

INSPECTION REPORT

**ALL SAINTS CHURCH OF ENGLAND
VOLUNTARY AIDED PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Framlingham Road, Laxfield,
Woodbridge, Suffolk.

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124776

Headteacher: Mrs. J. Rope-Jones

Reporting inspector: Paul Bennett
2234

Dates of inspection: 20 – 24 May 2002.

Inspection number: 196122

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary Aided

Age range of pupils: 4-11

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Framlingham Road,
Laxfield,
Woodbridge,
Suffolk.

Postcode: IP13 8HD

Telephone number: 01986 798344

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs. Ann Mills

Date of previous inspection: 7 – 9 July 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2234	Paul Bennett	Registered inspector	Maths Science Information and communication technology Design and technology Music Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
19436	Mike O'Malley	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
27790	Maggie Sanger	Team inspector	Special educational needs Foundation Stage English Art and design Geography History Physical education	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

All Saints Church of England Voluntary Aided Primary School is located in the village of Laxfield in the north of Suffolk, and serves the communities of Laxfield and Cratfield. The school aims to be a 'Christian community in which Christian values are taught and practised'. This is a smaller than average primary school with 88 pupils on roll, aged four to eleven years. As a result of a reduction in the birth rate, the number of pupils attending the school has declined by over a quarter in the last four years but is projected to increase again from September 2002. Some year groups are oversubscribed.

Children are admitted full-time to the school at the beginning of the term in which they become five years of age. Currently, there are nine children under the age of six years in the Reception Year. Some children will have attended on a part-time basis for one or two terms. Pupils come from a broadly average range of socio-economic backgrounds though a lower than average proportion claims an entitlement to free school meals. There are no pupils with English as an additional language or from ethnic minorities. This is low in comparison with schools nationally.

The attainment of pupils on entry to school varies from year to year and represents a wide range of abilities, including gifted and talented pupils and those with special educational needs. Data indicates that, in two of the last three years, attainment on entry to school has been slightly above the County average. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need. The proportion of pupils identified as having special educational needs (16%) is below the national average but has increased significantly since 1999.

At the time of the inspection the school was nearing the end of several months of major building works which had inhibited development in some curriculum areas, especially information and communication technology.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good and effective school. Standards of attainment are generally above, and sometimes well above the national average. The quality of teaching is good overall and makes a particularly strong impact on learning in Years 5 and 6. Pupils make at least satisfactory and generally good progress in all year groups. Their behaviour, attitudes to work, values and personal development are good. Effective leadership and management has ensured that the school has made satisfactory improvement since the last OFSTED inspection in 1997 and maintained above average standards of attainment. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Standards of attainment in statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001 were well above the national average in reading and mathematics. Boys achieved particularly well in mathematics and science.
- Pupils' attainment throughout the school is above the national average in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics, science, art and design, design and technology, and history.
- The school has been successful in making significant improvements to the quality and range of pupils' writing in the last twelve months.
- Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is of consistently high quality and leads to good progress in learning.
- Governors are well informed; have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school; and support actively the work of the school.
- Pupils' attendance and their attitudes to work are very good.
- The quality of relationships and pupils' behaviour in lessons is good.
- Strong links with the local community and neighbouring schools contribute to the breadth and quality of pupils' learning.
- Very good provision is made for the arts and sport, in and outside lessons.
- Parents and carers are kept well informed and are able to support their children's learning effectively because of the very good partnership they have with the school.

What could be improved

- Assessment is not used effectively to plan and match work to the needs of pupils, especially the less able and those with special educational needs.
- The quality of teaching is inconsistent and occasionally unsatisfactory, especially for eight and nine year olds.
- The planned activities, lack of appropriate resources, and the arrangement of the classroom do not allow children in the Reception Year to enjoy the range of learning experiences now expected for children of their age.
- Pupils' work is often untidily and carelessly stored and presented, which makes it difficult to show progress in learning.
- Over recent years, the school's budget has not always been used to maximum effect to support teaching and learning.

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 satisfactory improvement since the last inspection in 1997 and has addressed effectively most of the key issues for action. The above average standards of attainment for pupils aged seven and eleven years have been maintained successfully. The long-term curriculum plan now ensures good coverage of the required elements of the National Curriculum and sensible amounts of time have been allocated to each subject. Planning for scientific enquiry has improved greatly and this is reflected in better quality work and higher attainment in science across the school. Systems for assessment and recording have been implemented but are not yet used effectively to plan the next steps of learning for groups or individual pupils. The monitoring and evaluating roles of the headteacher, deputy headteacher and subject co-ordinators have improved and led to a better understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. The School Improvement Plan now provides a long-term view for development but monitoring and evaluating strategies are not yet built

into a systematic programme. The recent major building programme is nearing completion and will improve significantly the facilities for administration and learning. The school is well placed to improve even further.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 6 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	All schools			Similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	C	A	A	A
mathematics	A	A	A	A
science	D	C	B	B

Key

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

The results of statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001 indicate that pupils' attainment was well above average in English and mathematics, and above average in science when compared with all schools and with schools with a broadly similar proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals. The comparative grades must be treated with some caution because the relatively small numbers of pupils in each year group mean that the performance of one pupil can make one, or even two grades difference. The overall English results comprised high levels of attainment in reading but much lower standards of writing. Standards of attainment in English and science have improved markedly since 1999, at a rate above that found nationally. Standards in mathematics, while remaining well above average, have declined since 1997, in contrast to the national trend of improvement. Boys achieved particularly good results in mathematics and science when compared with boys nationally. However, girls' attainment in these subjects was below the national average for girls.

Statutory assessments for seven-year-olds in 2001 indicate that pupils' attainment was well above the national average in mathematics; above average in reading; and below average in writing and science. Generally, in reading, mathematics and science the school's performance was stronger at the higher levels of attainment (Level 3).

Four-year-old children enter school with a wide range of abilities but attainment is slightly above the County average. Given that some pupils receive only one term of full-time education in the Reception Year, they make at least satisfactory progress and their attainment is in line with national expectations in communications, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. Attainment is above average in personal, social and emotional development.

Evidence from the inspection shows that by the end of Year 2 and Year 6, pupils' attainment is

above the national average in reading, speaking and listening, mathematics, science, design and technology and history. Attainment is broadly average in writing and geography by the end of Year 2 and Year 6; and in information and communication technology by the end of Year 6. Attainment in art and design is above average by the end of Year 2 and well above average by the end of Year 6. There was not enough evidence upon which to make secure judgements about attainment in information and communication technology in Years 1 and 2, or in music and physical education throughout the school. Pupils of average and above average ability make generally good progress. Less-able pupils and those with special educational needs make satisfactory progress but tasks are not always well matched to their learning needs. No significant differences were observed in the achievements of boys and girls across the school. In general, standards of presentation are too low and work is often stored untidily and carelessly.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy learning and have very good attitudes to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave well in most lessons and during lunchtimes and playtimes. They are friendly and polite.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between adults and pupils are good. Pupils work co-operatively; are generally sensitive to each other's feelings; and respond well when given responsibility.
Attendance	Attendance is very good. It is well above the national average and there have been no unauthorised absences in the last two years.

These aspects are strengths of the school and have a significant impact upon teaching and learning and the good standards of attainment. Pupils are willing to learn and respond well to good teaching. A small minority of pupils in Years 3 and 4 sometimes behave inappropriately by calling out in lessons and not listening attentively.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The quality of teaching is good overall but varies considerably between excellent and unsatisfactory. Lessons are often well planned, well prepared and well organised. Teachers explain tasks carefully and pupils understand the purpose of the work and what is expected of them. Teachers and classroom assistants work well in partnership, and relationships between adults and pupils are good. Pupils respond well; work with sustained concentration; and make evident gains in skills, knowledge and understanding. In the occasional lessons where teaching was unsatisfactory, planning was

weak; the purpose of the lessons and tasks were not explained clearly to pupils; and their behaviour was managed inconsistently. As a result, pupils were unsure exactly what was expected of them and made limited progress in their learning. On occasions, children in the Reception Year did not have access to a wide enough range of learning activities and had too few opportunities to make choices and develop independence.

Evidence from work in all classes indicates that teachers do not use marking and day-to-day assessments effectively to plan the next steps in learning. As a result, work is not always well matched to the needs and abilities of pupils, especially the less able and those with special educational needs. Intervention programmes promoted by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies, to support these pupils, are not implemented effectively.

Teaching in Years 5 and 6 is of consistently high quality and the energy and enthusiasm for learning is contagious. Teaching in English and mathematics is good overall, although two unsatisfactory lessons were observed in Years 3 and 4. Generally, the basic skills of literacy and numeracy are taught well.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum is broad and often rich and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. Learning activities in the Reception Year are sometimes too narrow.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The school has satisfactory procedures for identifying pupils with special educational needs. Provision is often unsatisfactory, as tasks are not well matched to precise targets for learning. National intervention programmes in literacy and numeracy have not been implemented effectively.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good and strengthened through strong links with the Church and the local community.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The school cares well for its pupils. Procedures for assessing and monitoring academic and personal development are generally satisfactory, but require some improvement.

The school makes particularly strong provision for the arts and sport. Learning is enriched through a wide range of activities outside lessons, including making good use of resources within the local community. Children in the Reception Year have too few opportunities to make choices and to learn through first-hand investigation and play. Arrangements for child protection, health and safety and first aid are satisfactory. The school monitors pupils' academic performance and personal development but does not always use this information effectively to plan future learning. The school

works very well in partnership with parents.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher and deputy headteacher form an effective leadership team, which promotes successfully the aims and vision for the school.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Governors fulfil their responsibilities well and have a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school has evaluated its performance effectively; identified sensible priorities for improvement; and taken actions, which have improved teaching and learning and raised pupils' attainment.
The strategic use of resources	Staff, accommodation and resources are used well. However, the school has not always used its income to maximum effect.

The school benefits from a level of income per pupil that is well above the national average. The number of teachers and support staff is greater than might be expected of a school of this size. The accommodation is good, and is being improved further to enhance the currently inadequate facilities for information and communication technology. However, as a result of prolonged building work, floors in the hall and some classrooms are dirty and in poor condition. Resources are generally adequate but, despite some investment, are often old and worn. The above average budget carry forward has not always been used effectively to update and renew resources to support teaching and learning.

The headteacher, staff and governors have rightly identified writing and scientific enquiry as areas for whole-school development and have acted successfully to improve the quality of teaching and learning and to raise pupils' attainment in these areas. However, the monitoring and evaluation of teaching are not undertaken in a systematic way. The principles of best value are applied satisfactorily to the financial and management processes of the school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children are happy at school and make good progress. • Children behave well and have a good sense of right and wrong. • Parents are kept well informed about the curriculum and their children's progress. • Teaching is good and children of different abilities are supported well. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like all the children in the Reception Year group to be admitted full-time in September.

What pleases parents most (cont..)

- Parents feel welcome in school, and the headteacher and staff are very approachable.
- The school consults effectively with parents.
- The school is well led and managed.
- The school provides a good range of activities outside lessons.
- Children achieve high standards in performing, visual and creative arts.

