

# INSPECTION REPORT

**WHITE HOUSE COMMUNITY INFANTS  
SCHOOL**

Ipswich

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124660

Headteacher: Mrs E Gerrie

Reporting inspector: Mrs M S Summers  
25455

Dates of inspection: 13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> May 2002

Inspection number: 198374

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

## INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Infant
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 - 7
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body, White House Community Infants School
Name of chair of governors:	Mr J Doy
Date of previous inspection:	3 <sup>rd</sup> November 1997

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## INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
25455	Mary Summers	Registered inspector	Mathematics, information and communication technology, physical education, equality of opportunity.	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9977	Fran Luke	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
23674	Wendy Simmons	Team inspector	Foundation Stage, science, design and technology, geography, history.	
18083	Judith Howell	Team inspector	English, art and design, music, religious education, pupils with special educational needs, English as an additional language.	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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

### **INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL**

White House Community Infants caters for 228 pupils between the ages of three and seven. Fifty-two attend the Nursery part-time. The school is popular, with a waiting list for the Nursery and nearly one in five pupils coming from outside the immediate area. There are more boys than girls in the school, particularly in Year 1. Fifty-one pupils have special educational needs which is average for a school of this size, as is the number of pupils with statements of special educational need. These numbers have more than doubled since the previous inspection. Currently, a large percentage of these pupils are in Year 2. Most pupils are from white United Kingdom backgrounds and only a very small number speak English as an additional language. The school caters for 14 pupils from Traveller backgrounds, many of whom have extended periods of absence. About 23 per cent of pupils are entitled to free school meals, which is about average. Children's attainment on entry to school varies considerably but on the whole, they are at very low levels for their age.

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

The school provides a sound education for its pupils. The headteacher soundly leads a well-established team which is committed to improving provision for the pupils. Most of the teaching is at least satisfactory and, in the youngest classes, it is good and helps the children make a positive start to their education. Although standards are well below the national average, compared with pupils' low starting points, achievement is satisfactory. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

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

- Children get a good start to their education in the Nursery and Reception classes because the teaching is good and the curriculum is well organised.
- The school provides a safe and caring environment which helps pupils feel comfortable and ready to learn.
- The school provides well for pupils' personal development and this enables them to form sound relationships and respect one another's opinions.
- The school gives pupils a very good range of experiences to help them learn about different cultural backgrounds.
- Standards in art are above average for pupils' age by the time they leave the school.

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

- Pupils' standards in English, mathematics and science are well below average.
- The school is not monitoring its work well enough to identify weaknesses and take appropriate action.
- The results of assessments are not being used effectively to help teachers plan work for individuals or groups of pupils so that, frequently, more able pupils are not making enough progress.
- The rate of attendance is well below the national average.
- There is no long-term plan for school development and the short-term plan lacks enough detail to judge its success.

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

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

The school has made satisfactory improvement since it was last inspected in November 1997. The headteacher has maintained the strong ethos of teamwork, ensuring that everyone works together to meet the school's aims. Although standards have fallen in English, mathematics and science, when pupils' low attainment on entry to the school is considered, their achievement is satisfactory. The quality of teaching remains satisfactory although teachers are now managing their pupils more effectively and providing for pupils with special educational needs appropriately. However, they are still not extending the more able pupils by giving them challenging enough work. New assessment systems have been put into place to track pupils' progress but these are cumbersome and the results are not being used to target individuals or particular groups of pupils. Curriculum co-ordinators now monitor that their subjects are being covered but they are not having enough impact on improving teaching and learning in classes. Similarly, the headteacher observes lessons but this is not done rigorously enough to improve teaching and learning. Attendance has declined. The school shows a satisfactory capacity for further improvement.

