

INSPECTION REPORT

SWAFFHAM FIRST AND NURSERY SCHOOL

Swaffham

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121059

Headteacher: Mr I Futers

Reporting inspector: Graham Bate
20926

Dates of inspection: 26th – 30th November 2001

Inspection number: 196364

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First and Nursery
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	3 to 8 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed

School address:	White Cross Road Swaffham Norfolk
Postcode:	PE37 7RF
Telephone number:	01760 721357
Fax number:	01760 720193

Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Rev S J Smith

Date of previous inspection:	July 1997
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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
20926	Mr G Bate	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Music Equal opportunities English as an additional language	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and pupils' achievements How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
09942	Mrs S Stevens	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?
21858	Revd J Pryor	Team inspector	English Geography History Religious education Special educational needs	How well is the school led and managed?
15527	Mr D Manuel	Team inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology Physical education The Foundation Stage	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Bench Marque Limited
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Victoria Street
Burnham-on-Sea
Somerset TA8 1AN

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33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Swaffham First and Nursery School is located in the market town of Swaffham, Norfolk. It is a Church of England voluntary controlled school taking pupils from the ages of three to eight years of age. There are 229 pupils on roll plus 46 children in the nursery, all of whom attend either in the morning or in the afternoon. There are currently 30 children in the reception classes, with a further 30 due in January 2002. The number of boys is slightly greater than the number of girls. Most of the pupils live in the town, which is growing in size. As a result, the pressure on places is increasing. Despite a good pre-school experience in the nursery, the overall standard of attainment on entry to reception covers a wide range but is below average standard. Sixteen per cent of pupils are currently on the register of special educational needs. Seven per cent have individual education plans. This is below the national average. A further three pupils have a statement of special educational need. Unemployment in the area is not high but it is predominantly a low wage economy. About 20 per cent of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, which is just above the national average. About 13 per cent of pupils enter or leave the school on occasions other than at the usual first admission or leaving times. Two pupils speak English as an additional language and a number of pupils from the travelling community attend the school.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school is effective. The pupils make good progress from the time they enter the nursery until they leave at the age of eight. Standards at eight are at least satisfactory in all subjects. The pupils have positive attitudes to their work, enjoy good relationships with their teachers and peers and behave well. These positive attitudes, combined with an overall good quality of teaching, now ensure that learning is good throughout the school. The school provides a curriculum which meets the needs of pupils, and works hard to ensure it is relevant. The pupils are very well cared for and there is good provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school strives hard to involve the parents in their children's work. More work is required to use assessment information to guide curriculum planning, to further develop the role of subject co-ordinators and the governors' understanding of the school's strengths and weaknesses. The headteacher has a good clear view of the school's educational direction. The overall management of the headteacher and other key staff is satisfactory. The school's policies and practices ensure that pupils are valued and included in every aspect of school life. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress through the school.
- Achievement in reading and writing is good.
- The pupils' attitudes are positive and behaviour and relationships are good.
- The overall quality of teaching is good.
- Pupils are well cared for and provision for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good.
- The headteacher has a clear view of the school's educational direction.
- Art is a strength of the school.

What could be improved

- Insufficient use is made of assessment information to guide planning in all subjects.
- The role of the subject co-ordinators requires definition and further development.
- There are insufficient strategies in place to raise the governors' awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in July 1997. Since then the school has made a steady and satisfactory improvement over a wide range of issues, including those identified for particular attention in the last report. Standards in reading and writing have improved better than the average national trend. The underlying trend in mathematics has also been up but is more erratic. There has been a general improvement in the quality of teaching, which has ensured that pupils now have equal access to the curriculum, and there is a more effective whole-school approach to the management of behaviour. There is no unsatisfactory teaching. Overall attainment in information and communication technology is now satisfactory as a result of improved teacher competence and availability of computer hardware. Changes in the management structure have helped to ensure that the headteacher's clear understanding of the direction the school needs to take is now effectively complemented by the deputy headteacher. Systematic analysis of the school's performance in national tests is beginning to help the school to identify priorities related to raising standards, as have strategies to monitor pupils' personal and academic progress. The governors are now systematically considering best value when making decisions. The provision for the cultural development of the pupils is now good, strategic management has improved as have the steps taken to involve parents in their children's learning. The school is also benefiting from the improvements in accommodation and the opportunities it provides the pupils.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			Similar schools	
	1999	2000	2001	2001	
Reading	C	B	C	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	C	A	C	D	
Mathematics	D	C	D	D	

The range of attainment on entry to the school is wide but is, on the whole, below average. The results in the national tests for 2001 show that standards in reading and writing are average when compared with all schools nationally. They were just below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, that is those having 8-20 per cent of pupils entitled to free school meals, performance is average in reading and below average in writing and mathematics. The underlying trend in performance has been up since 1996 and generally better than the national trend, although mathematical performance is variable. During the inspection, standards of work seen indicate that achievement is good in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science with attainment at expected levels. In all other subjects of the curriculum, except religious education and art where standards are good, attainment is at expected levels for pupils aged both seven and eight in Years 2 and 3. These standards have been maintained since the last inspection except for information and communication technology where performance has improved. From entry to the nursery, where attainment is well below average, the pupils achieve well throughout the school, now leaving at eight at least in line with average expectations.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	The pupils have positive attitudes and enjoy coming to school. They show interest in their work and generally concentrate well.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Throughout the school the standard of behaviour is good. There was no evidence of oppressive behaviour and pupils play happily together in the playground. Pupils are welcoming and polite to visitors.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships throughout the school are good. There is a mutual respect between adults and pupils. Pupils are given small responsibilities to undertake, including some for their own learning.
Attendance	The above-authorized patterns of absence represent the seasonal work patterns of parents. Unauthorised absences are few and about average. No pupils have been excluded from school.

The quality of relationships in the school and the positive attitudes shown by the pupils contribute significantly to the good learning in the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

The overall quality of teaching is good throughout the school. There was no unsatisfactory teaching in the observed lessons. The teaching of literacy skills is good throughout the school. There is more inconsistency in the teaching of numeracy skills, varying from satisfactory to good. The teachers manage their classes well and use a good range of effective teaching methods linked suitably to the required learning objectives. They have high expectations of the standards of behaviour, quality of relationships, the inclusion of all pupils and the extension of the pupils' technical vocabulary. Expectations for higher attaining pupils and for written presentation are not always high enough. The teachers work exceptionally well with the learning support assistants and deploy resources efficiently. Use of time by the teachers varies; in some cases time is lost at the beginning and end of sessions. Subject knowledge is generally satisfactory. Teachers have confidence and competence in using information and communication technology. The teachers of children under five have a good understanding of how pupils of this age learn. Homework is used well, whilst the standard of marking varies. The teachers, by their effective planning and teaching strategies, ensure the needs of all pupils are well met. These positive aspects of teaching ensure learning is good throughout the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	A broad range of worthwhile opportunities is provided which meets the needs of all pupils. The school makes every effort to ensure the curriculum is relevant and interesting. There is satisfactory provision for extra-curricular activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision for these pupils is very good. They are appropriately included in all activities and well supported.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	The provision for these pupils is good. They are well supported and the school takes good strategic steps to ensure provision is always available.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for these aspects of the pupils' development. The provision contributes well to the quality of relationships.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The overall provision for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare is very good. All staff know the pupils very well. Assessment information about pupils' attainment is not yet used fully to modify their curriculum

The school strives hard to work in partnership with parents by, for example, providing good quality reports and other information. It has recently introduced termly curriculum outlines for all parents. A number of parents help in the school on a regular basis and the First School Association organises a series of social and fund raising events. The parents support the school's homework policy.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher has a clear vision for the educational direction of the school. He and the deputy headteacher work well together. The subject management role of curriculum co-ordinators has still to be fully developed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body fulfils its statutory duties satisfactorily, but further strategies are needed to raise awareness of the school's strengths and weaknesses.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Effective analysis is undertaken of the school's performance in the national tests and of baseline assessments. Monitoring of teaching is in the early stage of development.
The strategic use of resources	Resources are well deployed and used effectively. Financial resources are well and efficiently managed.

The teaching staff offer a good range of experience. The support staff are well trained, efficient and effectively deployed. The school is well resourced. The principles of best value are satisfactorily applied. The administrative and cleaning staff are efficient.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school. • The school is easy to approach. • Happy with standards of work. • Children make good progress. • School is well led and managed. • There is a good moral tone in the school. • The teaching is good. • Behaviour is generally good. • Annual reports are detailed and thorough. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Information on how their child is getting on. • More extra-curricular activities. • That children are not held back in reading unable to advance beyond prescribed age levels.

The inspection findings agree with what pleases parents most. The quality of annual reports is good and the school is always pleased to answer queries about pupils' progress. A small number of extra-curricular activities is organised, but the school feels constrained by the need of parents to collect children from other schools at the end of the day. It is considering other lunchtime activities. The school is anxious that all pupils reach their reading potential and are pleased to see very good progress taking place.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards in the 2001 national tests for seven-year-olds, based on the average points scored by all pupils, are average in reading and writing and below average in mathematics. When compared with similar schools, that is those schools having between eight per cent and 20 per cent of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals, reading remains as average and writing and mathematics are below average.
2. When the percentage of pupils who attained the national threshold of Level 2 in 2001 in reading, writing and mathematics is compared with 2000, it shows the falls from the previous year are small, for example four per cent in mathematics. They are within the boundaries of statistical variation for relatively small cohorts of pupils and also reflect the significantly greater number of pupils in the year on the register of special educational needs in 2001.
3. The trends in performance since 1996 have been one of steady improvement. In reading and writing the trend has been better than the improving national trend. In mathematics, the underlying trend has been upward over the same period but with a weak result in 1999. The performance of boys over the last three years has been poorer than the girls in all three areas, by approximately two terms' progress on average.
4. Although there is a wide variation in the standards of attainment on entry to the nursery, levels in communication and language particularly are well below average. Baseline assessment on entry to reception indicates improved attainment but still below average levels. Therefore, the above analyses of performance in national tests indicate that the pupils achieve well and make good progress.
5. Inspection evidence confirms overall standards are broadly average in English mathematics and science at the end of Year 2. A similar picture extends to the work of pupils in Year 3. The school's analyses of performance is beginning successfully to target areas of weakness and the attainment of boys. Positive attitudes and the overall good quality of teaching aid the good progress from a low base now made by pupils. The good quality practical support provided by the teachers, learning support assistants, other helpers and specialist teachers for traveller children and pupils with English as an additional language, ensures that all the pupils with special educational needs make good progress in all aspects of the curriculum. This progress leads the pupils to achieve standards that are not far short of the other pupils in their classes in spite of the learning difficulties they encounter. The careful planning of their work and the generosity and dependability of the levels of support they receive lie behind this successful aspect of the school's work, together with well-constructed individual education plans.
6. Children in the Foundation Stage make good progress. They are successfully encouraged to be more independent, make choices and to improve their levels of communication orally, written and creatively. They take turns at activities, comment on ideas and listen well to stories. Children begin to understand the difference between right and wrong. Through a wide range of imaginative activities they make significant gains in understanding about what is said to them. They show an increasing understanding that writing has meaning. Higher attaining children write their names legibly. All are interested and excited by books and there is an increasing understanding of size, number and concepts, such as capacity. Only a few higher attaining children are, however, likely to achieve the early learning goals in language and mathematical

development. However, most are likely to achieve these goals in their knowledge and understanding of the world and in their creative and physical development, aided by the rich and imaginative curriculum provided for the children.

