levels. Results for boys and girls are broadly similar. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress. The few pupils for whom English is an additional language make satisfactory progress.
83. The inspection findings indicate broadly satisfactory levels of attainment in mathematics and these are comparable with the national tests. Pupils' attainment in mathematics when they enter Year 1 is below average. Pupils therefore make sound progress to reach the expected level by the end of Year 2.

However, there remains a significant proportion of pupils who only just reach this standard. Through the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy, teachers are developing good teaching methods that are applied effectively throughout the school.

84. Pupils' learning is appropriately developed using tasks and activities of a practical nature. Written evidence of progress and attainment is, therefore, rather limited and consists mainly of undated worksheets. However, an examination of pupils' written work shows that pupils' experiences reflect the numeracy strategy's teaching programmes and objectives well. By the age of seven, pupils have experience of adding, subtracting and sequencing numbers to 100, working with multiples of 2, 5 and 10, measuring in centimetres, naming and describing two- and three-dimensional shapes and identifying reflective symmetry. However, there is no evidence to indicate that pupils organise or check their own work, nor do they approach problems associated with number, and standards in these areas are below those expected.

85. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall, and sometimes it is good or very good. Teachers' weekly planning is detailed and identifies activities appropriate for three levels of ability within the class. In the best lessons, teachers share objectives for the lesson with pupils and assess at the end whether these objectives have been met. The structure of lessons follows the suggestions included in the numeracy strategy, but sometimes the mental activities, and the main introduction to group work, are too long to sustain pupils' concentration. Demonstration by pupils is often overused, so that the pace of lessons is slowed and those pupils not actively involved become bored. Recent developments in resources, such as individual whiteboards and number fans, were not used extensively enough. This is unfortunate because such aids enable all pupils to be actively involved in the lesson, and show the teacher how well all pupils are learning. Group activities are well organised and contain tasks which are appropriate for pupils' abilities. Tasks sometimes contain a degree of challenge, such as when Year 1 pupils investigated the possible distribution of passengers between three vessels. Teachers have good relationships with their pupils, manage groups well, and sometimes have the confidence to use humour to engage pupils fully in their learning. In a very good Year 1 lesson, where the capacity of different containers was compared, pupils were engrossed in the tasks throughout the lesson because the activities were relevant and fun. Pupils respond well to teachers' questioning and to the tasks they are set, but they are not always challenged to give of their best. Pupils have a tendency to rush their work, rather than take appropriate pride, because teachers praise whatever pupils produce. When questioning is good, pupils demonstrate an ability to explain the strategies they are using, indicating a clear understanding of certain concepts. Learning support assistants make a valuable contribution, because they clearly understand the part they are to play in the lesson, know the pupils well, and have good relationships with teachers and pupils.

86. Formal assessments are administered at the end of units of work so that teachers can monitor progress and are able to plan their next lessons appropriately. The use of regular assessment to check if pupils are meeting the learning objectives, and to set challenging targets, requires further development.

87. The subject meets the requirements of the National Curriculum and has good breadth and balance. The co-ordinator's knowledge and enthusiasm for the subject are conveyed well to both pupils and staff. Her monitoring and evaluation of the effects of the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy are leading to improvements in teaching and learning. She effectively fosters the involvement of parents in their children's learning, through the development of a mathematical games library and well-focused homework activities. The range of resources is good and easily accessible. Management of the subject is good.