## STANDARDS

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

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1999	2000	2001	2001
Reading	C	E	E	D
Writing	C	C	C	B
Mathematics	B	C	E	D

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

Last year, standards for seven-year-olds were average in writing but well below average in reading and mathematics when compared with schools across the country. Compared with similar schools, they were above average in writing and below average in reading and mathematics. Teachers' assessments in science showed standards to be below average compared with all schools but average when compared with similar schools. Although standards appear to have fallen, this must be viewed within the context of the significant drop in pupils' levels of attainment when they first start school. In addition, last year's results were affected by the high percentage of pupils with special educational needs and a significant number who entered the school in Year 2 who had experienced very disrupted education. When these factors are considered, pupils' achievement is satisfactory by the time they reach the end of Year 2. Boys performed far worse than girls in the tests and few pupils reached high levels, particularly in reading and mathematics.

The pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to reach levels that are well below average in reading, mathematics and science and below average in writing. Forty per cent of these pupils have special educational needs and in addition, a few pupils have just resumed school after extended absence. Boys are doing as well as girls this year because teachers have provided more practical activities to engage their attention. Standards are above average in art and are average in all other subjects. Pupils with special educational needs make steady progress, although recent improvements in provision are having a good effect on the progress of younger pupils. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are making sound progress. However, the school does not provide well enough for more able pupils and they do not always reach the standards of which they are capable.

Children in the Nursery and Reception classes achieve well because of good quality teaching although only a few are on course to reach expected levels for their age by the time they transfer into Year 1 classes.

## PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy many aspects of school. However, many appear tired and find it difficult to concentrate in lessons.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Satisfactory. Most pupils behave appropriately in the playground and around the school. A small number behave poorly and disrupt other pupils' learning.
Personal development and relationships	Satisfactory. Pupils enjoy taking responsibility such as acting as class monitors or tidying the library. They develop sound relationships with one another as they move through the school. They respect one another's views and ideas.
Attendance	Well below the national average. Too many pupils have odd days off for no good reason and some children are taken on holiday during term time.

The high rate of absence affects the progress that some pupils make at school. Some pupils' progress in lessons is hindered because they are tired and find it difficult to concentrate and take an active part.

## TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2
Quality of teaching	Good	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.*

Teachers work hard to maintain good standards of discipline in their classes and, with a few exceptions, this is successful. Classroom assistants are used well to support pupils with special educational needs and help them make steady progress. Teaching for these pupils is generally good. Teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes is good because teachers provide a wide range of interesting practical activities to engage pupils' attention. They provide children with a good start to their school life by teaching them simple personal and social skills. The support given to pupils from Traveller families is good and helps them settle quickly into school life. Literacy and numeracy are taught appropriately although some aspects are not fully effective. For example, teachers do not plan challenging enough activities for more able children and this restricts their progress. Too many worksheets are used and this hinders pupils' ability to think for themselves and record their work in their own way. The introductory part of numeracy sessions does not focus enough on developing quick mental arithmetic skills and this restricts their development in many aspects of mathematics. Not enough attention is paid to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills and this means that their vocabulary is not developing quickly enough and that they lack confidence in speaking at length. The small number of unsatisfactory lessons seen during the inspection applied mainly to one Year 1 class, where lesson planning was particularly weak.

Most pupils try hard in lessons such as art, information and communication technology and physical education where activities are practical and stimulate their interest.

## OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. Children in Nursery and Reception classes receive a good range of experiences. Older pupils are taught all the subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education. The school strives to promote equal opportunities but the quality of teaching is significantly different for the children in the two Year 1 classes and affects the progress that they make. In addition, more able children do not have the same opportunity to make sufficient progress because teachers do not provide suitably challenging work for them.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Procedures are well organised and implemented. Support is planned carefully and pupils' progress is reviewed regularly.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Satisfactory. Pupils' progress in learning English is regularly reviewed by the local education authority's support teacher and teachers ensure that these pupils are adequately supported in lessons.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good. Spiritual awareness is fostered through assemblies and within the caring ethos of the school. There is a sound moral code and pupils are encouraged to work and play together positively, for example, in physical education lessons and through the 'Buddy system' at lunchtimes. Pupils receive a very good range of experiences that help them to understand different cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good. The school cares for pupils well, giving them security and stability to help them feel comfortable and ready to learn.

