

INSPECTION REPORT

WEST EARLHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL

Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 120958

Headteacher: Mrs J P Lodge

Reporting inspector: Mr G T Storer
19830

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th October 2001

Inspection number: 198295

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed primary school

School category: Community

Age range of pupils: 8 – 12

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: Scarnell Road
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Norfolk

Postcode: NR5 8HT

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Ms P Cary

Date of previous inspection: 20th October 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr G T Storer 19830	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Art and design French Physical education	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? School improvement
Mr P Widdowson 13485	Lay inspector		Attitudes, behaviour and personal development Attendance How well does the school care for its pupils? Partnership with parents
Mrs K Hurt 24895	Team inspector	English Music Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
Mr D J Matthews 18505	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Information and communication technology Design and technology	How well is the school led and managed?
Mr M Roussel 22157	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Geography History	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

West Earlham Middle School is situated in a mixed residential area on the outskirts of Norwich. The school serves the local community living on large local authority housing estates and smaller private housing developments in the vicinity of the school, although about a third of the pupils come from further afield. With 225 pupils on the school roll, this school is smaller than most middle schools. Unemployment is increasing in the area and a growing number of families experience hardship. Over 40 per cent of the pupils receive free school meals. This number has risen steadily in recent years and is high in comparison to schools nationally. During the same period, pupils' attainments on entry have declined and are now well below average and more and more pupils are facing difficulties in their learning. There are 116 pupils (51 per cent) on the school's register of special educational needs and six pupils have statements of special educational need. The number on the register of special educational need is well above average, although the number of statements is about average. One pupil is from a home where English is an additional language. This is about average. The school has had a very high turnover of staff in recent years and this has proved to be a significant barrier to improvement. Of the current teaching staff, only the headteacher and deputy were present during the last inspection of the school. The school has worked successfully to integrate new staff and to strengthen teamwork but this has understandably slowed the pace of development in other areas.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides a sound education for its pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Whilst the proportion of pupils that attains the nationally expected standard in English, mathematics and science by the age of 11 is well below the national average, almost all make sound gains in relation to their attainment on entry or to the special educational needs that they face. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and there are examples of good teaching throughout the school. The headteacher and senior staff provide sound leadership. They receive satisfactory support from the governing body and together they have developed a clear view of the way ahead. They have generated good levels of teamwork amongst staff and a shared commitment that means that the school is poised to make further improvements. There are good care arrangements. The school keeps parents and carers well informed about their children's progress and enlists their support. The school manages its budget effectively and provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and make good progress.
- The school makes good provision for pupils' personal development; moral and social development are particularly well supported.
- The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are rigorous and very effective.
- The school provides a very good range of activities outside of lessons.
- The school has effective links with parents; information for parents is particularly good.

What could be improved

- Standards in English, mathematics and science should be higher; more able pupils are underachieving.
- Pupils are not making enough progress in design and technology, French, information and communication technology (ICT) and music.
- Teachers are not using assessment information systematically enough in planning the next steps in pupils' learning.
- The school's arrangements for checking the quality of teaching and learning are not rigorous enough.
- Pupils do not learn enough about the richness and diversity of their own and other cultures.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

There are some issues from the last inspection in 1997 that the school has not yet addressed because it has been adversely affected by the very high turnover of staff during the intervening years. However, despite this barrier, the school has made satisfactory improvements to the quality of education that it provides for its

pupils since the previous inspection. Teaching is better than it was. More lessons are now good or very good and fewer lessons are unsatisfactory. Standards in history and geography have improved. Curriculum planning is better; pupils gain knowledge, understanding and skills more systematically and the individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs give better support for teachers' planning. The school's assessment procedures allow more realistic targets to be set for the raising of standards, but staff still have a lot of work to do on using assessment information to improve planning for pupils of differing abilities. Procedures for child protection and for pupils' welfare and pastoral care are more thorough and consistent than they were. As a result, pupils' moral development is more successful, supervision of pupils during breaktimes has improved and pupils' behaviour in and around the school is better. The school has improved its partnership with parents by forging stronger links with many parents and by improving the quality of information that it provides for all parents.

STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
English	E*	D	E	E
Mathematics	E*	E*	E	E
Science	E*	E	E	E

Key	
well above average	A
above average	B
average	C
below average	D
well below average	E
lowest five per cent	E*

In relation to their attainment on entry, most pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve sound gains in knowledge, understanding and skills. Assessments taken in the last two years indicate that pupils' attainment on entry has declined and is now well below average. In 2001, the results of national tests for 11-year-olds were well below average in English, mathematics and science. Taken together, the 2001 results were well below those in similar schools and this picture of low attainment is consistent with the inspection evidence. About half of the pupils in the current Year 6 are on course to attain the nationally expected standard¹ in English, mathematics and science, with a very small number on course to attain above average standards. Whilst most pupils are doing as well as they should be, standards could be higher. This is because pupils are not making enough progress in writing and current work is not challenging enough to bring the best out of the more able pupils. Although standards have remained well below the national average, they have improved at a similar rate to standards in schools nationally. The school has achieved these improvements despite social and educational circumstances that have become more challenging. In the current Year 6 classes, and throughout the school, about half of the pupils have special educational needs. Most are making good progress but many will not attain the nationally expected levels and this affects pupils' performance in the annual tests. Pupils who speak English as an additional language are fully included and make satisfactory progress. Standards in religious education are in line with those set out in the local guidance. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in most other subjects. However, in design and technology, French, ICT and music standards are below the expected level at the end of Year 6 and by the time pupils leave the school and pupils' progress in these subjects is unsatisfactory.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Most pupils enjoy coming to school, work hard and make a reasonable effort to improve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave well in lessons, though there are times when the behaviour of a few interrupts the learning of others. Behaviour in the playground has improved; there are fewer incidents of bullying or oppressive

¹ Most pupils are expected to attain Level 2 at the age of seven and Level 4 at the age of 11.

	behaviour.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Most pupils get along well with each other and with their teachers. However, a small number of pupils find relationships difficult and do not easily co-operate with others.
Attendance	Pupils' attendance is well below the national average; levels of authorised and unauthorised absence are higher than in most schools.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 4 – 6	Year 7
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. There are examples of good and very good teaching throughout the school, more consistently in Key Stage 2 classes and in Year 6 in particular. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all but six lessons and one lesson in ten was very good. This is an improvement since the last inspection. Teachers have sufficient knowledge and understanding to teach most subjects of the National Curriculum satisfactorily. The teaching of English and mathematics has improved because of the school's successful response to national strategies, although teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to reinforce their literacy and numeracy skills through work in other subjects of the curriculum, and this reduces pupils' progress in these subjects. However, weaknesses in teachers' subject knowledge and understanding contributed to unsatisfactory teaching in French and in music. Some teachers are also less confident with ICT and do not use computers enough as a tool to support pupils' learning. Most teachers manage their pupils effectively. They use suitable resources to interest pupils and organise support staff to ensure that pupils with special educational needs are fully included, able to succeed and make good progress. However, problems with the management of the disruptive behaviour of a small number of pupils contributed to unsatisfactory teaching in Key Stage 2 classes. The quality and use of teachers' assessments are unsatisfactory. Teachers use regular assessments in English and mathematics to provide work for pupils that is matched to their particular needs. This works well for average and lower attaining pupils but work for higher attaining pupils is not always sufficiently well matched to allow them to make the best possible progress. In other subjects, teachers' planning for pupils of all abilities is often on the basis of broad target levels from the National Curriculum and not on what pupils know, understand and can do. This also reduces the progress that some pupils make.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum. However, a lack of resources prevents teachers from covering all aspects of the ICT curriculum thoroughly. There are more activities outside lessons than in many schools.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. They take part in all that the school has to offer and so make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. The school uses its grant funding appropriately to provide specialist teaching. Teachers, classroom assistants and pupils provide additional support that allows these pupils to join in with most activities, to succeed and to make progress.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Satisfactory. Moral and social development are particular strengths but pupils do not learn enough about their own cultural heritage or about the richness and diversity of other cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school. Arrangements for child protection and pupils' welfare are very secure and teachers use their knowledge of the pupils effectively to

	support academic and personal development. However, teachers' use of assessment information in their planning for higher attaining pupils is currently unsatisfactory.
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Partnership with parents is improving. The school has effective links with many parents and provides a good range of information. Information in the annual progress reports is particularly good.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher and deputy headteacher have maintained a degree of stability in the school during a period of high staff turnover. They are now building a committed team and are making sure that the school improves.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors know the school's strengths and weaknesses but are not playing an active enough role in the drive to raise standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. Senior staff, subject co-ordinators and governors are not sufficiently involved in monitoring standards and the quality of teaching and learning.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The governing body uses the school's budget and other grants effectively, according to principles of best value and in the interests of the pupils.

There are suitable staffing levels throughout the school. The school provides good accommodation, and the quality of the outdoor facilities has a positive impact on pupils' learning in science and in physical education. There are adequate resources for most subjects. However, the school does not have enough computers or the programs for pupils to use ICT in other subjects. There are also not enough artefacts to bring pupils' learning to life in subjects such as art, history or religious education.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teaching is good. They are comfortable approaching staff with questions or problems. School helps their children to become mature and responsible. Their children like school. Teachers have high expectations. Their children make good progress at school. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about pupils' progress. How closely the school works with parents. The amount of homework that pupils receive. The range of activities outside lessons. Pupils' behaviour.

