

# INSPECTION REPORT

## **TEN MILE BANK PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Downham Market

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120875

Headteacher: Mrs V Wollaston

Reporting inspector: Miss M A Warner  
17288

Dates of inspection: 17<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> September 2001

Inspection number: 197791

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

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant and Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Station Road Ten Mile Bank Downham Market Norfolk
Postcode:	PE3 0EP
Telephone number:	01366 377310
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr R Houghton
Date of previous inspection:	29 September 1997

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
17288	Miss M A Warner	Registered inspector	Mathematics. Information and communication technology Music Foundation stage Special educational needs	Information about the school The school's results and pupils' achievements Teaching and learning Curriculum and other opportunities Leadership and management
9370	Mrs R Wingrove	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development The school's care of pupils The school's partnership with parents
19670	Mr S Barker	Team inspector	English Science Art Design and technology Geography History Physical education Religious education Equal opportunities	Assessment

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

Ten Mile Bank Primary School is a small, rural Fenland school, south of Downham Market. The school has two classes and is much smaller than other primary schools nationally with 39 pupils on the school roll. Pupils from Reception to Year 3 are taught in one class and pupils from Years 4 to 6 are taught in the other class. At the time of the inspection one child was in the Foundation Stage. Eleven pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is above the national average. Fifteen pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is well above the national average. No pupil has a formal statement of need and there are no pupils with English as an additional language. Children's average attainment on entry, taken over a number of years, is low.

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

The leadership and management of the school is satisfactory and the quality of teaching is good. The context of the school and the children's attainment on entry is low and standards when pupils leave the school are, overall, well below average. However, in the National Curriculum test results in 2001, all Year 6 pupils gained the expected level 4 in mathematics and science and the higher level 5 was achieved in mathematics. The majority gained the expected level in English. Overall, improvement since the last inspection is unsatisfactory; however, the current rate of improvement is satisfactory. The school is now giving satisfactory value for money.

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

- Standards in mathematics at the end of Year 2 are high and in the top five per cent of schools nationally.
- There are good links with the High School, especially in design and technology.
- The majority of pupils have positive attitudes to learning.
- The provision of the breakfast club, to support both pupils' learning and the community, is a strong feature of the school.
- The community makes a strong contribution to pupils' learning, with many volunteers helping in school.
- There is wholehearted commitment to the school and pupils by the governors and staff.
- There is efficient administration and financial planning, making good use of new technology.

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

- Standards of writing are low across the school.
- Statutory requirements are not fully met in information and communication technology, music and religious education.
- Assessment and recording procedures have only recently been put in place and are not yet fully operational.
- Poor standards of behaviour, by a significant minority of pupils, prevent other pupils from learning.
- The use of time and resources in practical lessons and in assemblies is unsatisfactory.

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

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

Since the last inspection, which was held in September 1997, improvement has been unsatisfactory, particularly in Years 4 to 6 where, until recently, there have been staffing problems. Improvements have been made in the teaching of art in the older class (Years 4 to 6) and more recently have begun in music. Teaching methods, across the school, are now appropriate to the aims and purposes of lessons. Lessons are matched to the differing ages and needs of pupils and there has been some improvement in the marking of pupils' work. Standards in reading at the end of Year 6 have improved considerably over the last year. The programme for evaluating the curriculum, however, has not been carried out sufficiently and as a result, standards in pupils' writing and the full implementation of the music, physical education and religious education curricular have not improved. There is still too little detail in teachers' and support staff's day-to-day planning. Whilst

pupils are seen to be responsibly independent at times, such as when going to lunch, opportunities for them to be independent learners are few, as they lack the self discipline needed. The school is working towards developing this further.

## STANDARDS

As the number of Year 6 pupils taking the National Curriculum tests in 2000 and 2001 was very small, the table showing the standards achieved has been omitted and no comparison is made between the results of boys and girls.

- The standards of children on entry to the school, taken over a number of years, are well below what is expected of children of their age, although there are exceptions in some year groups. At the end of Year 2, in the National Curriculum assessments in 2000, pupils' attainment in reading was below the national average but above that of similar schools. Standards in reading fluctuated between 1997 and 2000 but in only one year were they above the national average. In writing, standards were below all schools nationally and in line with similar schools. Standards in writing have been below the national average for four years. In mathematics, National Curriculum test results over the last five years have been well above the national average and in three of these years were very high, being within the range of the top five per cent of schools across the country. No national comparisons are yet available for the 2001 but results show that writing is still a weakness and mathematics a strength at the end of Year 2.
- Standards in English and mathematics, in the Year 6 National Curriculum tests in 2000, were well below the national average and also well below those of similar schools. Standards in English have been well below the national average for the last four years. In mathematics, standards were in line with the national average in 1997 but well below average in the other three years as a result of staffing problems. In science, standards in 2000 were below all schools nationally and below those of similar schools. Standards in science have been below the national average for the last four years. Over the last four years, the trend in the school's results at the end of Year 6 in the three core subjects, English, mathematics and science, has been below the national trend. However, in 2001, all pupils reached the expected level 4 in mathematics and science and the higher level 5 was achieved in mathematics. The majority achieved level 4 in English.
- Overall, the standards attained by pupils in the current Year 2 are above national expectations in art, in line with expectations in speaking, reading, mathematics, design and technology, geography and history and below expectations in listening, writing, science, information and communication technology and religious education. There was too little evidence available during the inspection to make judgements on standards in music or physical education.
- Overall, the standards attained by pupils in the current Year 6 are in line with national expectations in speaking, reading, science, art, design and technology, geography and history. They are below expectations in listening, writing, mathematics, information and communication technology, religious education and in some aspects of physical education, although standards are satisfactory in swimming. It is not possible to make a judgement on standards in music due to the limited amount of evidence available. Not all aspects of the statutory curriculum are being taught in information and communication technology, music and religious education in either class.
- Year 6 pupils achieved well in 2001. The targets set for these pupils were met in English and exceeded in mathematics. Appropriate targets have again been set for Year 6 pupils in 2002



## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are keen to come to school and their attitude to learning is good.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Some pupils do not have a clear enough understanding of school rules and what is expected of them, as sanctions are not always carried out quickly enough. Poor behaviour in some lessons and a tendency to fight over trivialities in the playground and around the school mar the pupils' opportunity to gain a good education. Behaviour in assemblies is not good, but in the dining hall and breakfast club most pupils behave well.
Personal development and relationships	Provision for pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils are known well by staff and the use of Circle Time in the class of younger pupils is beginning to help them to learn to take turns. Health and safety education is taken very seriously. Relationships are unsatisfactory in that squabbles break out too easily and there is sometimes a lack of respect for the authority of some staff.
Attendance	Attendance rates are just below the national average due to the small number of pupils and the effect of one long-term absence. Punctuality has improved since the introduction of the breakfast club.

Whilst the majority of pupils' attitudes to learning are good, the unsatisfactory relationships and poor behaviour of others prevents good progress from being made. Whilst some aspects of provision for pupils' personal development are noteworthy, good behaviour is not sufficiently supported.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
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.*

- Eighteen lessons were seen in the two classes, eight graded in the older class and ten in the younger class.
- Teaching in almost a third of lessons across the school was very good and there was one excellent lesson. In both classes teaching was good or better in over half the lessons. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson in each class.
- Very good or excellent teaching was seen in English, mathematics, art and personal and social education. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in mathematics and physical education. Strengths in teaching are the understanding of the needs of young children in the Reception to Year 3 class and the very good pace of lessons in the Year 4 to 6 class. Particular weaknesses are in the use of resources in the younger class and the lack of established routines and expectations in physical education in the older class.
- The effectiveness of teaching English and literacy skills is satisfactory across the school. The effectiveness of teaching mathematics and numeracy skills are very good in the Reception and Year 1 to 3 class and satisfactory in the Year 4 to 6 class. The school supports pupils with learning difficulties well but greater assistance is needed in supporting those with behavioural difficulties.