SCIENCE

88. Standards at the end of the key stage are broadly in line with those typically found nationally. The proportion of pupils reaching expected standards is similar to that found nationally but the more able pupils are not sufficiently stretched. The proportion of pupils achieving above expected levels is less than the national average.
89. Teacher assessments of the attainment of Year 2 pupils in 2000 judged that the proportion of pupils reaching level 2 or above was close to the national average, but that the percentage achieving the higher level 3 was below average. Inspection findings confirm that standards of attainment of the current Year 2 pupils are broadly in line with expected levels. However, there is insufficient evidence of pupils working at levels above those expected for this age. These judgements are similar to those made at the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress.
90. Pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding are broadly satisfactory. Pupils have a sound understanding of basic scientific facts across the range of the science curriculum. This is a similar picture to the last inspection. Pupils in Year 1 have an appropriate understanding of some of the properties of materials. For example, from their investigations on the absorbent properties of materials, they decide what materials will keep their teddies dry. They know that objects are made of different materials and can classify objects that float and sink. Pupils in Year 2 know the dangers of mains electricity, make a simple electric circuit to light a bulb and know that some items are attracted to magnets. They understand the difference between naturally occurring and man-made materials, and living and non-living things. They can identify similarities and differences between animals and sort them by a variety of observable attributes. Most pupils can explain the basis for their specific groupings, giving appropriate reasons. Pupils have a sound understanding of different habitats.
91. Pupils' skills in investigative science have improved since the last inspection, because they have more opportunities to undertake investigations and develop scientific skills of predicting, investigating, observing, measuring and recording. The weakness lies in the methods of recording used because there are insufficient examples of written accounts. Pupils have a sound understanding of the need for making a test fair and understand the importance of 'keeping things the same'. They can make predictions and test out their ideas in groups. However, pupils have limited scientific vocabulary and find it difficult to describe how to plan and carry out investigations and explain their results.

92. There has been an improvement in the quality of teaching and learning since the last inspection. Teaching is consistently satisfactory and this accounts for pupils' steady progress. Lessons have clear objectives and teachers often make good use of a 'planning board' to share ideas with pupils. The pace of lessons is satisfactory and teachers' questioning is often good. Teachers manage pupils well, which ensures pupils are interested and keen to learn. They listen and behave well. They work well individually and in small groups. Teachers plan opportunities to develop pupils' investigative skills more effectively than at the time of the last inspection. There is an appropriate emphasis throughout the school on developing pupils' scientific knowledge and understanding through practical investigations. They gain understanding through discussions, observations and investigations. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, good cross-curricular planning enabled pupils to combine their work on science and design and technology effectively as they investigated the effects of their different sails on the movement of their boats. This works well for most pupils, and lower attaining pupils in particular benefit from this approach.
93. However, there are still some shortcomings, particularly in how teachers plan and organise lessons. Insufficient attention is paid to providing tasks that challenge the more able pupils. Pupils generally are expected to undertake similar tasks and activities. Sometimes teachers have too many activities from different subjects taking place at the same time. For example, they organise lessons so that one or two groups of pupils are doing science activities while the rest of the class carry on with activities in other subjects. This is not an effective approach because the attention of the teacher or classroom assistant may not be focused sufficiently on pupils working on science-related activities. Teachers' expectations of their pupils in terms of providing written accounts of their investigations are too low. The school misses many opportunities to use the subject to contribute to developing literacy skills in writing and in use of scientific language. Analysis of pupils' work shows that recorded work at the beginning of Year 1 is mostly pictorial. As pupils progress through the key stage, there is insufficient improvement in the quality and quantity of written work.
94. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The co-ordinator, with the support of a science curriculum team, has taken a number of appropriate steps to improve provision. This has resulted in steady improvements in management procedures and in outcomes, most notably in greater consistency in teaching and more opportunities for pupils to develop their investigative skills. There are effective arrangements for monitoring the work of the school through class observations and analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning. This has led to the science team being able to identify areas for development, such as teaching pupils to record results in tables and graphs. Science contributes soundly to the development of numeracy through the use of measurements and the recording of data. However, there is limited use of information and communication technology to support science, especially in the areas of presenting and handling data. The science curriculum is broad and balanced and its scheme of work provides appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum. Sound joint planning in year groups ensures parity of experiences across parallel classes. However, revision of planning in line with national guidance and detailed planning for each term to ensure that pupils' skills are systematically built upon, have only just begun.

95. There are weaknesses in the assessment procedures. The school uses a checklist of key skills as a basis for monitoring pupils' progress, but it is not wholly effective because it is not detailed enough and there is not consistent practice across the school. There is not a portfolio of examples of work, assessed against national attainment targets, to enable teachers to make more accurate assessments. Marking of pupils' work seldom sets clear targets for further improvement. The school does not use assessment information to set learning targets for pupils or set end of key stage targets for each cohort. Resources are adequate and are well organised and accessible. Teachers make very good use of the school grounds and wildlife area and other local facilities such as woods, river and play park as learning resources.