7. When reading, the pupils make good use of their knowledge of letter sounds. As a result, most pupils read well in Year 2. The speaking and spelling skills of some lower attaining pupils are constrained by their inability to sound out letters. In Year 3, most pupils, especially the higher attaining pupils, converse competently, but a significant minority still have limited speaking and listening skills. The pupils show an understanding of writing conventions. The skills acquired in writing are used well in other subjects, such as geography. Handwriting skills are taught but they are not carried over into other subjects, especially amongst lower and average attaining pupils in Years 1 and 3. This has, for example, a detrimental effect on spelling. Pupils show increasing competence in dealing with mental mathematical problems, accurately adding and subtracting in number and problems. They have a satisfactory understanding of two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes and standard and non-standard units of measurement. There is a developing understanding of the presentation of data information but computers are currently used in limited ways. Many pupils have problems in moving from the practical examples to more abstract work.
8. In science, one of the strengths is in investigative work, which was a weakness in the previous report. Pupils carry out practical work in a systematic and collaborative way. Year 2 pupils show a good understanding of circuitry and use an increasing number of scientific terms correctly. Prediction and the notion of a fair test are quite well understood and help considerably the standard of pupils' investigative work. There has been an improvement in the standards in information and communication technology (ICT) since the last inspection, when they were judged unsatisfactory. Standards are now at expected levels by Year 2 and for Year 3. Pupils show an increasing awareness of the importance of ICT to their lives and are now familiar with basic processes. Standards in religious education are good. Pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge of a wide range of religious festivals with higher attaining pupils in this year and Year 3 showing good levels of reflective understanding over a range of issues.
9. Standards in design and technology, history, geography, physical education and music are those expected for seven and eight-year-olds. In design and technology the pupils have a clear understanding of the design process; the evaluation aspect of the process has improved significantly since the last inspection. In discussions, pupils use geographical terms correctly and can differentiate between the physical and human features of their own town. In history, pupils show a satisfactory understanding of some significant personalities from the past and are beginning to develop an appreciation of the passage of time. The pupils acquire a wide range of skills in physical education, for example ball control and co-ordination of bodily movements. In dance, they achieve better than expected for pupils of their age. Pupils generally sing well, in tune and time, show enjoyment of music and play untuned instruments competently. Standards in art are above expected levels. Pupils have a good understanding of different painting styles and show a mastery of a good range of skills.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10. Pupils, including those under five and those in the nursery, have positive attitudes to school. Their relationships with their teachers and with each other are good and parents appreciate the moral tone set within the school. Behaviour, both in the classrooms and around the school is generally good, and in assemblies it is very good. Pupils listen carefully to instructions and try hard, responding well to the values promoted by the school. These positive features were noted at the last inspection and have been well maintained. Pupils respond enthusiastically when given opportunities to take responsibility and to show their initiative. They are keen to talk about their school

and aspects they particularly enjoy. Pupils' personal development is good and they successfully develop mature and socially responsible attitudes during their time in the school.

11. The children in the Foundation Stage enjoy their time at school and have very good relationships with their teachers and with support staff. They settle quickly into the nursery and happily take part in the many varied and interesting activities. Children are encouraged to share and socialise, learning to work collaboratively and take turns. They develop confidence and many express views, often at great length, about the task in hand, for example the difficulty of filling a sock with sand to 'make it heavier than the other one'. The children understand the routines of the classroom and respond with enthusiasm, to tidying up for example, helping one another sensibly and carefully. They enjoy coming to school and parents confirm they have no trouble to get them to attend.
12. Most pupils, including those from the travelling community, pupils who speak English as an additional language and those with special educational needs, take part in school life with enthusiasm and interest. Nursery children volunteer to answer questions in lessons or take the register to the office and, as children move through the school, these and other duties are undertaken with equal enthusiasm. Pupils generally work hard and become involved in their learning. They enjoy the creative activities of music and art and respond well to the structure of the literacy and numeracy sessions. Pupils learn to evaluate their own performance in physical education lessons, for example, and show their appreciation by spontaneous applause in a Year 3 dance lesson.
13. Pupils' behaviour in lessons, in moving around the school and in the playground is good. In assemblies, pupils, including nursery children, listen carefully, showing respectful, attentive behaviour and lack of silliness. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, have a clear understanding of the school's expectations with regard to their behaviour and respond well. Pupils know the difference between acceptable and unacceptable behaviour and are well motivated by praise, trying hard to earn house points 'or house bricks' for pleasing work or behaviour. Pupils have no concerns about bullying. They say some incidents do occur but are quickly curbed by staff, and they know they can rely on staff to act promptly if they have any worries. Behaviour has generally improved since the last inspection with the introduction of the 'traffic lights system', which is said by parents to work well and is respected by the pupils. Pupils are often articulate and have many interesting views of school life but do not, at present, have any forum for discussing these views with the school management. No pupils have been excluded from school.
14. The pupils' personal development is good. They are generally polite and respectful to adults and to one another, showing awareness for the feelings of others. The good relationships they have with each other and with their teachers create an orderly and happy community in the school. Most pupils enjoy working in pairs or groups, happily sharing ideas and resources. They are swift to help if someone falls over in the playground or has a bleeding, wobbly tooth, for example, offering to help or to fetch an adult. Older pupils help younger ones with reading skills, showing good humour and kindness. They listen quietly to one another, discussing different points of view or taking turns to put their own. When given the opportunity, pupils can organise their own work and seek the resource needed, or consult a dictionary to help with a word.
15. The school has revised the system for recording absence to improve the tracking of pupils' absence since the last inspection. As a result of the rigorous approach, the school has a clear understanding of the attendance and absence patterns of all pupils, including those educated off-site and those from the travellers' community on roll. The above average authorised absence reflects the pupils who are still on roll but whose family are following seasonal work patterns away from the area, or who have enrolled but failed to attend. Pupils educated off-site are also recorded as authorised absences,

as are extended holidays in term time. There are few unauthorised absences. The educational welfare officer assists the school where patterns of absence become a problem, and the Travellers' Support Unit works closely with the school to inform them of likely movements onto or off the roll. Actual attendance at the school, which is good, is distorted by the high authorised absence figure. Pupils like coming to school, there are few persistent latecomers and registration is swift and efficient. Pupils settle quickly to their lessons following the pleasant daily class time session when registers are marked.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS OR STUDENTS TAUGHT?

16. The overall quality of teaching is good. Fifty-four lessons were observed. Thirteen per cent of the lessons were very good, 45 per cent good and the remainder satisfactory. This represents a significant improvement since the last inspection and is particularly noteworthy as half of the staff are fairly or very new to the profession. The teaching was at its strongest in the nursery and Year 2 where all the teaching was good or better.
17. The good teaching of the children under five ensures that they make gains in the knowledge, skills and understanding that prepares them well to access the National Curriculum. The teachers in both the nursery and reception classes have a good understanding of how children of this age learn. As a result, a stimulating and motivational environment and range of activities are well and effectively planned by the teachers. This leads to good levels of achievement by the children in the Foundation Stage of their learning. The calm and purposeful atmosphere created by the teachers helps to ensure that the transition from home to school life is happy and smooth.
18. As many of the children have underdeveloped language and communication skills, the teachers plan very frequent opportunities for dialogue to take place. This not only assists in the development of language skills, but in an increase in personal confidence as they are sensitively encouraged to speak audibly, respond to others' questions and to begin to understand that print has meaning. Good opportunities are provided by the teachers for the children to develop the concept of number and to widen their knowledge and understanding of the world, for example in the nursery, children look at shoes of different sizes, counting out from three pairs and, in reception, progressively removing one bun from ten currant buns whilst singing a song. The teachers in the Foundation Stage work exceptionally well with the learning support assistants. They are well briefed by the teachers and support the children well in all areas of learning. This is particularly evident in the area of creative and physical development, where co-ordination of large and small movements is well developed in small groupings for which the learning support assistants (LSAs) are responsible.
19. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in learning across the curriculum. This is as a result of the careful planning of their work and the high quality of support they receive. The pupils' learning is based on individual educational plans devised by the class teachers and LSAs working co-operatively, and supervised by the deputy headteacher who is the special educational needs co-ordinator. The plans are well constructed with small and achievable targets for the pupils to attain and enjoy success. Most of the support the pupils receive is properly directed towards the core subjects of English with mathematics and science, but the LSAs and other helpers provide good quality support also with other subjects. The governor responsible for special educational needs is one who provides practical help and in this way becomes well aware of the needs of this group of pupils, and plays a practical part in their good levels of progress and sound achievement. Good support is also given to pupils who speak English as an additional language and those from the travelling community.
20. The teachers plan fully and effectively. They have a clear idea of what they want their

pupils to achieve in the lesson. These objectives are, in the best lessons, clearly indicated to the pupils when they begin an activity, are reinforced as the lesson proceeds and used as a measure by which the pupils can gauge their own progress towards them during the concluding session. Such a strategy is adopted in the majority of lessons and, as a result, it helps to ensure that the overall quality of learning is good. The successful use of this approach is exemplified very well in a Year 2 numeracy lesson when there was extensive demonstration by the teacher of the notion of sorting by criteria. This was followed by effective discussion to reinforce the concept. As a result the pupils worked purposefully on the task, understanding and explaining what they had to do; achieving successful outcomes to a difficult concept. The clarity of learning objectives helps to maintain good pace to the pupils' learning, as they are usually very clear about their tasks and do not waste time considering what they have to do.