Inspectors agree with almost all the positive views expressed by parents. While more-able pupils are challenged and extended in their learning, the provision for less-able pupils and those with special educational needs is not always as effective as it should be. Inspectors sympathise with the concerns raised by parents relating to the termly admission of children to the reception class, but recognise that the school is implementing the policy of the local education authority.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The inspection took place in the first half of the Summer Term 2002 just after statutory tests for eleven-year-olds had been completed but before the results were known. At this point, teacher assessments of seven-year-olds were complete and some initial information was available. Throughout the school the number of pupils in each year group is below 20. National data must be interpreted with caution, especially where one pupil's results can make a significant difference in the grading of the school's comparative performance in a subject.
2. Evidence of attainment is based upon an analysis of the results of statutory assessments for seven and eleven-year-olds in 2001; data provided by the school relating to optional and standardised tests; a scrutiny of pupils' work in each subject; discussions with teachers and pupils; hearing pupils read aloud; an examination of pupils' records and reports; observations in lessons; and a review of displays and photographic evidence.
3. Children enter school full-time at the beginning of the term in which they become five years of age. Prior to this some children are able to spend one or two terms attending on a part-time basis. In the current reception class no children were eligible for full-time education in the Autumn Term and, at the time of the inspection, several had only been attending full-time for a matter of a few weeks. These children will only have one term's full-time education before leaving the Foundation Stage and transferring to Year 1. The results of assessments undertaken during the Reception Year indicate that children enter school with a wide range of abilities, including gifted and talented children as well as those with special educational needs. In two of the last three years, attainment has been slightly above the County average. An analysis of results was not available for the children currently in the Reception Year, as the process was not complete at the time of the inspection.
4. Attainment of children in the current Reception Year group is in line with national expectations in communications, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. It is above expectations in personal, social and emotional development. All pupils are expected to attain, and some will exceed, the expected Early Learning Goals by the time they commence Year 1.
5. The results of statutory assessments for seven-year-olds in 2001 indicate that pupils' attainment in reading was above the average for all schools and that of similar schools. More-able pupils performed very well and the percentage of pupils attaining Level 3 was very high, but a larger than average proportion (three pupils) did not achieve the expected Level 2. This suggests that less-able pupils had not made as much progress as might have been expected. Attainment in writing was below the average for all schools and similar schools, with no pupil achieving the higher Level 3, which was very low, and three pupils not

attaining the expected Level 2. In mathematics, attainment was well above that of schools nationally and similar schools. More-able pupils performed well at the higher levels of achievement. The results of teacher assessments in science indicate that attainment was below average at the expected Level 2 but broadly average at the higher Level 3. Overall, there was no significant difference in performance between the various elements of each subject but, in general, the more-able pupils performed comparatively better than the less able. Girls performed better than boys in reading and writing.

6. At the end of Year 2 attainment in reading had improved steadily over the last three years at a rate above the national average. Attainment in writing fell sharply from 1999 to 2000 and recovered slightly for 2001. However, it was still below the level achieved in 1997. Pupils' attainment in mathematics declined steadily from 1997 to 2000 but improved dramatically in 2001. Some of these fluctuations were caused by the small numbers of pupils in year groups.
7. The results of statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001 indicate that attainment in English was well above that of all schools and similar schools. These results were influenced by very high levels of attainment in reading but much lower results in writing. The difference between pupils' attainment in reading and writing was much greater than that found nationally. Attainment in mathematics was well above average when compared with all schools and similar schools. Boys achieved significantly better than girls particularly at the higher Level 5. In science, pupils' attainment was above that of all schools and similar schools. Again boys achieved much better than girls at the higher level of attainment. The school believes that this disparity in attainment reflected a small cohort and a particular group of pupils, rather than a trend in performance over time. In both English and science, results have improved from 1999 to 2001 at a rate greater than that found nationally. Attainment in mathematics, while remaining well above the national average, has declined from a peak in 1997, and has not matched the national rate of improvement.
8. The school sets targets for individual pupils based on a range of performance data, including statutory assessments and optional and standardised tests. These targets are aggregated to obtain statutory targets for Year 6 in English and mathematics. The targets are challenging and are discussed and agreed with the local education authority's link adviser. The small numbers of pupils in each year group means that targets are likely to fluctuate from one year group to another because the performance of one pupil can make up to 10% difference in a year group's targets.
9. Evidence gathered during the week of the inspection indicates that attainment in reading, speaking and listening is above average by the end of Year 2 and Year 6. There has been significant improvement in writing and attainment is now in line with national expectations. Attainment in mathematics and science is above average at the end of Years 2 and 6. This reflects a significant improvement in the provision for science, particularly in Years 1 and 2. There is little evidence of a disparity between the achievements of boys and girls. However, less-able pupils do not make such good progress as more-able pupils.
10. The disruption caused by the current building programme means that it is not possible to

make a judgement about attainment in information and communication technology (ICT) for seven-year-olds. However, there is evidence that the attainment of eleven-year-old pupils is in line with national expectations. Particularly good work is evident in relation to word processing skills and the development of art and design through information communication and technology.

11. As this is a Church of England aided school, religious education is subject to a separate inspection and no judgements are made here about standards of attainment within the subject.
12. By the age of seven, pupils' attainment is above average in art and design and design, design and technology and history; and broadly average in geography. It is not possible to make judgements about attainment in music and physical education.
13. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is well above average in art; above average in design and technology and history; and broadly average in geography. It is not possible to make judgements about attainment in music and physical education.
14. Pupils' skills in literacy and numeracy are developed well across the curriculum. In general, average and more-able pupils make good progress in their learning. The progress made by less-able pupils and those with special educational needs is satisfactory overall but less consistent. Although they are often well supported by classroom assistants, the tasks set for these pupils are not always matched carefully to their learning needs. Untidy presentation and storage of work often makes it difficult for teachers and pupils to track the progress that has been made over time.
15. Most pupils achieve well in lessons. They have to work hard and do so with sustained concentration whether this involves intellectual or creative effort. They are keen to succeed and to complete tasks. In most lessons there is a really positive work ethic. Pupils understand what they are doing and can explain why a piece of work was judged to be good. They are less confident in identifying how work can be improved and have limited awareness of personal targets for improvement.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

16. Pupils enjoy learning and have very good attitudes to school. They behave well in lessons and around the school; and their personal development is good. Relationships between pupils and staff are good and the high standards reported at the last inspection have been maintained. Attendance is very good. All this helps pupils to learn well.
17. Pupils are keen to come to school and many take part in activities outside class such as netball, football, recorders and dance. They are willing to learn and respond very well to good teaching. Pupils are very interested and are involved fully in their lessons. For example, in one lesson, Reception and Year 1 pupils were learning about fractions. The older pupils were conscientiously drawing, cutting, and folding shapes into halves and quarters. The younger pupils busily prepared plasticine biscuits for dividing into two and

four equal parts. However, they were all particularly interested in the teacher's demonstration. Pupils helped the teacher cut apples and chocolate bars into halves and quarters, and other waited in excited anticipation. The pupils were quite confident that these 'learning resources' would not be stored away in the cupboard at the end of the lesson!

18. Pupils listen attentively and get on with the tasks set. They are keen to ask and answer questions; they work hard; and are keen to improve. During the inspection, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were experimenting with screen-printing. They were very enthusiastic and pleased with what they achieved. They evaluated their own and each other's work, and were keen to look for ways in which they could improve.
19. Pupils behave well in lessons, and at playtimes and lunchtimes. All this makes for a calm learning atmosphere. The majority of pupils know what standard of behaviour is expected and respond well. However, some inappropriate calling out and off-task behaviour in Years 3 and 4 are not always managed consistently. Generally, pupils are friendly and polite. There are few, if any, incidents of bullying and parents are confident that staff would deal quickly and effectively with any such occurrences. There have been no exclusions in recent years. Pupils take good care of equipment and tidy resources away quickly at the end of lessons.
20. Relationships are good. Pupils respect one another's views, co-operate and share ideas. For example, even the youngest pupils work well together, listening to each other's views or taking turns in their literacy games. Pupils are well mannered and considerate, and respect teachers and other adults who work in school.
21. Pupils' personal development is good. They grow in confidence in response to the praise and encouragement they receive. They settle to group work quickly and can work well with little direct supervision. Pupils are sensitive to the needs of others and they are very aware of how their actions can affect other people. Members of the school council were quite clear about the importance of mutual respect and taking responsibility; the need to reflect on what they do; and the value of good relationships. During a personal and social education lesson, Years 5 and 6 pupils discussed water shortage in Africa. They understood their responsibility for such global issues and drew up a good range of ideas on how they could persuade others and influence change. Pupils are trusted to carry out some day-to-day tasks around school – for example, giving out and returning attendance registers. When given the opportunity, they fulfil such roles sensibly and reliably.
22. Pupils respect differences. For example, in a religious education lesson leading to a study of Islam, pupils in Years 3 and 4 pupils were encouraged to reflect on differences in customs and rules for meal times. They contributed confidently to the discussion and readily respected each other's different ideas and views. Pupils are able to work and develop in an atmosphere free from oppressive behaviour such as bullying, sexism and racism.
23. Pupils' attendance is very good. The high standard noted at the last inspection has been maintained. In 2000-2001 the recorded rate of attendance of 96.6% was well above the national average (93.9%). There was no unauthorised absence. Pupils are generally

punctual, and morning and afternoon sessions start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

24. Pupils are organised into four mixed-age classes comprising Reception and Year 1; Year 2; Years 3 and 4; and Years 5 and 6. For literacy and numeracy lessons some Year 3 pupils join the Year 2 class. In the afternoon, some Year 1 pupils join the Year 2 class for lessons in the foundation subjects. The Years 3 and 4 class is shared by the headteacher and a part-time teacher; and some lessons in science, music, religious education and art and design are taken by teachers with special interest or expertise in the subject.
25. During the inspection 29 lessons or part lessons were observed. The quality of teaching ranged from excellent to unsatisfactory. It was satisfactory or better in nine out of ten lessons; good or better in six out of ten; and very good or excellent in a quarter of lessons. Teaching was judged to be unsatisfactory in three lessons. Despite the inconsistency in the quality of teaching, it is judged to be good overall. Teaching has a positive impact on the good progress made by pupils in Years 1 and 2. Progress is satisfactory overall in Years 3 and 4, but inconsistent as a result of some unsatisfactory teaching. In Years 5 and 6, the high quality of the teaching results in pupils making consistently good and sometimes very good progress. This is particularly apparent in art and design. The good quality teaching is reflected in above average attainment in several subject areas at the end of Years 2 and 6.
26. Teaching for children in the Reception class ranges from very good to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall. Children are secure in classroom routines but are sometimes over-directed and have too little opportunities to exercise choice and develop independence. In general, the range of learning experiences and activities is much narrower than is currently expected for children of this age.
27. The teaching of English, mathematics and science is good overall and at its strongest in Years 1, 2, 5 and 6. The quality of teaching is inconsistent in Years 3 and 4 where there was some unsatisfactory teaching in English and mathematics. In general, teachers are implementing effectively the expected elements of lessons from the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. The teaching of phonics is secure in Years 1 and 2, and throughout the school pupils are given good opportunities to develop their skills in speaking and listening. Significant improvements have been made to the quality of teaching and learning in writing across the school, and in science in Years 1 and 2.
28. During the course of the inspection no lessons were observed in information and communication technology. The building work in the school has severely disrupted access to computers in recent months. Only in Years 5 and 6 is there significant evidence of effective teaching and learning in ICT.
29. No judgements are made about the quality of teaching in religious education as this is subject to a separate inspection.