ART AND DESIGN

96. It was only possible to observe two lessons in art. However, displays of pupils' work, usually in support of another subject, and some work of individual pupils suggest that, as in the last inspection, attainment meets national expectations.
97. Pupils are good at exploring ideas, whether for decoration or to represent real objects. For example, in a display of bags made by Year 1, pupils used decoration thoughtfully to complement and suggest the use to which the bag might be put. In Year 2, following a discussion on the texture and colouring of animals' covering, pupils made effective attempts to portray their own choices of skin, fur or feathers using simple drawing and colouring techniques. They showed well-developed knowledge of their materials' properties, and care in the selection and blending of colours. Pupils also showed good investigation of materials in a project to make pizzas as a collage. The best were able not only to reproduce the three-dimensional aspects of the pizza but, through choice from a range of fabrics, which they then cleverly assembled, also to suggest the colour and consistency of the ingredients.
98. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in one lesson and unsatisfactory in the other, due to a slow-paced introduction, lack of clear objectives, and only four pupils being involved in the actual task set. Overall, teachers give pupils a broad experience of the approaches to and the processes of art. They encourage pupils to make simple preliminary plans for a project, where appropriate, and include simple printing processes in the activities. As a result, pupils of all abilities take an interest in art. In drawing, for instance, they try their best, concentrate well, using a continuous line, and there is little meaningless scribble. They observe their subjects carefully and closely, as for example, when Year 1 pupils drew good likenesses of plants on their 'seed packets'. Teachers are very positive in their response to pupils' efforts, but little critical evaluation occurs in order to encourage pupils to achieve even better results. Little three-dimensional work is evident. Although some work in clay was seen during the inspection, pupils found difficulty in getting good detail and proper proportion into their models of totem poles.
99. The art co-ordinator is enthusiastic and knowledgeable about her subject. Although there are no formal monitoring procedures, she has a positive influence on staff planning and choice of activities, through adopting a pro-active approach in which she raises issues with them. Resources are adequate, though the school recognises the need to acquire good quality reproductions of famous paintings.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

100. Due to timetabling arrangements, it was possible to observe only two lessons in design and technology. Judgements were taken from a scrutiny of the displays in classes and around the school, teachers' planning, and a discussion with teachers and pupils. There was no evidence of pupils' designs or written evaluations.
101. Standards by the end of Year 2 are below those expected nationally, because the curriculum is too narrow and the emphasis on group work means less time is available overall for the subject. Although there is some evidence of the skill acquisition, design, making and evaluation elements of the subject being addressed over time, few projects involve all elements, so that pupils do not have the opportunity to experience the whole process often enough. However, the project planned for Year 2 this term indicates that all elements will be included in the task to make a home for a minibeast.
102. Most work is based on paper or card, and food technology. Standards in these areas are in line with those expected and pupils achieve at least satisfactorily, and sometimes well. Teachers place an appropriate emphasis on teaching joining techniques, and specific skills such as how to make a flap, pop-up, slider or a simple lever. Pupils learn to cut, stir and weigh ingredients. Year 1 pupils designed and made shopping bags, choosing their own joining techniques. No evaluation was evident, to help pupils make better decisions next time. Year 2 pupils disassembled a pizza box to explore how it opens, closes and the overall pattern of its net. This helped them to effectively make their own. In one class, the products were finished well, with carefully painted and labelled lids. The pupils selected toppings for their own pizza, but did not evaluate the results in writing. Pupils have opportunities to experience malleable materials, as seen when Year 1 made Jonah, or a whale, from playdough. They use construction materials, but not always for a challenging purpose. Year 2 pupils practise using a given pattern to construct a geared model. There is not enough work with wood, or where pupils design and make powered or moving vehicles.
103. In the two lessons observed, the quality of teaching was satisfactory, although there were weaknesses. In both lessons, there were several different activities taking place. In Year 1, pupils were shown a moving picture and their task was to make one themselves based on the story of Jonah and the whale. A good introduction enthused the pupils and they fully understood all the tasks to be covered. No designing took place, however, apart from the pupils creating their own interpretation of the sea and sky on a prepared background and foreground. The group that was drawing, colouring and cutting out the features that would move, such as the boat, Jonah or the whale, had no opportunity of using measurements to ensure that the finished picture would be in reasonable proportion. In Year 2, the teacher took a group of pupils carefully through the process of making a lever and then supervised them making their own. She gave clear instructions, taught them how to use the tools properly and safely, and used the correct vocabulary. Pupils successfully made a lever, but did not record what they had done.
104. The co-ordinator has recently reviewed the scheme of work, and prepared a comprehensive plan, which will help pupils to develop progressively their skills, knowledge and understanding in the required elements. Pupils' evaluation of their products needs to be included, however. As yet, there are no medium-term plans identifying how the scheme will be delivered through which activities.