21. A good example of the high expectations teachers have for pupils' behaviour was in a Year 3 physical education lesson. The teacher expected and received immediate response to instructions, and the pupils were clearly stimulated by the demands and expectations of performance levels, resulting in very good learning. Similarly the high expectations the teachers have for the quality of relationships helps to ensure that all pupils feel able to contribute to lessons without fear of rebuff, for example in a Year 2 music lesson when all pupils took part in a small element of performance of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. There were many examples of the high expectations for the use of appropriate technical vocabulary, such as 'metamorphic' and 'positive' and 'negative' terminals in science. The pupils clearly enjoy being able to use the terms correctly. However, in general, expectations for higher attaining pupils and for the standard of presentation of written work are not high enough, for example issuing greater challenges based on new knowledge, and ensuring that, where comments are made about presentation in marked work, it is subsequently followed up. Similarly an expectation that the good standards attained in handwriting lessons are maintained in other subjects.
22. The teachers use a good range of teaching methods, choosing the style that is likely to deliver effectively the desired learning outcome. This helps to motivate the pupils and maintain interest in their learning. The availability of LSAs allows the teachers to add different dimensions to their lessons. In a Year 3 art lesson, for example, the learning support assistant, who was well briefed by the teacher, worked well with rotating groups of pupils on a very difficult artistic skill, enabling the class teacher to work with the rest of the class on a slightly less demanding aspect of the work. As a result, the learning of the whole class was good as pupils' interest and concentration was maintained. The good partnership that exists between the teachers and the LSAs is a strength of the teaching and contributes significantly to the pupils' achievements. Some teachers maintain planning books with LSAs; this is very good practice.
23. The teaching of basic literacy skills is good. Teachers are implementing the National Literacy Strategy successfully by providing a full range of activities that are matched to targeted needs and groups of pupils. Most of the literacy lessons are taught at pace with a good response from the pupils. In the best literacy lessons the pupils are challenged to make discoveries for themselves, for example the technical differences of authorship of a book. The National Numeracy Strategy has been satisfactorily introduced. The focus on mental strategies has improved pupils' mathematical thinking. Occasionally, some of these sessions, however, lack sufficient pace and challenge. Most lessons provide different levels of challenge according to pupils' needs. A newly understood concept is, however, rarely challenged in the review session of the lesson, as it was in a successful Year 2 lesson, when predictions were sought to even greater challenges based upon new knowledge. The teaching of information and communication technology (ICT) has improved since the last inspection. Teacher confidence and competence have both improved and most seek to make links with

other subjects. Their knowledge and understanding of ICT is satisfactory, as it is for all subjects in the curriculum.

24. The teachers know their pupils well. In question and answer sessions, which are usually skilfully handled, the teachers ensure that all pupils are included and that the responses of everyone are respected. A good deal of informal assessment occurs during the review sessions of lessons and, amongst the youngest pupils, appropriately on a one-to-one basis. Marking is undertaken regularly by all teachers but the quality is inconsistent. The best includes helpful comments and targets for the future in order to improve pupils' learning. The teachers' use of homework is good and it meets the purposes for which it is intended.

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

25. The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which is relevant to the needs of its pupils. This is enhanced by good links with the local community. The curriculum is broadly based on the recent national guidance and amendments that the school has made to improve the provision for all its pupils. It also meets the requirements for personal and social development, including sex education and drugs awareness. This maintains the quality since the previous inspection. However, whilst providing a suitably broad content for religious education, the school does not fully meet the requirements of the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus.
26. Children in the Foundation Stage are provided with a wide range of stimulating activities which encourage and enable them to explore and share thoughts in the different areas of learning. In the nursery these activities provide very good opportunities to play, talk, experiment and to respond well to adults and to each other. In reception classes children are engaged in a good range of learning experiences which enable them to build on their interests and what they already know.
27. In the main school in Years 1 to 3, whole-school planning is supported by a suitably broad curriculum to ensure that all the required elements are taught to meet the needs of boys and girls whatever their background and prior attainment. There is a better time allocation of subjects than at the time of the previous inspection. The school's strategies for teaching literacy skills are good and for teaching numeracy skills are satisfactory. Pupils' literacy skills are effectively taught in links with other subjects, such as history and geography but numeracy skills are less consistently developed across the curriculum. Better provision is now made for information and communication technology (ICT) and design and technology, which were areas of weakness identified in the previous inspection. This has led to improvement in both subjects.
28. Specific funding has been used to purchase new computers and software and the school has a controlled system for access to the Internet. These factors, together with better subject knowledge of teachers, have contributed to improved ICT provision. Art is also given a strong emphasis to provide stimulating and less academic learning experiences. Annual monitoring and evaluation take place and contribute to any new whole-school developments. However, this monitoring needs to be more rigorous to identify key targets for future curriculum development to meet the continuing demands of the wide range of pupils' capabilities and to raise standards further. Few subject co-ordinators have yet had opportunities to observe lessons in order to monitor the standards of teaching and learning in their subjects
29. The headteacher and deputy head and the governors of the school took a deliberate step to supplement the sums specially allocated for special needs with funds from the school's general budget, using the money to increase the quantity of support staff time. They have also been at pains to provide opportunities and support for the learning

support assistants to develop professionally. This has had a good effect on the provision for pupils with special educational needs and on the standards of achievement they maintain. The resources provided are good and well managed so that they are also available for teachers dealing from time to time with lower attaining pupils who need an extra boost to maintain their progress. Where the school identified a need for support with speech that the local authority could not provide they made special regular and effective provision from their own support staff. Good provision is also made for pupils from the travelling community and those who speak English as an additional language.

30. A strong emphasis is placed on personal, social and health education and is part of the school's strategies for improving the quality of education. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Pupils' needs are quickly and effectively identified and monitored. Teachers and support staff have good knowledge of the individual education plans and the targets contained in them. These are shared with pupils in order to help them understand what they need to do to improve. There are good levels of general support including focused tasks aimed at improving specific areas of need.
31. Provision for extra-curricular activities is satisfactory for this type of school. There is a small number of clubs, which take place at lunchtimes and after school, and these are well attended by pupils. These involve recorders, football and a choir. Pupils' learning also benefits from visits to the local toy museum and weekly visits to the library for story time. Visitors to the school include the clergy, musicians and members of Norwich City football club who teach all classes. These experiences effectively support pupils' learning and personal development.
32. The school has good links within the local community. Staff and pupils visit the senior citizens to sing and perform music and also participate in the annual Swaffham festival. At the time of the Harvest Festival Service, gifts are collected and distributed to people in need. Good links are maintained with partner institutions. Pupils visit the nearby middle school and staff from there visit the first school to talk to pupils before their transfer. Staff from the local cluster of schools have group meetings and local primary pupils participate in dancing sessions at the nearby high school.
33. The school makes good provision for the development of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural awareness in the school. The efforts of staff are promoted in particular towards the moral and social aspects, with children being taught the difference between right and wrong, and a clear code of behaviour that is implemented consistently by all staff. Good behaviour is recognised and recorded in pupils' personal files. They are taught to share equipment and to take turns to speak and to listen. Merit certificates reward good behaviour, hard work and positive contributions to school life. Teachers and learning support assistants are very supportive of pupils in helping them to develop self-discipline and the good relationships they form with the children through this encouragement is reflected in the way the pupils generally work and play well together. From an early age they are encouraged to take responsibility and value the work of others.
34. The school makes good efforts to promote spiritual development throughout the school, with the quality of displays reflecting the different world faiths, including the significance of the Christian belief, as well as, in particular Judaism and Hinduism. The Chinese New Year and Divali are well displayed as are collages reflecting the art of Van Gogh, for example, and the pupils' interpretation of firework displays with good imaginative poetry and artwork. Daily acts of worship in assemblies make a contribution to spiritual development where themes such as friendship are explored which enable pupils to consider the wider qualities of friendship. In religious education, pupils study Christianity and reflect on other major world faiths. Dance and music give pupils opportunities to express spirituality. A dance lesson in Year 3 provided a moment of magic when a

group of pupils performed their sequence to others with very sensitive expression and in perfect co-ordination. As they finished, with an obvious sense of their own achievement, they were applauded by others in the class who evaluated highly the performance. Curriculum subjects, especially creative work in art and design, music and English, and in the exploration of words and ideas in the literacy hour, as well as the sense of wonder promoted in science, give good support to the spiritual development of the pupils. Their spiritual awareness is also raised through the close relationship with the local church.

35. There are good opportunities for pupils to develop an awareness of their own and other cultures, for example through visits within the local area and through their topic work such as in foods of the world. Traditional stories and songs are promoted, during a pre-literacy lesson as an example, and an appreciation of music is fostered through opportunities to listen to music and to sing in the school choir. Pupils explore the work of famous artists, such as Picasso, or produce detailed observational pencil drawings of the different rock formations they have studied in a science lesson in Year 3. There are no representations of the artistic culture of the largest ethnic community in the area, however, other than a detailed model of a travellers' van in a reception class. They are made aware of their own culture through regular contact with the elderly residential population when they visit to sing to them and when participating in the annual Swaffham festival. Visitors to the school tell stories of their time at the school and the pupils enjoy visits to the town museum for their topic work on toys, old and new. The school has strengthened the promotion of the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of its pupils since the last inspection.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36. The quality of the pastoral care of the pupils at the school is very good. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, pupils with English as an additional language and those from the travellers' community, are well cared for and this quality of care has been well developed and strengthened since the last inspection. The procedures the school has established, since the last inspection, to ensure that pupils are well cared for are successful. Throughout the school, the pupils' personal development is monitored and supported effectively and most of the children become increasingly confident, happy and sensible individuals. The good relationships between pupils, their teachers and other members of staff ensure that the pupils feel safe and happy within the school community. They are able to concentrate on their learning knowing that they are valued and that any problems, they may have, will be swiftly dealt with.
37. The children in the nursery are very well cared for in a happy and well-ordered atmosphere. There are very good induction procedures for both children and their parents. The children come into the school for assemblies and the older pupils visit the nursery to perform plays they have written and visit the library together for story time each week. There is very good support for the children of the travelling community from the local education authority travellers' unit who assist in the Foundation Stage. Parents have good opportunities to speak informally to staff in the nursery and reception classes if they have any concerns. The children come to school happily and settle quickly into the routines of the classroom. They quickly learn what is expected of them. Staff consistently reinforce good work and behaviour with praise and smiles. Although the procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory, the information gathered is not yet used effectively to provide an acceptable level of educational support and guidance for each individual.
38. The school ensures that the well being of all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, is safeguarded. Children say they feel comfortable talking to their teacher about any

concerns they may have and are confident 'something will, be done about it'. All adults in the school know the children well and this provides a continuity of care throughout the day. The procedures the school has to govern health and safety are comprehensive and good. Formal risk assessment is carried out regularly and fire drill takes place each half term. Provision for first aid is very good and all staff receive basic first aid training. Procedures for child protection are very good, with the headteacher as the designated member of staff having received appropriate training. The school follows recognised guidelines and works closely with outside agencies. Staff are vigilant in their approach to this aspect of care and awareness is maintained by staff discussion. The quality of supervision during the midday and other breaks is very good. The supervisors are kind and very well organised. They are liked and respected by the children.