The school works appropriately with parents to try to involve them in their children's learning and this is successful in many, but not all, cases. Procedures for assessing pupils' progress are satisfactory but the school is not using the resulting information well enough in planning for specific groups or individuals.

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

<b>Aspect</b>	<b>Comment</b>
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has built a team of staff who work well together and who are committed to raising standards within a caring and supportive environment. The acting deputy is providing a strong lead in developing provision for pupils with special educational needs and updating the arrangements that the school makes for its youngest children. Many subject co-ordinators have worked hard to develop clear plans and policies but are not maintaining an effective overview of improvements in their subject or the progress that children are making.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors have secure systems in place to help them carry out their responsibilities. They maintain a careful watch on spending but the school's improvement plan does not give them clear enough guidelines to judge the effectiveness of their spending decisions.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Unsatisfactory. The school analyses test results to find out how well it is doing compared with other schools, to identify any groups which are underachieving and which aspects of the teaching require improvement. It is not making enough use of this information, however, to improve teaching and learning in classes and thus raise standards. The lesson observations carried out by the headteacher and senior staff are not focused or rigorous enough to make any significant improvements.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school uses the funds which it has available to promote pupils' learning. Careful budgeting allows improvements to be made to premises and resources, for example, the new computer suite. However, the school lacks a long term plan of improvement to inform its work and the management of funds.

The school has enough teachers to teach the full curriculum. The number of classroom assistants is appropriate and they provide good support in classes. Accommodation is very good and often enhances the learning experiences for pupils. There are enough books and equipment to support teaching and learning although some of the equipment for the youngest children is old and worn and does little to stimulate their interest. The school is beginning to ensure that it gives 'best value' by comparing itself with other schools and collecting a number of estimates for major spending.

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

<b>What pleases parents most</b>	<b>What parents would like to see improved</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Their children like coming to school.</li> <li>• The teaching is good and helps their children make good progress.</li> <li>• The school works closely with parents and they are kept well informed about their children's progress.</li> <li>• The school has high expectations of their children and helps them to become mature and responsible.</li> <li>• They feel comfortable approaching the school with any concerns.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The range of activities on offer to pupils outside lessons.</li> </ul>

The inspection team agrees with many of the positive views of parents. It agrees that teaching for pupils in the youngest classes is good but finds that it is satisfactory for other year groups. There are sound procedures for

working with parents and for helping children become mature and responsible. The school welcomes parents and this helps them feel confident about raising any concerns. The range of activities on offer to pupils outside the school day is satisfactory.