Assessment procedures are not consistent across the school; there are some detailed records, but they are not designed to be done effectively and easily, and to be informative about what pupils need to do next. The plan is to include assessment opportunities within the new scheme, which should be helpful. The co-ordinator, who is knowledgeable and hard working, has been given time next term to monitor teaching, so she can identify strengths and weaknesses in order to raise standards in the subject. In the previous inspection, standards were judged to be in line with the expected levels, so they have fallen in some aspects of the subject. However, the school is well placed to address this and to make the necessary improvements to teaching and learning.

GEOGRAPHY

105. Due to timetabling arrangements, it was possible to observe only one lesson in geography. Judgements are based on a scrutiny of the displays in classes and around the school, the school's planning, and discussions with teachers and pupils.
106. Overall standards are below those expected by the end of Year 2. Inspection evidence indicates that pupils are gaining some geographical skills and they achieve satisfactorily year on year. Year 2 pupils remember making a plan to show their journey from home to school, and Year 1 drew a simple map of the local park after a visit there. They drew an imaginary island after hearing the story of 'Katie Morag', but did not label the geographical features. Year 2 pupils use pictures, books and videos appropriately to find the differences between hot and cold deserts. Geographical knowledge is unsatisfactory. They know the four points of a compass, but not where they are in relation to each other. Although pupils can name a range of different countries, they do not have much knowledge about how these may vary or what might be there, though they draw on their knowledge of the book 'Handa's Surprise' to surmise what life may be like in her village. The co-ordinator explained how, after pupils made a critical evaluation of the playground, parents have been involved in implementing some of the suggested improvements. Little recorded work is evident and no writing seen. Numeracy skills are used to good effect, as when pupils conducted a tally of traffic along the main road and then recorded the results in a graph.
107. The quality of teaching in the lesson observed was unsatisfactory as the work was undemanding and pupils were not actively involved enough. Pupils initially enjoyed placing play figures on a world map to illustrate 'land', 'sea' or 'island', but lost interest as the challenge was not increased. Teachers organise visits to local shops and visitors talk about their work, such as fire-fighters, police and postal workers. Artefacts, stories and pictures from other countries contribute to pupils' multicultural development, as did a visitor during assembly who described his village in Africa.
108. The headteacher is co-ordinating the subject until a new appointment has been made. She is reviewing the scheme of work and policy statement at present, whilst teachers are trialling units from the national guidance. Assessment procedures are in place, but not very helpful as they are linked to one criterion only and do not give a clear starting point for the next topic.

Also, as geography work at present is taught as part of a broad theme, there is not a clear focus on progressively developing pupils' skills and knowledge. The lack of recording work means pupils have difficulty in remembering what they have done. The situation was the same at the previous inspection, although standards were seen then to be broadly in line with national expectations. The new scheme of work should provide the opportunity to address the weaknesses in planning and assessment.