There were 154 questionnaires (68 per cent) returned and seven parents attended the meeting for parents. Most parents' responses supported the school and the quality of education provided for their children. However, a number of parents expressed concerns. The inspection endorses most of the positive views but also finds evidence to support some of their concerns. There are inconsistencies in teachers' use of homework. Some homework does not relate well to the work that pupils are doing and so does not add to the quality of their learning. There are some pupils whose poor behaviour disrupts the learning of others. Staff work hard and often successfully with these pupils and their families in order to overcome such difficulties. The pupils' annual progress reports evaluate their learning thoroughly. They give parents clear information about what pupils know, understand and can do. The school has worked hard to improve its partnership with parents. It actively seeks to involve parents in the work of the school and in their children's education. The number and range of activities that take place outside of lessons are considerably greater than in other schools of this size.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Whilst remaining well below average, standards of attainment are improving at a similar rate to those in schools nationally. Throughout the school, pupils of average and below average abilities are making satisfactory progress in most subjects, both in relation to their attainment at the age of seven and to their attainment on entry to the school. Pupils with special educational needs are making good progress towards the targets that have been set for them but the school's small number of higher attaining pupils are not doing well enough.
2. The 2001 test results for pupils aged 11 were well below the national average in English, mathematics and science. Standards were lower in mathematics than in English or science. Taken together, these results were also well below the average for similar schools. In 2001, fewer pupils attained or exceeded the nationally expected standard in English, mathematics and science than in the 2000 tests. Pupils' current work confirms this picture. About half of the pupils in Year 6 are on course to attain the nationally expected standard in English, mathematics and science, with a very small number on course to attain above average standards. However, these apparently declining standards do not indicate significant weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning or in the achievements that pupils make. The school has achieved a similar rate of improvement to schools nationally, despite social and educational circumstances that have become more challenging. In the current Year 6 classes and throughout the school, about half of the pupils have special educational needs. Whilst most lower attaining pupils are making good progress, many will not attain the nationally expected levels and this affects pupils' performance in the annual tests. Some pupils in Year 6 have performed better than their Year 2 results suggested and almost all have made satisfactory gains in relation to their attainment on entry. The school just about met its target for attainment in English in 2001 but fell some way short of its target in mathematics. In the light of this, targets for 2002 are not precise enough, particularly in mathematics, which would require a 25 per cent improvement.
3. Standards in religious education are in line with those set out in the local authority's guidance for pupils in both key stages. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in most other subjects. However, in design and technology, French, ICT and music, standards are still too low and pupils' progress in these subjects is unsatisfactory. There are weaknesses in teachers' understanding in these subjects that reduce the quality of pupils' learning and the progress that they make. In addition, there are not enough resources for ICT and design and technology to allow teachers to teach some aspects of these subjects as thoroughly as they should. Most pupils make sound progress in their personal and social development. This progress is an important factor that allows most pupils to adopt helpful patterns of behaviour and response and enables teachers to establish conditions in which satisfactory learning can take place.
4. Pupils make satisfactory gains in the skills of literacy and numeracy. However, there are currently too few opportunities for pupils to consolidate and extend these skills through work in other subjects and this reduces the progress that some pupils make, particularly in writing and in their ability to use and apply the mathematics that they have learned. There are no significant differences in the attainments of pupils of different gender, background or ability. The number of pupils with special educational needs is well above average for a school of this size. Despite good levels of achievement, some face quite profound difficulties that result in below average standards by the end of Year 6 and by the time they leave school, and this affects overall standards as reflected by test results. Nevertheless, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in most subject areas. Where pupils have statements of special educational need or speak English as an additional language, the

good support, closely focused on the individual, results in at least satisfactory progress across a wide range of areas. Work for more able pupils is not always sufficiently challenging to enable them to achieve above average standards.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

5. Pupils' attitudes to the school are satisfactory. Whilst the majority of pupils enjoy coming to school, there are a significant minority with poor attendance and punctuality. In the classroom, most pupils have positive attitudes to learning and are well focused on their tasks. They respond well during lessons and are keen to answer questions and participate in discussion. In some lessons, where there is a lack of pace and poor management of behaviour, there is a small number of pupils, often boys, who become disinterested and reluctant to join in activities.
6. Pupils are also developing sound values. Most pupils respect the views of others and share ideas when working collaboratively. This is because listening to and understanding the views of others is emphasised in the school, particularly when staff are dealing with incidents of inappropriate behaviour. The school provides a good range of lunchtime and after-school activities for pupils. There is a high and consistent attendance at these activities that contributes well to pupils' personal development.
7. The standard of behaviour that the school achieves is satisfactory overall. Most pupils' behave well in school, although a small number of pupils are sometimes disruptive. The school has a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs, and a significant number relate to behavioural problems. These are usually the pupils who show disruptive behaviour and, whilst teachers and learning assistants work hard to help these pupils and to minimise any disturbances, their outbursts sometimes have an adverse effect on the quality of learning of other pupils in the class.
8. Last year there were 20 exclusions, many for unacceptably aggressive behaviour. The school has worked successfully with pupils and their parents to improve on this. Behaviour in the playground is lively and boisterous and there are some pupils who occasionally try to challenge the authority of adult supervisors. However, this is usually handled appropriately and effectively. There is little evidence of rough or aggressive behaviour, and boys and girls and pupils from different ethnic backgrounds play well together. At lunchtime behaviour is good and there is a friendly, social atmosphere. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
9. Relationships between pupils at the school are satisfactory and there is no evidence of isolation or harassment. Most pupils get along well with each other and with their teachers. However, a small number of pupils find relationships difficult and do not easily co-operate with others. There are some incidents of inappropriate behaviour towards each other and isolated reports of bullying. The behavioural support assistant, who works closely with the deputy headteacher, pupils and their families, handles most of these quickly and effectively. Almost half of the staff are new to the school this year and relationships between these staff and the pupils that they teach are still at an early stage of development for many. Pupils nevertheless feel confident to approach staff with any problems or concerns they may have.
10. Pupils' personal development is satisfactory. Pupils have a range of individual classroom responsibilities that help them become more mature and responsible. Each class elects two representatives to the School Council, which meets on a regular basis to discuss issues, such as fund-raising events and the purchasing of equipment and books for the school. In this way pupils contribute to the school as a community. In Year 7, pupils have additional voluntary responsibilities: setting up the hall for assembly, helping in the library and office, and reading to the younger pupils. Many pupils take up these opportunities and, in doing so, further develop aspects of their personal development.

11. Attendance at the school is well below the national average with a high rate of unauthorised absence. This is because there is a significant minority of pupils with serious behavioural and social problems who are very poor attenders. The school works hard to rehabilitate these pupils and, whilst doing so, maintains an 'open door'. This approach is very supportive to the pupils concerned but has a damaging impact on the school's rate of attendance.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

12. The quality of the teaching throughout the school is satisfactory. Teaching has improved since the last inspection when more lessons were deemed to be unsatisfactory. During this inspection, a third of all lessons were good and there were examples of very good teaching in Years 4, 5 and 6. Strengths and weaknesses in teaching were found across all subjects and age groups. The unsatisfactory or poor teaching was mainly in English, music and French, in Years 5 and 7.
13. The school has recently had massive changes in its teaching staff. Many teachers are relatively new to the school, sometimes in the early stages of their teaching careers. They now form a cohesive team, sharing planning in year groups. Some have already established a good rapport and relationships with their pupils early in the school year. In these classes, pupils pay attention when their teachers are talking to them, and quickly follow their instructions. They behave sensibly because teachers have made clear what is expected and use the school's system of sanctions and rewards wisely. Class routines are well established, and the emphasis is on praise and encouragement when pupils do well. These teachers use learning support assistants effectively to supervise pupils who might misbehave.
14. There are some pupils, mainly boys, who exhibit very challenging behaviour. Where teachers have not established a good rapport, and behaviour management is weak, these pupils disrupt lessons by their restlessness and calling out. For example, in some music lessons, teachers did not insist on pupils listening carefully enough, with the result that some pupils in Year 7 made little progress in composing and the work that they produced was at a very low standard. This was a feature in all of the poor teaching seen during the inspection. There are constant interruptions as the teacher deals with these pupils. This results in lost time and a negative atmosphere in class. In these lessons, more could be done to brief the learning support assistants about when and how they are to intervene to support the teacher, so that other pupils are able to learn. When pupils are withdrawn for 'time out', more support is needed to ensure that they return to class calmly and quietly.
15. The teaching of English and mathematics has improved because of the school's successful response to the National Strategies for Literacy and Numeracy. There has been good improvement in lesson planning since the time of the last inspection. Teachers are now mostly very clear about what pupils are to learn in lessons. They display the lesson aims on the board and discuss them with pupils. At the end of lessons they check that pupils have achieved the aims. Teachers generally provide lively introductions, with clear explanations that help pupils understand what they are to do. Their expressive reading captured pupils' interest and attention very well in some literacy lessons. This helped pupils remember what they had heard, and they were able to identify important points when the teacher later questioned them. However, teachers' planning does not place enough emphasis on the development of handwriting or on practical and investigative tasks in mathematics and science. They do not provide enough opportunities for developing literacy and numeracy skills through work in other subjects and this reduces pupils' progress. Teachers have sufficient expertise to plan for and teach most National Curriculum subjects satisfactorily, but weak subject knowledge and lack of expertise were contributory factors to the unsatisfactory teaching in music and French. Some teachers are also less confident with ICT and do not use computers enough as a tool for pupils' learning.

16. Where teaching is very good, as in some literacy, music, and history lessons, teachers have a good knowledge of the subject and their preparation is thorough. They deploy support assistants successfully to complement their own teaching, either working with groups or overseeing generally. These teachers plan activities that are interesting and successfully develop pupils' skills. They lead by example, transmitting their own enthusiasm whether in reading, singing or other activities. Their lessons move at a brisk pace, so that pupils are kept on their toes, work very hard and achieve well.
17. In some lessons time is not used so effectively. Some introductions go on too long, so that pupils become restless and lose concentration towards the end. This also leaves too little time for pupils to complete their independent tasks. Sometimes, younger and less able pupils do not get beyond writing out the lesson aim, as seen when younger pupils were learning to write poetry in Year 4. Pupils sometimes do not work hard enough when asked to work independently or in groups, because teachers do not establish their expectations clearly enough. In subjects like religious education lessons are not as effective as they might be because teachers do not have access to good quality pictures, photographs and artefacts to bring the subject alive for pupils. Although teachers engage pupils in lively discussions that ensure they have the basic information, for example about other world faiths, pupils lack enthusiasm when asked to complete uninspiring worksheets.
18. Teachers and learning support assistants provide good support for pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. Teachers ensure that the targets set in individual education plans are clear and achievable with small steps that enable pupils to move confidently forward. For instance, in literacy lessons their tasks are sometimes carefully adapted so that they can learn similar skills to others without being slowed by their limited writing skills. A support assistant encouraged a group of pupils to create their own line for a group poem, which she then wrote for them. They read their poem proudly, and achieved better than others because they actually completed a rhyming poem in the short time available, whereas most others did not.
19. The quality and use of teachers' assessments are unsatisfactory because they are not used effectively to identify what higher attaining pupils need to learn. The day-to-day procedures for checking what pupils know, understand and can do are not yet sufficiently precise to give teachers a clear picture of what pupils need to learn next to move forward. As a result, teachers sometimes set inappropriate tasks that are not matched to pupils' differing abilities and this slows their progress. This is particularly apparent at the beginning of the school year; higher attaining pupils mark time when they move into a new class as their new teacher checks their skills. This is most obvious in literacy and numeracy where more could be done to match pupils' work to their different levels of ability. Often, the same work is set for all the class with extra support for the less able. As a result, tasks are sometimes too easy for more able pupils, like the worksheets that require only simple drawings or sentences in religious education. In many subjects, but particularly English and mathematics, independent tasks could be more challenging for brighter pupils, so that they work at higher levels.
20. The new writing assessment sheet is a valuable development in addressing this weakness in literacy, because it identifies specific skills that each pupil needs to achieve. This information is being used to set clearer targets when teachers make comments on pupils' work in their books. However, these need to be pursued more vigorously, so that careless mistakes and poor standards of presentation improve more rapidly. However, the use of the sheet is just developing, and it is not yet being used efficiently enough to set different writing tasks for the different levels of ability in each class.
21. Teachers now set homework more regularly. There were some good examples during the inspection, particularly in Year 6, where homework enabled pupils to consider carefully what

they had learned in lessons. For example, some pupils wrote about their own special places following a lesson on Buddhist shrines. However, the use of homework remains inconsistent, with some tasks having little connection to ongoing work.