## **PART B: COMMENTARY**

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

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

1. In the national tests taken by seven-year-old pupils in 2001, standards were average in writing and well below average in reading and mathematics when compared with schools across the country. Compared with schools in similar circumstances, standards were above average in writing and below average in reading. The mathematics results were very marginally below the average of similar schools. The assessments made by teachers in science indicate that standards were below average when compared with schools nationally but average when compared with schools in similar circumstances.
2. This appears to show a significant drop in standards since the last inspection, when all these subjects were judged to be average. However, the assessments made by teachers when children start school show that levels of attainment have fallen significantly in the past few years. Taking into account the low starting point of many of the children when they start school in the Nursery and the very low levels at which a significant number join the school, often in Year 2, the majority of pupils make satisfactory progress while at the school.
3. Standards in writing have improved year on year and show the success of the school's provision in this area of the curriculum even with the large number of pupils who were identified with special educational needs last year. However, in reading and mathematics, results have gone down and this has mainly been because of the low achievement of boys in the tests over the last two years. Results have been further affected by the small number of pupils reaching high levels in the tests in reading and mathematics.
4. The school has tried to address the weaknesses in boys' performance through the use of more practical activities in lessons and, currently, boys are performing at a similar level to girls. In one Year 2 class, there is evidence to show that boys are performing at a higher level than girls in mathematics. However, pupils in Year 2 this year are on track to reach standards which are well below average in reading, mathematics and science and below average in writing. This reflects the poor levels of attainment when these pupils entered the school. About 40 per cent of those pupils currently in Year 2 have special educational needs and a significant number have just resumed school after extended absence. However, the lack of clear plans to improve pupils' speaking and listening skills is having a real impact on pupils' progress as is the lack of appropriate emphasis on developing mental number skills during numeracy lessons.
5. Standards in art were judged as well above average at the last inspection. The loss of the school's co-ordinator for art has influenced standards in the subject although standards are still above average for the age of the pupils. Standards in all other subjects remain average.
6. Pupils with special educational needs in Year 2 have made steady progress during their time at the school. However, improvement in the provision for these pupils is beginning to have a good effect, with pupils in younger classes making better than average progress. In many cases, the more able children are not being catered for effectively and are making less progress than their classmates. Pupils for whom English is an additional language are making sound progress.
7. When children start in the Nursery, they have had very few experiences of learning and show very poor attainment in almost all areas of development. Children make good progress and, by the end

of the Reception year, achieve well in relation to their starting points. There is good provision for almost all groups of children in these younger classes, including Traveller children, those with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language. However, a few more able children are not always stretched enough in aspects of their language and mathematical learning. A significant number of children will not be on course to reach the nationally expected levels for their age, although a few more able pupils are on course to achieve average standards.

8. Overall, pupils with special educational needs make satisfactory progress in the light of their previous attainment. This is most apparent in the development of their literacy and numeracy skills. Progress is supported by the use of individual education plans, which are used to set targets for small steps in the development of key skills. Although pupils' attainment remains well below average, there is clear evidence of satisfactory achievement.

9. Pupils from Traveller families make satisfactory progress throughout the school, due to the sensitive and caring attention given to them by all members of staff and the regular support from the local education authority's Traveller Education Service. Many of these children have periods of extended absence as their families travel further afield and have to try to catch up on work they have missed when they return. Whilst they often make good progress in lessons, their overall rate of progress and the standards they reach are hindered by these frequent absences.

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

10. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are satisfactory. Pupils generally like coming to school, and enjoy many activities. Where there is good teaching, they show great enthusiasm, as was seen during a music lesson in Year 2. However, some children are very passive in lessons and many appear extremely tired and find it difficult to concentrate and to become enthusiastic about their work.

11. In the Nursery and Reception classes, children benefit from being in a happy and very caring environment, in which they feel valued and secure. These factors are designed to protect children against early failure and low self-esteem. They show positive attitudes to learning as they become more confident; although, overall, many children are passive in their attitude to learning. They readily accept what their teachers say and seldom ask relevant questions or make perceptive comments. Children make very good progress in their behaviour due to the good routines and clear and consistent expectations from all adults.

12. Overall, pupils behave satisfactorily in the classroom and at play times. Pupils know the school rules and devise their class rules at the beginning of each year. The majority of pupils behave well in lessons, but there is a small number who can disrupt lessons from time to time and teachers have to spend a considerable amount of time attending to these problems. At break times, behaviour in the playground is satisfactory and at lunch times the "Buddy system" works well and ensures that all pupils are engaged in activities. At these times, pupils look after one another and play together very well. Relationships between pupils are often poor when they first start school but school staff work hard to improve this and provide very good examples themselves in the way they treat children and one another.

13. There are opportunities for pupils to take on additional responsibility throughout the school, such as the taking of registers to the school office, being monitors in class, tidying the school library and moving the lunch trolleys. Pupils respond well to these opportunities.

14. There was no sign of any oppressive behaviour, racism or bullying during the inspection. The school works hard to ensure that pupils have regard for the feelings of others, as was shown in a

lesson in religious education where the pupils considered what it means to be disabled. Pupils also show respect for different cultures. No vandalism, graffiti or litter was seen during the inspection; pupils look after their environment and take care when using books and equipment.