39. The procedures for monitoring attendance are good. The system put in place since the last inspection for recording absence gives a clearer picture of the overall level of attendance in the school. Where appropriate, support is provided to encourage regular attendance, often with the help of the educational welfare officer or the traveller support unit. Any absence without an explanation is followed up and records are kept of pupils who arrive late. Parents are reminded of the dates of forthcoming national tests and requested not to take extended leave at these times. Registration procedures are consistent across the school and fully comply with legal requirements.
40. The school has good procedures for dealing with any tendencies towards bullying behaviour and is consistent in setting standards of behaviour, which are accepted by the majority of pupils. Any lapses are firmly corrected by staff and often by the pupils who understand what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour in the school. The school has procedures for recording and monitoring any persistent instances of poor behaviour and, in such cases, parents are involved at an early stage. Children speak highly of the way in which the school deals with any incident of bullying. Pupils, in conversation confirm their confidence that misbehavers will be firmly treated and sanctions imposed. The personal and social education lessons provide a forum for issues such as these to be discussed and evaluated by pupils.
41. The nursery staff work well with the special needs staff to identify as soon as possible any pupils who may be experiencing unusual difficulties. This early identification and provision means that a significant proportion of the pupils are able to be taken off the special needs register early because their problems have been dealt with and they are no longer in need of special support. All the staff are alert to the need for special help for pupils from time to time and the school's systems for support effectively provide it. The documentation supporting this area of the school's work is well managed, and the parents of pupils with special needs are kept well informed of their children's progress and further needs. They are also involved in the regular case conferences about those pupils with statements of special educational need.
42. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievement are satisfactory. The systems in place enable teachers to track pupils' attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science. These have been reviewed since the previous inspection and maintain the satisfactory standards judged at that time. Whilst good note has been taken of National Curriculum assessments and their implications for overall standards in the pupils' achievements, the information gained has not been used sufficiently across the range of the curriculum, or effectively enough to turn this into consistent action for development. The procedures have not yet been refined well enough, or become sufficiently embedded into the teachers' working practice, to ensure the fullest development in pupils' achievement. Teachers do not use information about what the pupils can do consistently enough to identify what they need to learn in order to make even better progress.

43. There are some positive elements in the current assessment arrangements. Initial assessment in the nursery is used well in monitoring the acquisition of skills and planning provision for the youngest pupils. These records are passed to the reception teachers when children transfer. The assessment co-ordinator has carried out a careful analysis of the National Curriculum results over time. This has identified trends and highlighted aspects of the pupils' attainments by the ages of seven in English and mathematics that are either weaker or stronger. As a result the need to raise boys' standards was identified. However, there is still a need to increase teachers' awareness of matching the tasks the pupils are given to their current skills and understanding.
44. A purposeful start has been made in English in creating pupil portfolios and a system for pupils to set their own targets. The school has identified the need to extend these arrangements to mathematics in the near future. The procedures for monitoring the pupils' attainment and progress in the other subjects of the National Curriculum are very varied. Assessment in the non-core subjects is largely informal. The pupils with special educational needs have clear targets for development set for them in their individual education plans. Annual written reports meet requirements and contain targets for each subject. These are shared and discussed with pupils and parents.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

45. The school has strengthened its partnership with parents since the last inspection and is now good overall. The majority of parents express positive views about most aspects of school life. They are confident that their children are well cared for and parents feel very happy with the learning environment, which is 'very child centred'. Parents confirm that they feel welcome in the school and are confident to approach the staff about any concerns they may have.
46. Information provided for parents about the school is very good and informative. Consultation evenings are well attended and parents express the view that their opinions are listened to by staff. For example, comprehensive curriculum details have recently been produced for each year group in response to parental requests and these have been well received. The annual pupils' reports are very well written, pertinent to individual children and highlight areas of achievement and progress attained. They include specific targets for future development and indicate levels of attainment in some subjects. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are fully involved in the decision-making process and are kept informed about the needs of their children. The school communicates well with all parents over pastoral matters. Parents of nursery children have very good information about what their children are learning and guidelines given as to how they can help their children at home. The nursery teacher makes visits to the homes of children and local playgroups to ensure there is a smooth transition from home to school.
47. Parental involvement in school life is good. A number of parents and governors assist with reading and practical skills, such as music, and their support has a good impact on pupils' skills and their reading ability. Many parents willingly help on visits, such as to the local library. Analysis of the parents' questionnaire shows that the large majority of parents feel the school works closely with them and they find the staff approachable. Parents are seen to chat with staff at the end of the school day when they collect their children and appreciate the two formal open evenings during the year for more detailed information about their children's progress. The First School Association organises social and fund raising events during the year, which provide significant funds which are used to supplement resources and enhance the learning environment.
48. The school provides parents with details of what their children will be learning which enables them to focus their help in a constructive fashion. Reading diaries are generally

used well, with regular comments by class teachers or others who assist with reading, but parental participation is not so consistent. Parental assistance with project work, such as 'The Victorians', is good, when pupils were well turned out as youngsters from a bygone age. Parents are pleased with the level of homework, which is mainly reading, or mathematics related, and say their children enjoy doing the work, including the half-term activities, which are taken very seriously by the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The leadership of the headteacher and deputy headteacher, whose styles are complementary, is sound and provides a steady support for the governing body and staff in the discharge of their duties. They have a good clear common view of a first school that is a safe place for pupils in which to learn, and where care for the pupils is a priority. This is shared with all who work in the school, as well as with the parents. It represents a good improvement in this aspect of the school since the previous inspection. However, while staff with management responsibilities share these aims, their roles and responsibilities as subject managers have not been defined. Except in literacy, they have little opportunity to influence standards throughout the school through the monitoring of standards of learning and the quality of teaching in the subjects for which they are responsible.
50. The governing body fulfils its responsibilities satisfactorily and has hitherto done so as far as possible by delegating them to the headteacher and deputy, in whom it places great trust. There has been a very considerable change in the membership of the governing body with one or two places still to be filled. This has led to a change in the situation, as new members receive training and play a more positive and active role in the governance of the school. Some governors are becoming involved with subjects in the curriculum as well as accepting the statutory duties involved, with for example, pupils with special educational needs. This means that they are becoming more knowledgeable about the strengths of the school and of those areas where more needs to be done, but further strategies are required to develop understanding. The provision for the Foundation Stage, special educational needs, English as a second language and travellers' children is well managed.
51. There is a satisfactory system for the monitoring and evaluation of the school's performance in reading, writing and mathematics based on an analysis of the national tests. Apart from these core subjects there is no structured monitoring and evaluation of standards in learning. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching is currently mainly in the hands of the headteacher and deputy, though some subject leaders have been given an opportunity to observe colleagues' lessons in their subjects. The monitoring of teaching is closely associated with the requirements of the performance management initiatives, and the clearly set up scheme for this has recently begun to operate.
52. The headteacher and deputy together with the governing body, and well supported by the school administrator, manage the school budget efficiently. They buy in the best support available from the local education authority. The budget process takes note of what the staff need to teach effectively. Specific grants are efficiently spent, and in the case of those to support pupils with special needs they are supplemented from the school's own funds to ensure their effectiveness. The higher than average spending on support staff throughout the school has been justified by the improvement in standards.
53. The school funds are efficiently audited. All financial procedures are carefully managed and scrutinised by the governing body finance committee. The headteacher and governors use most of the principles of best value in their purchases for the school. That of consultation with parents over major developments, however, is not commonly practised. The very recent information and communication technology changes in the administrative and financial systems have improved the availability of financial

information and simplified purchasing and payment procedures considerably, thus improving the already commendable efficiency of this aspect of the school's work.

54. There has been marked improvement in most aspects of the leadership and management of the school since the previous inspection. The considerable number of staff changes has led to some delays in the implementation of necessary developments. Now the school improvement planning already outlined and in progress, together with the aspirations of subject leaders, as they get to grips with their tasks, provide a sound basis on which the school can develop. This is conditional on the impetus for improvement being maintained. The school's targets for future performance are realistic and have been arrived at as a result of analysis of past and current pupil performance, and there is a sound whole-school commitment to improve standards across the board.
55. The school makes good provision for newly appointed staff, especially for those who have just qualified. It buys in the highest rate of local education authority support and provides teachers with appropriate non-contact time. This allows them a good range of professional development opportunities, especially those provided within the cluster of associated schools.
56. Staffing of the school is good, with teachers suitably qualified to teach the subjects of the National Curriculum. There is a range of expertise across the school. All teachers have posts of responsibility although the job descriptions are generic only and do not reflect the current roles and responsibilities across subjects of the curriculum. There are very good, well-trained learning support assistants, who work alongside teachers, complementing the teachers' role and having a positive impact on pupils' learning. The nursery nurse also has a good level of expertise and, with the guidance of the nursery teacher, forms a strong team in working with young children. Arrangements for the professional development of staff are satisfactory overall. Induction and mentoring arrangements are good and all new staff to the school are given clear guidance of the school's procedures.
57. The quality of the accommodation is good. It is very clean, bright and airy. Standards of display are very good throughout the building with all spaces used effectively. Classrooms are of a good size with those in the new wing having lofty ceiling heights. There is an adequate amount of storage space in different areas of the school, which is kept tidy and labelled for ease of use. The hall is large with a good floor surface enabling physical education activities or whole-school assemblies to be accommodated with ease. There are large fenced play areas with security a priority. Outdoor provision for the nursery children is good with a large all-weather surface where children can use the slide and other large play apparatus with safety, even during a sudden shower. A large attractive grassed area surrounded by mature trees enhances the school. An environmental area has been created in one of the small woodland areas and 'The Tree of Knowledge', which is the school's logo, stands in the front playground near the entrance providing summer shade and a focus for hide and seek.
58. The number and quality of resources, including books, materials, physical education equipment and computers is good. The supply of books has been carefully selected to ensure that the pupils have a good range of literature. Many of the reading scheme books and library books are new since the last inspection. All resources are readily available and the pupils are encouraged to find what they need and to handle the equipment with care.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. The governing body, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) use assessment information to guide and modify the planning in all subjects, in order to raise standards further;
(Paras: 28, 42, 51, 92, 97, 102, 123)
- (2) define and continue to develop the role of the curriculum co-ordinators by, for example, providing regular opportunities for them to monitor standards of teaching and learning, share good practice and ensure consistency of provision and experience through the school;
(Paras: 28, 37, 42, 43, 44, 49, 51, 56, 86, 92, 102, 106, 115)
- (3) devise and implement strategies that will enable the governors to have a clearer understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
(Para: 50)