HISTORY

109. Discussions with pupils, an analysis of their work, discussion with the subject co-ordinator and observation of a lesson indicate that standards are below those expected. However, the school provides the range of experiences expected by the National Curriculum and, given the low attainment on entry, pupils achieve satisfactorily. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the emphasis on role-play and oral work and make good progress in understanding past events.
110. Only one lesson was observed; in this the quality of teaching was good. In this Year 1 lesson about 'The Mayflower', pupils contributed their ideas about the ways of life then and now, to build up a picture of the differences in travelling by sea, for example, how long and how comfortable journeys might be. They made good progress in understanding the uncomfortable conditions of the ship by sitting very closely together and swaying violently to simulate the effect of its rocky motion. They also considered ways that the travellers might set about making a home in an undeveloped land and what they would have needed to take with them. For a homework task, Year 2 pupils used their investigative skills in an activity shared with their parents. They compared photographs from five dates in the 20th century recording what people wore, noting the differences over the period of time. In conversation, however, pupils had not retained enough knowledge of the past to illustrate an appreciation of chronology, neither could they accurately remember significant people or events from the periods they had studied. Little written work is completed to reinforce pupils' knowledge.
111. Teachers have a good knowledge of the topics in the school's scheme of work, which has good links with the National Curriculum. In response to comments of the last inspection, the co-ordinator has planned for better continuity from reception, for instance in developing 'My Home' into 'Me and My Area' in Year 1. She has also emphasised the importance of pupils' developing investigative skills, again highlighted in the last report, by enlisting parents to share their knowledge in certain work taken home. The co-ordinator has also adopted elements of the national guidance, and plans to consult staff over extending it further. Assessment criteria for history are attached to the medium-term plans, but mainly take note of what has been covered. This is recorded in the marking of work, but the pupils' achievement relative to national levels is not, which makes it difficult to measure their progress.
112. The school's resources for history are good. A well-trying, commercial course book is used and there is a good range of original artefacts and other material to support topics. In addition, the school subscribes to the local museum scheme which gives access to resources off site. The whole school visits Gressenhall as part of its study of Victorian schools. The staff plan to visit Norwich castle, which has been closed for lengthy refurbishment, with a view to re-assessing its potential as another off-site resource.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

113. Standards of attainment are below those expected. At the time of the last inspection, pupils were reported as making satisfactory progress, and standards were judged to be in line with national expectations. This is no longer the case. In recent years, due to budgetary restraints, the school has not sufficiently improved its provision for information and communication technology and current provision is less than that typically found.
114. By the age of seven, pupils' knowledge and understanding and use of information and communication technology are below expectations, because pupils have insufficient opportunities to develop their skills. Year 2 pupils know how to switch on computers and load specific programs, but are less confident in saving or printing their work independently. Most pupils have a sound knowledge of the keyboard and use of keys. They use the mouse and keyboard functions competently and show sound familiarity with the icons and tool bars on the screen. Year 1 pupils write simple text and use the shift, delete and spacebar. However, Year 2 pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use simple word-processing tools to present and amend their work. They have limited experience of changing the appearance and layout of text and their knowledge of how to change font, colour and size of letters is unsatisfactory. Year 2 pupils can enter data onto a table to create a pictogram and can make simple interpretations of the results. A simple art program is used effectively to draw designs. Pupils have limited understanding of using information and communication technology to explore what happens in real and imaginary situations. Year 1 pupils have a basic knowledge of everyday devices that can be controlled by giving signals or commands, and have been introduced to ways of controlling the movements of floor devices. However, Year 2 pupils cannot plan and record sequences of instructions to control the movement of devices on computer screen or floor. They use programs to find out information about places in the world and to look for meanings of words but their knowledge and understanding of the benefits of using information and communication technology inside and outside school are below expected standards.
115. Teaching was satisfactory in the two lessons observed. In both lessons, teaching was purposeful and conducted at a brisk pace. Both teachers made good use of their knowledge and expertise to provide clear explanations to pupils, sharing the learning intentions of the lessons. Good practice was seen in a Year 1 class where the teacher had a good balance of instruction, demonstration and explanation, combined with sufficient opportunities for pupils to demonstrate what they had learnt. Pupils enjoyed making the floor device move across the carpet, showing positive attitudes and keenness to learn. In a Year 2 lesson the teacher gave a clear demonstration how to enter data into a table and effectively demonstrated how information can be shown as a graph. On other occasions, when pupils were observed using computers during class time, most worked soundly individually or in pairs showing appropriate concentration and perseverance. They show respect for the equipment, take turns and support each other well. However, such opportunities are not always satisfactory as pupils do not always receive sufficient support. They are frequently left to work at their own pace without appropriate support or teacher intervention. Pupils do not always make sufficient progress because the teachers' attention is directed to supporting other class activities. In addition, computers were often not in use during the inspection, although they were switched on.