- The main strength in pupils' learning is their interest in what is being taught. However, the lack of self-discipline of some pupils prevents good learning from taking place in some lessons in both classes.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory and mathematics is a strength. There are gaps in the information and communication technology, music and religious education curriculum. The school enriches the curriculum with a good range of visits and with visitors to the school.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	The provision the school offers pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. However, the school has limited support from outside agencies, such as the school nurse and educational psychologist, and no pupil has a formal statement of need.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. Assemblies do not provide an appropriate ethos in which collective worship can take place and there is little evidence of it being promoted explicitly across the curriculum. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	The main strength in the care of pupils is in the teachers' knowledge of them. The aim of the staff and governors is to provide a caring school: the introduction of the breakfast club demonstrates this strongly. Overall, procedures for child protection and ensuring pupils welfare are satisfactory. Records of pupils' personal behaviour were not seen during the inspection.

The school's partnership with parents is, overall, satisfactory but it is not always easy to involve some parents in their children's learning. The school has an 'open door' policy, which enables parents to speak to teachers when they feel it necessary. One formal meeting is arranged with parents at the end of each year but a half yearly meeting, especially for those who do not regularly meet with teachers would be helpful in ensuring that parents were kept better informed about their children's progress. Pupils' end-of-year reports are of good quality.

## HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory. After a difficult few years, the school is beginning to show signs of moving forward. Teachers and support staff have the will and capacity to succeed.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors take a key role in shaping the direction of the school, are very committed and give a considerable amount of their time to developing the buildings, and supporting staff and pupils. Appointments that they have made have helped the school to make good progress over the last year. Some information is missing from the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents.

Aspect	Comment
The school's evaluation of its performance	Not enough is done to evaluate the school's performance and as a result there has been little progress made in ensuring that the requirements of all National Curriculum subjects and religious education are fully met.
The strategic use of resources	The school's financial resources are used well and the school has a clear, well-presented, costed management plan for the next four years. The accounts have not been audited since before the last inspection.

Staffing is adequate, except at lunchtime when there is only one non-teaching member of staff on duty. The accommodation is clean and well cared for. There is adequate classroom space but no provision for a computer suite and the school hall is small and cluttered. The school has a well-developed, outside playground and environmental area, as well as a large adjoining field. There are inadequate learning resources in information and communication technology and religious education and for group-work in the younger class. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily. The main strength is the commitment of the governors and all staff to the pupils and the school.

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

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents support the school in practical ways.</li> <li>• Parents feel that their children are receiving a good and improving education.</li> <li>• Parents welcome the breakfast club.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parents are concerned about the behaviour and bad language of some pupils.</li> <li>• Parents would like to see more extra-curricular activities.</li> <li>• Parents are concerned that there are few chances for pupils to meet with and compete against other schools.</li> <li>• Some parents would like to see homework marks.</li> </ul>

The inspectors acknowledge the great support given by many parents. Last year's National Curriculum test results are an improvement on past years. Inspectors agree that the breakfast club is a successful development. They are also concerned about the poor behaviour of some pupils, which is having a detrimental effect on the education of others. The school plans a number of visits for pupils, although staff do not run clubs: in a small school this is reasonable. Pupils mix with other pupils when they visit the High School for design and technology, and also, for example, at the inter-school sports and dance festival. Inspectors agree that it would be helpful for parents to know how well their children achieved with homework.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. As the groups taking the National Curriculum tests at the end of Year 2 and Year 6 in 2000 and 2001 were very small, judgements are based on overall results during the last five years. The number of pupils taking the National Curriculum tests is also too small to make any accurate comparison between the results of boys and girls.
2. The standards of children on entry to the school, taken over a number of years, are well below what is expected of children of their age, although there are exceptions in some year groups. Pupils' attainment in reading, at the end of Year 2 in the National Curriculum assessments in 2000, was below the national average but above that of similar schools. Standards in reading fluctuated between 1997 and 2000 but in only one year were they above the national average. Standards in writing in the national tests in 2000 were below all schools nationally and in line with similar schools. Standards in writing have been below the national average for four years. In mathematics, however, National Curriculum test results over the last five years have been well above the national average and in three of these years were very high, being within the range of the top five per cent of schools across the country. No national comparisons are yet available for 2001, but results show that writing is still a weakness and mathematics a strength by the end of Year 2. These results reflect the low standards in English of children on entry to the school but their ability to grasp mathematical concepts more easily through the practical experiences offered them in both classes.
3. Standards in English and mathematics, at the end of Year 6 in 2000, were well below the national average and also well below those of similar schools. Standards in English have been well below the national average for the last four years. In mathematics, standards were in line with the national average in 1997 but well below average in other three years as a result of staffing problems. In science, standards in 2000 were below all schools nationally and below those of similar schools. Standards in science, at the end of Year 6, have been below the national average for the last four years. Over the last four years, the trend in the school's results of Year 6 pupils has been below the national trend. However, in 2001 all pupils reached the expected level 4 in mathematics and science and the higher level 5 was achieved in mathematics. The majority reached the expected level in English.
4. Overall, standards attained by the current Year 2 pupils are above national expectations in art, and are in line with national expectations in speaking, reading, mathematics, design and technology, geography and history. They are below expectation for pupils of their age in listening, writing, science, information and communication technology and religious education. There was too little evidence available during the inspection to make judgements on standards in music or physical education.
5. Overall, the standards attained by the current Year 6 pupils are in line with national expectations for pupils of their age in speaking, reading, science, art, design and technology, geography and history. They are below expectations in listening, writing, mathematics, information and communication technology, religious education and in some aspects of physical education, although standards are satisfactory in swimming.

It is not possible to make a judgement about standards in music due to the limited amount of evidence available. Not all aspects of the statutory curriculum are being taught in information and communication technology, music and religious education in either class.

6. Pupils' achievement is below expectations overall, because of past staffing problems in the Year 4 to 6 class which also adversely affected the younger age class. However, last years' pupils achieved well, especially when compared with the low attainment of pupils on entry to the school. The targets set for Year 6 pupils in 2001 were met in English and exceeded in mathematics. Appropriate targets have again been set for 2002.
7. In English and mathematics, higher-attaining pupils are given appropriate work and achieve at a higher level than the majority. Pupils with learning difficulties make satisfactory progress but those with behavioural needs make unsatisfactory progress. Individual Education Plans generally have clear and attainable objectives and enable pupils with learning difficulties to attain basic literacy skills. Those related to behavioural needs are not always so successfully achieved. The school has not identified any gifted or talented pupils.

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

8. The attitudes of the majority are good. Pupils like their teachers and the other school staff who help and look after them. They show respect for staff and visitors and can be polite and helpful. The majority are interested in lessons and enjoy being involved in activities.
9. Pupils are alert and eager: keen to come to school and learn. There is, however, an unsatisfactory amount of poor behaviour, as some of the pupils have not yet learned classroom routines and discipline. Consequently, too much of the teachers' time is taken up with quietening the noisy and gaining the attention of the easily distracted. This prevents those who do want to concentrate and learn from making progress and reaching the standards of which they are capable. Those who want to concentrate and learn are the majority, but the difficult minority adversely influences them. Too few pupils are sufficiently responsible to be left to work in pairs or in small groups independently. The teachers and support assistants work very hard teaching and supervising these lively pupils but, even during the inspection, fights were seen to break out, particularly in a physical education lesson at the end of one afternoon. Three pupils who have identified behaviour problems and two who have been excluded are, however, making progress.
10. Inspectors were told that many children who attend playgroups learn how to behave and accept the necessary routines. However, not all have learned how to behave and when they move into the class of Reception to Year 3 pupils, some of the younger as well as the older pupils will not raise their hands to answer questions but persist in calling out, are noisy and, sometimes, even rude.
11. In the older class (Years 4 to 6), inspectors noted even more examples of poor behaviour but were told that things are improving. An example of this was seen in lessons where pupils' full attention and interest was maintained all the time and good work was produced. A system of merits for good behaviour, co-operation and improving schoolwork has been introduced and the pupils, we were told, are making an effort to remember to put up their hands and not to call out. Only one pupil seems

unable to obey this rule at any time whilst others are, at least, beginning to try to do as asked. Pupils certainly pay attention well when their work is interesting and moves at a good pace. By the time they reach Year 6, pupils are taking some responsibility, caring for younger ones and showing enthusiasm for their lessons. Staff have sought guidance and training to help them improve the classroom discipline and control the disruptive pupils. Parents have agreed to the school's behaviour policy and both parents and pupils have signed the home/school agreement but it seems to make little difference to some. The main concern expressed in response to the questionnaire and at the parents' meeting was about behaviour.