Minor issue

Improve the overall standard of presentation of the pupils' work.
(Paras: 7, 21, 74, 89, 105, 113)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	54
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	32

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	7	24	22	0	0	0
Percentage	0	13	45	42	0	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 one percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	23	229
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	37

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y3
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	32

English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	2

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	18
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	20

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.3
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.7
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	29	30	59

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	25	24	25
	Girls	27	27	28
	Total	52	51	53
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (91)	86 (93)	90 (95)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	24	24	21
	Girls	27	27	27
	Total	51	51	48
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	86 (93)	86 (93)	81 (93)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	225
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	23

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	180

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.5

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
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	£
Total income	492,589
Total expenditure	490,552
Expenditure per pupil	1,858
Balance brought forward from previous year	13,079
Balance carried forward to next year	15,116

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	1
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

259

Number of questionnaires returned

55

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	27	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	65	31	2	2	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	35	56	2	0	7
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	31	56	2	0	11
The teaching is good.	55	42	0	2	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	51	35	13	2	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	24	2	4	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	53	42	0	0	5
The school works closely with parents.	38	58	2	0	2
The school is well led and managed.	58	38	0	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	58	40	0	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	18	22	38	0	22

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

60. Children are admitted to the nursery in the September or January following their third birthday, subject to a place being available. They transfer to the reception classes in January, if they will have had their fourth birthday by the end of February. A wide-ranging, lively curriculum is imaginatively taught in a well-managed, supportive and very caring nursery environment. The children make consistently good, and often very good progress, in most areas of learning. The children are taught in two similar reception classes before entering statutory schooling in the September after their fifth birthday. Initial assessments indicate that there is a wide spread of attainment on entry to the nursery with the majority of the children entering with levels below those found nationally and a significant number enter with levels in communication and language which are well below average.
61. At the time of the previous inspection, the nursery had only been open for two weeks. The good teaching and provision, judged then, have been improved. Great care is taken to ensure a smooth and happy start to school life, with the nursery teacher making home visits and visits to local playgroups to ensure the children's smooth transition from home to school. The parents are provided with helpful information prior to their child's entry and good contact is maintained throughout. Once in school, the children quickly adapt and grow confidently in the interesting and often exciting environment, with its features of very good care, routines, firm discipline, and lively and sensitive teaching. Consequently, they make good, and sometimes very good, progress in all aspects of their development.
62. In the nursery, the teaching is good overall. It is never less than good and occasionally very good. In the reception classes teaching is good overall. There are many opportunities for structured play amongst the more formal learning opportunities. Teachers, the nursery assistant and learning support assistants have a good understanding of how children at this age learn best and they have clear learning intentions for each activity. They know children very well and use their considerable teaching skills to adapt activities in the light of children's understanding and responses. All adults work hard to ensure that the children's learning opportunities are successfully used. The teachers' planning is of a good quality and ensures that the needs of individuals, including those with special educational needs, are considered and met as fully as possible. The children are encouraged to be independent, while being fully supported. They have many opportunities to make choices, to talk with adults and with each other. There is an enclosed area for outdoor play that contains a wide range of toys and equipment. This is also used regularly to support children's development well.

Personal, social and emotional development

63. Children's personal, social and emotional development is very well provided for and as a result, they become increasingly more independent as they respond to the teachers' high expectations and learn to manage themselves well. Very good teaching in the nursery motivates the children very well, and most of them readily discuss what they are doing. Their confidence increases and they show high levels of involvement. They share equipment amicably and are increasingly considerate towards others. In reception classes, children sustain their concentration over longer periods of time as for example, in exploring the properties of sand and water. They also sit quietly listening to a story and take turns in commenting upon it or offering their own ideas. All staff in the Foundation Stage consistently demonstrate examples of positive behaviour and

attitudes for children to emulate. They are very successful in developing children's skills in taking turns, sharing space or adult attention. Children are effectively taught the difference between what is right and what is wrong and are polite and helpful. They clear up successfully after activities, and are learning to undress and dress themselves when going to physical education lessons. Most do this well. The relationships in the nursery and reception classes are very positive and children with special educational needs are fully integrated. Many children are likely to achieve the early learning goals.

Communication, language and literacy

64. Initially, children's communication, language and literacy skills are well below average when they enter the nursery. As a result of the very good teaching and planned activities, children soon gain sufficient confidence to ask questions and to provide answers. They interact effectively and initiate conversations when engaged in role-play with each other in the attractively arranged shoe shop area. They take turns to act as shop assistant or customer. Through these activities and experiences, children make good gains in understanding what is said to them, and in wishing to communicate. Many children ascribe meaning to marks they make and begin to use writing as a means of communication. The nursery children make good progress in learning in this aspect.
65. In the reception classes, children are encouraged to speak audibly and most do. Good teaching helps them learn the names and sounds of the alphabet letters. They know that print carries meaning and they begin to establish their knowledge of sounds to help them tackle new words. They are also interested and excited by books. Having chosen to copy a picture of a favourite pet from a book, the children over-wrote its name correctly after guidance from the teacher. A small number of higher attaining pupils write their first names legibly. Many activities are planned to develop the children's use of language but at this stage a high proportion of children have difficulties explaining their ideas. Only a few higher attainers are likely to achieve the early learning goals in language.

Mathematical development

66. Commencing from a low level, the mathematical development of children in the nursery is well supported by good and very good teaching and through many stimulating activities such as the shoe shop. They express views about the shoes, match foot shapes and compare sizes. They correctly identify bigger, smaller or 'too big'. Most ordered correctly several different sizes from biggest to smallest. They also enjoy counting out up to six shoes, two higher attaining children up to ten. They do this individually and in small groups with effective support and prompts from their teacher.
67. Children in reception classes enjoy singing number songs such as 'Ten Currant Buns' and while doing so, selected children take one away and identify the new numeral. Others record the number on a whiteboard but some of these numbers are written back to front. The teaching is good and staff provide a range of suitable activities to help promote children's understanding of quantity. The children often choose to use the sand and water trays, and there is always an adult on hand to ask, for example, 'Is it full, or half-full?' This ensures that the children gain the maximum learning from their activities and that they make good progress. Children practise counting groups of objects up to ten or more but often miscount if their finger does not actually touch each object. The children learn about the shapes of everyday objects and group these correctly. They decide whether the objects or groups are bigger or smaller, heavier or lighter. Only a few higher attaining children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in mathematics.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

68. The teaching of children's development in knowledge and understanding of the world is good and promotes good progress in learning. For example, children in the nursery use the mouse control of a computer and access the brush tool to colour in different parts of the screen. They describe various interesting objects displayed strategically in the classroom and comment on such things as patterns on shoes. Children, including those with special educational needs, are very willing to talk about their experiences when it was their turn to take 'Teddy' home with them. They fetch his diary to show what he did, such as go shopping in the supermarket and how he nearly got left behind in the trolley. Children in the reception classes confidently and independently control a computer mouse to create colourful pictures of fireworks. They concentrate very well on such activities. Teachers plan a range of suitable activities, usually linked to a topic or theme, such as 'ourselves'. These provide the children with good opportunities to gain knowledge of the world about them. This was done effectively in showing children pictures of rice being grown and harvested in India. As a follow up, the children, with guidance, cooked Indian food and tasted it. Further work was successfully linked to finding out about other cultures and beliefs, such as Divali, the festival of light, and making clay pots for holding candles. A majority of children are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area.

Physical development

69. In their physical development most children make good progress as a result of good teaching. Children join the nursery with levels of co-ordination, balance and precision that are below expectations for their age. By the time they leave reception most children, including those with special needs, are likely to achieve expected levels of physical development in both large movements with their whole body and in small movements controlling tools. Children in the nursery have regular well-planned opportunities to use a variety of equipment in indoor and outdoor activities. They quickly acquire skills in pedalling, steering, pushing and pulling large wheeled equipment. They practise putting on shoes and most show a clear and consistent preference for the right or left hand. Teachers gradually increase their demands of children's physical skills. They provide a suitable range of small equipment such as play dough and construction kits that require children to exert pressure and strengthen their fingers. This helps children to gain increasing control of pencils, crayons and paintbrushes.
70. In reception classes children work in the school hall and effectively develop their skills in using space and improving their co-ordination. Teachers have suitably high expectations of children in these sessions. As a result all children participate fully in walking and running although some found skipping more difficult. The children show a good awareness of space and of each other. They also vary the speed of their movements and stop in a co-ordinated manner. They make good efforts to increase steadily their skills, particularly their sense of balance. Appropriate attention is given to general safety and to good health habits.

Creative development

71. The teaching of creative development is good overall because teachers place a high emphasis upon encouraging children to use their imaginations, especially through role-play. This is planned for carefully. In the nursery very skilful teaching was seen in the new shoe shop area. The teacher and nursing assistant have good understanding of the significance of this area of learning for the children as a means of encouraging and increasing their senses very effectively. The children's paintings and drawings of themselves are interesting and lively. They display good observation skills. The children sing tunefully and are building up a good repertoire of songs from memory. They use construction kits and malleable materials with safety and increasing control.

72. In the reception classes, children extend their repertoire of songs and choose to sing them tunefully, with others or on their own. Having looked at some x-rays of bones, children used brushes to paint their ideas of bones while others used suitable cutting and sticking skills, scissors and glue when using straws to build up their own representations of bones in a skeleton. Using computers, other children designed colourful pictures of fireworks night. Most pupils are likely to achieve the early learning goals in this area.