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

22. The quality and range of learning opportunities for pupils are sound overall. The curriculum is based on national guidance and meets the statutory requirements of the National Curriculum. The school provides religious education in accordance with locally agreed guidelines. There are satisfactory arrangements for drug education, sex education and teaching to combat racism. This takes place through the curriculum as a whole and as part of personal, social and health and education, which is taught in Year 7, and for the rest of the school is an essential part of circle time².
23. The planning of the curriculum is sound. The planning for English and mathematics has benefited from the school's successful introduction of the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies. There is sound analysis of pupil progress and this, combined with teaching in ability groups in English and mathematics and specially identified 'booster' and 'springboard' groups³, is helping to maintain and improve pupils' attainments. The attention that is given to planning for lower attaining pupils contributes significantly to their good rate of progress throughout the school. However, some pupils of above average ability do not always receive work that is hard enough to extend their learning in English, mathematics and science.
24. The present curriculum adopts national guidance for schemes of work and these are in place for science, and for the remainder of the other subjects in the school curriculum. This ensures that pupils' learning builds more systematically on what has gone before and is an improvement since the last inspection. However, a lack of resources means that the ICT curriculum is narrower than it should be. Furthermore, current planning does not link the different areas of the curriculum, with the result that pupils do not get enough opportunities to reinforce the skills of literacy, numeracy and ICT through their work in other subjects.
25. Planning for pupils with special educational needs is good. Individual education plans for pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties and for pupils who speak English as an additional language have improved since the last inspection. They form an effective basis for the good levels of support that these pupils receive from their teachers and learning support assistants. As a result, these and all other pupils have full equality of access and take a full part in the range of learning opportunities that the school provides.
26. The school takes suitable steps to extend and enrich its curriculum. The strong links that have been formed with the local high school and University of East Anglia make an additional contribution to the range of worthwhile curricular experiences for the pupils. Pupils spend time visiting these institutions and taking part in curriculum activities. For example, Year 4 and 6 pupils visit the university and are taught science by post-graduate students. This is a highlight for the pupils, as demonstrated by the enthusiasm of pupils who were interviewed about what they had learned in science. Similarly, Year 7 pupils attend the high school for a series of weeks to take part in science and design and technology activities to prepare them for their future transfer to the school. There are educational visits for each year group to visit sites of historical, geographical or scientific interest, as well as a residential trip for Year 7. Visitors to the school include representatives from a local newspaper who help Year 7 pupils to produce their own news-sheet. There are visits from actors and singers from the Theatre Royal and also an extended opera workshop, at the end of which pupils are invited to take part in performances in the Theatre Royal. Further

² Circle time - when pupils sit together, often in a circle, to discuss and share issues of importance in their personal development.

³ Booster and springboard groups are initiatives to raise attainment, specifically for higher and lower attaining pupils.

links have been established with the information technology unit at the local football ground. These visits and visitors improve the quality of pupils' learning by bringing subjects to life and adding to pupils' enjoyment.

27. The school provides a very good range of extra-curricular activities for the pupils. For example, as well as those extra-curricular clubs that are usually seen, such as sporting activities, pupils also have the opportunity to take part in flower arranging, sign language, poetry, paper-craft and animal craft clubs. Each lunchtime there is an indoor activities club. These activities are well attended and so add to the learning and social development of a significant number of pupils.
28. The school gives a satisfactory emphasis to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The new policy and planning for personal, social, health and emotional development is giving a boost to social and moral skills in particular. As a result, provision in these two aspects is now good. There are regular timetabled sessions where pupils explore issues, like teasing, in circle time. Teachers encourage them to listen carefully and to appreciate others' ideas. Sometimes, the impact of these is limited because teachers accept brief answers and do not encourage pupils to explain and discuss issues as fully as they might. There is a wide range of strategies, such as the 'Roll of Honour' and the 'most polite and cheerful customer' award by the school meals staff, that encourage pupils to be well mannered and hard working. The school motto, 'care, consideration and respect', successfully encourages qualities of teamwork and personal effort. Teachers and support staff take every opportunity to discuss inappropriate behaviour so that pupils clearly understand the impact of their actions on others.
29. The recently introduced School Council provides a good opportunity for pupils to learn to elect representatives, to organise and run their own meetings and to begin to make decisions about whole-school developments. They have already organised charity fund-raising events, such as a three-legged race to raise funds for the RSPCA and the Jenny Lind Hospital. The Council provides valuable opportunities for pupils to use their initiative. For instance, one more able pupil demonstrated his computer skills by producing a high quality newsletter about the Council's work. There are good opportunities for pupils to work together in some subjects, for instance when they work in pairs on computers and in small groups in music, and effective extra-curricular activities, sporting events and residential visits all add a further dimension to pupils' social development. However, other than worthwhile units of work on anti-racism, the school does little to prepare pupils for life in a multi-cultural society.
30. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is sound. Pupils are encouraged to show sensitivity in prayer times in assemblies. There are good opportunities to consider the beliefs and values of other faiths, for instance when pupils in Year 6 explore the artefacts on a Buddhist shrine. Although music was played in assembly, no one drew pupil's attention to it or invited them to think about the feelings it aroused. This was also found in art and music lessons, where opportunities to discuss music and works of art were often missed. This meant that pupils did not extend their spiritual awareness as well as they might. The school's planning for developing pupils' spiritual awareness is unclear, so that teachers are not guided to see where these opportunities might be used more effectively.
31. This is also true of provision for pupils' cultural development, which is unsatisfactory. This aspect does not feature strongly in teachers' planning and the school does not have enough artefacts, books and visual resources to promote pupils' awareness of the contributions of other cultures to subjects like mathematics, literature, art and music.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

32. The quality of the school's care for its pupils has improved considerably since the previous inspection. The school's procedures for child protection and for ensuring pupils' welfare are now very effective. There is a detailed child protection policy with a named co-ordinator and clear guidelines for staff on how to identify children who may be at risk. Child protection issues are recorded carefully and follow-up procedures are quick and effective. The school provides a safe and caring environment for all its pupils and the quality of care is good. There are two qualified first-aiders on the staff and all teachers are aware of the special medical needs of individual pupils. There is a thorough personal, social and health education policy. This results in specifically planned personal, social and health education lessons that contribute to pupils' awareness of issues that relate to their safety and well-being and during which the older pupils receive suitable advice on drug awareness and sex education.
33. The school has good procedures for recording and monitoring pupils' attendance and punctuality. Staff mark attendance registers accurately and late arrivals report to the school office. Senior staff follow up regular or unexplained absences promptly and the education social worker regularly visits the school to support the school with persistent non-attenders. The school has an award scheme that recognises full attendance during a school year. However, this is unattainable for most pupils and is therefore not encouraging and supporting good attendance and punctuality with achievable targets for those pupils who have a poor attendance record. Plans to introduce more attainable rewards for good attendance are already being considered.
34. The school has a comprehensive behaviour management policy, which teaching and non-teaching staff apply consistently throughout the school. Prominent displays feature the school and classroom codes of conduct, and staff use a wide range of strategies to deal with inappropriate and disruptive behaviour. All parents and pupils receive a leaflet, which was prepared by Year 7 pupils when the school was formulating its anti-bullying policy, giving advice on how to deal with bullying. The procedures provide effective long-term measures for dealing with pupils who are involved in incidents of aggressive behaviour or bullying, but are less successful in preventing and eliminating disruptive behaviour in some lessons.
35. The procedures for monitoring and supporting personal development are good throughout the school. There is a good induction programme for pupils coming into school. Children in Year 3 visit the school and there is good liaison between teachers and the special educational needs co-ordinators. There is a good liaison with the high school and procedures ensure a smooth transition to the next stage of education. Teachers keep individual records on behaviour and those with behavioural problems have realistic targets for improvement. The progress that pupils make is recorded as part of their annual report. The school provides satisfactory support and guidance for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, physical disabilities and English as an additional language. The policy of including every child is effective; this ensures that all pupils have equality of access to what the school offers and that all pupils receive the support that they need to succeed and make progress.
36. The school has satisfactory procedures in place to assess pupils' attainment and progress and it now has a comprehensive and helpful policy to support teachers' planning for assessment. This was an issue in the previous inspection. The school has made satisfactory progress in introducing a more systematic approach to assessment throughout the school. Current procedures include a range of tests and assessments, which provide comprehensive information about pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. The school knows what pupils achieve in national tests and carries out further optional tests at the end of Years 4 and 5. There are termly tests for English and mathematics and all teachers carefully record the results of these. Teachers' termly plans highlight suitable opportunities for assessment. In most other subjects, pupils' achievement is assessed at the end of each topic. Arrangements in science and in other subjects are informal. Some

teachers carry out thorough assessments and record pupils' attainments in detail but inconsistencies in the quality of this work mean that some teachers do not have the information needed to plan pupils' learning at an individual level in some subjects.