30. Evidence from lessons, pupils' work and teachers' planning indicates that teaching is consistently good in history; excellent or very good in art and design; and satisfactory in geography. No teaching and learning was observed in design and technology, music or physical education.
31. The most effective lessons commenced with a good recap of previous learning and an explanation to the pupils of the purpose of the lesson. Key learning objectives were also apparent in the teacher's short-term, daily or weekly planning. However, in some lesson, short-term planning was weak and the purpose of the lesson was unclear. As a result, key learning objectives, concepts and tasks were not explained clearly and pupils were confused or uncertain about what they were required to do. There was little evidence of individual education plans (IEPs) for pupils with special educational needs influencing teachers' short-term plans.
32. In some lessons, introductions and explanations were clear and effective; good use was made of whiteboards so that teachers modelled calculations or examples of writing effectively; and teachers demonstrated good subject knowledge. Tasks were well prepared and explained carefully so that pupils could settle quickly to them and achieve the desired objectives. In the best lessons, the range of tasks was matched well to the needs and abilities of different groups of pupils. In some lessons good support for pupils with special educational needs was provided by work well matched to the needs of differing abilities, including the use of structured support sheets, such as a writing frame, and the focused support of the teacher or classroom assistant. However in other lessons, there was no focused support. The task was the same for all pupils and, whilst some pupils learn from their peers, some were unable to complete the task and began to lose confidence. On occasions, teachers were unaware of the need to break the task into smaller steps or to use supporting strategies. In general, tasks were matched better to the needs of the average and more-able pupils than to the less able and those with special educational needs. On occasions, the whole class was given the same activity which did not challenge and extend the more-able pupils or support the less able.
33. In most lessons, teachers had high and consistent expectations for pupils' behaviour; relationships between teachers and pupils were good; and pupils worked co-operatively and behaved well. In one or two unsatisfactory lessons, the teacher's strategies for managing behaviour were applied inconsistently to different pupils or in different situations. As a result, pupils were unsure about what was expected of them and sometimes interrupted or called out inappropriately. In some lessons throughout the school, the teachers' evident interest, expertise and enthusiasm for the subject inspired and motivated the pupils. This reaction was particularly evident in art and design, science and some English lessons.
34. Teachers and classroom assistants generally worked well in partnership and each knew what the other was doing. In some lessons, classroom assistants were particularly well briefed to lead activities with a whole year group. Good support was sometimes provided for less-able pupils and this allowed them to complete tasks that might otherwise have been too difficult. On occasions, younger pupils, in particular, were over-directed by the level of

adult support and had too few opportunities to make choices or learn through play-based activities.

35. Most lessons were conducted at a good pace and teachers used time well. In literacy and numeracy lessons, the expected elements from the respective national strategies were evident and received suitable amounts of time. Even though some sessions go on for longer than the recommended hour, teaching and learning was still purposeful and there was little sense of time dragging. However, in one or two lessons where teaching was less effective, introductions or activities went on for too long and pupils found it difficult to sustain interest or concentration.
36. Although teachers know their pupils well, there was little evidence of day-to-day assessment being used systematically to inform the next steps in learning. Short-term plans include few, if any, evaluative comments or assessment information, and national or commercial planning frameworks are rarely annotated to include reference to the needs of different groups of pupils. The marking of pupils' work is an area of weakness. Approaches to marking are inconsistent and written comments rarely relate to the learning objectives for the piece of work or how work could be improved. Individual or group targets for improvement in English have been introduced in some classes but practice is still inconsistent.
37. Marking and assessment during and at the end of lessons often does not identify the particular difficulties of pupils with special educational needs. Planning for the next lesson is thus not modified for these pupils, and they are moved onto the next step before learning is embedded securely. As a result their progress slows.
38. In most lessons, pupils either consolidated previous learning well or made at least satisfactory and, often, good gains in knowledge, skills or understanding. Only occasionally did tasks lead to insufficient learning and this was associated with a lack of clarity of purpose in the teacher's planning and delivery of the lesson. In many lessons, pupils worked with evident interest and enthusiasm. They applied themselves conscientiously to activities and worked with sustained concentration even during long sessions. In Years 5 and 6, in particular, pupils were clearly used to applying very good levels of intellectual and creative effort to their work in a range of subjects.

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

39. The curriculum provided by the school is good. It meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum and provides religious education in accordance with the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus. It is broad, rich and enhanced strongly through the school's links with the community and neighbouring schools, and through the very good range of extra-curricular activities. The curriculum is relevant to the needs of most pupils and reflects the aims of the school's curriculum policy. However, the school does not provide a sufficiently broad curriculum for children under statutory school age, in the Reception Year. Neither does it provide effective support for less-able pupils and those with special educational needs. Curriculum balance is ensured through careful long-term planning and timetabling. Links

between subjects provide relevance, strengthen learning and maximise the use of time. The curriculum is well monitored by staff and governors.

40. Long-term planning ensures progression and coverage through a two-year rolling programme, which suits the context of mixed-age classes. Half-termly planning is based upon national guidance from the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), which provides a sound basis for meeting the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. In some areas - notably art and design, science and history - this planning is enhanced effectively by additional guidance, from staff and the County advisory team. Short-term planning is less effective as it does not often identify the needs of pupils of differing abilities. In some cases it is superficial and lacks a clear sense of purpose. As a result, the needs of less-able pupils and those with special educational needs are not always met successfully.
41. Curriculum policy and planning for the Reception Year covers the six areas of learning within the Foundation Stage. Whilst key learning objectives are clear, the range and nature of learning activities are too narrow and not well described. Consequently, pupils are not given the expected range of learning experiences.
42. The school makes good provision for the teaching of literacy and numeracy, resulting in improving standards in writing and good standards in mathematics and reading. Both teaching and support staff have undertaken training in the numeracy and literacy strategies, and additional support from the local education authority has been used to good effect. However, insufficient use has been made of national intervention programmes such as the Early Literacy Strategy, Additional Literacy Support and Springboard Mathematics, which are aimed at strengthening the basic skills of less-able pupils. In writing, specific skills are taught well and then applied to independent pieces of extended work.
43. The school offers a very good range of activities outside normal lessons. These provide additional breadth, relevance and richness to the school's educational provision. A range of sporting and music clubs, including gym, dance, netball, rugby, football, rounders, cricket, swimming, recorders and guitar is provided for older pupils. Younger pupils attend cookery and swimming clubs. All these clubs are popular and well supported. Older pupils receive cycle training through a road safety project. Many areas of the curriculum are enhanced through visits to local sites such as Framlingham and Orford castles, local museums and Wingfield Arts Centre. Evening theatre visits are very popular, as the pupils at Laxfield have a keen interest in the performing and visual arts. Visitors are welcomed frequently into school. Local residents, a local toy maker, journalists, artists, story tellers, poets and writers together with key figures such as the local vicar, pastor and police officer, all make valuable contributions to pupils' learning experiences. An annual residential experience is provided for the oldest pupils. During a recent visit to Derbyshire, pupils experienced a contrasting locality, walking and studying amongst the hills.
44. The school's curriculum policy aims to ensure inclusion for all its pupils. The school policy identifies a fully inclusive range of special educational needs, including very able pupils. It is comprehensive and includes the necessary procedures for implementing the current national Code of Practice for special educational needs.

45. The school is successful in making appropriate provision for most of its pupils. Average and more-able pupils make good progress and achieve good standards. However, less-able pupils, including those with special educational needs make relatively slower progress and achieve less well than those in similar schools, and their needs are not always addressed adequately. The school has an effective system for identifying pupils making slow progress, or having difficulties with learning or behaviour. It does not identify the specific needs of such pupils, and the plans for improving their learning are often far too general and contain too many targets. Teachers' planning does not often reflect these individual education plans. However, an additional teacher provides useful support for a short period weekly, with a focus on handwriting and spelling. Learning support staff also provide valuable support for less-able pupils in lessons, but this would sometimes benefit from more precisely focused tasks.
46. Provision for personal, social and health education (PSHE) is satisfactory and includes policies for sex education and drugs awareness. The school has identified the need to have a policy and to identify curricular opportunities for PSHE. Currently teachers provide support and guidance in response to issues that arise naturally through the day-to-day life of school. For example, such events as the death of a pet are discussed, the resolution of a disagreement is supported, and the achievement of a personal target is celebrated. The teaching of PSHE was seen to cover such issues as '*how we can influence the decisions and actions of others*' and '*how our behaviour affects others*'. Assembly themes also contribute to the raising of self-esteem, respect for others and shared school values.
47. The school works well in partnership with neighbouring schools, joining with them for a full and extensive range of sports and performing arts events. These have a very positive benefit to all the schools involved, broadening and extending their provision. The use of joint funding for large projects such as a forthcoming music festival and the provision of 'behaviour surgeries' ensure the wise use of small budgets. Informal links with the pre-school group supports the induction of pupils into the Reception Year. Links with the local high school include a 'science day', an induction day for Year 6 pupils every summer, support with specialist equipment, liaison over transfer of pupils, and involvement in arts and dance projects.
48. The school's links with its community are very good. It is an integral part of the village with mutual benefit resulting. Links with the Church include the celebration of festivals in church and the involvement of the local Anglican vicar and Baptist pastor in worship. The younger pupils perform a nativity play for the elderly residents of a local residential home. Many aspects of the curriculum are enhanced through local visits and visitors. Pupils support local, national and global charities. Governors, support staff and teaching staff, especially the deputy headteacher strongly promote, and are actively involved in many formal and informal community initiatives. The school's swimming pool is used as a community resource in summer evenings and weekends.
49. The school's provision for, and pupils' development in spiritual, moral, social and cultural education are good. These are strengthened through the extra-curricular provision and the

close links with the community.

50. Pupils are regularly given time to reflect in assemblies. They are aware of the significance of events such as Pentecost and the way in which stories such as parables can help them in their lives. Pupils write and read their own prayers. They develop a greater self-awareness, the awareness of a deity, and a growing insight into values and beliefs. In assemblies and lessons, pupils are encouraged to experience emotions and to express their feelings appropriately. In lessons many spontaneous moments of awe and wonder were seen. A Reception child remarked '*They're growing and look at the spikes!*' when first seeing gooseberries on a bush. Year 6 pupils showed absolute delight in the effects of a computer tool on their digital photographs, and pupils in Years 3 and 4 were amazed at the outcomes of their screen-printing.
51. A strong moral code is part of the fabric of the school. It is implicit in the expectations staff have of pupils. In assembly and lessons, pupils are taught to distinguish clearly between right and wrong and school rules and expectations are reinforced through the use of the '*marble jar*'. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good in lessons and around school, with the exception of the Year 3 and 4 class when pupils occasionally interrupt learning with silly interjections, as a result of inconsistent behaviour management. Pupils are encouraged to have a responsible attitude; to understand the consequences of their behaviour; and to be aware of global issues such as famine, drought and war. The proposed developments in the PSHE provision and the school council should contribute strongly to this area of development.
52. Provision for social development is good. Relationships are strong and are positively reinforced and taught. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to work co-operatively, so developing their social skills. Younger pupils take turns sensibly. Older pupils listen to each other, respect the opinions of others and work together in pairs or groups of three or four to complete tasks. Pupils strengthen their social skills through their involvement with neighbouring schools. Whilst older pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their learning through opportunities in the classroom, insufficient similar opportunities are offered across the school.
53. The school encourages pupils to appreciate cultural diversity through an awareness of their own local culture, through strong local links. An awareness of different global cultures is developed, through art and dance, PSHE, religious education, history and geography. For example, pupils extended their experience of printing through looking at the work of Kalahari Bushmen and Gambian textiles. The cultures of different times are also explored through historical topics, for example, the study of the Ancient Greeks. In PSHE, pupils study current global issues such as water shortage in different parts of the world. However, there is little evidence of pupils developing a secure understanding and awareness of the cultural diversity of Britain.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

54. The school cares well for its pupils and provides them with satisfactory levels of support and

guidance. The staff know the pupils very well, and have created a caring atmosphere that contributes greatly towards pupils' learning. Good additional support is provided by outside agencies. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress in English and mathematics, in particular, but does not use this information effectively to plan the next steps in learning.