12. Through Circle Time and with the forthcoming re-introduction of the school council, attempts are being made to address the problems of poor behaviour and bad language and to hear the views of pupils on their school. The breakfast club also plays a part in preparing pupils for their morning's work in the right frame of mind, perhaps having overcome early morning differences with their siblings, some of whom are in the same class. At present, however, pupils in both classes are not sufficiently aware of how their behaviour and actions affect everyone else.
13. Although the curriculum is not being enriched by clubs and sporting activities outside school hours because there are not enough adults to organise them, opportunities are taken, whenever possible, to invite interesting speakers into the school and to take the children on organised visits. For example, they go to the Wildlife and Wetlands Trust nearby and also to West Runton where there is an exceptionally good residential centre with a wide variety of taught projects such as computers, archery, go-carting and quad-biking. Behaviour on these occasions, even of those who are disruptive in school, is good.
14. Attendance rates are 2.1 per cent below the National Average but in such a small school this can be due to the long-term absence of one pupil. No unauthorised absences have been recorded in the past two years: efforts to promote regular attendance are effective. Punctuality has improved since the introduction of the breakfast club. Lessons begin on time and registration is conducted in a speedy, businesslike manner. Later in the day, before the younger pupils' afternoon break, the timing of lessons was erratic.

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

15. Eighteen lessons were seen in the two classes, eight graded in the older class and ten in the younger class. Teaching in almost a third of lessons across the school was very good and there was one excellent lesson. In both classes teaching was good or better in over half the lessons. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson in each class. Overall, teaching is good in both classes.
16. Very good or excellent teaching was seen in English, mathematics, art and personal and social education. Unsatisfactory teaching was observed in mathematics and physical education. Teachers have good subject knowledge except in information and communication technology in Key Stage 2 where extra expertise has been brought in. Particular strengths in teaching are the understanding of the needs of young children and the provision made for a very wide range of ages in the class of younger pupils. The school has a clear and appropriate policy for the teaching of Reception age children. The very good pace of lessons is a strength in the class of older pupils. Another characteristic of very good teaching in this older class is the amount of general knowledge that the teacher manages to impart during the lesson

which is of interest to pupils and often holds their attention well. An example of this was in art where they were studying 'still life' and were being encouraged to bring objects that meant something special to them into school the following week. The teacher spoke with enthusiasm about his own hobby of bee keeping, showing them the tools that a beekeeper uses. Weaknesses in teaching in the younger class are the insufficient use of resources to enable pupils to be actively engaged and the lack of accepted rules with regard to pupils calling out. A further weakness is the planning for supporting adults, which is not detailed enough to ensure that what has been planned is taught well. Where clear directions are given, such as in the additional literacy class, teaching by support staff is good. In the older class, weaknesses with regard to calling out continue and the lack of established routines and expectations in physical education is a concern. In both classes, teachers and supporting adults are working hard to remedy the weaknesses but teachers need to establish boundaries more firmly.

17. The methods used are generally good. Teachers focus on teaching basics skills well. Teachers question different pupils appropriately and, in the class of older pupils, use assessment well to guide daily planning. There is no evidence that week-to-week lesson planning for the younger class draws directly from assessment information. In almost all lessons, however, teachers group pupils well according to their prior attainment and take account of their differing needs and ages. Expectations of Year 3 pupils in science are not always high enough, partly because they are unavoidably taught with much younger pupils, but the teaching of science in the older class is very effective. Expectations here are high and the oldest pupils are skilfully encouraged with comments like, *'This is Year 6 work, it must be Year 6 quality.'* Pupils are also shown how to meet these expectations. Good use is made of support staff when pupils use information and communication technology (ICT) to support the subject, but ICT is seldom used. Homework is used effectively in both classes.
18. The amount of time allocated to writing for pupils in Years 2 and 3 is insufficient for good progress to be made. This lack of writing skills also has a negative effect on the standards that can be reached in other subjects, such as science. Time in the younger class is also sometimes used unsatisfactorily in mathematics when there are inadequate resources. This results in pupils being inactive for too much of the time, becoming bored and making less progress than they should. Time is used exceptionally well in the class of older pupils. In both classes, when resources are well-selected and well-prepared, lessons run smoothly and pupils respond favourably, for example, in a geography lesson in the younger class, pupils are fascinated by aerial photographs of their locality and photographs of people are used effectively to teach about portraits in art.
19. Where teaching is effective, objectives are clearly shared with the children and opportunities are taken to capture and keep the pupils' interest and teachers are aware of pupils' level of understanding. In a number of foundation subject lessons inspectors found evidence of good support for the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. For example, in design and technology pupils in the younger class are taught about the importance of sequencing instructions, reinforcing literacy work.

20. The school has not identified any pupils who are gifted or talented and no specific planning is made to counteract the fact that Year 2 girls performed at a lower level than boys in reading and writing in the 2000 National Curriculum tests. There are examples, however, that suitable provision is being made for higher-attainers in English and mathematics. The school supports pupils with learning difficulties well but greater assistance is needed in supporting those with behavioural difficulties.
21. The quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory overall. Pupils' interest, concentration and independence is good in the younger class but pupils are not self-disciplined enough to work independently in the older class. Their pace of working in both classes could be faster.

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

22. The quality and range of learning opportunities is satisfactory. The literacy strategy has been implemented satisfactorily and the numeracy strategy very well. However, not all the statutory National Curriculum is fully in place. The school is aware of the need to meet statutory requirements and plans are in place for this to be achieved this academic year after staffing problems over the last few years. At present music, information and communication technology and religious education do not meet requirements and more time needs to be given to foundation subjects.
23. The school enriches the curriculum with a good range of visits and with visitors to the school. Outside visits include a weekend residential visit and visits to the local Wildlife and Wetlands Trust at Welney, to Ely and King's Lynn. No extra-curricular activities take place due to the small number of staff and recent staffing problems. There are, however, a number of opportunities for pupils to visit and get to know the High School and to be taught design technology and information and communication technology by teachers from that school.
24. The provision the school makes within its own resources for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school has a strong sense of the importance of inclusiveness. However, the school has limited support from outside agencies, such as the school nurse and educational psychologist, and no pupil has a formal statement of need.
25. From the pupils' point of view there are no clear aims and objectives to guide personal development and awareness of other people. Provision for pupils' spiritual development is unsatisfactory. Assemblies do not provide an appropriate ethos in which collective worship can take place and there is little evidence of spirituality being promoted explicitly across the curriculum. Provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory but there are too few opportunities given for pupils to take responsibility and show initiative as they, as yet, lack self discipline. The school takes health education seriously and provides further personal, moral and social education through Circle Time, particularly in the younger class. Sex education and drugs misuse are suitable addressed but there is no overall scheme of work for personal, social and health education. There are plans for Circle Time to be extended to Years 4 to 6 and for a school council to be set up. There are limited opportunities for cultural development: for example, a study of famous artists contributes to a wider understanding of European culture and other cultures are mainly studied at festival times. A local story-teller of Fenland stories has visited the school, to widen pupils'



knowledge of their own local culture. Members of the local community give of their time and enhance the curriculum.