116. There are shortcomings in teachers' planning. It lacks sufficient detail and does not provide for the different abilities of pupils. Teachers plan a limited range of activities for all pupils but there is little consideration to matching these to key objectives. Pupils do not sufficiently build upon their skills in a way that gets progressively harder. Teachers find it difficult to deliver the planned curriculum to all pupils, due to lack of specific teaching time and insufficient up-to-date computers. They plan limited opportunities for pupils to use information and communication technology to support pupils' learning in mathematics, science and aspects of English. Across the school there are inconsistencies in opportunities for pupils to use computers and in how teachers record pupils' progress.
117. Management of the subject is satisfactory. The school has identified the subject as an area for development. Out-dated computers have only very recently been replaced with a modern machine in each classroom. However, it is difficult for teachers to ensure sufficient access for pupils with the current insufficient number of computers in each classroom. The co-ordinator is enthusiastic and has a clear view and understanding of what needs to be done to raise standards. He takes an active part in leading in-service training and supporting colleagues. Written guidance provides support for teachers to plan lessons in year groups, so that pupils in parallel classes receive a similar entitlement. However, the school has yet to complete modifying its scheme of work in the light of national guidance. In consequence, planning is insufficiently focused on improving skills in ways that gets progressively harder. The co-ordinator undertakes some monitoring of teaching and learning but the monitoring of pupils' work is not rigorous enough. Assessment practices are improving as teachers undertake regular assessments of what pupils can do and understand. However, assessment procedures remain unsatisfactory because there are no effective whole-school systems to monitor pupils' progress over time.

MUSIC

118. At the time of the last inspection, standards in some aspects of music were found to be below expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. Evidence from this inspection is taken from observations of four lessons and from a whole-school assembly; it indicates that standards overall remain much as they were, but the school has satisfactorily addressed the previously identified weakness of a lack of opportunities to compose.
119. Singing in assembly, when there is a lively piano accompaniment, is a particular strength. Pupils enjoy this weekly occasion, joining in tunefully and with a good sense of rhythm. They sing the words of a variety of hymns and songs from memory, which enables their concentration to be on the tune and upon appropriate posture.
120. The school uses a published music scheme as the basis for all its music lessons. The use of the scheme is enabling teachers, none of whom have musical expertise, to approach the subject with greater confidence. The scheme's lesson plans are closely followed; this tends to slow the pace of lessons but ensures that they contain an appropriate balance of performing, composing and appraising skills, and listening.
121. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. In one lesson, in which the quality of teaching was good, pupils had the opportunity to use simple home-made instruments, such as bottles of water and tins containing dried pulses, to compose sea music. Pupils co-operated well with each other in order to create effectively the sound of waves on pebbles.

In another lesson pupils were able to identify representational sounds within music and to use untuned instruments to experiment with making similar sounds. A Year 2 class experimented with rubber bands and boxes in order to develop an understanding of pitch and the variations that the use of different types of strings provides. Teachers manage the lessons well, using a good range of resources and providing pupils with opportunities to develop their musical understanding. Pupils enjoy the lessons and make sound progress.

122. The school has a combined library and music room. This large space facilitates group work and opportunities for experimenting with sound and composition. There is a good selection of instruments which are well organised and accessible. The co-ordinator manages the subject satisfactorily and leads whole-school singing well.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

123. The school has maintained the sound standards of attainment since the last inspection. The performances displayed by pupils are typical of standards found nationally.

124. Pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their skills and performing simple actions with increasing control and coordination. They have a sound understanding of the effect of exercise on their bodies and of the need for safety. Year 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their games skills and many show good achievement in dance and movement. In dance they work in groups to explore and perform basic actions in response to different musical stimuli. Some pupils show good imagination in their interpretation of the movements of animals. Pupils respond imaginatively, varying the dynamics, speed direction and levels. Year 1 pupils demonstrate appropriate skills in sending and receiving balls and quoits. They learn different ways of throwing a ball and develop appropriate positions to catch and throw. They apply these skills successfully in the context of simple group activities. Pupils co-operate well with each other. They make appropriate efforts to improve their performances.