55. The school makes satisfactory provision for child protection, and health and safety. Staff are aware of the required procedures and make sure that pupils learn safely. Good first aid arrangements are in place and staff know about pupils with medical conditions. The school checks systematically the safety of the premises and makes improvements where necessary. However, some procedures are not audited and the health and safety policy has not been reviewed recently.
56. Pupils with special educational needs are identified as they join or transfer into school, and by their class teacher whilst in school. Clear guidelines support the process of the identification of needs. However, school documentation shows that needs are identified in a general way and there is insufficient diagnosis of specific needs. The class teacher, in consultation with the co-ordinator (SENCo), draws up Individual Education Plans (IEPs). In the early stages, these plans contain general learning targets, which lack precision, for example 'To know letter patterns, to spell new words'. However, behaviour targets are more precise and these are clearly measurable. Often there are five targets, which are too many. Most pupils have IEPs, which contain a self-esteem target, which helps to build up confidence. A pupil with a higher level of need has a plan with fewer targets. These are much more precise and identify teaching and learning strategies, and methods for assessment. IEPs are reviewed regularly and both parents and pupils are encouraged to be involved in the review and planning process.
57. The procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. All unexplained absence is followed up rigorously, and the education welfare officer checks patterns of attendance each term. Pupils with good attendance records receive certificates, and parents are reminded about the importance of good attendance through the home-school agreement. Attendance registers are completed, but lateness and the reasons for absence are not recorded.
58. Strategies to monitor and promote good behaviour are effective. The behaviour policy emphasises a positive approach to managing pupils' behaviour. Parents are well informed and support the school in maintaining high standards. End-of-year reports include a section for pupils to reflect and comment on their behaviour. The majority of staff expect high standards and reinforce good behaviour by recognising and encouraging it consistently. An effective system of rewards ensures that the majority of pupils know what is expected of them. However, in one class inconsistent expectations and approaches to behaviour management sometimes confuse pupils who occasionally behave inappropriately. The school works well to maintain high standards of behaviour at break time. Games equipment is available for the younger pupils and some lunchtime clubs are also organised. Good systems are in place for monitoring unsatisfactory behaviour. The school is effective at promoting good relationships and teachers help pupils to understand that oppressive

behaviour is not tolerated.

59. The school monitors and promotes pupils' personal development well through PSHE lessons, circle time, clear communications and effective links with parents. These strategies help staff understand the factors affecting individual pupils and to identify concerns. Pupils' confidence and self-esteem are promoted through very good relationships and effective use of praise. However, with the exception of end-of-year reports, there are no procedures for recording systematically pupils' personal development as they move through the school.
60. Pupils think through problems for themselves as part of their investigations in mathematics and science. They take responsibility for their own learning through group work, homework and research. Pupils help responsibly with the daily routines such as looking after the music at assemblies, collecting registers and ringing the school bell for assemblies. The school council has just been established and this gives all pupils an opportunity to have some say in what happens at school. Currently, their discussions include school dinners and the organisation of games at break time.
61. The school has satisfactory procedures for assessing and monitoring pupils' attainment in English and mathematics. Information from statutory tests and a range of optional tests is recorded. This enables the headteacher and staff to track pupils' progress from year to year and to set statutory and optional targets for year groups. The school meets the statutory requirements for assessing pupils at the end of Year 2 and Year 6, and for reporting the results to parents. Apart from English and mathematics, there are no consistent whole-school procedures for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress.
62. An initial assessment based on national guidelines is completed for each child on entry into the Reception Year. This is followed by the local education authority's assessment procedure, as children commence full-time schooling. However, little of this information is used to inform planning in a systematic way. Records relating to the national numeracy and national literacy objectives are kept. These show progress but again are not used effectively to inform planning.
63. The headteacher and deputy headteacher analyse the results of statutory and optional tests to identify differences in attainment and progress. Targets are set for each year group with a clear focus on the achievement of more-able pupils. There is much less awareness of the performance and progress of less-able pupils. As a result their needs are not always recognised or met effectively. Results are also analysed by gender and staff are aware of the comparative performance of boys and girls.
64. On-going assessments from regular mathematics and spelling tests, evaluations of writing and dictations are not used effectively to identify learning needs or to inform planning. Similarly, information from marking or from the use of assessment in lessons is not used sufficiently well to plan the next steps in learning. Records of achievement contain end-of-year tests and examples of work, but these are not annotated in a way that will give useful information to teachers as children progress through the school. Whilst there are clear policies relating to assessment and marking, these are not being applied consistently within the school.

Teachers keep a variety of personal records but these are not used effectively to support teaching and learning.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

65. Parents are very pleased with all aspects of the school's provision. Inspectors share almost all of the positive views held by parents. The partnership with parents is a real strength of the school and makes a really positive contribution to the academic and personal development of pupils.
66. The school has a very good partnership with parents, which helps them to support their children's learning. The information provided for parents is very good. Curriculum evenings, letters about national tests, and termly letters all explain what the pupils are learning and how they are assessed. Regular newsletters inform parents about school events and significant changes in policy. The prospectus and governors' annual report provide a good summary of significant features of the life of the school.
67. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress. The end-of-year reports contain detailed comments about pupils' attainment and progress. Parents are able to meet formally with the teachers to discuss their children's progress. Literacy and numeracy targets are discussed with parents, and pupils also take home certificates, badges and awards noting their achievements. Teachers are readily accessible for informal contacts and the school is quick to involve parents if there are problems or concerns.
68. The school works closely with parents and enables them to support their children's learning. Parents are encouraged to raise concerns and keep the school informed about their children. The school consults regularly with parents over issues such as sex education, behaviour policy and Internet access, and responds to their concerns. Parents are satisfied with the arrangements for homework, and teachers readily give advice so parents can help their children. For example, the school has produced useful guidance for parents to help with their children's reading. Parents and teachers use the reading record regularly to note achievements and difficulties.
69. Good arrangements are in place to introduce parents and children to the Reception Year. Parents welcome the induction process and recognise the benefits for them and their children. However, some parents would prefer their children to start school full-time in September rather than wait until the term in which they become five years of age. Many parents support their children at assemblies, school productions and events such as sports day and harvest celebration. They encourage their children to take part in activities after school such as netball, football, booster classes and dance. Some parents help regularly in the classroom and with activities like swimming and sports day. The active 'friends of the school' association organises social events and raises funds for new equipment and resources. Their social and financial support is welcomed and appreciated by parents and the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

70. The headteacher provides effective leadership of the school. In collaboration with staff, governors and parents she has identified a vision for the school which is encapsulated in the aim to provide “*the highest standard of education for all our pupils*”. This aim is founded upon five key objectives – good quality teaching; a broad and balanced curriculum; a stimulating environment; high expectations; and home-school partnership. She has led successfully a committed team of teachers and support staff in realising most of these key objectives. She has also led and managed successfully important changes to the organisation of classes, which have resulted in a more coherent approach to curriculum planning. This ensures that pupils receive a consistent entitlement to all aspects of the curriculum as they move through the school.
71. The headteacher and deputy headteacher form an effective leadership team, which promotes successfully the aims and vision for the school. The deputy headteacher provides very good leadership in the classroom through her high quality teaching; her involvement in a range of rich and interesting projects within and outside lessons; and her very enthusiastic engagement in school and community activities and events.
72. In consultation with staff and governors, the headteacher has produced a well-structured school improvement plan which is based upon an effective review of previous developments. The plan includes short-term priorities as well as medium- and longer-term targets stretching over the next three years and beyond. This represents a significant improvement in the management of the school since the last inspection. Actions within the school improvement plan are defined clearly and evidence of successful completion often relates well to improvements in pupils’ attainment.
73. Since her appointment eighteen months ago, the headteacher has worked well with subject co-ordinators to identify key areas for improvement and to take effective action. Improvements to the range and quality of provision and pupils’ attainment in writing and scientific enquiry are good examples of the successful management of change, involving the headteacher, subject co-ordinators, teachers, classroom assistants, governors and local education authority advisers.
74. All teaching staff have more than one subject to co-ordinate and, generally, have a good understanding of the key strengths and weaknesses of their subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Subject co-ordinators are aware of the implications of test results and have had the opportunity to monitor planning and to look at pupils’ work. They have had very few opportunities to work alongside colleagues or to observe teaching and learning in lessons. Job descriptions are general in nature and do not include specific tasks for the year, or indications of entitlement of time and resources to fulfil the particular responsibilities.
75. The processes of performance management of the headteacher and teachers are carried out effectively and meet statutory requirements. All staff engage in a range of professional development activities relating to whole-school and individual areas for improvement.

Professional development takes place through in-school training; activities with the local cluster of schools; and through attendance at courses and meetings provided largely by the local education authority. Newly appointed staff are inducted successfully into the life and work of the school through formal activities and informal contacts.

76. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators know the school well and have identified relevant areas for improvement. However, the monitoring and evaluation of performance relies largely on analysing test results, looking at pupils' work and discussing issues with colleagues. As yet, there is no systematic approach to observing lessons and gathering first-hand evidence about the quality of teaching and learning.
77. The governing body has a very good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. Governors are well informed by the headteacher's reports to governing body meetings and through their regular contact with the school. They are active, committed and support the school well through their formal meetings and informal contacts with the local community. Some governors have particular subject or aspect links, for example, with literacy, numeracy, early years and special educational needs. These links and the programme of termly paired visits ensure that governors know the school well and share a common vision for its longer-term development. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities well.
78. The school benefits from a level of income per pupil that is well above the national average. The number of teachers and support staff is greater than might be expected in a school of this size. Financial planning has been undertaken carefully and, at times, cautiously. As a result, the school often carries forward a much larger than average proportion of its income. While this carry-forward may have provided useful protection against the impact of a decline in the number of pupils attending the school, it has meant that there has been insufficient investment in renewing and upgrading resources and classroom equipment. Also the rationale for allocating budgets to subject areas is unclear and is not always based upon a thorough audit of needs.
79. Generally, specific grants and funds are used well for their designated purposes. For example, the New Opportunities Fund has been used effectively for staff training in ICT. Funds allocated to the local cluster of schools are used well to support curriculum initiatives. Elsewhere, intervention programmes relating to the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have not been implemented effectively.
80. Financial controls and the administration and monitoring of the budget are good. The school's experienced administrative assistant has well-established procedures for dealing with orders and invoices and keeps detailed records of income and expenditure. Budget statements are discussed regularly by the governors' finance committee who benefit from a clear commentary provided by the headteacher and administrative assistant. However, the school is not yet making the best use of ICT for the electronic storage, retrieval and communication of information relating to financial and other administrative procedures.