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

26. The aim of the staff and governors is to provide a caring school. They invite new pupils and their parents to spend time in the school during the term before the children enrol. They make efforts to give the school a good image, welcoming children who have health problems or have had difficulties in other schools. The teachers' knowledge of the backgrounds and health problems of their pupils is very good and, by written arrangement with the parents, staff will give necessary medicines during the course of the day.
27. Health education matters are taken very seriously. Pupils are encouraged to drink water and to eat sensibly. Sex education, talks on stranger danger, cycling proficiency and drug education all have a place in the curriculum. The school is a 'no smoking' area. The school used a 'Healthy Norfolk School' award to provide the breakfast club. Pupils arrive at 8.15 a.m. and for ten pence can take turns to sit at a large table in the refurbished building which previously used to house outside toilets. A support assistant in charge keeps them supplied with bowls of cereal, toast, tea, milk and water. Children use cutlery and crockery appropriately, remember to say "please" and "thank you" and pass things to each other sensibly. They enjoy the social time together and are energised and ready by 8.45 a.m. for a good start to the school day.
28. Outside agencies help the school when necessary. The children see the dental nurse regularly but the school nurse comes only once in two years. Because of the special needs of some of the pupils, the assistance of an educational psychologist more often would be helpful: their time is limited to seeing only one pupil in a term which is inadequate if the needs of all are to be addressed sufficiently.
29. There are many very good policy documents approved by the governors but these are not yet all being followed effectively. Child protection policies are in place, however, and staff are aware of the need for vigilance. Parents and pupils sign the home/school agreement, endorsed by the school, but in some cases that is as far as it goes. The unruly behaviour and lack of classroom discipline shown by some pupils has a harmful effect on the progress of the others. The school is failing at times to prevent pupils being upset and harmed by the aggressive behaviour of others, although pupils say that they would go to a member of staff if they had worries about bullying, whether they were the victim or it was another child. There have been two short exclusions.
30. Efforts are made to promote regular attendance and parents are reminded of how important it is for children to be at school to take full advantage of all the educational opportunities.
31. Teachers keep a clear record of the Early Learning Goals achieved by children in the Foundation Stage. There is no evidence that week-to-week lesson planning for the Year 1 to 3 pupils draws from assessment information but some detailed assessments have been compiled for pupils in Years 4 to 6 and these are beginning to form a basis for planning future work. The school has basic performance indicators for core subjects and the special educational needs Code of Practice in place. Day-to-day assessment is used well in numeracy and literacy, which enables

teachers to group pupils according to years and ability. The school maintains records of pupils' attainment in national tests and in some county tests but this record only applies to English and mathematics: in science and in the foundation subjects, assessment is relatively underdeveloped as a tool to aid planning. However, the teacher's records for the class of older pupils show that formative assessment methods for science are developing. The school has begun to put formal assessment procedures in place but should keep records in all subjects.

32. The aims and objectives for the school are not always made explicit and therefore there is no clear direction for pupils' personal development.

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

33. Parents have a very positive view of the school although, both in reply to questionnaires and at the parents' meeting, a number expressed concerns about the standards of behaviour and use of bad language. Most parents consulted felt that their children had made better progress in the last year.
34. Parents considered that they were receiving sufficient information by letter about what was happening in school and appreciated the 'open door' policy that enables them to talk to a teacher when they feel it necessary. The menu for school meals is sent to parents each term. When pupils have achieved exceptionally well, a 'positive postcard' is sent home to mark this. Whilst the 'open door' policy is appreciated by many, the fact that there is only a formal parents' meeting (by appointment) at the end of the school year means that some are not kept informed about their children's progress, or lack of it, throughout the year.
35. End-of-year reports give parents plenty of good information about their children's progress. They give details of attainment in each subject and report on the children's knowledge, skills and personal development. There are targets set for the following year and, as appropriate, references to the older children's responsibilities in the school.
36. The school prospectus is well presented and informative, whilst the annual report of the governors gives details of their regular meetings. Neither document, however, gives all the information required by statute about, for example, attendance, special needs and provision for disabled children or the professional development of staff. The school's aims are not explicitly conveyed.
37. Support for the school from parents, grandparents, ex-pupils and the village community is very good indeed and a strength of the school. However, some parents need a lot of encouragement to take any part in school activities. Fund-raising events are always well attended on the day. Attendance at the parents' rounders match and picnic on the last day of the school year is good.
38. A group of adults and governors have given invaluable help to the school by freely offering their time and professional expertise to make alterations and decorate buildings for the playgroup and breakfast club. Some adults help by hearing children read and this is much appreciated by teachers and pupils, especially when good progress is marked by a recommendation for merit awards.

39. The 'Friends of the School Association' is not functioning at present, but a village organisation makes donations to provide Christmas presents for the children and help in other projects. Recently, parents have not been invited to attend assemblies. However, it is planned that, quite soon, children will be given opportunities to become involved in presenting assemblies again and parents will be invited to come along. Parents attended the Leavers presentation at the end of the summer term, also enjoying a picnic and a game of Kwik cricket during the same afternoon. At Christmas time they join the children for Christmas dinner and the school pantomime. One of the parents and the Chair of Governors run the cycling proficiency club.

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

40. The leadership of the headteacher and key staff is satisfactory. In this small school the Early Years expertise of the headteacher, the subject expertise of the teacher of older pupils and the special educational needs expertise of the third teacher complement each other well. After a difficult few years, due to staffing problems, the school is beginning to show signs of moving forward and teachers and support staff have a will to succeed. The main strength of the leadership and management of the school is the commitment of the governors and all staff to the pupils and school. Staff and governors work closely together and support one another well. There is a good team spirit and a willingness to improve where there are weaknesses. The present staff are keen to provide the best they can for the pupils. Whilst the school does have written aims in the school improvement plan these are not made explicit in other documents and in the daily life of the school and the direction of the school is not, therefore, sufficiently driven by them.
41. The governors take a key role in shaping the direction of the school, are very committed and give a considerable amount of their time to developing the buildings and supporting staff and pupils. Not enough is done, however, to evaluate the school's performance and as a result there has been little progress made in ensuring that the requirements of all National Curriculum subjects and religious education are fully met. Some statutory information is also missing from the school prospectus and the governors' annual report to parents.
42. Performance Management requirements are in place and the headteacher monitors teaching. The main weakness is in the formal monitoring of pupils' attainment and personal development. The school relies too much on the teachers' personal knowledge of pupils in this small school. More formal procedures are needed if standards are to improve. The school, however, has made a start in tracking the progress of pupils, assessing their academic attainment and monitoring their personal development but this is at an early stage. It will not yet be much help in future planning or advising the pupils' future school of their all-round abilities.
43. The school has a very efficient school secretary who is supported well by regular visits from the finance department of the Local Education Authority. Information and communication technology is used well to support administration. The school's financial resources are used efficiently and the school has a clear, well-presented, costed management plan for the next four years. There is no evidence of specific grants being allocated to the school. The school applies the principles of best value satisfactorily. Accounts have not been audited since before the last inspection.

44. Staffing is adequate except at lunchtime when there is only one non-teaching member of staff on duty. The appointment of a new teacher for Years 4 to 6 has also added expertise to subjects such as music and art.
45. The accommodation is clean and well cared for. There is adequate classroom space but no provision for a computer suite and the school hall is small and cluttered. The school has a well-developed outside playground and environmental area, as well as a large adjoining field. There are inadequate learning resources in information and communication technology and religious education across the school and for group-work in the younger class.
46. The governors' role in health and safety and in security issues is very good. They make regular risk assessments and checks on equipment. The oil tank in the playground was considered to be a hazard and is to be moved very soon. The Local Education Authority will reimburse the school for this work. The use of the school hall for active physical education lessons for twenty pupils is a problem as it is small and there is so much equipment stored there, particularly chairs and tables which are used at lunchtime. The wall bars are no longer used in lessons and there are many other objects stored around the hall.
47. The quality of teaching and the leadership and management of the school is satisfactory. The context of the school and the children's attainment on entry is low and standards when pupils leave the school are well below average. Improvement has been slow and although unsatisfactory since the last inspection is now satisfactory and the school, with the present staff, is mainly effective. The school is now giving satisfactory value for money.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

In order to raise standards of work and behaviour the headteacher, governors and staff should:

- (1) Raise standards in writing by:
  - Developing closer links with the pre-school group, so that the Early Learning Goals are more readily achieved at the end of the Reception year;  
(Paragraphs 2, 48.)
  - Allowing more time for a range of writing activities including extended writing for pupils in the older class (Years 4 to 6) and giving pupils opportunities to work in silence for short periods of time to aid concentration.  
(Paragraphs 4, 5, 18, 20, 55, 58, 59, 60, 74.)
- (2) Ensure statutory requirements are met in information and communication technology, music and religious education and in particular improve facilities and support for information and communication technology;  
(Paragraphs 5, 22, 84, 86.)
- (3) Apply the assessment and recording procedures so that the school has a record of what pupils have achieved in each subject and what their needs are for personal development and citizenship.  
(Paragraphs 17, 31, 70, 76, 84, 95, 98.)
- (4) Improve standards of behaviour by:
  - not ignoring inappropriate behaviour whether in class or out of it and ensuring safety in physical education lessons. Setting clear boundaries and when they are broken, immediately applying agreed sanctions;  
(Paragraphs 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 20, 29, 33, 62, 77, 91, 94.)
  - having a clear policy for provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and a scheme of work for personal development based on the school's aims.  
(Paragraph 25.)
- (5) Improve the use of time and resources by:
  - reducing the amount of time when pupils are inactive in lessons by:
    - i) in the younger class increasing the quantity of resources, so that pupils do not have to wait to take turns;
    - ii) in both classes - having resources already distributed before or quickly available during lessons so that pupils do not have to wait to begin their work;  
(Paragraphs 16, 69, 83.)
  - increasing the pace of teaching especially for Years 2 and 3 in class and in all assemblies;  
(Paragraphs 21, 25.)

- Providing detailed daily plans for support staff (similar to Additional Literacy Strategy guidance) so that staff are clear as to what is to be taught and achieved by each child and the methods to be used.  
(Paragraph 16, 51.)

Minor issues:

- ensure that the school's aims are explicit in the school prospectus;  
(Paragraph 36.)
- raise pupils' self-esteem by regularly giving praise and encouraging pupils to appreciate each other and each other's work and providing greater opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, use their own initiative and acquire the ability to work independently;  
(Paragraphs 9, 21, 25, 49, 87.)
- develop the support of parents in their children's learning, for example, in helping with information and communication technology and having a second formal parents' meeting half way through the year;  
(Paragraphs 11, 29, 37, 39.)
- review the number of dinner supervisors to release teachers at lunchtime to enable them to prepare adequately for the afternoon.  
(Paragraph 44.)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	18
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	1	5	5	5	2	0	0
Percentage	5	28	28	28	11	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 five percentage points,

### Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	39
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	11

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y R – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	15

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

### Attendance

#### Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.7
National comparative data	5.2

#### Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	2	4	6

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (71)	100 (71)	100 (100)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	100 (71)	100 (86)	100 (71)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	2	3	5

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (0)	40 (0)	100 (0)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	60 (0)	60 (0)	80 (0)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

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	39
Any other minority ethnic group	0

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

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

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	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 – Y6**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	13
Average class size	19

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y6**

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	28

### **Financial information**

Financial year	2001
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	£
Total income	127835
Total expenditure	130109
Expenditure per pupil	3336
Balance brought forward from previous year	8513
Balance carried forward to next year	6239

### **Recruitment of teachers**

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
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	37
Number of questionnaires returned	12

### **Number of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	4	5	1	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	3	4	1	3	1
Behaviour in the school is good.	0	4	4	4	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	3	3	3	2	0
The teaching is good.	4	3	2	2	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	3	5	0	3	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	7	1	2	2	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	3	5	2	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	5	3	0	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	5	2	0	4	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	3	5	0	3	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	1	4	2	2	3

### **Other issues raised by parents**

- Parents are particularly concerned about the behaviour and bad language of some pupils.
- Parents are concerned that there are fewer chances for pupils to meet with and compete against other schools.
- Some parents would like to see homework marks.

## **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**

48. Children start school in the September of the year in which they are five. Numbers are often small, ranging from six to one. The standards of children on entry to the school vary, with some above the standards expected and the majority below or well below expectations of children of their age. Taken over a number of years, standards on entry are well below what is expected of children of their age. During the inspection only one child, who was taught with Year 1 to Year 3 pupils, was in the Foundation Stage. The following judgements are based on evidence from this and the previous year group.

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

49. Suitable provision is made for children's personal development, taking into consideration the small numbers in the school and the good links with the playgroup on site. Whilst having to provide for the needs of the pupils in Years 1 to Year 3 in the same class, the school is also aware of the needs of the Reception age children. When possible, arrangements are made for them to mix with children of their own age and planning generally provides well for their needs when working with older pupils, with added support from adults. Baseline assessment records show that none of the children have achieved all the Early Learning Goals expected by the end of the reception class and some are achieving stepping stones at a level below that expected of children of their age. Almost all, however, across the two years are on course to achieve them by the end of this year and higher-attainers should reach above the usual expectations. Children have gained, and are gaining, confidence and can concentrate well when their interest is engaged, such as in mathematics, art and history lessons. The majority of children, including those with special educational needs relate well to pupils of different ages and have learned to take turns and put forward their own ideas, such as in Circle Time. In the playground they play happily with older children. At such times, they gain a good sense of being part of a community. Some are, however, still at an early stage of development and are only beginning to seek out other to share experiences and have limited confidence to work independently. Most have a positive approach to new experiences and like to become involved in activities, able to operate independently within the class.

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

50. Assessment records show that the majority of children achieve almost all the Early Learning Goals expected in speaking. They can interact with others, taking turns in conversations, speak audibly and with confidence using language for an increasing range of purposes. In their knowledge of sounds however, there is a wider range of attainment and overall standards are below those expected. Photographs show children engrossed in a book at quiet reading time and taking part in drama in the hall. They enjoy story time with a classroom assistant. In a lesson observed, pupils again showed great enjoyment when putting two halves of a sentence together. From their records, it can be seen that children are beginning to form letters with varying degrees of success. The higher-attaining pupils can write a short sentence unaided but, for the majority, words and sentences are only beginning to emerge and letter formation is at an early stage, and their pencil control is poor. Children know a

range of stories, which they illustrate. They can select pictures from a magazine which begin with a given letter.

### **Mathematical development**

51. Assessment records show that no children have achieved the Early learning Goals expected of pupils at the end of the foundation Stage. The majority are achieving well below expectations. Whilst a high-attaining child knows numbers to 20 the majority only have a real understanding of numbers to 5. They experience shopping in the class shop and exchange larger coins for smaller one. There is not, however a clear progression in this work and pupils are sometimes expected to use 50p before they have fully understood the concept of 1p and 2p. Photographs show that they have begun to gain the concept of fractions when cutting fruit into halves, quarters and eighths. Teaching is generally good but not enough direction is given to volunteers and support staff through daily planning and tasks are sometimes inappropriately difficult.

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

52. None of the children have achieved the Early Learning Goals expected. Standards are below, and often well below, those expected of children of their age. Photographs show that they learn to look after plants, work on a computer dressing a teddy, and make scones in cooking. They watched caterpillars change to chrysalises and then to butterflies and enjoyed setting them free. They have also visited the Welney Wetlands trust and been pond dipping. They learn about other cultures by making lanterns at Chinese New Year, and take part in the non-uniform day on Red Nose Day. From children's records it is evident that children have learned about the seaside, a lighthouse, Noah's Ark, and dinosaurs, and know the name of some different animals. The standard of their work is variable, and usually below average, but all know their colours and some are beginning to be able to name body parts.

### **Physical development**

53. Records show that the majority of children are achieving just below the levels expected by the Early Learning Goals. No outside activities or physical education lessons were observed during the inspection, so no first-hand evidence can be reported upon but photographs show pupils using large toy cars and the indoor climbing frame, learning to push and pull. They also join in the sack race on sports day. Provision is judged to be appropriate.