15. The rate of attendance at school has fallen since the last inspection and is now well below the national average. The number of unauthorised absences is above the national average. Some account must be taken of the number of children from Traveller families who attend the school and whose attendance is erratic; however, even taking this group into account, the level of attendance is still below average. Teachers complete the class registers at the beginning of each morning and afternoon session, and legal requirements are met. The school has worked hard to maintain the level of punctuality and very few pupils arrive late at school in the morning. This enables most lessons to start on time.

16. Most pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes to their learning. They work hard within their own classes and when withdrawn for extra support. However, at times they find it difficult to listen for long periods of time in whole-class teaching and do not always accept correction gracefully. Most pupils are willing to practise skills that have been identified as part of their individual educational plans and this forms the basis for much of their individual activities during the literacy and numeracy lessons. In the last few years the school has had an increase in the number of pupils who present quite challenging behaviour. All these pupils have individual behaviour management plans. Staff have received training on assertive discipline and there is considerable evidence to show its successful implementation in the school.

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

17. The last inspection judged teaching to be satisfactory overall and that teaching in the Nursery class specifically was very good. Currently, the quality of teaching is satisfactory overall and this means that pupils make steady progress during their time at the school. They make faster progress in the Nursery and Reception classes where the quality of teaching is good. Of the 48 lessons observed during the inspection, four per cent were very good, 36 per cent were good and 52 per cent were satisfactory. Eight per cent of the lessons seen were unsatisfactory, but most of these were in one particular Year 1 class. All of the teaching in the Nursery and Reception classes was at least satisfactory and more than half of the lessons seen were good or very good.

18. Teaching is good in music because of the good subject knowledge and expertise of the headteacher who takes all classes for the subject. It is good in art and design where most teachers have high expectations of their pupils and teach the basic skills well. It is good in geography, because the pupils are given interesting practical tasks and enjoy a good range of visits to places of interest to make their lessons more meaningful. Teaching in all other subjects is satisfactory with some strengths but with some areas of weakness.

19. The quality of teaching and learning is good for children in the Nursery and Reception classes generally, but stronger in the Nursery class, where there is greater consistency in the teachers' planning and teaching. In the Reception classes, there is more variation in the quality of mathematical and language and literacy teaching from lesson to lesson. Teaching of personal and social skills is consistently good, as is that of creative development. These are considerable strengths of the teaching, which underpin learning in the older classes. Teachers understand the importance of first hand investigations and of helping children to use their senses and improve their speaking and listening skills. This has a strong impact on children's quickly developing knowledge and understanding of the world around them. A very good Nursery Nurse and good support from other teaching assistants and the Traveller support staff enhance children's learning in these early days of their education.

20. The main strength in the teaching is the way that most teachers manage their pupils in lessons. Many pupils have significant emotional and behavioural problems and teachers work hard to ensure that relationships are warm and friendly. This helps to support these pupils well but, on occasion, the time taken to control outbursts of behaviour disrupts the learning of others in the class. The school has done much to improve this aspect of teaching since the last inspection when it was identified as a weakness in some classes. All teachers now follow the school's policy for positive behaviour management consistently and, in the main, control the pupils well.

21. There are other strengths in teaching although these are not always consistent in all classes. For example, in some lessons, teachers make learning interesting and relevant by relating it to pupils' own experiences and giving them practical work with real-life examples to help them understand the lesson's objective. In a lesson on religious education, for instance, the presence of a disabled adult helped the children reflect on the problems faced by such people and how they could be supportive and helpful. In a science lesson in Year 2, the teacher brought in a range of plants in various stages of growth so that the pupils could see at first hand how roots and leaves develop. In a Year 2 art lesson, careful examination of different fruits, flowers and vegetables helped pupils produce good quality observational drawings. Generally, pupils try hard in practical lessons such as art, information and communication technology and physical education. However, when teachers do not present their lessons in a stimulating way or do not involve them in practical work, pupils show little interest and enthusiasm.