81. The school applies the principles of best value effectively to much of its work. The headteacher and governors are aware of comparative costs and quality when making decisions about contracts and major items of expenditure. The school has been prepared to challenge its existing practices to make improvements to the organisation of classes, and to approaches to teaching writing and scientific enquiry. The school has consulted parents about such issues as sex education, school uniform and the use of the Internet.
82. The school benefits from good accommodation, including a covered swimming pool, and extensive grounds. The recent building programme has enhanced facilities for teaching and learning and for administration. Nevertheless, some classroom equipment is in need of renewing and improving, and in one classroom physical education mats are being used as a carpet area. In general, floors in the hall and in classrooms are in a poor condition. Building work has made it difficult to keep them clean and the school recognises that, once the work is complete, a major cleaning programme will be needed to bring floors up to an acceptable standard of cleanliness. This was an issue at the time of the last inspection. In general, resources for teaching most subjects are adequate but often old and worn. The school has already made provision to improve resources in ICT where they are currently inadequate.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

83. In order to improve further the quality of education and standards of attainment, the headteacher, staff and governors should:
- improve the quality and consistency of marking across the school and make better use of assessment information to plan the next steps in learning for groups or individual pupils; (36, 37, 61-64, 90, 99, 112, 115, 128, 131, 145, 156, 159, 162, 168)
 - improve the match of work to the needs of individual pupils, especially the less-able and those with special educational needs; and make better use of intervention programmes promoted by the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies; (5, 9, 14, 31, 32, 42, 45, 56, 79, 102, 104, 107, 114, 123, 126, 140)
 - improve the quality and consistency of teaching especially where it is unsatisfactory, giving particular attention to the learning objectives, the clarity of explanations and consistent approaches to behaviour management; (18, 25, 31-33, 35, 38, 40, 51, 105, 111, 124, 125, 144)
 - develop and extend the Foundation Stage curriculum by providing a wider range of learning activities, better resources, and a richer and more interesting learning environment; (26, 34, 39, 41, 88-97)
 - raise expectations for the quality of presentation of pupils' work and store their work so that it enables teachers and pupils to see more clearly how it is progressing; (14, 108, 120)
 - use the budget surplus to improve the range and quality of teaching programmes and learning resources, and further improve the quality of the learning environment. (42,

78-81, 91, 130, 146, 168)

MINOR ISSUES

- 84 The school should make more effective use of new technology to support financial and administrative systems. (80)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	29
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	20

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	2	5	11	8	3	0	0
Percentage	7	17	38	28	10	0	0

The table gives the number and percentage of lessons observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about teaching. Care should be taken when interpreting these percentages as each lesson represents more than three percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	88
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	6

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	14

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	6

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	3.4
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	13	4	17

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	14	14	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (100)	82 (91)	94 (91)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	11	11	11
	Girls	3	4	4
	Total	14	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (91)	88 (91)	88 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2 (Year 6)

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	10	11	21

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	9	10
	Girls	11	8	10
	Total	21	17	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	100 (96)	81 (92)	95 (92)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	9	9	10
	Girls	10	10	11
	Total	19	19	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	90 (75)	90 (92)	100 (67)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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	88
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	88
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.5
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	22

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	66

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001 - 2002
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	£
Total income	237,385
Total expenditure	263,996
Expenditure per pupil	2.420
Balance brought forward from previous year	41,242
Balance carried forward to next year	(26,611)

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	3
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	88
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	72	23	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	23	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	67	30	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	42	40	7	5	7
The teaching is good.	77	23	0	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	67	28	5	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	93	7	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	79	19	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	58	40	0	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	51	42	0	5	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	70	23	3	0	5
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	47	40	14	0	0

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

85. Children in the Reception class make a secure and purposeful start to school life, but there are some unsatisfactory aspects within the school's provision. Improvement in this part of the school's work since the last inspection is judged to be satisfactory, as standards remain similar and many new requirements have been implemented.
86. During the inspection inspectors observed six lessons involving children in the Reception Year; examined children's work in books and around their classroom; studied their assessments and records; talked with children; and held discussions with the co-ordinator, other staff and governors.
87. Children are admitted to school on a part-time afternoon basis in the term following their fourth birthday. They attend full-time education in the term in which they become five. Currently there are nine full-time children in the Reception Year and they form part of a mixed Reception and Year 1 class. Parents are invited to an introductory meeting to support their children's induction into school. Informal after-school communication is also welcomed and is a feature of the school. The local education authority's assessment procedures indicate that children's attainment on entry to school is slightly above the County average, and includes a lower proportion of children with below average attainment. School data shows that the ability profile varies from one year to the next, an important factor when looking at statistical information relating to small year groups. By the end of Reception Year most children are achieving the standards expected for their age in communications, language and literacy, mathematical development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. Children's attainment is generally above the level expected in personal, social and emotional development. All this represents satisfactory progress overall, particularly given that some of the children receive only one term of full-time education in the Reception Year.
88. The quality of teaching for children in the Reception Year ranges from very good to unsatisfactory and is satisfactory overall. Well-established routines and expectations help children to feel secure. The staff know the children well and relationships are good. Children are encouraged sensitively to take part in and contribute to activities. They are confident when responding. Through adult-directed introductions to lessons, children soon focus on key teaching points, are clear about the purpose of the lesson, and understand their tasks. The teacher often uses this element of the lesson effectively to assess their current learning. Children listen and concentrate well. Good questioning, interaction and involvement help them to extend their learning. When children have first-hand activities based on exploration, such as looking at real plants growing in their teacher's garden or making boats to carry teddies on the water, they make very strong gains in learning. Questions such '*I wonder what's going on here?*' encourage children to verbalise ideas.

89. Children are strongly directed by the teacher or other adults in many of their tasks, and have limited opportunities to make choices and extend their own learning through guided or independent investigation and experience. There is often a stronger emphasis on recording than on learning. For example, when asked about what happened to the beans the class has planted, a little boy answered '*we drew labels with lines*' rather than describing the way the bean seeds grew. At times, learning can be passive, involving only listening to the teacher and other children. In one afternoon, children sat in assembly and then participated in singing, with little active involvement in the key learning experiences. Much learning relies on visual skills and children have too few opportunities to use hearing, touch, movement and other senses, so important in early learning.
90. The Foundation Stage curriculum guidance has been embodied in the school's own policy and the six areas of learning are shown in the long- and medium-term plans for topics such as 'ourselves', 'changes', and 'holidays'. Key objectives are shown within these plans with an emphasis on outcomes. There is no indication of the range of activities leading to the objectives, or of whether activities are structured play, adult-guided or teacher-led. Short-term planning is superficial, mainly identifying the teacher's role and broad outcomes. As a consequence, planning is not guiding effectively the teaching and learning experiences of children in the Reception Year.
91. The classroom is of good size and opens onto an outdoor play area, which during the inspection was not secure due to building work. However, plans are underway to extend the secure area to include a grassy surface. Within the classroom there are few areas dedicated to experiential development, such as well developed role play, effective reading or imaginative graphics areas or a census table. The room lacks stimulation and order. Despite some recent investment in equipment, resources are barely adequate for the requirements of the new Foundation Stage curriculum, with many being old and worn.

Personal, social and emotional development

92. Children are happy and confident as they enter school in the morning, quickly hanging up or putting away their coats, lunch and reading bags. They understand clearly and respond well to the rules and routines of the classroom. Children listen carefully for sustained periods of time, put hands up when offering responses, and are keen to work and want to do well. They are well aware of other children and are confident in their interactions with older children in the class. Many children can dress themselves independently, some needing help with tights, laces and very tiny buttons. One little boy confidently told the school how they had made a '*sandman*'. They share such resources as crayons, construction materials and letter cards, and tidy up well at the end of lessons. When given the opportunity, children work together in play-based activities, such as making a car for teddy to go across the sand. Children are encouraged sensitively to distinguish right from wrong and are developing an understanding of school rules. They behave well. Opportunities for choice and more independence are limited, with the heavy emphasis on teacher-directed activities restricting children's further development in this area. However, many children have already exceeded the expectations of the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning.

Communication, language and literacy

93. Children make good progress in listening and respond with confidence in question and answer sessions. Opportunities to talk are often limited to this type of experience. The average and more-able children can recognise initial sounds; can write them holding a pencil correctly; and can copy write. Less-able children have a growing knowledge of letter sounds and, through tracing, have growing pencil control and are improving copy writing. Few opportunities were seen in children's work of their own independent attempts at writing and this is currently over-directed. All children have reading books, which match their needs. These are shared at home and at school. Children hold their books correctly and are confident to talk about the pictures. Some will talk about characters and events. They have a growing knowledge of very common words, with the more-able using letter sounds and pictures as clues for their reading. Children are taught effectively early pencil control and sound and word recognition within reading and writing. However, the over-direction inhibits the less able who lack the confidence to attempt writing. Reading and writing experiences are limited and children have little opportunity to develop imagination, extend language, choose and enjoy books, or write for their own purposes. Overall attainment in this area is in line with expectations and most children will have achieved the Early Learning Goals by the time they start Year 1.

Mathematical development

94. Children's mathematical experiences occur mainly within 'maths lessons'. Average and more-able children can count to ten. They can match numbers one-to-one; count on one more and one back; and recognise 'more' or 'less' in practical situations. Less-able children can also count to ten but find matching numbers to objects more difficult. All children are strengthening their number formation with increasing pencil control. There is a strong focus on written recording, rather than on the process of first-hand practical experience leading the way to understanding. Children recognise two- and three-dimensional shapes and can name a circle, triangle, cone etc. More-able children can explain the properties of some shapes '*a triangle has three sides*'. In one lesson during the inspection, children were encouraged to match halves and quarters to whole shapes and by the end of the lesson could explain '*two halves make a whole*'. Children make good progress in the skills that are taught but the range of experiences is narrow and directed, with few links to other areas of learning to give practical application. Overall children's attainment is in line with national expectations for this area of learning and most will achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time that they start in Year 1.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

95. During the inspection the children walked through the village to their teacher's garden to look at the fruit and vegetables. They related this work to their own attempts to grow beans in the classroom. This first-hand experience opened up opportunities for a wide range of learning closely related to the needs and interests of the children. Children were able to talk about places in school and in the village, develop a growing knowledge of directional language, and ask and answer questions about animals and plants in their teacher's garden. They developed a growing awareness of the care needed by both plants and animals.

However, there are too few opportunities, with a focused purpose, for children to investigate and, as a consequence, their curriculum in this area is limited. Children were not seen using the computer during the week of the inspection. Within a narrow range of experiences, children's attainment is in line with national expectations and they should achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time that they start in Year 1.