### **Creative development**

54. Almost all pupils are achieving at the level expected and have achieved the Early Learning Goals in this area of learning. Children make models out of play dough, and Leggo and, working in groups or pairs, make small toys using gears. They show interest in their model of a school and when working in the sand making sand castles. In an art lesson observed, children achieved above average standards and their considerable enjoyment was observed.

## ENGLISH

55. Due to the small number of pupils in each year group it is necessary to consider results over several years in order to come to a judgement about standards. Since the last inspection, pupils at the end of Year 2 have broadly attained standards below national expectations in both reading and writing. However, in 2000 standards exceeded the average for similar schools in reading and were in line with the average for similar schools in writing. The performance of pupils at the end of Year 6 has been well below the national expectation and the average for similar schools throughout this period. Inspection evidence and results drawn from the 2001 tests suggest that there has been an improvement in English at the end of Year 6 in the last year, although the targets set for 2002 indicate that attainment in writing continues to lag behind that in reading.
56. Provision for pupils with special educational needs in English is satisfactory and they make satisfactory progress. Appropriate work is set and there is useful guidance and support for the achievement of learning objectives. Individual Education Plans have clear and attainable objectives and enable pupils with learning difficulties to attain basic literacy skills.
57. By the end of Year 2 most pupils speak clearly and with confidence to the range of adults with whom they come into contact. They are able to describe and explain what they are doing in lessons and often add useful detail to interest the listener. Their listening skills are less well developed. Inspectors noted that many pupils find it difficult to sustain attention and do not readily respond to what others are saying. Most pupils read fluently, accurately and with confidence. They were observed orchestrating a range of strategies to help with pronunciation and establish meaning. There was relatively little written work available for inspectors to see at Years 1 and 2. The samples seen indicated variable standards, with very few opportunities for children to develop sequences of sentences or story-writing skills. Handwriting standards are below the national expectation. Year 2 pupils form letters and words in a variety of styles and sizes and presentation skills are under-developed.
58. Evidence gathered during the inspection indicates that standards in Years 4, 5 and 6 are rising and that reading attainment in particular has improved and is becoming a strength of the school. Pupils in these year groups read from a range of texts and are given opportunities to read quietly each day. They understand the main points and, by Year 6, are often able to explore subtle ideas and themes through inference and deduction. In lessons they are encouraged to participate orally for long periods and generally speak with confidence, articulating opinions clearly. However, oral contributions in lessons are typically set against a backdrop of ongoing conversations, causing pupils to place a heavy emphasis on being heard. Listening skills are far less well developed. Pupils do not readily listen attentively or respectfully to others and their comments in discussion rarely take account of others' views. The standard of writing seen in lessons and in the work sample was generally below expectation across Years 3-6. The use of grammar and punctuation is variable and, although some pupils spell accurately and at an appropriate level for their age, many do not. The inspection was not able to sample any extended writing and the evidence suggests that pupils are rarely expected to write grammatically complex sentences, extending meaning, and have few, if any, opportunities to develop longer compositions. The class teacher is aware of the low base from which the pupils are working and has, rightly, made a professional judgement to move them forward step

by step. Handwriting and presentation are inconsistent, often poor, with a majority of pupils in Years 5 and 6 combining printing with a joined script.

59. The quality of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good. Planning takes account of prior learning and the ability of pupils. Teachers employ an effective balance of reinforcement and extension activities, enabling learning to progress logically and incrementally. For example, in one lesson pupils revisited the effect of placing an *e* at the end of words ending *at*. They then moved on to explore the similar effect on words ending *ak* and *am*. This approach supports the development of reading and writing and provides an important foundation for progress in spelling. Teaching effectively takes account of the different needs of three age groups, with Year 3 pupils currently grouped with those in Years 1 and 2. Group tasks are designed to ensure that children are able to work at an appropriate level, often helped by learning support assistants who guide the children and intervene skilfully when they need additional help. However the time afforded to writing is insufficient. Year 2 and Year 3 pupils in particular are not given enough time on tasks which develop writing capability and encourage children to extend their written work, developing ideas and sequences of sentences.
60. The quality of teaching in Years 4 to 6 is also good. Strengths include clearly stated lesson objectives, activities to meet the needs of a mixed-ability, mixed year-group (where pupils cover a three years age span and are at different levels of attainment), very effective questioning and enthusiastic intervention, continually extending pupils' understanding and addressing their misconceptions. The use of pupils' work to exemplify standards was noted on a number of occasions and opportunities which emerged during lessons to reinforce higher-order reading skills or spelling conventions were taken as a matter of course. Teaching clearly places a strong emphasis on reading and the development of comprehension. Activities involve the children in a range of reading tasks throughout the lesson, derived from shared texts, examples on the board, their own whiteboard notes or their own drafted writing. Pupils are given opportunities to read their work aloud at the end of the lesson. Although this approach is helping to raise standards of reading in Years 4, 5 and 6, and strives to support development of the components of writing, the time allowed for the children to actually write is insufficient. The school has identified this and improving writing is a school priority for the coming year.
61. The features of good teaching described above can help pupils to become increasingly independent as learners. However, two features of lessons observed during the inspection work against the development of independence. One is the tendency of the teaching to intervene *too much*, giving pupils very little time to settle to their work alone. The second is the proliferation of unsatisfactory behaviour on the part of a significant minority of pupils. This prevents children from working without distraction, makes it difficult for pupils to listen attentively and generally creates a climate of unrest. The teaching necessarily deploys strategies to limit this unrest, constantly intervening to keep pupils on task. These strategies are often ineffective.
62. Planning is based on the National Literacy Strategy and is comprehensive in respect of the long-term and medium-term. Some short-term planning lacks detail in terms of what the children are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. This is particularly so in Years 1, 2 and 3. Assessment systems are developing. In Years 4, 5 and 6 in particular, evidence points to assessments being introduced which help teachers to plan future work and lessons are clearly part of a series in which the content is guided by what the children have learned in previous sessions. The skilful

questioning of pupils observed by inspectors enables the teacher to assess accurately the level of understanding of individuals, groups and the class as a whole, making an important contribution to the information available when planning the next steps. There were relatively few examples of marking in the samples of work available but the marking seen featured comments which help pupils improve their work and which encourage them. An example from a pupil's reading record gives the message, *You found the text a bit difficult, but you persevered, building up new words.* Comments like this form a useful basis for assessing pupils' personal development as well as their literacy attainment. The recent use of standardised reading tests for pupils in the older class is proving a useful tool for monitoring reading progress on a regular basis.

63. A well-ordered library and colour-coded reading scheme books contribute to a resource bank which is currently adequate, although some more up-to-date non-fiction books are needed. In both classes there is insufficient use made of information and communication technology to support literacy but there was evidence of literacy being developed across the curriculum in some foundation subjects.

## **MATHEMATICS**

64. At the end of Year 2, pupils' attainment in the National Curriculum test results over the last five years, has been well above the national average. In three of these years, standards were very high, being within the range of the top five per cent of schools across the country. No national comparisons are yet available for the 2001 but results show that mathematics at the end of Year 2 is again a strength of the school. These results reflect pupils' ability to grasp mathematical concepts easily through practical experiences.
65. At the end of Year 6, over the last four years, standards were in line with the national average in 1997 but well below average in the other three years. In 2000, standards in mathematics were well below the national average and also well below those of similar schools because of staffing problems. With these long-term problems resolved, the school exceeded its targets in 2001 and pupils reached both the expected level 4 and the higher level 5.
66. Overall, the standards attained by pupils in the current Year 2, are in line with national expectation for pupils of their age but are below the national expectations of pupils in Year 6. No written work was available from Reception to Year 2 pupils, as all work is practical and oral. In the lessons observed in the younger class, pupils were able to recognise odd and even numbers and could count in fives up to 30. The majority can recognise the different coins we use, place them in order of size and are able to say which are missing from a set. Year 1 pupils learn to pay for a toy with their coins and give change. Pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress.
67. In the Years 4 to 6 class a scrutiny of pupils' work shows that there is a range of attainment within each year group and sometimes Year 5 is attaining at a higher level than Year 6. However, the same work is sometimes seen in books from all three years and greater care is needed to ensure that each is aiming at the work expected of their year group, unless they are capable of achieving higher. Where Year 4 attempt work similar to Year 6 they struggle and the rate of a success is unsatisfactory. All attainment targets are covered and there is evidence that pupils have strategies to succeed in a range of number activities, and data handling problems. By the end of Year 6 they have a basic knowledge of equivalent fractions,

can work out real life mathematical problems and explain how they reached the answer and know how to use brackets to work out a sum. They investigate numbers and use Venn diagrams, tally columns and graphs to record their answers. They also understand work out the perimeter and area of regular and irregular shapes. Higher-attaining pupils can work out simple percentages, can measure temperature, draw angles and use a frequency graph. All pupils are able to use a calculator to varying degrees of competency. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 5 understand ratio, and can use a formula to find perimeters and areas. In the lesson observed, pupils learned how to work out the change to be given for priced objects, by counting on as a shopkeeper would, and how to record their answer to show the methods used. This was not sufficiently challenging at times for the Year 6 pupils. Pupils with special educational needs, however, make satisfactory progress.