22. Another strength in many lessons is the way that teachers develop the pupils' knowledge and understanding progressively through the lesson. An example of this was in a Year 2 geography lesson where the teacher showed pupils a range of maps and asked them questions which enabled them to understand how countries and seas are represented. She then drew their attention to items such as rivers and roads and symbols to represent castles and different types of beaches. The pupils made good progress because of the careful planning and good use of prepared resources.

23. Teachers use their classroom assistants well in lessons. These assistants are well-informed about what the teacher expects them to do during the lesson and have good opportunities to report back about their work with pupils. They have a significant impact on pupils' learning in many lessons in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology.

24. The local education authority's Traveller Education Service supports teachers well in their work. A teacher visits regularly to make ongoing assessments of pupils' progress and to make suggestions to teachers about how these children can be supported further. There is a designated support assistant who visits several times a week to help individual pupils in class. She does so sensitively and to good effect. The regular visits made by the specialist teacher and the assistant to the Traveller site help forge strong relationships and ensure that these pupils readily accept the support offered in school.

25. The main weakness in the teaching applies to the use made of ongoing assessment to inform teachers' planning for subsequent lessons. This is particularly the case in literacy and numeracy lessons. The school has implemented the national strategies for literacy and numeracy and teachers are planning their lessons using these frameworks. However, although teachers identify learning objectives on their lesson plans, these are not always specific enough in literacy and numeracy sessions and this makes assessment at the end of the lesson difficult. It also influences the relevance of the activities during independent work to the various groups of pupils in the class, particularly the more able children. Teachers rely too much on worksheets which are often too easy and do not give pupils enough opportunity to record the work in their own way. They do not challenge the more able pupils to think deeply enough about what they are doing and move them on in their learning. Although

targets are given to pupils about what they must do to improve their work in literacy, these are not stressed or reviewed often enough for them to be effective. In numeracy sessions, the first part of the lessons does not concentrate on developing pupils' mental number skills and this is one of the main reasons they are not making better progress in mathematics generally.

26. Another weakness in the teaching is the lack of attention paid to developing pupils' speaking and listening skills. Although specific vocabulary is often identified in literacy and numeracy sessions, teachers do not give pupils enough opportunities to use these new words in class discussion. This is also the case in lessons in other subjects and teachers seldom ask questions which challenge the pupils to speak at length or use new words in their answers. New vocabulary is seldom written up on the board or on lists so that pupils can see how to write them or use them in their discussions. There are not enough planned opportunities for paired or small group discussions where pupils talk about their work and then report back to the whole class.

27. Teaching of pupils with special educational needs is good both in lessons and in small group or individual activities. A judgement of the last inspection was that these pupils were withdrawn too often from classes. This is no longer the case; pupils are supported well during lessons and are only withdrawn occasionally for targeted support of literacy and numeracy. Targets on pupils' individual education plans are expressed clearly and provide realistic stages of development. Teaching is sympathetic and, in most cases, appropriate to ensure that pupils make steady gains in their learning. Activities are sufficiently varied to match the range of attainment of these pupils. The pupils are well supported by the classroom assistants. They know their pupils well and contribute much to their learning. The very small number of pupils for whom English is an additional language are supported appropriately by teachers in lessons. They often assign a classroom assistant to help them, especially if the pupil is at a very early stage of language acquisition.