Physical development

96. A strong emphasis on pencil control and handwriting helps children to develop increasing dexterity. They handled construction toys well and soon made a car for teddy. In art and design, children showed good control using fabric crayons. When walking around the garden, they showed a high level of awareness and control, taking care not to step on plants, negotiating steps and slopes and walking over uneven ground. In a games lesson they enjoyed the freedom of running round hoops, although some became inhibited during a competitive game by the boisterousness of older children. They changed appropriately for physical education lessons and showed great enjoyment. Children were not seen using tricycles and cars in the outdoor play area during the lessons observed because of sharp and heavy rain showers. Children are on line to attain the expected Early Learning Goals in this area by the time that they start Year 1.

Creative development

97. During the week of the inspection, limited opportunities were seen for children to develop their creative skills. There was no role-play, imaginative activity, story telling or music apart from a limited opportunity for singing. However, in art and design, the children responded well to a directed activity representing a beach or seaside theme. Children knew their colours and used them appropriately, they showed interest in the fabric crayons, saying they were '*magic*' and were able to talk about their work. Evidence from work over time and the planned provision indicates that children's attainment is in line with expectations, and pupils should achieve the Early Learning Goals by the time that they start in Year 1.

ENGLISH

98. Overall, the school makes good provision for teaching and learning in English and the key elements of the literacy hour have been implemented effectively. Pupils' attainment is above national expectations in speaking and listening and reading throughout the school and in line with expectations in writing. Progress has been good since the last inspection.
99. Key strengths in English include:
- Teaching is good overall;
 - The curriculum is broad ranging and implements effectively the National Literacy Strategy;
 - Literacy skills are applied well within other subject areas;
 - Standards of attainment in reading are above the national average by the end of Years 2 and 6;
 - Good progress has been made in improving the range and quality of writing throughout the school, and handwriting and spelling skills have also improved.

100. Areas for improvement include:
- There are weaknesses in the procedures for marking and assessing pupils' work and for planning work based upon the needs of pupils with differing abilities;
 - As a result less-able pupils do not achieve as well as they could;
 - There is a lack of focus on the basic skills of word building, vocabulary extension and sentence structure for less-able pupils;
 - Insufficient use has been made of the intervention programmes of the Early Literacy;
 - Strategy or the Additional Literacy Support, which focus on these very skills.
101. The results of statutory assessments for seven-year-olds in 2001 indicate that pupils' attainment in reading was above average when compared with schools nationally and with similar schools. In writing, pupils' attainment was below that of schools nationally and similar schools. In both reading and writing the proportion of pupils attaining below the expected Level 2 was greater than that found nationally. However, this data has to be treated with caution because of the small number of pupils in the year group. Overall, results show that standards of attainment in reading have improved steadily since 1999, while pupils' attainment in writing declined significantly between 1999 and 2000 but improved again in 2001.
102. Evidence gained from looking at pupils' work, talking with pupils and hearing them read indicates that, by the age of seven years, standards in speaking and listening and reading are above national expectations, and that standards in writing are close to national expectations. Average and more-able pupils achieve well, but less-able pupils and those with special educational needs do not always achieve as well as they should. They are less confident about reading and make slow progress with the acquisition of the basic skills of word building, sentence structure and broadening vocabulary.
103. The results of statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001 indicate that overall in English pupils' attainment was well above average when compared with all schools and similar schools. The proportion of pupils attaining Level 4 was very high. However, the overall results mask a significant difference in performance in reading and writing. Pupils' attainment in reading was very high with two thirds of the pupils attaining level 5. By contrast, their attainment in writing was below average with very few pupils attaining the higher level. Overall, there has been a marked improvement in standards of attainment in English since 1999.
104. Evidence gained during the week of the inspection shows that, by the age of eleven years, pupils' attainment in reading and speaking and listening remains above average, often well above expectations for average and more-able pupils. However, some less-able pupils and those with special educational needs lack both confidence and word building skills and their attainment is below expectations for their age. Currently, examples of pupils' writing show significant improvement and indicate that attainment is now in line with national expectations. There is a similar pattern to that of reading, with less-able pupils and those with special educational needs making less progress because of insecure sentence structure, spelling and word usage. Pupils with special educational needs receive some additional support in a

withdrawal group, for a short time each week. The focus of support is mainly handwriting and letter strings. Learning support staff provide good support in class, but a lack of specific planning for this group means that the support is not always focused sufficiently on precise strategies for improvement.

105. In Years 1 and 2, pupils listen attentively and are given opportunities to reflect and express and extend their ideas. Good use is made of question and answer sessions to strengthen and extend speaking and listening skills. In Years 3 and 4, similar opportunities are offered but these can be inhibited by a few pupils who dominate and interrupt, or by the teacher moving away from the focus of the lesson. Pupils make strong gains in speaking and listening in Years 5 and 6, frequently being asked to explain, evaluate and justify their ideas and opinions, as part of class work and in small groups, in all areas of the curriculum. A Year 6 pupil was able to explain why she would prefer to live in the city-state of Athens, rather than Sparta and give supporting reasons.
106. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 strengthen their knowledge and recall of common words and their use of phonics and picture clues. The average and more-able pupils enjoy reading and are confident. Their reading is accurate, fluent and has expression. They self correct and talk with confidence about the books they enjoy, but are less confident about discussing characters or the plot of a story. They are aware of the use of an index and table of contents to find information. Less-able pupils are more hesitant, less confident and rely heavily on common words and picture clues. They are reluctant to talk about books, other than to respond to questions about the pictures.
107. Average and more-able Year 6 pupils are established readers who love books. They offer preferences and opinions on authors and genres, and explain the detail of the plot and the reasons for authors choosing particular features. They are confident, accurate, expressive readers who normally read silently and quickly. They use a range of skills to locate information. In one lesson they had to identify similes within a poem they were reading. Less-able pupils had books that were too difficult. As a consequence they lacked confidence and read hesitantly, using sounds and clues, together with common known words. They were not confident in word building. They talked about books at a simple level. Parents and learning support staff provide good support for pupils and reading diaries are particularly helpful in sharing progress between home and school. Most pupils read regularly at home.
108. The skills of handwriting, with a focus on common letter strings e.g. 'ee' and 'ea', are taught almost daily in every class. As a consequence, most pupils from Year 2 onwards have a secure joined style. However, whilst pupils join writing in their books, their presentation is poor and work is often untidy. This spoils work of otherwise good quality.
109. Progress in spelling is sound. Pupils gain a progressive knowledge of common letter strings and spelling patterns and rules. This enables most pupils to make good progress. This work is not well matched to the needs and abilities of less-able pupils who need more opportunities for word building and consolidation.

110. Throughout the school, pupils are taught a wide range of skills to strengthen and extend sentence structure and punctuation. They also learn about different forms and purposes of writing. These include poetry, instructions, letters, recounts, stories, playscripts and biographies. Pupils are given opportunities to strengthen individual skills; and to apply these, first in short focused pieces and then, through drafting and editing, to extended pieces of writing. This is a successful process. A Year 2 pupil wrote a letter of complaint, which included adventurous choices of vocabulary – *‘furious, angry, disappointed, severe punishment’*. Expectations are high, but less-able pupils need more precise support with basic skills.
111. Two lessons were seen in Years 1 and 2, both of good quality. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6 three lessons were seen ranging from unsatisfactory to very good. Overall, the quality of teaching is good. In the best lessons, teachers have good subject knowledge, share clear objectives and expectations with pupils, model very effectively reading and writing, and use questioning well to assess pupils’ current knowledge and to take learning forward. Teachers have made good use of recent training to broaden teaching and learning strategies. For example, white boards, writing frames, letter boards and hot-seating enable pupils to be involved more actively in their learning. Planning that clearly meets the needs of differing abilities and the targeted use of learning support assistants were seen to support effectively the learning of less-able pupils. Common features of less effective or unsatisfactory teaching include brief planning with unclear learning objectives for each ability group; lack of clarity of expectations; limited knowledge of how to help less-able pupils; and missed opportunities to use words, learned through spelling practice, in a meaningful context.
112. Marking is inconsistent. The use of *‘moving my writing forward’* sheets, where the teacher and pupil identify strengths and key areas upon which to improve, is a particularly good feature of assessment practice within the school. However, whilst it is used well in Years 5 and 6, it is only used termly in Years 3 and 4, and not at all in Years 1 and 2. A similar pattern is apparent in pupils’ awareness of their targets. Other marking is acknowledgement or perhaps congratulatory, but sometimes absent altogether. It is not used to inform the next steps in teaching and, as a result, short-term planning remains general and does not meet the specific needs of groups or individual pupils. The reading record provides an ideal opportunity for the teacher and pupil to review progress, but it remains underused for this purpose.
113. Writing and reading are used in many areas of the curriculum and a range of writing is displayed well. A good-sized library contains a satisfactory range of resources including fiction and non-fiction books, videos and CDs. These are well organised and effective use is made of colour coding and the Dewey classification system. Whilst pupils are regularly encouraged to take reading books home, reading is not promoted consistently well in school, other than in Years 5 and 6.
114. The subject co-ordinator has a good understanding of current standards of attainment in English, as well as the strengths and weaknesses in the subject. She gains this from analysing data and from looking carefully at pupils’ work, but has not yet had opportunities to observe teaching and learning. Within the school focus on raising standards, she has

played a significant part in strengthening the range and quality of work, and in introducing new teaching strategies. However, insufficient use has been made of the national intervention programmes for lower ability pupils. The co-ordinator is committed to raising pupils' interest and enthusiasm for the subject and is an excellent role model. She organises Book Week and strengthens and enlivens English through visits to the theatre, and through visits from poets, story-tellers and authors. She has also entered anthologies of pupils' poems in the Aldeburgh Festival.

MATHEMATICS

115. Overall, the school makes good provision for teaching mathematics and the key elements of the National Numeracy Strategy have been implemented successfully. Across the school, attainment is above the national average and pupils demonstrate good attitudes to the subject.
116. Key strengths in mathematics include:
- The range and quantity of work undertaken in all classes;
 - The high quality of teaching and learning in Years 5 and 6;
 - The ways in which the most-able pupils are given the opportunities to achieve the higher levels of attainment at the ages of seven and eleven years;
 - The good range of performance information that the school collects from statutory, optional, commercial and standardised tests.
117. Areas for improvement include:
- The quality of marking and the use made of day-to-day assessments to plan the next steps in learning for individuals or groups of pupils;
 - The match of tasks and provision for less-able pupils in mathematics;
 - The quality of teaching and learning in Years 3 and 4;
 - The presentation and storage of pupils' work.
118. During the course of the inspection, inspectors observed six mathematics lessons; examined work from pupils in every class and year group; analysed the results of statutory and optional tests; discussed provision and performance with the subject co-ordinator; talked with pupils about their work; examined resources; and studied work on display in classrooms and around the school. The small number of pupils in each year group means that comparisons based upon statutory assessments have to be treated with some caution.
119. The results of statutory assessments for seven-year-olds in 2001 indicate that attainment was well above that of all schools nationally and that of schools from the appropriate free school meals benchmark group. This represents a significant improvement in standards since 2000. In particular, boys performed much better than boys nationally. Over three-quarters of the pupils achieved the higher Level 2 (Level 2A) or Level 3, which was above the national trend.
120. Lesson observations and pupils' work indicate that, by the age of seven, pupils' attainment is above average. Pupils have a good understanding of place value when using tens and

units and add and subtract two digit numbers with confidence. They are less confident when using or talking about numbers above 1000. Pupils work confidently with coins when dealing with amounts below 100 pence. They show good knowledge and understanding of two- and three-dimensional shapes and have begun to explore angles and turns. They have used tally charts, pictograms and block graphs when recording and interpreting data. They have too few opportunities for independent recording of work and exploring and explaining patterns and applications in number work. Much of the work is completed on worksheets, which are not always stored in an order, which makes it difficult to see the progress that pupils have made over time.