68. Pupils in Year R to Y3 show a real enjoyment of mathematics. They have good skills in mental mathematics, with high-attaining Year 3 pupils sometimes reaching very good standards indeed. Their mental use of number bonds to find the correct answer is sometimes exemplary. Good provision is made for a new pupil who is not used to the English coinage system and learning is quick. Year R and Year 1 enjoy playing shopkeepers but the lack of clear progression in what is being taught and lack of appropriate questioning sometimes confused them. Work on money using the computer is successful, but not enough progress is made because too few pupils are able to be actively engaged when one computer is shared between five pupils. The attitudes of pupils in Years 3 to 6 are generally good, as they listen well to the clear teaching given and do their best to follow the instructions.
69. Teaching observed during the inspection was satisfactory, overall, in the class of younger pupils and good in the older class. Whilst it is acknowledged that the school has achieved good results in the past, in the lessons observed there were weaknesses in the younger class. For example, there are too few resources and not enough guidance given to other adults supporting pupils to enable them to ask the right questions and pitch the work at the right level. Groups are also unevenly divided with the teacher sometimes having only three pupils and supporting adults five or seven. Whilst this is not a problem in itself, as supporting adults are able and experienced, they need to be given more appropriate resources and guidance. The very clear teaching of a method is given in the older class, a very good pace is set and pupils are mainly kept on task very well. Better use could, however, be made of supporting adults in some parts of the lesson.
70. The subject is led well and the Numeracy Strategy is being followed. Teachers have been on a number of courses, the policy has been updated and teachers have analysed the test results to find where further teaching needs to be focused. A greater use of assessment could be used in Years 4 to 6 to ensure that Year 6 pupils reach a higher standard than in the past. The school is proud of the results achieved at the end of Years 2 and 3 and this needs to be continued into Years 4 to 6.

## **SCIENCE**

71. The school has very small numbers of pupils in each year group, making annual comparisons with national figures and similar schools unreliable. On the basis of Year 6 test results over the last four years since the previous inspection, it is clear that standards have been generally below expectations. The school's 1999 test results in particular alerted staff to a lowering of standards and that subsequent action has halted the decline and begun to bring about improvements at the end of Year 6. In



the one lesson observed in the older class, there was evidence of improved standards being reached by pupils from Year 4 to Year 6 and the 2001 test results show that the school's targets were achieved, with all 11 year-olds meeting the national expectation. In the one lesson observed in the older class standards of attainment were in line with national expectation.

72. Evidence derived from timetables and discussion with the co-ordinator suggests that science has been less of a priority since the last inspection. The co-ordinator does not monitor the quality of teaching and learning, although there are plans for monitoring to start in 2002. Certainly, the time allocated to science suggests that the subject is under-emphasised as a core element of the curriculum, with provision in both classes up to one hour per week short of that recommended. This clearly restricts the amount of teaching and learning, limits pupils' progress and makes it difficult to maintain standards.
73. There is an adequate science policy and both long-term and medium term-plans for teaching. The medium term plans are organised on a cyclical basis to ensure complete coverage for mixed-age pupils and avoid repetition to ensure that pupils in a mixed-age class will cover the syllabus over a four-year period without too much repetition.
74. In the one lesson observed the quality of teaching was satisfactory in the class of younger pupils (Reception and Years 1 to 3). Activities were modified to reflect the range of age of pupils and teachers intervened effectively during the lesson, supported by teaching assistants, to develop early science vocabulary and enquiry skills. Provision for the Year 3 pupils in the class was appropriate but derived from the Year 1 and 2 programme of study. Year 2 pupils had opportunities to work at Level 2 but a majority were performing at Level 1. Limited writing ability restricted the capacity of pupils to record their observations.
75. In the class of older pupils the quality of teaching is good. The one lesson observed represented a clear progression from previous ones and challenged pupils to analyse and discuss their findings critically. Teaching took very effective account of the needs of pupils in different age groups and skilfully encouraged high expectations with comments like, *'This is Year 6 work, it must be Year 6 quality.'* Skilful intervention showed pupils how to meet these expectations of them. The lesson observed was effectively supported by an ICT support teacher who worked with groups of pupils to present information on a suitable database.
76. Additionally, teachers' records in the older class show that the teacher is beginning to use assessment to match work appropriately to pupils' different levels of attainment. There is no evidence that week-to-week lesson planning for pupils in the younger class draws from assessment information, but some detailed assessments have been compiled for Years 4 to 6 which are beginning to provide the basis for planning future work.
77. In both classes pupils' progress and productivity are inhibited by unsatisfactory behaviour. Pupils call out indiscriminately and routinely continue talking while the teacher is addressing the class, particularly in the older class. This prevents many from concentrating and developing the study skills, which facilitate independence.
78. However, pupils respond well to enthusiastic teaching and, despite the distractions around them, many remain largely on task and demonstrate ongoing learning at an appropriate level. They are aware of what they know and understand in the subject,

and in lessons they generally know what they have to do. This is particularly the case in Years 4 to 6.

79. Resources for teaching science are adequate and displays feature children's work, sources of information and work inspired by the school's close links with the nearby Wildfowl and Wetland Trust, such as that on *Dragonflies*.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

80. The standards reached at the end of Years 2 and Year 6 are well below those expected by pupils of their respective ages. There was little evidence, in the scrutiny of work or in lessons, of information and communication technology being used across the curriculum on a regular basis. The school, however, has recently received help from the Local Education Authority's advisory service and the High School, using 'Small Schools' Support Group' funding. A technician and teacher have worked with groups of pupils on a regular basis for the past year on specific programs. For example, work during the inspection showed links being made with literacy. In Year R and Year 1 pupils discussed the sounds of letters of the alphabet and Year 2 were being introduced to the program Starspell on the computer, where they discussed the sounds 'oi' and oy'. Pupils in Years 1 to 3 were also seen to be able to use the mouse, click and drag an icon or word across the scene, and follow instructions on the screen when working with a support assistant. Inspection evidence, from the interview with the co-ordinator, reports that pupils in the younger class have also used a program linked to their reading scheme, whilst pupils with special educational needs have used 'Clicker', and more able Year 3 pupils have enjoyed using 'Maths Mania'. The school has two programmable Roamers, which are used by pupils in the younger class. However, no work from any of these programs was seen.
81. Whilst pupils in Years 4 to 6 work on computers during lunchtime, they do not regularly use them during lessons, except when specifically taught, and progress is, therefore, restricted. Pupils have learned the basic computer key skills such as saving a file and using different styles and sizes for lettering and fonts, employing bold, colour, italic, underlining and shading. However, little application is made of them other than to list their family and friends or write out the class rules. There was some limited evidence of pupils using computers for word processing and the program 'Art'. Teachers' planning shows that links with mathematics are to be made this term. When working with the visiting teacher, during the inspection, pupils were learning to write for different audiences. They were beginning to use their knowledge of word processing to produce the front page of a newspaper. Previous visits have included introducing pupils in both classes to the Internet, sending an e-mail to a neighbouring school and introducing pupils to a scanner and to Powerpoint, with the aim of creating their own presentation on 'The Fens'. On a visit to the Wetlands Trust, pupils also sent an e-mail to a school in Iceland. A web site has been set up recently by the local cluster of schools but is not yet fully launched.
82. The only time computers were used during the inspection was when groups were being taught or at lunchtime. No pupils were seen working on their own or in pairs except at lunchtime. The progress that all pupils can make, therefore, is restricted in both classes. Pupils in both classes, however, show interest and enthusiasm for the subject.
83. In the younger class the only teaching seen, other than by the visiting teacher, was of a group of five pupils in a mathematics lesson. In this lesson, they learned to make up the different amounts of money needed to buy toys from a toyshop. For too much of the time pupils were inactive, watching others use the computer. This caused

pupils, some of whom were seen to be mathematically able in the first part of the lesson, to become bored, with their teacher having to constantly bring their attention back to what was being taught. While the teaching itself was satisfactory, the lack of standardised computers for Reception to Year 3 pupils is a serious deficiency, and is one cause for the lack of progress being made by pupils.