37. The school's use of assessment information is unsatisfactory. The school keeps full records of the assessments that are made but its analysis of them, and therefore its use of assessment information as a basis for yearly planning, is still at a very early stage of development. The school's analysis of pupils' test and assessment results is not detailed enough to be of maximum help. It is currently used to track different groups of pupils as they move through the school, to identify differences in the performance of boys and girls, to place pupils into ability groups and to set targets for particular year groups. This level of analysis is a considerable improvement on what was in place at the time of the previous inspection but is not yet rigorous enough. The analysis of assessment data has not been in place long enough for it to reveal particular strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum. This means that, despite their good, informal knowledge of their pupils, teachers cannot base their planning securely on what they understand about pupils' attainment and achievements or on an understanding of relative strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning. Assessment does not have the impact it should on planning and therefore on what pupils do and achieve. The use of assessment as a guide to planning in the medium and shorter term is also unsatisfactory. Teachers do not use pupils' individual records and their ongoing assessments consistently to match tasks to pupils' immediate learning needs. Tasks are usually set on the basis of broad target levels and not on the basis of what pupils know, understand and can do. This means that there are times when work is either too easy or too difficult for particular pupils and this reduces the progress that they make.
38. The school methodically assesses pupils with special education needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language in order to gain a good picture of their difficulties. Teachers use this information effectively to place pupils on appropriate levels on the special needs register or to direct specific linguistic support to them. Individual education plans record clearly what these pupils need to concentrate on in order to improve. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and pupils at an early stage of English language development are making good progress against the targets that are set for them. This is an improvement since the last inspection, when there were concerns about the quality of targets set for pupils with special educational needs.
39. Although only in post for two terms, the assessment co-ordinator has worked hard to monitor the impact of assessment in the school and to develop an ambitious action plan. Many of the assessment procedures are very new, with some yet to be introduced, but the co-ordinator has made a good start and is having a positive effect on the attitude of staff, many of whom are new to the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

40. The school is continuing to develop its partnership with parents who are now much more supportive of the school and the work it does than they were at the time of the previous inspection. The school provides good quality information to parents through the school brochure, the governors' annual report to parents and regular newsletters. Information sessions for parents on numeracy, literacy and ICT skills have been held but with limited success. Pupils' annual reports provide good quality information on attainment and they also include areas for development and a section on personal development.
41. The school sends details of curriculum topics to parents at the beginning of the school year and this information is also displayed on the noticeboard at the entrance to the school. In this way, parents are given the opportunity to support their children's learning in the home. There is a home/school book, which is used for contact with parents. Parents are asked to sign the book to confirm that homework has been done and can comment on any reading

done at home. The book also includes information on the school's behaviour policy and details of the rewards and sanctions used by the school.

42. The school maintains effective links with many parents. There is a formal consultation meeting in the autumn term when parents have the opportunity to discuss with teachers how their children have settled into their new class and an open evening in the summer term allows parents to review their children's progress. The school offers parents the opportunity to discuss pupils' progress following the annual report but very few take up the offer. Staff are always available to talk to parents at the beginning of the school day and there are formal weekly 'drop in' sessions for parents to discuss any problems or concerns they may have with the deputy headteacher. These links give parents every opportunity to be informed about and involved in their children's education. Additionally, almost half of the school's pupils have special educational needs. Parents of these pupils are involved in target setting and reviews and are kept informed of their child's progress. The school also contacts parents in the event of persistently inappropriate behaviour and there is a very high rate of contact between individual parents and the behaviour support assistant. Similarly, the parents of pupils who are not regular attenders work closely with the school in an attempt to reintegrate their children.
43. Despite good quality information and the many opportunities that the school provides, the contribution that parents make to their children's education in the home and in school is, at present, limited. There are very few parents who help in the classrooms, although some help with swimming and reading and are available to drive the minibus. The 'Friends' Association holds regular social and fund-raising activities and raise money, which goes towards the purchase of equipment and the improving of facilities for the school. There is a suitable home/school agreement, although support with homework is limited and variable. Those parents who do help their children at home have a significant impact on their progress at school. The school recognises the importance of this and is planning to organise another workshop to help parents support numeracy and literacy more effectively at home.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. The headteacher and senior members of staff provide sound leadership for the school. Since the last inspection there has been a significant turnover of teachers. However, despite this, the headteacher has successfully built a united team of teachers who work well together to support her efforts to improve the school. This has enabled the school to make satisfactory improvement since the last inspection, and although there are still issues to address, its capacity to succeed is now good. Central to this has been the school's wide range of measures for the induction of new staff that contribute well to the ability of all staff to work effectively as a team. This includes newly qualified teachers, other teachers who are new to the school and support assistants who continue to take part in regular meetings with the deputy headteacher. This successfully underpins their work as they establish themselves in the school and come to terms with their new responsibilities
45. The deputy headteacher has a clear management role and a strong partnership with the headteacher. She effectively co-ordinates what the school offers to pupils with special educational needs and as a result their learning is good and they make good progress. The assessment co-ordinator has effectively established a system for teachers to measure and record pupils' attainments and progress systematically as they move through the school. The procedure is relatively new, and the information that it is beginning to provide for teachers is not yet used effectively enough in planning what pupils need to learn next. Most subject co-ordinators are new to the school and they have not had sufficient time to make a significant impact on their subjects across the year groups. The school is aware of this and has appropriately included the enhancement of the role of subject co-ordinators in its current development plan.

46. The governors fulfil all their statutory responsibilities. They are well informed about the school and they have a good understanding of its strengths and weaknesses. They know for example that standards in music are weak and that pupils' attainments in mathematics are lower than in the other core subjects of English and science. They discuss the value added to pupils' learning from Year 4 to Year 7 to help them to build a full picture of the school's effectiveness. The training that governors have received has given them a strong awareness of their responsibilities, but as yet they do not have a central role in decision making. For example, they do not play a key part in identifying the priorities for the school's development. As a result, they do not yet play a full role in shaping the future direction of the school. Their enthusiasm and their desire to have an objective view of the school's work place them on the threshold of becoming a 'critical friend'. However, they currently fall short of this. The school uses its financial resources satisfactorily to enable it to achieve identified targets for development and it takes care to use specific grants for their designated purposes. The governors apply the principles of best value in their spending decisions.
47. The school has a suitable policy for managing the performance of teachers. However, because of staff changes, not all teachers have agreed objectives for their development. As a result, teachers are not always getting the support they need to develop new skills or remedy weaknesses in their work. Additionally, because of the high turnover of staff and frequent staff absence in recent years, the ongoing programme of monitoring of teaching has lacked rigour. The result is that some members of this new staff team do not yet know what works well and what does not, for example with regard to managing pupils' behaviour. Some teachers work well with support assistants to address these difficulties, especially in preventing potential problems from arising and dealing swiftly with those that do. Other teachers are less successful, and this sometimes leads to reduced learning for other pupils. Because of the lack of rigour in the evaluation of teaching, some effective practice is not shared and some weaknesses are not remedied.
48. This is an inclusive school. Its aims and values place strong emphasis on all pupils having equal access to what the school offers. These are reflected well in its life and work. Over half of the pupils have special educational needs. There are pupils with learning, behavioural and physical difficulties. All receive effective support from teachers and a good number of assistants who help them to make good progress. Pupils who speak English as an additional language receive specialist teaching and ongoing support that enables them to take a full part in all activities. The school identifies and supports pupils who are gifted and talented -these children have individual education plans and are identified on the schools special educational needs register as more able pupils. For example, one able musician is given the opportunity to practise regularly and plays the piano in assemblies.
49. The accommodation in the school is good and allows all subjects of the National Curriculum to be taught effectively. The classrooms are of varying sizes and some are small for the number of pupils who use them. Most classrooms are well decorated with displays and examples of pupils' work. There is a very welcoming entrance hall, which leads on to the recently refurbished library. There are dedicated classrooms for the teaching of specialist subjects such as science, food technology and design and technology. There is also a recently refurbished ICT suite. Outside, the playground is marked out with traditional playground games and there is a large playing field. These facilities are used for physical education, football and sports day. The conservation area and pond are used effectively to support science.
50. The school has satisfactory resources for learning in most areas of the curriculum. The stock of books for reading has improved since the last inspection but there are insufficient books that reflect different cultures. There is a shortage of large gymnastic equipment and the school needs to acquire more artefacts to enliven the teaching of religious education, art, history and geography. Similarly, a shortage of resources for design and technology means that teachers cannot cover all aspects the curriculum as thoroughly as they should. The ICT suite is equipped with 14 computers and this is an improvement in resources since the last

inspection. Nevertheless, there is a lack of resources for controlling, modelling and multi-media work, which makes the ICT curriculum narrow, and depresses standards. The school makes satisfactory use of local historical sites, art galleries and museums to support the curriculum.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

51. In order to extend the school's current achievements, the governors, headteacher and staff should jointly:

1. Raise standards in English, mathematics and science and other subjects by:

- i) ensuring that teachers make more effective use of ongoing assessments in their daily and weekly planning to match tasks more closely to the needs of pupils of differing abilities;
- ii) ensuring that teachers set challenging work for the more able pupils;
- iii) providing more opportunities for pupils to reinforce their literacy, numeracy and scientific skills through work in other subjects;
- iv) introducing a clear policy on handwriting and ensuring that pupils gain the basic skills more quickly;
- v) providing more opportunities for pupils to undertake practical and investigative tasks in mathematics and science;
- vi) ensuring that homework builds on and extends pupils' work in class;
- vii) using additional adult support in classrooms more consistently to support teachers in controlling the behaviour of pupils who disrupt the learning of others.

(Paras: 1,2,4,14,21,23,55,56,59,61,66,67,72,74,85)

2. Improve pupils' progress in design and technology, French, ICT and music by:

- i) providing suitable in-service training for teachers who do not have sufficient experience or expertise to teach these subjects effectively;
- ii) improving resources for ICT so that teachers and pupils can use computers more regularly as part of their work in all subjects;
- iii) improving resources for design and technology so that teachers can cover all aspects of the curriculum more thoroughly.

(Paras: 3,15,24,50,78,79,82,86,91,92,96,98,101,106,115)

3. Improve teachers' planning in the medium and longer term by:

- i) identifying the criteria that are to be used in assessing pupils' attainment and progress in all subjects;
- ii) ensuring that all staff receive the necessary training to apply these criteria consistently;
- iii) devising a manageable way of recording assessment information so that it is readily available to teachers when topics or skills are re-visited;
- iv) ensuring that teachers use assessment information more systematically to identify what pupils of different levels of attainment, but particularly the higher attaining, need to learn next.

(Paras: 36,37,39,60,61,67)

4. Improve teaching and learning by:

- i) setting up a structured programme for the monitoring and evaluating of teaching and learning that involves senior staff, subject co-ordinators and governors;
- ii) using the outcomes of monitoring to ensure that good and effective practice, for example in the managing of pupils with behavioural difficulties, is shared with all staff, but particularly with those who are new to the school;
- iii) ensuring that the school's staff development programme identifies appropriate training to strengthen the work of individual teachers and of the school as a whole.