ENGLISH

73. Standards in English throughout the school have improved since the previous inspection. By the end of Year 2 standards in reading and in writing are in line with national expectations. Pupils make good progress through the Foundation Stage from the well below average level of language and literacy, with which they enter the school. On entry to Year 1 it is still below average, but the good progress is maintained throughout Years 1, 2 and 3 leading to good levels of achievement.
74. The raised standards are the result of improvements in teaching with the staff making good use of the National Literacy Strategy, for which the school ran a pilot scheme. A careful analysis of test results led to the successful targeting of pupils to improve their achievements in writing and spelling, and these continue. By the time pupils are in Year 2 they read well. They use a range of methods to deal with words they have not previously met, and make good use of phonics, sounding out words, in the way they are taught in the well-planned literacy sessions. The speaking skills of a number of lower attaining pupils are hampered by the difficulty they find in sounding out all the letters correctly. This also adversely affects their spelling. The school is providing good support for this where it occurs. There is a good liaison between parents and the school with regard to reading, and the pupils' reading record books are regularly used. The support staff are carefully trained in the use of a variety of strategies to improve standards in English, especially in reading, and these are well used to supplement the literacy lessons. Pupils produce work of a good standard in handwriting lessons but this level is not always maintained in work in other subjects.
75. The school continues to develop the methods devised in the pilot literacy strategy to good effect, and the subject leader and the staff are conscious of the need to continue to develop English. To this end, the pupils' performances in national tests are carefully analysed. The results enable targets, both for groups of pupils, such as improving the quality of boys' writing, or more generally, such as improvements in the use of phonics to improve spelling, to be set. In addition, training opportunities for staff to support these developments are created. These, together with the setting of targets for individual pupils, used most carefully with the older pupils in Years 2 and 3, have contributed to the steady rise in standards over time.
76. Funds have been used wisely to buy a good range of books to support work in literacy and to extend the pupils' opportunity for reading, especially for boys, with both storybooks and those for information. They are distributed around the classrooms as well as in the library. In a wish list of ideas that might improve the school, a group of Year 3 pupils suggested that it would be good to have times when they could browse through the books that are available. This demonstrated a good understanding of their own learning. The school makes effective use of more than one reading scheme. These are all colour coded so that the pupils are very familiar with the range of books that are appropriate for them to read at home. Reading is a regular activity for all the pupils and the teachers maintain good records of their progress. The pupils' records of reading done at home supplement these.
77. The school has identified the need to develop the pupils' writing, especially that of the

boys, with some success, and this continues resulting in average standards. In Year 2 they recognise the need to start sentences with capital letters and end them with full stops, and most do so regularly. Pupils in Year 2 recounted the story of 'The Three Billy Goats Gruff' interestingly in their own words, which they read to the class with good expression. They understand some of the conventions used in printing storybooks, for example using large print for loud pieces of dialogue. The pupils' skill in writing carries over well into other subjects, such as when they write letters to pen friends in another part of the country describing the geographical features of Swaffham. The presentation of the written work in English and in other subjects often does not reflect the good quality of the handwriting especially among the average and lower attaining pupils in Years 1 and 3. This also affects accuracy in spelling. Pupils generally make good progress in speaking and listening skills, so that by the time they are in Year 3 the highest attainers are confident and competent conversationalists, well able to express their ideas and opinions clearly. However, the range of attainment is wide and there is a significant minority of pupils in each year whose speaking skills are limited.

78. Overall the teaching of English is good, in Years 1 and 2 it varies between satisfactory and very good, while it is consistently good in Year 3. All the teachers have a good understanding of the requirements of the national literacy initiative and of how it can be adapted to meet the particular needs of classes and groups of pupils. Lessons are taught at a good pace and the pupils respond well to the encouragement to work hard.
79. The most talented teachers share their enthusiasm for the subject with their pupils, and make learning exciting, drawing out the best from them. They encourage the pupils to make discoveries for themselves and rejoice in their success, as when a Year 2 pupil worked out for herself the difference between 'written by' and 'retold by' on the title page of a book. Very good use is made of learning support assistants, especially in the good provision made for teaching those pupils with special educational needs, travellers' children and those pupils with English as an additional language, as well as for those with higher than average attainment. Teachers keep good records of the pupils' work in all aspects of English and know how well they are progressing. This has enabled particular groups of pupils to be targeted for extra work to speed up their progress especially in reading. The needs of all types of pupils, whatever their levels of prior attainment or cultural background, are taken account of in the planning for this subject. The pupils enjoy English and generally behave well in class. The teachers use the good quality literacy resources effectively, but currently information and communication technology is used in a limited way to support the teaching and learning in English.
80. The leadership of the subject is very effective, being in the hands of a very competent enthusiast for the subject. Staff, both teachers and support staff, are kept up to date and provided with further training as the need is identified in the careful analysis of the pupils' results in tests. The school acknowledges that further progress in the subject is both desirable and possible and is set well to achieve that progress.

MATHEMATICS

81. The school's strategies for teaching numeracy are satisfactory. The National Numeracy Strategy has also been implemented satisfactorily. However, the range of attainment in each year group of pupils varies considerably and standards over the past two years have fluctuated accordingly. Evidence gathered during the inspection shows that by the end of Year 2, most pupils are likely to attain average levels. By the end of Year 3, when pupils leave the school, most pupils are also likely to attain average levels. These are similar judgements to those made during the previous inspection. Teachers have focused particularly on the development of mental strategies and this has resulted in improvements in the way that pupils answer questions.
82. In good lessons, as a result of the teacher's clear expectations and challenges, pupils in Years 1 and 2 develop the use of quick mental strategies accurately, adding and subtracting to solve number and money problems. Pupils use number lines and other equipment effectively to help them reach correct answers. They recognise and name common two-dimensional shapes up to six sides and identify the basic properties of a range of three-dimensional shapes, such as the number of faces, edges and corners. Pupils of all attainment levels have a sound understanding of standard and non-standard units of measurement and teachers provide suitable practical activities to enable pupils to accurately compare measures, such as lengths and widths of objects in the classroom. Lower attaining pupils often have difficulties mastering new concepts and require constant reinforcement. This is done sensitively by teachers. However, some teachers move too rapidly with lower attaining pupils, from practical examples to abstract operation, before understanding is fully embedded. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactorily at their own levels of need, particularly when supported by a learning support assistant. Pupils with English as an additional language and those from the travelling community are also well supported.
83. Older pupils in Year 3 achieve satisfactorily in all aspects of mathematical development. Mental skills and strategies are reinforced regularly by teachers and pupils respond suitably to the challenges. All pupils have good attitudes to their work and use suitable mathematical vocabulary to explain how they arrived at their answers. This was demonstrated well when pupils used an information and communication technology (ICT) program to present their information about how children use different methods of transport to get to school.
84. Good links were made with ICT, when pupils in Year 2 produced a tally chart and a block graph to present information about the most frequent month of the year for birthdays. Year 3 pupils investigated which number on a dice would appear most. They recorded their evidence in clear tally charts and compared answers. Pupils' rates of work, confidence and attitudes are good where teaching challenges their thinking effectively but these strategies are not used consistently throughout the school. Homework is set regularly and contributes effectively to the development of numeracy skills with some pupils extending their own ideas at home.
85. Throughout the school, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Particular strengths are detailed planning to provide relevant challenges to meet the range of pupils' needs and emphasis on mental calculations. Good lessons begin with brisk mental tasks. Challenging questions and prompts at different levels extend thinking to develop strategies for solving problems and encourage pupils' contributions in discussion. Teachers involve pupils in the review of most lessons, encouraging them to explain their answers and this provides suitable opportunities to assess pupils' understanding. This was demonstrated well in a Year 2 lesson when, having provided good levels of challenge within tasks, the teacher then asked pupils to predict the answer to a greater challenge based on their new knowledge. This they did successfully. However, this level of challenge is not evident in all lessons and, as a result, is less effective.

86. ICT resources have only been available in all classrooms since this summer. As a result, computers and data handling skills are used in limited ways to reinforce knowledge and understanding. Other resources are good in quantity and quality and are used regularly to support learning. The co-ordinator provides satisfactory support to staff but has had no opportunities to date to observe teaching and learning in lessons. What is required now is the facility to do this and share the good practice which is evident in some, but not all classes. More detailed and regular assessment is required, and the setting of targets to be shared with pupils, to help pupils know what they have to do to improve and enable them all to reach their full potential.

SCIENCE

87. As a result of the overall good quality of teaching, most pupils achieve well and, by the age of seven and also in Year 3, attain satisfactory standards. The pupils with special educational needs, those with English as an additional language and travellers' children make good progress because of the good and effective support they receive. A weakness commented on in the last report was related to the practical and investigative aspect of this subject. This has, in most classes, been successfully addressed and represents an improvement from the previous position. It is as a result of improved planning and the overall quality of teaching.
88. The pupils show considerable enthusiasm for, and interest in, their practical investigations. This motivation is used effectively by the teachers when they set out the learning objectives clearly, ensuring that the pupils have a good understanding of the experimental requirements. The teachers leave the objectives sufficiently 'open-ended' so that for the pupils it is a real investigation and not merely a prescribed routine. This also provides the pupils with a sense of challenge, which motivates interest in the tasks. The teachers also use a range of strategies to interest and stimulate the pupils. For example, pupils in Year 2 have a good understanding of the notion of a complete circuit when studying electricity; this is simply but effectively achieved by sitting in a circle and passing on a hand squeeze from your neighbour until it returns to the point of origin. A circuit breaker is also successfully demonstrated in a similar manner. As a result the pupils' subsequent practical work using cells, bulbs and wire was particularly effective and learning good. Both of the teachers carrying out this work have high expectations for the correct use of scientific terminology referring, for example, to the 'positive' and 'negative' terminals of the cell.
89. It was clear that practical investigations and learning are greatly assisted by the willingness of the pupils to collaborate and co-operate when undertaking this work. In a Year 3 lesson, for example, pupils listen to each other's ideas when investigating the erosion of different types of rock. Learning is also helped by appropriate matching of activity to pupils' needs, the modelling of tasks and the reinforcement of understanding, for lower attaining pupils, of such terms as 'diagram'. However, the teacher has appropriately high expectations for the extension of the pupils' knowledge of such technical terms as 'sedimentary', 'igneous' and 'metamorphic'. Higher attaining pupils, as a result, use these terms with ease and accuracy. Most of the pupils in the class can explain accurately their understanding of the notion of a 'fair test'. Year 2 pupils also make 'predictions' about the impact on brightness when varying a number of bulbs in a circuit. Recording of practical work and other aspects of science are satisfactory, but teachers' expectations for the standards of presentation are generally not high enough. This was an aspect also noted in the last report.
90. In all the lessons observed, the teachers make good use of class review or plenary sessions. They generally have a positive impact on the pupils' learning. This is an indicator of good pace and timing in lessons and represents an improvement on the last report. It is a significant contributor to the pupils' good learning.