125. Teaching is satisfactory overall. The quality of teaching and learning shows improvement since the last inspection but some shortcomings remain. Lessons are appropriately organised and teachers' planning is satisfactory, clearly identifying what skills pupils are expected to learn. Teachers manage their pupils well and pupils listen to instructions attentively and respond promptly. Clear explanations and effective use of pupil demonstrations help pupils improve their performances. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, pupils demonstrated the importance of keeping an 'eye on the ball' when catching in a careful and sensible manner. All lessons make appropriate physical demands upon pupils who respond enthusiastically and energetically. Better lessons are conducted at a brisk pace with a good sequence of activities that build upon previous activities. In a physical education/drama lesson the teacher challenged pupils to use their imagination in developing their animal movements as they responded to music. Pupils enjoy these lessons and they concentrate on the tasks and apply themselves well.

126. Assessment practices are inconsistent. In good lessons, teachers make effective use of examples of pupils' performance to illustrate, refine and improve skills. In some lessons pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to evaluate their own performances or those of others. Some teachers develop a good understanding of pupils' achievements through close observation during lessons and use this information effectively to help pupils improve. For example, in a Year 1 lesson the teacher made assessment notes as she observed pupils practising catching and throwing balls. However, the over-use of praise can distract from pupils' progress because they are not always given constructive feedback on the quality of their performances, and receive insufficient guidance on how to improve. For example, some teachers repeatedly say 'well done' even when pupils are not making sufficient efforts to improve.
127. Management of the subject is sound. The curriculum is balanced and pupils are offered a broad range of opportunities to develop their skills in gymnastics, dance and games. Resources are satisfactory and the school offers a sound range of extra-curricular activities. The subject makes an effective contribution to the personal and social development of pupils. The co-ordinator has drafted an outline scheme from the national guidance. Written guidance on planning is satisfactory, but needs to be developed further to ensure that pupils' skills are built upon sufficiently. Recording arrangements are unsatisfactory because the school does not have an agreed approach to recording the progress that pupils make. Monitoring of provision is limited and lacks rigour.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

128. Evidence from the one lesson seen, from assemblies, from curriculum planning and from discussion with pupils, is insufficient to make a secure judgement about standards the pupils attain.
129. The school's long-term curriculum plan conforms to the local authority's agreed syllabus and provides sufficient detail to guide teachers' termly plans in each year group. Medium-term plans or schemes of work are not fully developed, and the time allocated to the elements within the overall curriculum is not identified. This is a weakness, particularly as the subject is not clearly timetabled for most year groups, and much teaching occurs within topics.
130. The quality of teaching was satisfactory in the one Year 2 lesson seen during the inspection. In a good introduction to some of the everyday practices of the Islamic religion, the teacher used photographs and artefacts well to explain how the faithful are called to prayer. As a result, pupils became engrossed and were eager to respond to what they had learned by drawing a mosque, building a minaret tower with a construction kit, or assembling cut out shapes to reproduce the key features of a mosque. It is evident that much discussion takes place in lessons and that pupils' responses to stories of the Christian and other religions usually involve creative activities of some kind. Written responses are rare.
131. Pupils' sense of the wonder of church building is fostered by visits to the local parish church and to the shrine at Walsingham. In an English lesson in Year 1 there was a good blend of religious education and literacy when the shared text used was the story of Jonah. In addition to using the text for the literacy aspects of the lesson, the teacher led a discussion about Jonah's predicament and what he might say in his prayer to God.

132. The hymn singing during a whole-school assembly was joyful. In the Year 2 assembly the story of the shepherd and the lost sheep was well told, involving pupils in acting out the main points of the story. Opportunities are provided for reflecting upon the moral aspects of stories and events.
133. The co-ordinator manages the subject effectively, ensuring that there are adequate resources and monitoring teachers' planning for curriculum coverage. The effectiveness of the teaching of religious education across other curriculum areas is being evaluated.