(Paras: 45,47,74,91,92,115)

5. Improve pupils' understanding of the richness and diversity of other cultures by:
 - i) ensuring that teachers plan more systematically for this aspect of pupils' learning;
 - ii) providing the resources that allow teachers to give greater emphasis to this area of learning.(Paras: 31,50,77,115)

OTHER ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

1. Improve the governors' role in shaping the direction of the school by:
 - i) introducing procedures that allow governors to gather first-hand information about the quality of education that the school provides;
 - ii) giving governors a more active role in planning for school improvement.(Para: 46)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	58
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
Number	0	6	19	26	4	2	0
Percentage	0	10	33	45	7	3	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 almost two percentage points.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	225
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	94
Special educational needs	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	6
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	116
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	9
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	13

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.1
National comparative data	5.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	1.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	24	26	50

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	8	9	17
	Girls	15	8	17
	Total	23	17	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	46 (68)	34 (42)	68 (74)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	7	10	17
	Girls	14	12	17
	Total	21	22	34
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	42 (68)	44 (42)	68 (74)
	National	70	72	79

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	216
Any other minority ethnic group	4

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	20	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: Y4 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	11
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	20
Average class size	25

Education support staff: Y4 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	10
Total aggregate hours worked per week	186

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	502008
Total expenditure	506824
Expenditure per pupil	2336
Balance brought forward from previous year	41694
Balance carried forward to next year	36878

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	12
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	17

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	225
Number of questionnaires returned	154

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	34	57	6	2	1
My child is making good progress in school.	31	59	3	1	6
Behaviour in the school is good.	30	47	14	1	8
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	27	52	15	2	4
The teaching is good.	34	54	5	0	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	20	48	21	5	6
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	44	4	4	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	56	37	1	0	6
The school works closely with parents.	27	45	15	3	10
The school is well led and managed.	29	43	7	7	14
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	24	56	10	1	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	30	36	13	5	16

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

ENGLISH

52. Standards in English are well below those expected for pupils by the end of Years 6 and 7. Pupils achieve better in speaking, listening and reading than in writing, as they do in schools nationally. There is no significant difference between the attainments of boys and girls. Since the previous inspection, standards have improved at a similar rate to those in schools nationally. Pupils' skills on entry to the school have declined since the last inspection. The number of pupils with poor language skills, special educational needs and challenging behaviour has increased. Nevertheless, sound teaching and careful planning helps them make satisfactory and sometimes good progress. The targets set for pupils with special educational needs are clear and achievable. They achieve well because they receive good support from teachers and learning support assistants. This enables them to take part fully, and learn alongside their classmates in lessons.
53. Speaking and listening skills are below average. Pupils often have a very limited vocabulary, as seen in a lesson in Year 7 pupils when they were asked to summarise a piece of writing. The teacher checked their understanding of words like 'reservoir' and 'summarise'. His clear explanations successfully extended their vocabulary so that they could cope with the task. Pupils become sharper in their listening skills as they move through the school. In Year 6, they quickly spotted clues to the location of a Harry Potter story because they listened intently to their teacher's lively reading. They knew their teacher would value what they had to say, so they confidently asked and answered her questions. Teachers sometimes provide valuable opportunities for pupils to discuss topics in groups. In a religious education lesson, pupils discussed their own 'Good Samaritan' experiences, later contributing their ideas to a class discussion. They expressed themselves clearly, but often too briefly, when speaking. Pupils' speaking skills are not as good as they might be, because teachers often accept their first, single word answers without encouraging them to explain more fully.
54. Pupils make satisfactory progress from a very low base in reading, but standards are well below average. The school has worked hard to stimulate pupils' enthusiasm and interest by providing a good range of attractive and interesting junior novels and other reading books. Pupils confidently described their favourite books and authors, explaining why they liked a particular style. They willingly read for their class, and others concentrate well because teachers choose texts they know pupils will enjoy. Pupils become more fluent in their reading, but are less confident in reading more advanced and reference texts where they encounter technical words. Although they have a sound grasp of phonics, they lack confidence in using these, as when they struggle to read words like 'Hagrid' in Year 6. Younger pupils struggle to sing the hymns in assembly because they cannot read the words quickly enough. Whilst older pupils quickly grasp the main points in a text, they need lots of prompting to appreciate the deeper meanings or to make their own deductions. This was highlighted in a lesson where pupils found it hard to summarise what they had read about life in Victorian factories. They often copied out the text instead of identifying the key points. Pupils know how to use the library and an index system efficiently. They are sometimes slow to locate words in a dictionary, for instance when checking the spellings in their writing.
55. Pupils' writing skills are weak and their progress is unsatisfactory. Their handwriting and presentation in English and other subjects is poor throughout the school and teachers' expectations are not high enough. The school does not have a clear enough plan for ensuring that pupils practise and develop a neat, joined handwriting style from the outset in Year 4. There are now useful opportunities for pupils to edit and re-draft their work, which was a weakness in the last inspection. Pupils are encouraged to critically check the work in

their drafting books, and to correct mistakes in spelling and punctuation. Teachers' write clear comments when marking pupils' work that set clear targets for improvement. However, more could be done to ensure that these are pursued consistently and vigorously, so that careless mistakes in spelling, punctuation and handwriting are eliminated and that pupils take more care to present their work neatly so that subsequent work shows real improvement.

56. Planning to the National Literacy Strategy is ensuring a better focus on teaching the basic skills and the use of effective strategies that make writing more vibrant and imaginative. This is best seen in the Year 4 booster group where more able pupils learn to use similes, metaphors and imaginative words in their poetry writing on a 'Journeys' theme. They write, '...like gusts of white wind twirling...' and '...colourful, scaly fish...' because the teacher has encouraged them to explore expressive words. Pupils in Year 6 explored words to use instead of 'said'. They word-processed words like 'whispered' using different font styles to create a classroom display. However, whilst most pupils learn to adapt their writing, for example producing play scripts or persuasive reports about mobile phones, they still use only a basic language and simple sentences in their writing by the time they leave the school. Teachers could do more to extend the writing of the more able pupils in other areas of the curriculum where there is sometimes a heavy use of worksheets and drawing activities. However, good examples were seen when pupils wrote about the battle of Hastings from the point of view of William the Conqueror in Year 7, and younger pupils wrote a letter describing a meeting with Jesus to a friend. Throughout the school there are too few examples of pupils using ICT to record their English work.
57. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall with over half the lessons being good or very good. Pupils are generally clear about what they are to learn because teachers display and discuss the lesson aims, checking that these have been achieved at the end. This is an improvement since the last inspection when teaching was marred by unclear lesson aims. In a few lessons, time is lost when introductions are too lengthy, or when less able and younger pupils are expected to write out lesson objectives before starting their tasks. This leaves them too little time to read, write and practise the skills they have learned in the lesson and they do not achieve as well as they might. In a lesson in Year 4, some pupils had too little time to practise the new poetry skills they were learning, because they used what little time they had in copying the lesson aims.
58. In the best lessons seen during the inspection, teachers provided lively, confident introductions. They had a very good rapport with pupils who, as a result, were enthusiastic, co-operative and hard working. Pupils behaved well because the teacher had established clear expectations. In a lesson in Year 6, pupils learned to use connectives to create more complex sentences. The teacher knew exactly what pupils had to do to reach the next stage in their writing because she had carefully assessed what they could and could not do. "If you had used these connectives in your last piece of writing it would have been a level 4", she told some pupils.
59. There is good teamwork between teachers and learning support assistants generally. This particularly benefits the less able pupils who sometimes make the best progress in lessons. Successful encouragement and discussion by one assistant in Year 4 meant that some pupils with special educational needs produced a good group poem, which other pupils found difficult. When they are well briefed, they quickly move in to support where help is needed and to nip inappropriate behaviour in the bud. However, sometimes the management of behaviour is weak, resulting in unsatisfactory teaching. A small number of lessons are marred by the unsatisfactory behaviour of a minority of boys. This is not addressed soon enough and it disrupts the lesson, so that other pupils struggle to concentrate. This was seen in a lesson where the teacher's good planning gave pupils the

opportunity to use what they had learned about similes to make improvements in their 'scary stories'. Constant disruptions meant that the lesson lost its focus because assistants were unsure when to intervene to support the teacher. As a result, pupils spent the majority of their time checking spellings rather than working to add richness to the content of their work. More rigorous monitoring of teaching is needed to manage inappropriate behaviour and to share existing good practice in the teaching of English.

60. The school has valuable information from a range of tests and teachers' assessment that is used to place pupils in booster groups in Years 4 and 6 and to identify areas for development, like writing. The co-ordinator is new to her role, but has already introduced a new writing assessment sheet to give teachers more precise information about what pupils need to do next. This is urgently needed to ensure a smooth transfer as pupils move through the school. When it is more established, it will enable teachers to quickly place pupils into ability sets at the start of the year. However, at present there is too little data available to teachers and what is there is often not used effectively. Too often all pupils are set similar work in lessons. More able pupils sometimes mark time when they move to a new class, because their work is not pitched at a high enough level to move them on. A similar sheet for reading would also help to make the teaching more effective.

MATHEMATICS

61. Pupils in Year 6 and Year 7 attain standards that are well below those expected for their age in mathematics, with pupils' ability to use and apply their understanding of mathematical principles being a particular weakness. The results of the 2001 national tests were well below results in schools nationally and those in similar schools; only about a third of the pupils at the end of Year 6 attained the expected level 4 or above. The standards have not improved since the school's last inspection. There are a number of reasons for this.
- Pupils enter the school in Year 4 with weak mathematical knowledge, skills and understanding. Of pupils currently in Year 6, only about 20 per cent scored a secure level 2 at the age of seven, and almost half were below or well below the nationally expected standard.
 - Extensive changes in teaching staff have hampered the school in its efforts to improve the teaching and learning of mathematics and to increase pupils' progress.
 - Improved assessment systems are too new to have had a significant impact. They are not yet helping teachers to plan more accurately what pupils need to learn next. As a result, teachers sometimes give work that is too easy or too hard for particular pupils and when this happens it slows the progress, particularly of more able pupils.
62. Despite barriers to improvement, most pupils make satisfactory progress in mathematics, both to the age of 11 and to the time that they leave the school. More pupils attain or exceed the nationally expected standard at the age of 11 than might be expected on the basis of their attainment at age seven. Almost half of the school's pupils have special educational needs. The provision for these pupils is good. They receive effective support both from their class teachers and from the good number of classroom support assistants. This enables them to achieve well in relation to the difficulties they face, although most do not achieve the nationally expected standard and this affects the school's results. During the inspection, there was no marked difference between the performance of boys and girls. In recent years the boys have performed better than the girls in tests of 11 year olds. However, this reflects the particular abilities of the pupils in those year groups, and there is no clear overall trend.
63. By the age of 11, pupils' number work is at a basic level. They carry out simple calculations and round three-digit numbers to the nearest hundred. However, many struggle to recall all but the most simple number bonds and tables and their understanding of place value is not secure. As a result, pupils' understanding of mathematical principles and strategies is weak. This is evident when they try to work out problems, applying only a limited range of

approaches when trying to overcome difficulties in their work. Pupils' understanding of space, shape and measures is similarly limited. For example, lower attaining pupils are unsure of equivalent measures such as ten millimetres making a centimetre and the relative value of a tenth compared with a hundredth. Most know that information can be presented in different ways, and they can interpret simple graphs and charts. However, the standard of this work is low for their age.