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

28. Overall, the quality and range of the curriculum provided by the school are satisfactory. The curriculum includes all subjects of the National Curriculum, together with religious education. The curriculum meets all statutory requirements and offers pupils a satisfactory range of opportunities. Appropriate policies and schemes of work are in place for all subjects and each receives an appropriate amount of teaching time. However, in a few classes, this is not spread evenly and, as a result, pupils in those classes do not receive their full entitlement to all the subjects. For example, in one Year 1 class, too much time is spent on literacy and not enough on numeracy and some other subjects. Team curricular planning in year groups does, however, ensure equality of coverage across year groups. Long-term and medium-term planning is good and provides for the coverage of all National Curriculum programmes of study. The headteacher and subject co-ordinators monitor the planning to ensure that all aspects of their subjects are being taught at an appropriate level for the age of the pupils. However, the monitoring is not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that the needs of pupils of different abilities are always met, particularly in the activities for the more able pupils. This was noted in the school's previous inspection.

29. The school's strategy for teaching literacy is generally satisfactory and provides a secure structure for teachers to work from. However, although the school has been successful in improving the number of pupils who reach national standards in writing, this has not been the case with reading. There is no whole school policy for speaking and listening and, in general, the development of literacy skills across the curriculum is still an area for improvement. Planning for numeracy also follows national guidelines. Lessons are structured appropriately but there is not enough focus on developing

pupils' mental number skills during the lesson introductions and this influences pupils' mathematical development in Year 1 and 2 classes.

30. The provision for personal, social and health education is good with a detailed scheme in place that includes citizenship. Sex education and the use and misuse of medicines and drugs are taught as part of personal, social and health education and through the science curriculum. Pupils are provided with accurate information, which promotes positive attitudes to a healthy life style.

31. Overall, the quality and range of learning opportunities for children in the Nursery and Reception classes are good. The planning is detailed and takes full account of nationally recommended guidelines. One of the main strengths of the curriculum is the way in which learning is planned to link very closely with first-hand investigation activities. The National Literacy Strategy is suitably modified, although there are inconsistencies in the way teachers use this time, which indicates that monitoring is unsatisfactory. This also applies to the modified numeracy strategy, which is not used consistently to enhance children's early understanding of number.

32. Curricular provision for pupils with special educational needs is good. Although staff have not yet received training on the new Code of Practice, the special educational needs co-ordinator is well aware of the requirements and has provided a summary of the changes for all teachers. Training for staff is planned for in the very near future. These pupils have good access to the curriculum. Support in class and in withdrawal groups is carefully planned and organised to address the targets set out in pupils' individual educational plans so that it is of maximum benefit to all pupils concerned. The special needs co-ordinator maintains good links with the class teachers to ensure continuity and in the use of short-term targets for pupils. The targets in the pupils' individual educational plans are precise and contain the necessary detail to make them fully effective. The needs of pupils with statements of special educational need are met well and their annual reviews provide a good focus for further improvement. The small numbers of pupils who have English as an additional language are well integrated into the school and they make satisfactory progress. Additional teaching support is provided for one child and the school has appropriate systems in place to call in additional targeted support if required.

33. Children from Traveller families receive good support from the school and are appropriately supported by the local education authority's Traveller Education Service. They receive equal access to the curriculum. The school is committed to equality of education for all pupils and this is reflected in the ethos of the school and in most practical aspects of school life. In analysing test and assessment results, the school compares how well boys and girls perform. In most recent years, the analysis has revealed that boys performed significantly less well than girls. Teachers this year have tried to provide more practical activities to involve boys more in their work and the findings of this inspection show that in lessons, boys are doing equally as well as girls. However, the lack of rigorous monitoring procedures has meant that significant weaknesses in teaching have not been addressed and that pupils in Year 1 are receiving different experiences. The lack of suitably challenging opportunities for more able pupils means that these pupils do not have the same opportunity to progress as quickly as other groups of pupils.

34. The additional activities undertaken by the school are wide and varied and add an extra dimension to the planned curriculum. These include visits to the Museum of East Anglian Life, Ipswich Transport Museum, Christchurch Park and Mansion, Orford Castle, Framlingham Castle and St. Thomas Church to supplement classroom work in several subjects. Special celebration weeks for art and music provide opportunities for members of the local community, such as artists and musicians to visit the school and work with the pupils. There are also visits from leaders of the Christian church and from the Sikh faith that help to develop pupils' awareness of the outside world.