121. The results of statutory tests for eleven year olds in 2001 indicate that pupils' attainment was well above average when compared with all schools; schools of similar performance in the 1997 assessments for seven-year-olds; and schools in their appropriate free school meals benchmark group. Boys' attainment is generally well above that of boys nationally; and girls' attainment is generally above girls nationally though this was only just the case in 2001. Although overall attainment remains well above average, there has been a slight downward trend in the school's performance since 1997. A real strength has been the well above average proportion of pupils, mainly boys, attaining the higher Level 5.
122. By the age of eleven, pupils' attainment is above average. Pupils are confident in adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing two and three digit numbers, including decimals. They have a sound understanding of multiplication tables to ten and use this knowledge successfully during mental calculations. They have good knowledge of the properties of two- and three-dimensional shapes, line and rotational symmetry, and perimeter and area. They use data in practical situations, for example when analysing the results of mathematics tests or when presenting the results of a plant growth investigation. Work is recorded on worksheets and in exercise books but presentation is often careless and untidy, although pupils can and do present well when required to do so. The disorganised storage of worksheets again makes it difficult to track progress.
123. Across the school, average and more-able pupils are generally given demanding work and make good progress. Tasks for less-able pupils and those with special educational needs are not always well matched to their needs or abilities. As a result they do not make such consistent progress. Overall, pupils make generally good progress in mathematics in Years 1 and 2, and particularly good progress in Years 5 and 6. Progress in Years 3 and 4 is sound overall but sometimes not as good as it should be.
124. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall throughout the school but varies significantly between unsatisfactory and very good. It is at its best in Years 2, 5 and 6 where good and sometimes very good progress is made. In a very good lesson in Year 2, pupils had to describe the perimeter of a shape to each other using the language of turns and direction. This not only reinforced mathematical concepts but also the key skills of speaking and listening. In a good lesson with pupils in Years 5 and 6, the pace of the teacher's explanations was brisk and the key concepts relating to presenting and interpreting data were presented clearly using well-prepared overhead transparencies. Where teaching and learning was unsatisfactory in Years 3 and 4, key methods and tasks were not explained

clearly or modelled effectively. As a result, pupils were not clear what to do and the pace of learning was slow.

125. Teachers are aware of the key elements of the National Numeracy Strategy and apply the three-part lesson structure effectively to their mathematics' teaching. Mental and oral activities are carried out at a good pace and pupils are familiar with using individual whiteboards to record and present outcomes. Planning is based upon the national framework and, in the best lessons, objectives are identified clearly in short-term plans and communicated to pupils in language that they can understand. In an unsatisfactory lesson, the purpose was not evident in the teacher's planning and was not communicated effectively to the pupils. As a result, they found it difficult to know what was expected of them and how it related to previous learning.
126. In the best lessons, although the broad focus or topic was the same for all pupils, work was matched to the ability and prior learning of three or four different groups of pupils. This ensured that all pupils were able to engage meaningfully in the activities and had to work hard to complete their tasks. Less-able pupils were often supported well by classroom assistants who worked effectively in partnership with, and under the direction of the class teacher. Evidence from the scrutiny of work indicates that tasks are not always well matched to the needs of less-able pupils, and although supported, they find the tasks too difficult to complete successfully. This inhibits their progress in learning.
127. Pupils are generally well behaved in lessons and work with sustained concentration. They apply themselves conscientiously to their tasks and are keen to complete them. They co-operate well when required to, which was evident in the paired activity in Year 2 when pupils read out instructions for partners to follow. There was a genuine desire to help each other to succeed. When the teacher's explanations went on for too long there was occasional fidgeting and minor off-task behaviour, but this was less than might have been expected. Pupils are usually attentive and keen to respond in order to offer answers, explanations and ideas. On occasions, the teacher allows this interaction to be dominated by boys. In one lesson in Years 5 and 6, at one point, the interactions between the teacher and individual pupils, were 10:1 in favour of boys, even though girls were indicating that they had answers and idea to contribute.
128. Work is marked up-to-date but teachers write few comments relating to mathematical knowledge and understanding or how pupils may improve their work. Commercial tests are used regularly to assess pupils' attainment, particularly in number work. Sometimes these provide useful indicators of gaps in knowledge and understanding but on other occasions contribute little to the teacher's knowledge of the pupils' performance. Generally, there is little evidence of day-to-day assessments influencing the planning for the next steps in learning. However, the school does maintain a good range of performance data from which end-of-key stage targets are set and tracked for each pupil. These targets are aggregated into suitably challenging statutory targets for Year 6, which are discussed and agreed annually with the school's link adviser. As yet, these targets have not been communicated to pupils in a way that helps them to identify where they need to improve.

129. Information and communication technology is used effectively in Years 5 and 6 to support teaching and learning in mathematics. Here there is a relatively new computer and spreadsheet software has been used successfully by pupils to enter, interpret and present data and information. Elsewhere in the school, there is little recent evidence of the use of ICT in mathematics lessons.
130. The subject is led and managed effectively by the mathematics' co-ordinator who has a good understanding of the main strengths and weaknesses in teaching, learning and attainment. Overall, satisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection. The mathematics' policy has been reviewed and updated and the National Numeracy Strategy has been implemented successfully. Long- and medium-term planning for mathematics is more structured and effective and time is allocated more consistently to the subject across the school. Some sessions are still too long but pupils sustain their concentration well when the teaching is good. Teaching has benefited from the use of new resources such as individual whiteboards and number fans. Overall, resources are adequate but some are old and worn and not stored in a way that makes them attractive or accessible to pupils.

SCIENCE

131. Overall, the school makes good provision for teaching science and the key elements of the National Curriculum programmes of study are delivered effectively. Across the school, attainment is above the national average and pupils demonstrate good attitudes to learning.
132. Key strengths in science include:
- The range and quantity of work undertaken across the school;
 - The improvements that have been made this year in both the provision for and pupils' attainment in Attainment Target 1 – Scientific Enquiry;
 - The good subject knowledge and enthusiasm demonstrated by teachers and reflected in pupils' positive attitudes to science;
 - The good levels of knowledge and understanding of life processes and living things, and materials, in particular, evident in pupils' work across the school.
133. Areas for improvement include:
- The quality of marking and the use made of day-to-day assessments to plan the next steps in learning for individuals or groups of pupils;
 - The match of tasks and provision for less-able pupils in science;
 - The limited use of information and communication technology to support teaching and learning in science;
 - The potential of some scientific investigations for making predictions and explaining conclusions in scientific terms is not always recognised or realised.
134. During the course of the inspection, inspectors observed four science lessons, one in each class; examined work from pupils in every class and year group; analysed the results of statutory tests; discussed provision and performance with the subject co-ordinator; talked with pupils about their work; examined resources; and studied work on display in classrooms and around the school. The small number of pupils in each year group means

that comparisons based upon statutory assessments have to be treated with some caution.

135. The results of teacher assessments for seven-year olds in 2001 indicate that attainment in science was below the national average in relation to the proportion of pupils achieving the expected Level 2, and broadly average for those attaining the higher Level 3. The initial results of teacher assessments in 2002 suggest that standards of attainment will be much higher.
136. Lesson observations and the scrutiny of work in books and on display indicate that the attainment of seven-year-olds is now above that expected nationally. Pupils' knowledge of the human body, nutrition and healthy diet, medicines and drugs, plants and habitats has been developed well. For example, during fieldwork in the school grounds, Year 1 and Year 2 pupils were able to identify and label the key parts of a plant; observe and classify plants as bush, tree or flower; and distinguish between dry and damp habitats. They made task-related observations and recorded these using a table. The improved levels of attainment also reflect the conscious development of skills of scientific enquiry.
137. The results of statutory tests for eleven-year-olds in 2001 indicate that attainment was above that of all schools nationally and that of the appropriate free school meals benchmark group. The performance of boys has improved steadily since 1997 and, in 2001, boys' attainment was significantly higher than that of girls. For example, of the eight Level 5 results, six were achieved by boys.
138. By the age of eleven years, pupils have a particularly detailed knowledge and understanding of the functions of the human body including the skeleton, muscles and the respiratory, circulatory and reproductive systems. They have begun to understand the protective qualities of fluoride on teeth from an investigation involving toothpaste, eggshells and vinegar. They understand the harmful effects associated with drugs, alcohol and smoking. Pupils are well informed about plants and the conditions for growth and can explain the fundamental principles of photosynthesis. They also understand a variety of methods of separating mixtures of materials including filtration and evaporation. Pupils know about light, shadows, reflection, sound and vibration. Their knowledge of the sun, moon and earth and the interrelationship of these bodies is less secure.
139. Across the school, it is clear that much greater emphasis has been given to developing the skills of scientific enquiry. Investigations are now planned carefully into science topics and this represents a significant improvement from the last inspection. At times the learning potential of investigations is not realised fully and older pupils do not have enough opportunities to record predictions and conclusions based upon previous scientific knowledge and understanding.
140. Generally, average and more-able pupils in all classes are given demanding work and make good progress. This is particularly the case for pupils in Years 2, 5 and 6. Sometimes the written tasks required of less-able pupils and those with special educational needs are not always well matched to their needs or abilities. As a result they do not make such consistent progress. In lessons, girls achieve as well as boys, though, on occasions, teachers choose boys rather than girls to carry out activities or give explanations.

141. The quality of teaching in the four lessons observed ranged from satisfactory to very good and was good overall. Teachers have good subject knowledge and evident enthusiasm for topics associated with plants and living things. The school grounds provide good opportunities for fieldwork including observational drawings and quadrat surveys. The best lessons were well planned with clear objectives and detailed activities. In a Years 5 and 6 lesson, the detailed plans produced by the teacher enabled a learning support assistant to lead a group of pupils very effectively as they explored the process of photosynthesis. Generally, resources are well organised and accessible, and in the Years 5 and 6 lesson pupils were able to draw on a range of materials to design and set up their own investigations.
142. Across the school, pupils showed real interest and enthusiasm for work in science. They co-operated well together when engaged in practical activities and showed real excitement when observing that seeds they had planted in the school grounds had germinated successfully. Many offered suggestions and reported confidently to the class on the outcomes of their work. This form of reporting back provides good opportunities to develop skills in speaking and listening.
143. The recording frames for writing up the processes and outcomes of investigations, and the use of labels and diagrams, provide good support for work in literacy. Measuring length and time, in particular, and recording these observations in tables and graphs, extends effectively class work in numeracy. In Years 5 and 6, ICT has been used successfully to record and present data relating to investigations, but little use is made of ICT to support teaching and learning in other classes.
144. Since the last inspection the school has developed a two-year planning cycle of science topics. This represents an important improvement to the structure and coherence of work in science and ensures that the requirements of the National Curriculum Programmes of Study for science can be met. Medium-term planning is based upon national guidance and a commercial scheme and provides a good foundation for class topics. Short-term, weekly planning varies considerably in quality and, generally, contains little reference to the distinct needs of groups or individual pupils, particularly the less able. In some short-term plans the key learning objectives are not identified clearly.
145. The school has analysed test results and identified successfully areas for improvement, including giving more attention to scientific enquiry. A useful class checklist to record the skills of scientific enquiry has been introduced in the current school year. However, marking of pupils' work contains few written comments relating to knowledge and understanding of science, the achievement of learning objectives or targets for improvement. There is little evidence of effective day-to-day assessment being used to plan the next steps in learning.
146. The subject is led and managed effectively and good progress has been made since the last inspection. The science co-ordinator has a good understanding of some of the key strengths and weaknesses of the subject, through monitoring plans and scrutinising work. She has led successfully the work to improve the school's approaches to developing skills in scientific

enquiry and has received useful support from a local education authority adviser. The co-ordinator has not been able to work alongside colleagues in their classrooms or to monitor and evaluate teaching and learning. Resources for science are adequate but many are old and worn. The rationale for the allocation of funds to the subject is not defined clearly within the School Improvement Plan.