64. Pupils in Year 7 continue to make satisfactory progress. However, by the time they leave the school, their understanding in many areas remains insecure. This is apparent when pupils apply a formula to calculate the area of a shape without fully understanding how it results in the correct answer. Lower attaining pupils use a calculator to find the average of a set of values but most are unable to apply the same principle to simple numbers without the calculator. More pupils learn to measure and draw angles accurately to the nearest degree but most pupils do not present their work neatly or with pride or care to achieve this standard. Most can gather simple data, but have poor skills in selecting an appropriate way of presenting the information that they collect.
65. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory throughout the school. The teachers competently plan and are beginning to teach in accordance with the National Numeracy Strategy. Teaching develops learning well when:
 - it challenges pupils to talk about the strategies that they have used to solve a problem, for example making pupils in Year 7 think more deeply about alternative routes to the same answer;
 - the mental mathematics questioning moves at a lively pace and effectively improves pupils' understanding, for example of equivalent fractions in Year 6;
 - teachers take care to help pupils to learn correct terms such as 'mean' when handling data, 'axes' when interpreting graphs and 'imperial' when using measures such as feet.
66. Because of the high turnover of staff, the school is not as far forward with its response to the National Strategy for Numeracy as many schools. This results in inconsistencies in the quality of teaching that reduce pupils' progress. For example, at times the pace of mental mathematics sessions is not brisk enough and this results in some pupils in Year 6 not listening carefully or responding enthusiastically to questions. Also, teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to develop their understanding by using and applying what they know or by trying out their own ideas in problem-solving activities or through planned links with other subjects, for example ICT. Consequently higher attaining pupils' progress is not always as good as it could be.
67. However, the main weakness in teaching is the inadequate use of assessment information in planning what pupils need to do next. Teachers do not yet have a sufficiently detailed picture of what each pupil knows and understands because the assessment system is new. As a result, the work that teachers give to pupils is sometimes too easy or too hard and in these instances they do not make as much progress as they could. For example, in one Year 6 lesson, the teacher relied on asking the pupils what work they had done on fractions in Year 5. Because there was inadequate recorded information about the pupils' achievements in the last class, the work given to the more able pupils did not challenge them sufficiently, and their progress was not as good as it could have been. Higher attaining pupils tended to become bored when they were not fully challenged and were easily distracted from the task. As a result, the quality of their learning was reduced.
68. Generally, however, pupils show sound attitudes to mathematics and their behaviour in lessons is satisfactory. A small minority of pupils with behaviour difficulties find it difficult to listen carefully to the teacher and they are sometimes reluctant to join in discussions. Some teachers are skilful in meeting the needs of these pupils so that their behaviour is satisfactory and their learning develops well. For example, they foster pupils' behaviour through good relationships and they effectively encourage good attitudes by providing

practical activities that engage pupils well. A Year 7 lesson engaged pupils well and supported their growing understanding of collecting and recording data through practical opportunities to measure each other's pulse rates before and after exercise.

SCIENCE

69. Attainment in science is well below the standard normally expected of pupils at the age of 11 and this remains the same by the time they leave the school at the age of 12. The school's results in the 2001 national tests were well below the national average and the average for similar schools. However, this does not indicate serious weaknesses in teaching and learning. The attainment of pupils on entry is very low but by the time they leave the school most have made satisfactory progress. A slightly higher proportion of pupils attains or exceeds the nationally expected standard than indicated by results at the age of seven. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language benefit from the additional support they receive and most make good progress, though many do not achieve the nationally expected level because of the difficulties that they face in their learning. Despite the number of pupils who currently fall below national expectations, the trend in the school's science results over the last five years has been upwards at a rate that is similar to that in schools nationally.
70. Pupils in Year 4 know that there is a link between force and motion but do not understand this phenomenon in sufficient depth to compare the forces at work in the world around them or to make generalisations in scientific terms. In Year 5 pupils extend their understanding in a topic on the Earth, Sun and Moon and begin to understand gravity and what gravity does. In Year 6, pupils know about the properties of different materials, for example that some will dissolve and that some will not. However, most do not have the breadth of knowledge or enough experience of designing simple experiments to use this knowledge as the basis of a method for separating simple mixtures. Pupils in Year 7 know about cell reproduction in plants. They conduct simple research using information from CD-ROMs and the Internet.
71. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Most teachers have sound subject knowledge and as a result lesson planning is satisfactory. In the majority of lessons, teachers know what they expect pupils to learn and how this is to be achieved. Where teaching is at its best, pupils are excited and well motivated to learn. For example, in a Year 5 lesson on the solar system, pupils were inspired by the teacher and one boy commented, "I'm really enjoying this!" Similarly, where there are good relationships between teachers and pupils, as for example in classes in Year 6, there is better behaviour and subsequently a better working atmosphere that adds to the quality of pupils' learning. However, in some classes, teachers, often newly appointed to the school, are still working hard to develop these effective relationships and are now just beginning to make progress. Consequently in some lessons in Year 5 and Year 7, the behaviour of a minority of pupils still disturbs the learning of others in the class. Teachers make some useful links between science and other subjects. For example, when pupils in Year 7 display their pulse rate data in graph form, their understanding of data and information handling is reinforced. However, this linking of subjects is not yet consistent practice throughout the school so many opportunities are missed.
72. Assessment in science is at an early stage of development. Teachers now routinely conduct end of topic assessments but their use of assessment information remains unsatisfactory. Teachers are not using assessment information to identify and meet the needs of pupils of different abilities in the class. Inspection evidence shows that in most lessons, pupils of all abilities undertake the same work and that the brighter pupils are consequently not being challenged enough to reach their potential in science. Teachers' expectations for the more able are not high enough. There is an over-emphasis on direct whole-class teaching and this approach does not always challenge and motivate pupils to plan and develop their own investigations.

73. Most pupils are interested in and enjoy science. They are keen to talk about their previous learning and what they had done recently in the subject. Behaviour in classes is generally sound although there are some instances of unsuitable behaviour that affect the flow of lessons and the learning of other pupils. This is generally where the teachers have not yet achieved the successful management of pupils' behaviour or have little extra support in the classrooms where there are pupils with behavioural problems. Where this has been achieved, pupils are willing to listen to others and also keen to join in discussions and this has a positive impact on their learning. For example, pupils remember what they have learned and use correct scientific vocabulary as and when necessary.
74. The new subject co-ordinator has already given a high priority to raising the profile of science and the quality of teaching in the subject. However, a particular weakness is the lack of monitoring of teaching and learning in the classrooms and this has been highlighted as a high priority for future development. This means that teachers who are new to the school do not always get the support that they need, be it with specific aspects of science or classroom management. There are good links with the high school and the University of East Anglia that allows Year 4, 6 and 7 pupils to take part in science lessons there. The quality and use of learning resources is satisfactory overall although the absence of computers in some classrooms does make it impossible to follow up work appropriately using ICT on a regular basis.

ART AND DESIGN

75. Pupils in both key stages achieve satisfactory standards in most aspects of their work in art and design and are maintaining the standards reported in the last inspection. They do this because:
- improved planning to national guidelines ensures that pupils learn and develop skills and techniques progressively as they move through the school. For example, what pupils learn to do with clay in Year 5 is extended when they use the same medium in Year 7;
 - pupils learn to use a satisfactory range of media and techniques that includes paint, pencil, pastel, crayon, collage, print making and clay;
 - teachers give appropriate emphasis to the teaching of skills, for example coiling in a Year 7 lesson using clay or the 'thumb pot' technique in Year 5;
 - pupils use their sketchbooks purposefully to practise and extend skills such as representing the proportions of the human face or using line and shade in landscape pictures.
76. Teaching is satisfactory overall. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teachers had a secure understanding of the techniques they were teaching and enough skill to demonstrate them effectively. This meant that teaching was clear and authoritative and pupils knew exactly what to do. Pupils, including those with learning and behavioural difficulties, were drawn into the activity by the teachers' initial presentations and by the quality of the support when the pupils worked independently. The quality of pupils' learning was satisfactory because all were fully involved and making sound progress.
77. The school has sufficient resources to allow teachers to cover the curriculum adequately but there are still not enough resources that focus on the work of artists and on the heritage of art from our own and from other cultures. As a result, pupils know little of the works of famous artists and have few opportunities to investigate the techniques used by different artists or to use these as the starting points for their own work. They know almost nothing of the richness and diversity of art from other cultures and this is a contributory factor in pupils' unsatisfactory cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

78. The standards that the pupils reach by the end of Year 6 and in Year 7 are unsatisfactory. The school has not made enough improvement since the last inspection when standards and progress were also unsatisfactory in all years. This is because:
- during recent years the subject has had a low profile in the school, due in part to significant staff changes;
 - pupils have received a restricted curriculum that has prevented them from making enough progress in their skills and understanding;
 - the school's recent implementation of national guidance for the subject has only just begun to improve pupils' learning and progress through planned projects designed to introduce and develop their skills year by year.
79. Consequently, by the time the pupils leave the school, pupils' knowledge, understanding and skills are weak. Because they have had too few opportunities, pupils are unable to plan effectively what they are going to make and how they are going to make it. They have limited skills in working with tools and materials, and the skills that they have vary considerably because they have not been built up progressively. Pupils have poorly developed evaluative skills; most are unable to judge the end product in terms of what works well and what could be improved and so are not really learning from their experiences.
80. Insufficient teaching was seen during the inspection to make a judgement on its quality throughout the school. There were strengths and weaknesses in the lessons seen. The teaching in the Year 6 lesson was good because it combined practical advice about how pupils should improve the quality of their work along with ample support and encouragement. Pupils had good attitudes to the subject. Because they enjoyed the practical activities, they applied themselves well. As a result the learning of all pupils, including those with special educational needs, was good. The pupils made measurable progress from one lesson to another by improving the quality of their stitching when making slippers.
81. The teaching seen in Year 7 used humour well to encourage pupils and to raise their self-esteem. The way the lesson was structured, however, resulted in some pupils waiting for slower pupils and so their progress in designing a puppet was not as good as it might have been. Teaching missed opportunities for pupils to evaluate their own designs by, for example, explaining them in more detail to their classmates.
82. The co-ordinator was appointed to the school relatively recently. He is aware that the shortage of some resources, such as those for working with wood, limits the range of activities that pupils undertake and the quality of their finished work. He understands that ICT could be used to support the pupils' learning. Some teachers lack experience and expertise in the subject and do not yet have a clear understanding of what each pupil should be expected to achieve by the end of each year. As a result, teachers' expectations of what pupils can do are sometimes too low and this hinders the raising of pupils' attainment.