84. The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and has been responsible for the subject since March, during which time the visiting teachers have enabled pupils to make satisfactory progress. However, there is a need for further in-service training among staff, the development of a school scheme of work, clear guidelines on assessment and a revised attitude to pupils using computers in lessons and across the curriculum. At present there is little recorded individual work of pupils and no school portfolio for the subject. In both classes there are too few computers for the school to fully meet statutory requirements. In both classes computers need standardising. The school has no computer suite, which would make better use of the smaller number of computers a school of this size is likely to have. Whilst standards were reported to be satisfactory at the last inspection, more is expected now and improvement has been unsatisfactory.

## **THE FOUNDATION SUBJECTS**

85. Due to the limited time available during the inspection, it was possible to observe a relatively small number of lessons only in the remaining foundation subjects of art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. One lesson in each class was observed in art and design and design and technology. One lesson only was seen in each of geography, history and physical education. No music lessons were seen but children were observed singing in assembly. While it is possible to comment on standards in the lessons and work seen, the relatively small evidence base and the limited amount of work available to be seen at the start of a new year does not permit judgements about overall standards. In no subject is information and communication technology used sufficiently to enhance the subject.
86. It should be noted that statutory curriculum requirements are not being met in music. National Curriculum coverage is currently insufficient but evidence derived from planning and discussions with staff suggest that this situation will be rectified during 2001-2.
87. Standards of work seen in art, by the pupils in the younger class, are good. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The lesson observed was well conceived for the range of year groups, inclusive of Year 3, well-prepared and successful in terms of pupils' learning. In Years 4 to 6, standards of work are satisfactory in respect of each of the year groups. This is also an improvement on standards observed in the previous inspection and confirms a raising of standards in art throughout the school. Recent photographic evidence suggests that pupils have engaged in work making use of a range of media, including clay, and that steps have been taken to enable children to make two-dimensional and three-dimensional artefacts. There are two main corridor displays featuring the work of established artists, including Monet, but there was very little pupils' work on display during the inspection, which was early in the school year. Photographic evidence shows work on display later in the year.
88. Standards of work seen in design and technology in both classes are satisfactory. Lessons are components in a series, which provides opportunities for the skills of

designing, making and evaluating and there is evidence of progression in terms of year-to-year attainment. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 were producing carefully executed pieces of stitching. They use tools skilfully and work with accuracy, paying attention to the quality of the finished product. Close liaison with the local high school clearly enhances provision, with Year 6 pupils gaining from high school expertise and resources. Furthermore, recent evidence from portfolios of photographs and on the pre-inspection visit shows good work, from Year 4 to 6 pupils, in making packages, photograph frames, shelters and a moving toy.

89. In geography the standard of the limited amount of work seen is satisfactory, although very little of pupils' work was available for inspectors to look at. The evidence base was similarly restricted in history. What inspectors were able to observe does suggest satisfactory standards in history, although the lack of recorded evidence in both subjects raises questions about the frequency of teaching and the methods used to teach in geography and history.
90. It was not possible to make a judgement about standards seen in music.
91. The physical education lesson observed was characterised by constant disruptive behaviour. Standards in this lesson were below average, largely because the scale of the disruption made it impossible for the teacher to teach. However, more time has been allocated to the subjects since the last inspection and evidence suggests that the weekly swimming provision for all pupils is producing at least satisfactory outcomes for children in this part of the physical education programme. The co-ordinator reports that all pupils can swim by the time they reach the end of Year 6.
92. The quality of teaching in four of the seven lessons observed in the foundation subjects was satisfactory. In the two art lessons it was very good. Where teaching is effective in these subjects, objectives are clearly shared with the children and opportunities are taken to capture and keep the pupils' interest. Teachers are aware of pupils' level of understanding. For example, during the introduction of an art lesson in the older class, the teacher picked up individual pupils' comments and used them to advance the learning of pupils in general. Where resources are well-selected and well-prepared, lessons run smoothly and pupils respond favourably. In a geography lesson in the younger class, aerial photographs of their locality fascinated pupils. Photographs of people are used effectively in the younger class in art, to inspire portraits. In this particular lesson, pupils demonstrate good skills and persistence in mixing and matching colours to their own skins.
93. In a number of lessons in foundation subjects, inspectors found evidence of good support for the basic skills of literacy and numeracy. For example, in design and technology in the younger class, pupils are taught about the importance of sequencing instructions, thereby reinforcing literacy. In geography in the same class, the creation of a human graph illustrating how children in the class travel to school supports learning in numeracy.

94. A recurrent theme in lessons seen in these subjects is that of unsatisfactory behaviour. Even in lessons in which attitudes and behaviour were judged to be satisfactory overall, inspectors comment on underlying restlessness and the efforts teachers make to hold on to pupils' interest. Certainly it can be said that the pupils' attitudes and behaviour observed inhibit teaching and learning opportunities and adversely affect pupils' progress. In two lessons, in particular, pupils conversed with each other aggressively. In the observed physical education lesson, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 shouted abuse at one another and indulged in frivolous activity throughout. Widespread calling out was witnessed while the teacher tried to teach and a significant minority of the pupils pretended to fight with one another. This behaviour was judged to be very poor and seriously limited the pupils' opportunities to learn.
95. Comprehensive policies for all the foundation subjects are in place. However, the evidence suggests that current practice falls some way short of policy, particularly in respect of assessment procedures. The progress of pupils in these subjects is inhibited by underdeveloped assessment systems. Some basic assessment in design and technology and geography was noted in the older class but there is little evidence that assessment information is used to guide the planning of future work, especially in the younger class.
96. Resources for teaching and learning in the foundation subjects are generally adequate. However, the current arrangements for teaching physical education indoors are not satisfactory. The hall is too small to allow safe movement of a class of children, a situation compounded by the extensive storage of music equipment, tables and chairs.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

97. It was not possible to observe any teaching during the inspection and there was no recorded work available for inspectors to see. Too little time is allocated to the subject; no more than thirty minutes per week in each of the two classes. Standards were below expectations at the end of both Years 2 and 6 at the last inspection and there is no evidence that standards have changed. Improvement has been unsatisfactory and the subject remains underemphasised in the school.
98. There is a comprehensive policy for the subject but little evidence of the policy in practice. Although the school points to the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus and medium-term planning sheets to indicate its approach to teaching and learning, no assessment material was provided. The co-ordinator reports that pupils' work is mainly discussion-based and attempts to foster an awareness of the plight of others, suggesting that teachers' knowledge of the subject remains under-developed.
99. The school acknowledges that most of its resources relate to Christianity and that it needs materials to support the study of other faiths. A display in the corridor reflects this imbalance. Resources to inspire learning in Christianity also need to be extended. The school is working with the newly appointed vicar who visits once a month and who is helping the school to develop its provision.
100. One pupil is formally withdrawn from religious education. Evidence suggests that suitable alternative provision is made for this pupil.