OTHER SUBJECTS OF THE CURRICULUM

147. The provision for *art and design* is very good. It continues to be a great strength of the school. The knowledge, expertise and enthusiasm of the co-ordinator have a very significant impact on the quality of the curriculum, teaching and learning and pupils' attainment within school. Links with artists within the community are maximised, and the school makes strong contributions to displays and exhibitions within the community. The display of art and design is a striking feature of the school.
148. During the inspection three lessons were observed; and inspectors examined artwork in folders, on display and recorded in photograph albums, and held discussions with the subject co-ordinator and governors.
149. In Years 1 and 2, pupils' attainment is above average. Pupils show a growing understanding of colour, line, texture and tone. They gain an understanding of the materials they use. In a lesson using fabric crayons on silk, a Year 2 pupil was able to explain the '*magic*' of fabric crayons becoming colour fast when ironed by saying '*the heat melts the silk and crayon together*'. In Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, pupils' attainment is well above average. Pupils regularly investigate the work of a range of artists to stimulate and inform their own work. A clear focus on the techniques, skills and nature of different media enable pupils to work confidently with a whole range of materials. A Year 3 pupil was able to explain '*Blue is a strong colour and when printed on yellow will produce a green – yellow printed on blue probably wouldn't show up.*' Pupils evaluate their own work and that of others, expressing preferences and making reference to techniques and to cause and effect. The display of pupils' work celebrates and values its worth in a very powerful way. It is wide ranging with sculpture, printing, drawing, collage and tapestry, reflecting local and global cultures.
150. A limited number of lessons were observed, but teaching by the co-ordinator was very good and excellent. A combination of good subject knowledge, good reference to a range of stimuli, and the demonstration of techniques enables pupils to feel confident and to express their own ideas. Pupils make very good progress. Helpers and learning support staff are clear about their roles and provide guidance, but do not over direct. Pupils are confident in evaluating their work and explain what they might try next time in order to change or improve it.
151. Clear progression in the planning for art and design enables all pupils to make good progress. Plans are strengthened with the provision of a rich range of visual stimuli. Resources, many from local sources, are good. The use of the computer and digital camera greatly enhanced the work seen in Years 5 and 6. The subject makes a very strong contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and especially cultural development of pupils.

152. Links with the community provide inspiration for pupils' work, such as the Norfolk and Suffolk Open Studios and visits by local artists. Similarly, pupils contribute to the community through such exhibitions as the forthcoming community arts day at Stradbroke High School.
153. During the course of the inspection no lessons were observed in *design and technology*. However, evidence from a collection of pupils' work, photographs and displays around school indicates that at the ages of seven and eleven years pupils' attainment is generally above that expected for their age.
154. Pupils in Year 1 have created story pictures using simple levers and hinge flaps to reveal a picture. In Year 2, in a project leading to the production of shields made from a range of fabrics, pupils produced plans including labelled drawings; chose appropriate materials and colours to match their design; cut shapes accurately; and used a combination of running stitches and glue, where appropriate, to join different materials. They recorded the process and identified sensibly aspects that had pleased them most and had been difficult. They also reported on what they might improve next time.
155. Pupils aged ten and eleven years have undertaken a variety of interesting projects. Links with a professional toy maker provided a particularly rich learning experience in which to explore the use of cogs and gears. In another project, pupils used a range of sources to obtain information from which to design string puppets. These were then made using different fabrics and appropriate methods for joining them. All this work demonstrated care and attention to detail. Projects contained detailed reports and perceptive evaluations. There is clear evidence that the weaknesses in designing skills reported at the time of the last inspection have been addressed successfully.
156. Planning is based upon national guidance and, in Years 5 and 6, design and technology projects are enriched by effective business link opportunities such as the Teachers' Pets Business Link. There is no whole-school, structured approach to assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in the subject. Resources for design and technology are satisfactory and have been enhanced successfully by the recent acquisition of commercial techno-construction packs resulting from a project with the local cluster of schools.
157. During the course of the inspection only one lesson was observed in *geography*. However, evidence from a collection of pupils' work, displays around school, teachers' planning and discussions with the subject co-ordinator indicates that teaching is satisfactory and, by the ages of seven and eleven years, pupils' attainment is broadly in line with national expectations.
158. A good range of activities strengthens geographical skills in Years 1 and 2. Pupils interpret large-scale local maps and make their own maps of their journey to school. They develop a growing knowledge about, and understanding of, daily life in other lands and the differences between hot and cold lands. In Years 3 and 4, pupils use books and pictures to research differences between life in Zambia and home life in Laxfield. By Year 6 pupils use enquiry

skills by identifying key questions, seeking information from books, the Internet, maps and atlases and newspapers. They make good links with current events. When studying mountains, they looked at evidence in newspapers and books about Afghanistan. Pupils are developing an understanding of environmental issues through work linked with (PSHE). Good links are also made with literacy, history and ICT. Areas of moral, social and cultural development are strengthened successfully through work in geography topics.

159. The co-ordinator has planned a two-year rolling programme of half-term topics to ensure progression and continuity. These have been strengthened through a greater focus on first-hand experience and the use of the locality. She has also examined pupils' work and identified key areas for development. Currently, there are no whole-school processes for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in geography.
160. During the course of the inspection only one lesson was observed in *history*. However, evidence from a collection of pupils' work, displays around school, teachers' planning and discussions with the subject co-ordinator indicates that teaching is good and, by the ages of seven and eleven years, pupils' attainment is generally above national expectations.
161. In Years 1 and 2, good use is made of first-hand experiences as sources of historical evidence, through local studies within Laxfield and visits to Framlingham and Orford castles. Pupils compare life long ago with that of today, and have a growing knowledge of chronology through sequencing events. By Year 6, pupils seek historical evidence from a range of sources and many understand that there will be different viewpoints and interpretations. This is exhibited well in their newspaper reports on the Elgin Marbles. They identify similarities and differences and understand the impact of key events.
162. Good links are made with geography and literacy, and pupils use research skills to seek and interpret information. An interesting range of activities is planned, based on national guidance for the subject. These have been extended and enhanced by the subject co-ordinator with advice from the County adviser. A good range of artefacts enhances displays and invites pupils to be curious. The co-ordinator has good subject knowledge and a clear view of how to improve further the subject. Currently, there are no whole-school processes for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in history.
163. The development of work in *information and communication technology* has been severely disrupted by recent building work in school. This has limited access to appropriate hardware for several months and there is little evidence of work in ICT in three of the four classes. During the course of the inspection no ICT lessons were observed, and in only three lessons, all with Years 5 and 6, was ICT used to support teaching and learning. It is not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in ICT nor is it possible to make a judgement about pupils' attainment at the age of seven years. However, evidence from discussion with pupils, observations in lessons and work in folders and on display, indicates that by the age of eleven years pupils' attainment is in line with national expectations with some particularly strong features.
164. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have produced Haiku poems demonstrating good word-processing

skills in relation to the use of different fonts, size, colour, headers and layout. Reports to parents about the attainment of Year 5 pupils indicate that they have used the Internet to locate and retrieve information and send e-mails. These pupils have also used successfully a software package to present text and images. In Years 5 and 6, pupils have used a range of software to combine photographs, clipart and text. The use of ICT to develop work in art and design is particularly effective and attainment here is above that expected of pupils of this age.

165. ICT is a major area for development within the school improvement plan. The nearly-complete building programme includes a new ICT suite, which will contain ten computers. This will enhance significantly the resources for ICT, which are currently inadequate. The school is also aware that pupils have too few opportunities to develop their skills in using ICT for control purposes.
166. Teachers and learning support assistants are improving their personal skills in ICT through a national training programme. The subject co-ordinator provides effective leadership of ICT though she has no specialist skills or qualifications in the subject. The school benefits from support from the local cluster of schools and the good curriculum advice provided by the local education authority.
167. During the course of the inspection no class *music* lessons were observed. It is not possible to make judgements about the quality of teaching or standards of attainment in the subject. Evidence from whole-school and key stage assemblies and singing practice indicates that pupils are able to sing expressively with a good sense of rhythm and dynamics when they are well motivated. In a Key Stage 1 assembly, the teacher modelled singing well and the pupils responded enthusiastically and used percussion with a good sense of rhythm and beat. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 performed very well their own composition and interpretation of the story of Demeter and Persephone, using guitars, recorders and tuned and untuned percussion. They were highly motivated and performed with high levels of concentration and awareness of their part within the whole ensemble. In other singing activities, pupils in Years 3 and 4 participated with evident enjoyment and enthusiasm, while those in Years 5 and 6 seemed very restrained and self-conscious. Some pupils benefit from recorder and guitar tuition provided by teachers outside class lessons.
168. There has been little effective leadership of the subject for some while. Recently, a co-ordinator has been identified who is developing a more coherent approach to whole-school planning. However, this is not yet secure and there are no systematic approaches to assessing pupils' attainment and progress in music or monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning in the subject. Resources for teaching music are adequate but would benefit from a wider range of tuned percussion instruments.
169. During the week of the inspection very limited evidence was gained of the quality of teaching and standards of attainment in *physical education*. One lesson was observed discussions with the some Year 6 pupils and the co-ordinator took place, and the policy was examined. As a result no judgements have been made about standards of attainment or the quality of teaching. Building work has disrupted the storage of resources and the availability of the

hall. However, there is evidence that the planned curriculum over time covers gymnastics, dance, games, swimming and athletics. Provision in dance and swimming is particularly strong and the school has its own swimming pool, which is used extensively during the warmer weather. The school recognises that gymnastics is an area that requires further development and improvement in terms of the range and quality of learning experiences. Very strong sporting links with neighbouring schools, through the High Suffolk Sports Association, strengthen and broaden the range of games' opportunities for pupils. Links within the community also enhance the quality and range of provision in physical education. For example, local dance groups, Dance East and the Suffolk School of Samba, visit the school; visits are made to local theatres to watch dance; and the school has a strong tradition of dance and drama performances. The co-ordinator has vision, expertise and great enthusiasm for promoting subject.