GEOGRAPHY

83. Most pupils make satisfactory progress in geography. Standards at the end of Year 6 and throughout Year 7 are similar to those expected for the pupils' ages. This is an improvement on the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language take a full part in all activities and make good progress towards the targets set for them.
84. Pupils in Year 5 know about the water cycle, and understand the dangers of pollution and the importance of water treatment. Pupils in Year 6 know that mountains affect the weather patterns in regions such as the Scottish Highlands and English Lake District. Although pupils

in Year 7 know about the key and symbols on a map, their knowledge and understanding of the use of different maps, such as globes, atlases, Ordnance Survey maps and plans at varying scales, is under-developed. At present this is a weakness in pupils' learning. The school has purchased up-to-date wall maps, atlases and globes, but the impact on learning of these new resources is yet to be felt across the school. Older pupils have the necessary skills to use computers to aid their learning. For example, pupils in a Year 6 class used their time in the computer suite to investigate mountain ranges, animal habitats and the effect of mountains on weather using an encyclopaedia program. However, the amount of this type of work that pupils can undertake is restricted by the school's shortage of classroom computers and suitable geographical programs for pupils to use.

85. The quality of teaching is variable, though satisfactory overall. In the most successful lessons, as for example when pupils in Year 5 investigated their personal use of water, the subject matter is appealing and pupils are immediately ready to learn. Planning identifies exactly what pupils are to learn and specific tasks for pupils of differing abilities ensure that all pupils succeed and make progress. Good links with mathematics give pupils the chance to reinforce their developing numeracy skills and add an extra dimension to pupils' learning. In another effective lesson about mountains in Year 6, the teacher used her good relationship with the class to control behaviour effectively and to channel pupils' energy into productive work. Some newly appointed teachers are still working to establish relationships and productive patterns of behaviour and response, and this has a direct impact on pupils' attitudes, interest and learning in the subject. All lessons are planned for the whole class with all pupils undertaking the same work. Whilst the pupils with special educational needs benefit from extra support for their learning, pupils of higher than average ability are not challenged or stretched and are underachieving. Teachers have begun to assess pupils' progress in geography by undertaking tests at the end of units. However, ongoing assessments and the teachers' use of assessment are unsatisfactory. Teachers are not using the information that they have to plan for pupils of different abilities and this reduces the progress that some pupils, in particularly the more able, make.
86. The present subject co-ordinator took on the responsibility only at the beginning of the academic year, but has already drawn up a suitable action plan that targets the use of ICT and development of fieldwork to enhance the teaching and learning in the subject.

HISTORY

87. It was only possible to see a small sample of history lessons during the inspection. However, pupils' past and present work in books, classroom displays and interviews with teachers and pupils indicate that most pupils make satisfactory progress in history. By the age of 11 they achieve standards that are similar to those expected for their age and this continues to be the case throughout Year 7. This is an improvement on the standards reported at the time of the previous inspection.
88. As they move through the school, pupils successfully learn to use and interpret different sources of information about the past. Pupils in Year 4 understand something of what life was like in the Roman town of Venta Icenorium in Norfolk from studying a plan of how the town may have looked in AD30. They also know about other legacies of the Roman invasion from using reference books effectively to conduct simple research. Pupils in Year 5 understand the passing of time because they use timelines effectively to plot key events. They also know that life was different in the past by, for example, concentrating on games and pastimes played by Tudor children and those of children today. This is a new topic that the school is developing in order to meet the requirements for the revised National Curriculum. Pupils in Year 6 make good use of the writings of Charles Dickens and reproduction school timetables as sources of evidence to help them draw valid conclusions about education in Victorian times. In Year 7, pupils continue to make sound progress with

studies of the royal houses of England. Pupils undertake various extended writing tasks, sometimes carried out as homework, that add to the progress that they make in lessons.

89. Teaching in history is sound overall. Teachers plan their lessons in accordance to national guidance. This ensures that pupils cover a suitable range of periods in history and that they develop satisfactory skills of historical inquiry as they find out about important people and events from the past. In the few lessons seen, there were both strengths and weaknesses. The teacher's expressive reading from Dickens immediately interested pupils in Year 6. Consequently they engaged with the task and enjoyed comparing the Victorian school's daily timetable to the one they are using in their own class. This added to the quality of their learning and to the progress that they made. Teachers and classroom assistants successfully support pupils with special educational needs. As a result, pupils with learning and behavioural difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language make good progress. Teachers in Year 7 use homework effectively. Pupils undertake extended writing tasks that not only extend their learning in history but also reinforce their developing literacy skills. However, the use of teaching time for the subject is variable. For example, in Year 4 pupils spend the whole afternoon on history. Whilst this can be productive at times with older pupils, it does not work so well for younger pupils because they are unable to concentrate for so long and easily become distracted as the lesson goes on.
90. Most pupils respond well satisfactorily to the teaching of history. When there are interesting things to see, hear and do, as in the lesson on Victorian schools, most pupils join in fully and persevere with the tasks that teachers set. However, the school has not got enough artefacts and other interesting books and objects for the teachers to use as a means of bringing the subject to life. When there is not enough to hold pupils' attention or when the lesson goes on for too long, some pupils become restless and do not make the progress that they should.
91. As a result of staff changes, the subject co-ordinator has only been in post for half a term, but in that time has begun to understand what needs to be done in the subject. She has already written a draft policy, brought the scheme of work into line with the requirements of the revised National Curriculum and made a start at monitoring lesson plans and preparing for assessment. However, in addition to the school's lack of artefacts, there are also not enough computers or suitable programs that support the teaching of history. Researching for information can only be undertaken in the computer suite, as there are too few computers in the classrooms and this seriously restricts the time for this important activity. There is a computer encyclopaedia and a program on 'Life in Tudor times', but nothing else to support the topics covered across the school in history. However, a link has been established with the local high school and the University of East Anglia to share some resources but other opportunities for links with the community are as yet undeveloped.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

92. The standards in information and communication technology are well below average overall and pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. This is because:
- the school does not have enough computers for the use of ICT to be an integral part of pupils' learning in all subjects;
 - the school does not have a permanent co-ordinator for the subject so whole-school monitoring and development is restricted;
 - there are not enough suitable programs or additional hardware, such as programmable devices, video or digital cameras, sound recording apparatus and listening centres, to enable pupils to develop skills and understanding in sufficient depth across the different aspects of ICT;

- the curriculum for ICT is too narrow; pupils learn little about controlling devices by the use of ICT, or about how computer models can help them understand features of places or times that are beyond the classroom;
 - teachers do not give enough emphasis to teaching about the uses of ICT in the wider world.
93. By the age of 11 pupils know how to use the Internet to gather information, but do not have the facility to send e-mails. This limits the range of ways that they exchange information and ideas with others. They gain basic word-processing and information handling skills, but do not use them often enough to become fully competent or independent and this makes it impossible for them to achieve the expected standard by the end of Year 6. By the time the pupils leave the school, although they competently describe how to program what happens on a screen, they have little understanding of how to use ICT to sense physical information, such as temperature. Pupils in Year 7 combine different forms of information including text and pictures, but as yet this does not extend to sound. They cannot talk in any real depth about how ICT is used in the wider world, other than computers. More able pupils know that e-mails are quicker than tradition mail, but most pupils have limited skills in comparing ICT with alternative methods of communication, or in describing the advantages and disadvantages of each. The word processing that pupils do in Year 7 does not extend them sufficiently beyond what they achieved in Year 6, and this aspect of their work in ICT does not make an adequate contribution to their skills in English, for example by improving the quality of their written work.
94. The pupils' response to working with computers is enthusiastic, with good attitudes to work developing. These help pupils to concentrate hard and work effectively together. Pupils are confident when they apply their limited skills. For example, the higher attaining pupils confidently play a video when they search for information from a computer encyclopaedia. They co-operate well, sharing skills and knowledge and they are confident in trying suggestions made by the teacher and their peers. For example, in a Year 6 lesson, one pupil extended the skills of others by sharing his knowledge of the need to click twice on the mouse to achieve the required result on the screen.
95. There is insufficient evidence to judge the quality of teaching throughout the school. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was satisfactory. Teaching effectively enabled pupils to explore ideas and share their skills on computers. This improved their confidence levels and promoted interest in and enthusiasm for the subject. Classroom support assistants were used effectively to help pupils with special educational needs. They prompt and encourage them in order to sustain their interest and concentration. Confident teachers give clear explanations that help pupils to understand their work, and their use of correct terms helps pupils to learn, for example, what icons are and what commands do. However, frequent faults on the computers in the ICT room frustrate teaching and hamper learning. Furthermore, because there is no well-established system for assessing pupils' attainments and progress, teachers do not have a sufficiently clear or detailed knowledge of pupils' skills and understanding to help them to plan more accurately what they need to learn next in order to improve.
96. Some teachers link pupils' experiences in ICT to their work in other subjects. This is effective in developing pupils' knowledge in geography, for example, when Year 6 pupils use a computer encyclopaedia to gather information about the various features of different mountain ranges. Similarly, a Year 5 lesson made a good contribution to pupils' mathematical development by increasing their knowledge of different types of angle, when programming the movements of a turtle on a screen. As yet, however, not all teachers plan thoroughly enough for the use of computers throughout the curriculum. For example ICT is not used enough to develop pupils' skills in design and technology, music, English, science or art. This reduces the rate at which pupils gain and consolidate skills, both in ICT and in other subjects.