91. Year 1 pupils have a satisfactory understanding of the sources of sound. Evidence from their recorded work indicates that they undertake interesting investigations, for example 'can we hear through water and wood', and that they undertook some simple predictions. Pupils in this year group also know about their senses, linked appropriately to their stage of development, for example they write about the 'tastes and smells I like'. The teachers in other years plan well for stimulating and imaginative investigations. For example, in work on materials, the pupils carry out satisfactory tests to test absorbency and imaginative testing of the elasticity of tights, the results of which were of particular interest to 50 per cent of the pupils! The understanding by the teachers of the importance of experiment and investigation greatly helps to reinforce pupils' learning in the subject. The effective deployment of support staff also helps to ensure all pupils make progress in most lessons.
92. The teachers plan their work using national guidance. Assessment also follows similar guidance. Marking is undertaken regularly by the teachers but there was little evidence of the setting of targets, even for presentation. Whilst year teams plan together, there is no clear framework for the modification of the curriculum in the light of experience and for ensuring the progressive development of skills and understanding through the school. The national guidance has improved on the situation found during the last inspection, but the subject co-ordinator has currently limited opportunities to ensure consistency of practice and provision through the school and to be aware of standards in the subject. This is unsatisfactory. The school is beginning a system of monitoring, which is in the very early stages. This is an important first development in the role of the subject co-ordinator.

ART AND DESIGN

93. The above average standards in art noted in the last report have been maintained. The subject remains a strength of the school. The pupils achieve well and show good control of a variety of techniques and an appreciation of a wide range of artistic styles.
94. The pupils love art. As a result, they work with a great sense of purpose and show considerable pride and satisfaction in what they produce. This, in turn, makes a very significant contribution to the quality of the pupils' learning, which is good. In a Year 3 lesson, the good learning of the pupils was also very well supported by the good planning and effective co-operation between the class teachers and the learning support assistant. The tonal scales produced by the pupils, in the group working with the learning support assistant, were of a good standard; two of them were outstanding for pupils of their age and showed a very good understanding of paint mixing techniques. As the teacher was knowledgeable about the subject, the other pupils in the class knew exactly what their objective was, worked hard, and achieved very well in creating pictures using only one colour. They showed a good mastery of tonal variation by cleverly changing the density of their shading in the picture. Picasso would clearly have been pleased with their efforts. Work on display in the other Year 3 class showed that they too had been taught well with some very good observational pencil drawings of rocks which exhibited good control of shading techniques.
95. The teachers' planning, which is good, around the work of significant artists, gives the pupils models to which they can aspire and an initial understanding of artistic style. In Year 2 they are introduced to the work of the impressionists. The pupils' pictures using the pointillism style of Seurat are good. In the observed lesson, the teachers' systematic approach, whilst still allowing individual creative freedom, was clearly significant in enabling the pupils to produce work of quality. The pupils' very positive attitudes ensure concentration, a desire to master skills and pleasure in the outcomes. This was evident, too, in the same Year 2 work on clay relief panels of fruit. With the very good support of the teacher, the pupils pay close attention to detail, control tools

well and reveal a good understanding of the design process. As a result, learning is good and all pupils achieve well, including those with special educational needs, English as an additional language and travellers' children. The skilful help given by the learning support assistants, well directed by the teachers, ensures the inclusion of all pupils in the activities and is an important component of the overall good quality of teaching.

96. Displays around the school indicate that the pupils have a broad and balanced experience in art. For example, some Year 1 work effectively contrasts painted self-portraits and clay faces, very large-scale class pictures are produced and artistic work is used well to support the investigations of sounds in science. Relevance is well given to the subject by the productions of 'healthy living' posters and 'keep fit' pictures using hinged, paper human figures. Although no direct use of the computer was observed, there was an indication of pupil awareness of possibilities when one child suggested he might use a particular program to create a stippled effect.
97. The subject is temporarily without a co-ordinator. Planning primarily follows national guidelines and consistency of approach is assisted by the joint planning in year teams. There is, however, no formal framework for ensuring the systematic progression of skills through the school. Success in the subject is supported effectively by the good level of resources and the use of sketchbooks, which can be used to measure progression.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. The school has successfully overcome a weakness noted in the last report. Although it was not possible to observe any lessons in Year 3 related to the design process, evidence from the pupils' sketchbooks shows an increasing awareness of the whole design process. Observation of pupils in Years 1 and 2 shows that the evaluation strand of design is now well embedded in the curriculum. The pupils achieve well and reach the levels expected for seven-year-olds. There was insufficient evidence to make a judgement about the attainment of pupils in Year 3.
99. The teachers consolidate the design process well and use a variety of strategies to achieve this objective. For example, in one Year 1 class, the lesson planning deliberately separated on to different days the elements of the design process. This was a good strategy to underscore the important strands in the process in the minds of these young pupils. There was also an effective evaluation of the possible suitability of some materials suggested at the design stage, which added significantly to the pupils' learning. Such strategies contribute to the overall good quality of teaching.
100. The teachers' effective and detailed planning was evident in a Year 2 lesson, where the focus was on the 'making' stage following the 'design' stage in the previous lesson. Clear objectives were set which greatly helped the pupils' learning, for example the importance of achieving two identical templates when making hand puppets was very well emphasised. The pupils' learning was also well assisted by their appreciation of the need to make templates larger than their hand to allow for joining. A weakness noted in the last report suggested that the pupils were not allowed sufficient individual freedom in design and work was frequently too prescriptive. However, there was a sharp focus in this lesson on the basic essentials to achieve success with the outcomes, but the teacher appropriately gave the pupils opportunity to create designs and choose materials. This is an important and significant development. Pupils with special educational needs are helped well by effective teaching methods. For example, the groups in the lessons are carefully organised to ensure that these pupils are able to learn, not only from the support of the teachers, but also from the pupils around them. The good relations amongst the pupils also help to ensure this occurs. A current weakness in the pupils' experiences, which is acknowledged by the subject co-

ordinator, is the limited opportunity to work with food and to use tools with some resistant materials. However, in Year 2 there was evidence that work on healthy eating in science was linked very effectively to the construction of models of plates of food deemed to be wholesome.

101. In all the observed lessons, the pupils' learning was successfully encouraged by an element of 'challenge' that the teachers introduce to the work. This motivates the pupils well and they respond when reminded of the need to be alert to attention and quality at each stage. A particularly effective display in a Year 2 room very clearly emphasised this aspect in taking the pupils visually, using their work, through from the object, observational drawing, template, detailed design, to well sewn appliqué of very good quality.
102. The subject co-ordinator has been responsible for the design and technology curriculum for only two months. She shows much foresight in establishing a plan of a year's targets she hopes to achieve. She is aware of the need to monitor in order to measure attainment and progress and is creating a portfolio of expectations to help colleagues in their planning. There is currently no whole-school assessment policy but the co-ordinator's own scheme for her class is effective.

GEOGRAPHY

103. No geography is planned for Years 1 and 2 in the current term, as the subject alternates with history. The judgements about the quality of geography in these two years are based on a scrutiny of the pupils' work and of the teachers' planning. Lessons in Year 3 were observed and the judgements about the work and standards of the older pupils include these observations.
104. Overall standards in geography throughout the school are in line with what is expected of pupils of these ages nationally, maintaining the position of the last inspection. They are curious about the world in which they live, that curiosity having been fostered well during the Foundation Stage. The pupils' achievements in knowing and understanding about the geographical features of their own town are good, but that of other places is somewhat narrow. This weakness is acknowledged by the school and is due to be addressed by the recently appointed subject co-ordinator. Pupils readily differentiate between the human and the physical geographical features of their own locality. In Year 3 they write clearly about these to pen friends from a school in Bedfordshire with which they are in contact. Other pupils discuss factors that affect the local environment commenting on significant features such as the wind generators that supply electricity to the town. When discussing geographical ideas they use the correct vocabulary with understanding.
105. The teaching of the subject is sound, the teachers have a clear understanding of the topics they are teaching and of how to enable the pupils to learn about geographical features. Skills learned in literacy sessions are used effectively when work in geography is being recorded, but on occasions the geographical focus is ignored. One such occasion was when a significant group of pupils used up that part of the lesson planned for recording what they had discussed about the geographical features of the town for a letter to a friend, in only writing the address. Expectations for the standards of presentation are not high enough.
106. The teachers' marking of the pupils' work is generally sound and where the teaching is very good it provides the pupils with targets at which to aim to improve their work. As there is no formal structure for assessing how well the pupils are achieving in geography the teachers' assessments are not used systematically to develop the way the subject is learned throughout the school. The subject leader has received in-service training and plans are in place for the observation of teaching in the subject, but

currently this does not happen.

107. The resources available for the subject are satisfactory for the curriculum currently planned, and an audit of them is planned for the near future with an eye to developing the scheme of work and servicing its new requirements.
108. The support provided for pupils with special educational needs is good, as is that for pupils for whom English is not their first language and travellers' children. In each case the pupils make good progress and achieve well as a result of the careful and well-planned help they receive. The work provided for the pupils is well matched to the overall ability of the class. However, the higher attaining pupils are not stretched in their geographical understanding, with the focus more on producing work that has a higher standard of English and presentation, such as producing better written letters to a school in Biggleswade. The interests and experiences of all groups of pupils, whatever their origin and levels of prior attainment, are taken note of in the planning and delivery of the lessons.
109. Geography has improved since the previous inspection, along with the other subjects in the curriculum as a result of improvements in teaching and in the planning of work. This is based upon the nationally recommended schemes, but they are not yet clearly adapted to the needs and opportunities afforded by this particular school, though this is in the mind of the subject co-ordinator as part of the planning to improve the subject.

HISTORY

110. Due to the pattern of the timetable no history lessons were observed in Years 2 or 3. The following judgements are based on the observations of lessons in Year 1 and on the scrutiny of pupils' work throughout the school as well as of teachers' planning.
111. The standards of attainment of pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 are broadly in line with what is expected of pupils of those ages. Their curiosity about the past is engaged during the Foundation Stage where they make good progress from a lower than average level of initial attainment. This progress continues throughout the school so that they achieve well by the time they move onto the middle school.
112. The pupils develop a sound initial understanding of history from looking at the ways things change over time. In Year 1 they look at how familiar things like toys or teddy bears have changed. They make reasonable judgements about the age of toys on display in the classroom based on the material from which they are made, their condition and other clues such as those provided by the illustrations on the toy boxes. Pupils during Year 2 study the lives of well-known historical figures like Florence Nightingale and Guy Fawkes and recall well the events described. They begin to set historical events into context such as the work on Remembrance Day, linking the past with an event in the pupils' own lives. The older pupils in Year 3 make a study of ancient Egypt, making use of the time lines that are displayed in the classrooms to gain some idea of the spread of time dealt with. Good use is made of literacy skills in the recording of information learned. As the pupils sort and arrange the information about, for example old and modern toys, they categorise them using simple techniques learned in numeracy with some understanding, though the range of attainment in each class is broad.
113. The history lessons make good use of a wide range of objects such as the interesting collections of toys old and new displayed in the classrooms. This gives the pupils an insight into how historical knowledge and understanding can be gained from a study of artefacts. Good links between different parts of the curriculum and history maintain the pupils' interests, as do the arresting displays of pupils' work. Though currently not enough use is made of the good opportunities that exist to support history with

information and communication technology. The teaching is based on a sound knowledge of the subjects tackled and of how pupils learn about the past. The teachers in each year group plan the work carefully together and the pupils' learning benefits from this pooling of ideas. The individual pieces of work are usually carefully checked by the teachers, but currently there is no formal programme of assessment for the subject on which future planning and accurate reporting on standards in history can be made. The teachers generally do not require high enough standards of presentation of written work.