97. The development of ICT throughout the school has been restricted by the high turnover of staff in recent years and the frequent changes of subject co-ordinator.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

98. Pupils in Year 7 are not making enough progress in French. They are unlikely to attain the standard expected for their age by the time that they leave the school. The quality of their learning is unsatisfactory and standards have fallen. This is because the teacher charged with teaching French to both Year 7 classes does not have the necessary knowledge and understanding to teach the subject effectively.
99. The teaching of French is unsatisfactory because the teacher's command of the language is weak and pronunciation is poor. The teaching methods in use are not appropriate to pupils at an early stage of foreign language acquisition. This reduces pupils' quality of learning because:
- the teacher conducts most of the lesson in English and this reduces pupils' exposure to the target language;
 - the French sentence patterns that pupils hear and copy are, at times, incorrect;
 - the French pronunciation that pupils hear is inconsistent and often incorrect;
 - the teacher does not give pupils enough opportunities to consolidate the language they know by speaking in response to questions or by responding to simple commands;
 - there are very few opportunities for pupils to use French in active, role-play situations;
 - there is an over-emphasis on rules of grammar when pupils do not have the necessary linguistic concepts to understand or use them;
 - there are not enough activities such as songs, games, quizzes or role-play to interest and motivate pupils.
100. As a result of these weaknesses in teaching and learning, pupils' attitudes to French and their behaviour in lessons are beginning to deteriorate. Many pupils lack confidence and are reluctant to join in the various activities. Those who do join in often do so half-heartedly, making little real effort to reproduce the language fluently, accurately or with accurate pronunciation. A small number of pupils are beginning to reject the idea of learning French and resort to disruptive behaviour as a means of avoiding learning. This is also unsatisfactory as it interrupts the learning of others.

MUSIC

101. The standards that pupils attain in music are unsatisfactory. They have declined since the school's last inspection when they were satisfactory and sometimes better. At present, the school does not have a music specialist among its teaching staff to provide strong leadership and guidance for those teachers who are new to the school or lack confidence and skills in teaching the subject. Because of this, there are also few extra-curricular opportunities for pupils to extend their musical skills. The quality of teaching in lessons is barely satisfactory overall because of the very wide variation from very good to poor teaching seen during the inspection. Because of this lack of consistently effective teaching, pupils' do not build systematically enough on their achievements in each year group and their overall progress is unsatisfactory. Teachers are still not making enough use of ICT in their music lessons.
102. There are, however, very good opportunities for talented pupils to demonstrate and use their skills. For example, a talented pianist in Year 6 enhanced assemblies considerably by the quality of his playing as pupils arrived, and as he accompanied their hymn singing.

103. The school is aware of weaknesses in its provision for music. Consequently, it arranges valuable opportunities for staff and pupils to observe and participate in sessions taken by a senior music specialist from the local advisory service as part of in-service training for staff. This provides a very good model for inexperienced teachers and helps raise the profile of music in the school.
104. Pupils show obvious enjoyment in the visiting specialist's regular whole-school music sessions. Her excellent subject knowledge, expertise and infectious enthusiasm encourage the pupils to work very hard so that their achievements are very good. In one such session she made sure that pupils knew what they were to learn and carefully sequenced the lesson so that they could build their skills systematically. She ensured that everyone listened and followed her instructions closely. Songs, like 'Whales' and 'One Man's Hands' had catchy tunes, and she used them well so that pupils sang more tunefully and expressively as the lesson progressed. Only the younger pupils struggled to join in because they could not read the lyrics. They concentrated very well, quickly responding to changes in dynamics, tempo and timbre in the music. The teacher provided plenty of demonstrations and opportunities to practice, all building to a final performance of which everyone was justifiably proud.
105. This was also true in a lesson in Year 4 that had similar strengths. Very good teaching, and teamwork with the learning support assistant who helped to supervise and support the class as they worked, improved pupils' singing and understanding of how sounds can be used to create musical effects. Pupils had a good grasp of 'timbre' because the teacher used words like 'tingle ...rattle ...crash' to illustrate what the word means. Their attainments were as expected for their age. In the best lessons, teachers keep up a brisk pace with interesting activities so that pupils want to learn. As a result, they are attentive and behave sensibly.
106. However, the weak management of pupils' behaviour was a feature of lessons where teaching was less than satisfactory. This and the teachers' lack of confidence meant that delivery was slow. Teachers struggled to keep to the lesson focus so that very little learning took place and pupils did not work as hard as they might and their progress was unsatisfactory. For example, pupils in Year 7 managed only very simple, unstructured compositions that were well below the standard normally seen in pupils of this age, when asked to accompany the 'Bogeyman' poem. Most pupils did not give enough thought to the type of sounds that would best reflect words like 'desolate' and as a result their work lacked originality.
107. A newly qualified teacher with skills in music is to take over the co-ordinator role at the end of her induction year. The school is providing appropriate training to prepare her for this responsibility.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

108. Pupils throughout the school reach the expected standards in the aspects of the physical education curriculum that were seen during the inspection. Inspection evidence and teachers' planning for physical education indicate that all elements of the National Curriculum receive appropriate attention. Most pupils of all levels of attainment in both key stages make satisfactory progress in the areas covered. Pupils with physical and learning difficulties receive good support that enables them to take a part in physical education lessons, experience success and make sound progress.
109. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 learn to swim and some attain standards above those normally expected of pupils at the end of Year 6. They develop their gymnastics skills, so that by Year 6, they are performing sequences and moving with suitable precision and control. Pupils in both key stages extend their games skills effectively. Many in Years 4 and 5 throw, catch,

dribble and pass a ball accurately and play small games that use the skills of netball and basketball. Pupils in Year 7 build on and extend the tennis skills that they learned in Year 6, refining their footwork, racquet handling and stroke making. The school organises a residential visit, during which pupils experience outdoor and adventurous activities, and throughout the year sporting activities outside lessons help motivate pupils and expose them to additional coaching. There are also opportunities for pupils to extend their skills by participating in local competitive events.

110. The teaching of physical education is sound. Teachers' planning is satisfactory. It identifies appropriate objectives. When these are shared with pupils, for example in an effective games lesson in Year 5, they give a clear focus to teaching and learning that improves pupils' progress. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge. They give clear explanations and monitor pupils' responses carefully. This ensures that all pupils are able to work confidently and to make appropriate progress. Teaching is most effective when the teachers' awareness of pupils' performance is good and results in effective individual and group coaching that helps pupils improve aspects of their technique. This worked to good effect in a Year 7 games lesson, when the teacher's analysis of pupils' tennis skills, along with clear instruction and effective demonstrations, helped pupils to make better progress. Similarly, in a Year 6 gymnastics lesson, the teacher's emphasis on precision, control and correct technique added to the quality of pupils' work and to the progress that they made during the lesson. Teachers manage their pupils effectively.
111. Pupils have satisfactory attitudes to their work in physical education. Where teachers have successfully established positive patterns of behaviour and response, using a suitable balance of praise and challenge, they are attentive and follow instructions promptly and accurately. This allows the lesson to flow and effectively maintains the pace of pupils' learning, as was seen to good effect in games lessons in Years 4 and 5. Older pupils are responsive to effective coaching and rise to the challenge to improve as, for example, in the Year 6 gymnastics lesson. Most pupils work sensibly in pairs or groups, giving each other constructive help to succeed. This is particularly effective when pupils work with and support those with special educational needs, enabling them to be fully involved and to make good progress, as in a Year 5 games lesson. The quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory. This results from pupils' positive response and from the satisfactory range and variety of experiences that the school provides. However, in some lessons, the challenging behaviour of a small minority of pupils demands the teacher's attention and this slows the pace of learning and reduces the progress that other pupils make.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

112. The school has recently revised its planning for religious education. It is now securely based on the locally agreed syllabus. Standards are in line with those required by the agreed syllabus by the time pupils are 11 years of age and when they leave the school.
113. Pupils learn a range of Bible stories and show a satisfactory understanding of their meanings. In Year 7, pupils successfully related the story of the Good Samaritan to incidents in their own lives. The teacher gave this a boost by describing her own experiences. As a result, pupils were confident when telling others about similar incidents in their own lives in the group discussions that followed. In a Year 4 lesson, pupils explored stories about Creation in Christianity, comparing this with an Aborigine story about how the rainbow was created. They remembered the important points because the teacher read both stories in a lively manner that successfully captured their interest and concentration. There are opportunities for pupils to learn about other faiths in each year group. By Year 7, pupils appreciate the beliefs and practices of a range of religions such as Islam, Sikhism and Judaism. A well-managed class discussion in Year 6 helped pupils to appreciate the significance of the Bodhi leaf, Stupa and the shrine for Buddhists. Their learning was further extended when they wrote about their own special places for homework.

114. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Teachers provide pupils with useful opportunities to discuss their ideas and show their understanding. For example, pupils in Year 6 showed a good understanding of Christian symbols like the fish because their teacher used questions skilfully to encourage them to think harder. Pupils enjoyed their recording task in Year 4. They took care with their drawings when illustrating the sequence of the rainbow story. However, such tasks are often limited by a worksheet. Pupils do not always have sufficient time or opportunities to reflect and respond to their new learning when written tasks are set. As a result, their work is sometimes unfinished and too brief. Teachers often set the same task for all pupils without considering their different needs and abilities. As a result, brighter pupils are unable to respond at a higher level, and the less able struggle to complete their work. A good example was, however, seen in pupils' workbooks in Year 5 when some pupils described their feelings on meeting Jesus in letters to an imaginary friend.
115. The co-ordinator is relatively new to her duties, but has made a good start by adapting the planning to more effectively meet the needs of the pupils and the locally agreed syllabus. Alongside this, she has identified the need for additional resources, but has not, as yet, monitored teaching sufficiently to identify strengths and areas for development. Lessons are not as interesting for pupils as they might be, because teachers do not have access to a good enough range of artefacts and visual resources to stimulate their knowledge and enthusiasm. This was particularly noticeable when pupils learned about Buddhism in Year 6. The teachers relied heavily on a worksheet and their own drawings to show pupils what the symbols are like. There were too few opportunities for pupils to handle real artefacts, and to fully appreciate what a Buddhist shrine is like. More could be done to enable pupils to extend their spiritual and religious awareness in visits to places like the local church and other sites of religious significance.