114. The leadership of the subject is developing along satisfactory lines to improve the provision for history further, and a start has been made on monitoring how the subject is being taught in different classes. A recent audit of resources for teaching the subject has revealed the need for more historical artefacts. The teachers' planning is based upon the suggestions taken from national guidelines; a future development in the subject is that these shall be more closely adapted to the needs of the school. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported and make good progress, as do those for whom English is not their first language and travellers' children. The school is careful to ensure that all pupils are treated equally, whatever their levels of attainment, gender, social or cultural background.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

115. By the end of Year 2 and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3, their achievement in ICT is satisfactory and the standards attained by most pupils match standards expected nationally. This shows that standards have risen since the previous inspection when they were judged to be below average and progress was poor. Resources have been updated and improved from a poor level to a satisfactory level but only since this summer. The new co-ordinator has also provided helpful guidance in what to teach and when, and this has improved the effectiveness of teaching.
116. From an early age, pupils are taught how to operate computers. They learn to access programs, using the mouse control and keyboard accurately and acquire a range of basic technological skills. Year 1 and Year 2 pupils know the basic commands required to access prepared text and graphics programs. They use the keyboard suitably when entering and amending text in their literacy work to show their understanding of the differences between prose and poetry. They also design pictures using draw, brush and fill icons to complete colourful additions to their work. Tape recorders and listening stations are used effectively by teachers at selected times, to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills and enhance their enjoyment of literature. Year 1 pupils began to learn early control skills when entering a sequence of instructions into a programmable toy to make it move forward to a given target. This they did with varying degrees of success. By the age of seven, most pupils are likely to attain the expected standards.
117. By Year 3 pupils make satisfactory gains in their learning and effectively use technology, to a very limited extent, in other curriculum subjects, such as English and art to design 'Happy Birthday' cards. Insufficient use is made of ICT potential in subjects such as history. They are aware of the importance of ICT in their lives when searching for information about different places and designing a holiday brochure for their selected location. Teachers plan interesting activities that include all pupils at their particular level of need. Pupils used word processing programs to create text and selected different font sizes, styles and colours to highlight key features. In small groups pupils co-operate well together, refining ideas and organising relevant graphics and text.
118. Overall, the quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers and support staff have a sound knowledge of computing and make appropriate links with most other curriculum

subjects. Pupils work successfully in small mixed ability and gender groups and this successfully promotes pupils' social development. Resources have been much improved from a poor level with the purchase of new computers and software making good use of national funding provided. Satisfactory provision is made for pupils with special educational needs most of whom achieve well and show interest, and for travellers' children and pupils with English as an additional language. The new co-ordinator provides good support for staff and has prepared an action plan for the further training of teachers. This has resulted in teachers using an increasing number of strategies for developing technological skills. Standards have risen since the previous inspection and with the increased level of resources and improved coverage in teachers' planning, the school is well placed to improve further.

MUSIC

119. On the basis of the observation of only one lesson in both Years 2 and Year 3 and the singing in assembly, standards in the subject are judged to be at levels expected for pupils of their age. This maintains the position at the previous inspection, when the judgement was also made on the basis of similarly limited evidence.
120. The pupils sang well in assembly. All joined in and there was obvious enjoyment in their singing. The singing was predominantly in tune and the expert piano playing by the headteacher helped to ensure a correct tempo and an early appreciation of the importance of dynamics. The school provides a good range of opportunities for the pupils to develop their singing skills. There are regular Christmas and summer concerts, a choir sings to the elderly in local residential homes and the school takes part in the town's art week. The lunchtime supervisors are encouraged by the headteacher to lead the pupils in traditional playground songs, which are much enjoyed. All the pupils recently had the opportunity, with the help of a member of the governing body, who is a songwriter, to record a CD. There is a recorder club for Year 3 pupils. Children from the nursery regularly attend some of the assemblies, in which listening to music is also an important element. This helps to ensure that the pupils experience many aspects of music from the earliest possible age. All these experiences have a very positive impact on the pupils' appreciation of music in their lives.
121. Considerable emphasis is given to the planning by the pupils of musical performance. In the Year 2 observed lesson, the pupils' independent learning was very effectively supported by the responsibility placed upon each group to plan a short performance using a range of percussion instruments to describe actions, as one child narrated the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. The pupils showed good levels of co-operation and collaboration during the piece's preparation and also the appreciation of others' performance. The success of the pupils' learning was as a result of the good quality of teaching, thorough planning and effective deployment of resources. The planning of performance also featured strongly in the Year 3 lesson, when short phrases for untuned instruments were planned in pairs for others to play. The pupils used imaginative notation to record the phrases. The pupils' learning was effectively consolidated by the sympathetic evaluation of each pair's skill in following the notation. Some pupils effectively used a computer to prepare a musical phrase, which was played to the class and evaluated.
122. The planning by the teachers is thorough and an effective variety of methods is used to stimulate and motivate the pupils. As a result the pupils have very positive attitudes towards music and clearly enjoy their experiences. The good relationships in the school allow pupils to volunteer to perform with confidence in front of their peers. This also allows all pupils to feel included.
123. Planning follows national guidance. There is no formalised assessment scheme yet in place. The headteacher until recently used to take the music throughout the school. He

informally monitors and supports the class teachers as they develop their skills in teaching the subject. They are also well supported by a good range of resources.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

124. By the end of Year 2 and when pupils leave the school at the end of Year 3, pupils make satisfactory progress in most aspects of physical education and attain average standards for their age. In dance, achievement is better than expected, throughout the school. Pupils with special educational needs are effectively supported and achieve similar levels to other pupils. This maintains the standards noted in the previous inspection. The school provides a full programme of physical activities for this age range and enables pupils to acquire a wide range of skills.
125. In games, pupils are taught key skills in a variety of games including football and netball. The different skills of ball control, passing and intercepting and teamwork are systematically developed by pupils throughout the school. Pupils in Year 1 showed good levels of co-ordination when responding to new challenges introduced by the teacher. Having demonstrated the ability to keep their eyes on the ball and keep both hands together when catching, they were challenged to clap once and even twice in between bouncing and catching. About half the pupils made good progress and achieved this.
126. In gymnastics, teachers follow the new curriculum guidance well. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 learn how to move in different ways by running, jumping, hopping and skipping with due attention given to changes of speed and direction. They work confidently with appropriate use of space and awareness of others around them. Older pupils apply their skills and actions to large apparatus with increasing control and co-ordination. Through good intervention and prompts by the teacher, relevant challenges to pupils of all capabilities are set. Boys and girls participate keenly either individually, in pairs or small groups.
127. The curriculum also provides a good programme of dance. Pupils perform creatively to a range of stimuli, as was demonstrated in Year 1 when they performed different movements representing the characteristics of, either Mr Strong, Mr Noisy, Mr Jelly or Mr Quiet. Year 3 pupils develop more advanced skills when planning sequences of movements to specific themes and numbers of beats. Some very expressive sequences were developed by good teamwork and the high quality work of one group was greatly appreciated and sensitively evaluated by the other pupils. Achievement in all dance sessions was above the levels normally seen.
128. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have clear expectations of pupils who, as a result, respond positively to challenges and work hard to improve their skills and co-ordination. The co-ordinator has introduced new elements to the curriculum to improve the progression of skills' teaching throughout the school. The quantity and quality of resources are satisfactory and the accommodation is good with a hall and good outdoor facilities in the hard surface and field areas. A small range of extra-curricular sporting activities enhances the skills of the pupils who participate. These opportunities also contribute to the good development of pupils' personal and social skills.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

129. The religious education taught in the school plays a significant role in the maintenance of its religious character, achieving its aims in the personal development of the pupils and in providing for their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. In the range of religions studied the school goes beyond the expectations of the current Norfolk

Agreed Syllabus of religious education, to which it does not relate its planning as closely to the syllabus as it should. However, this does not materially affect the quality of teaching and learning of the subject in the school.

130. The standards achieved by the pupils in learning about the religions studied are good. Pupils in Year 2 have a good knowledge of several religious festivals associated with light. Their achievement in learning from those religions, understanding the significance of what they had studied, is also good. The higher attaining pupils in Years 2 and 3 especially, demonstrate good levels of reflective understanding in the observations they make and the questions they ask. For example, when discussing what led some people in His time to disapprove of Jesus, the story of the turning out of the moneychangers from the Temple came up, one Year 3 pupil asked, 'Did they put him on the cross because he done (sic) all that?' clearly anticipating the answer 'Yes', having worked it out already.
131. The core of the work planned for the subject in all years is Christian. Many of the pupils in each year have a good grasp of significant stories from the Bible, not only knowing the events described, but in many cases, such as the miracle stories and stories about Jesus, something of their meaning to believers as well. Pupils in Year 2 have knowledge of Judaism and Hinduism, as well as Christianity, following their studies of festivals of light, but the range of religions studied gives rise to some confusion about which religion teaches what, or where stories such as those of Rama and Sita fit in.
132. The teaching of religious education is at least satisfactory and sometimes good. It is based on joint planning for each year group so that the teachers share their knowledge and understanding of the subject matter to each other's benefit. The methods they employ provide the pupils with a suitable degree of challenge, such as the lessons in which they find evidence from the New Testament of why some people supported Jesus while others did not. The work on world religions is well supported by interesting 'Big Books', such as those used in literacy, for example on the life of a Muslim or a Hindu as well as of a Christian. However the school does not support this side of its religious education with visits from members of faith communities, or visits to places other than Christian churches, which is an important part of the provision for religious education. The pupils' learning from religion is supported by the programme of collective worship, which has both educational and reflective aspects as well as a spiritual ones.
133. Currently the headteacher is subject leader for religious education. There are plans for its development with an extension of its resources to include more religious objects to enlarge the pupils' direct experience of religions, but these have not yet been realised. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported in religious education, as are those for whom English is an additional language and travellers' children. The school is sensitive to the needs of all its pupils and encourages them to respect each other's beliefs and values effectively. The programme of religious education plays a special part in this as it does in the support of the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.