35. Extracurricular provision is satisfactory. Pupils are able to participate in clubs for music, country dancing and maypole dancing during lunchtime. There is a recorder club for pupils in Year 2 and an informal lunchtime club for information and communication technology. Links with the local community are satisfactory overall. The school takes a group of pupils to a local shopping centre to sing carols at Christmas time. They make good use of the shops in the nearby shopping parade for work connected to subjects such as geography, food technology and mathematics. Elderly residents from local sheltered accommodation have been invited into school for special events and the pupils are often invited to sing carols at the local church and at a senior citizens' luncheon club.

36. There are good links with partner educational establishments and pupils and teachers make regular visits to and from the adjacent junior school. These good links prepare pupils well for their transfer to their next stage of education. Links with the local playgroups are good and enable the school's youngest children to be well prepared for the beginning of their school life. The school is part of the pyramid group of nearby schools, which includes the local secondary school to which pupils transfer. There are contacts with colleges and other institutions to support the students who visit the school as trainee teachers and those training in childcare.

37. The provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development remains good and the provision of cultural development remains very good and continues to be a strength of the school. Class teachers help children have self-esteem. Spiritual development is satisfactory overall. It sometimes occurs spontaneously in lessons. For example, in the Nursery, when children mixed powder with water to make spirals, they were amazed when they put the paper on top and discovered the spiral underneath. In the Reception classes, role-play by one of the teachers as Mrs Wishy-Washy entranced children. In a religious education lesson, great sensitivity was shown by children toward their disabled visitor. However, many teachers miss opportunities to encourage children to reflect about their own feelings and beliefs.

38. The provision for pupils' moral development is satisfactory. Pupils are taught the school rules and teachers try hard to teach an acceptable code of behaviour through the consistent use of the school behaviour policy. Pupils devise class rules at the beginning of each academic year. Assemblies are used to encourage pupils to think about moral issues such as the need to look after the environment.

39. The provision for pupils' social development is good. Children support a charity each year and collect aluminium foil for one of the children's hospitals. Year 2 children are invited to sing carols at the local church and to the senior citizens' lunch club. The staff work hard to encourage social development and the provision of snack time throughout the school helps pupils communicate with each other and with adults and learn good manners. The "buddy system" encourages children to play well together in the playground. In games lessons, pupils have good opportunities to work together in pairs and in small groups, throwing and catching balls. They also learn to work successfully together in country and maypole dancing.

40. There is very good provision for pupils' cultural development. The school ensures that pupils are aware of cultural issues beyond the area in which they live. The school draws on examples from many cultural traditions and help pupils appreciate the ethnic and cultural diversity of life. Music and art both enhance pupils' cultural awareness. Pupils listen to music from other cultures and have studied a range of different artists' work including Kandinsky and Mondrian. There are other opportunities throughout the curriculum to learn about other cultures, for example, in geography, pupils learn about countries in the wider world such as the Gambia. In history, children learn about famous characters such as Grace Darling, Nelson Mandela and Mary Seacole.

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

41. The school provides satisfactory care for its pupils. The environment is safe and staff care for pupils well. All members of staff know pupils and their medical and personal needs well. The equipment, grounds and buildings are checked regularly and any hazards are identified and addressed. Governors are fully involved in these procedures.

42. Appropriate arrangements are made for the provision of first aid; two members of staff are fully trained and all remaining staff have attended a one-day course.

43. The school follows the policy and procedures of the local committee for the protection of children. The headteacher is the person responsible for child protection matters and she and the designated governor have attended appropriate training courses. Staff are kept up-to-date with the school's arrangements and procedures.

44. The school monitors and eliminates oppressive behaviour appropriately. There are few incidents of bullying or racism and procedures are in place to deal with them quickly and effectively, should they arise.

45. The school has satisfactory procedures in place for the monitoring and promotion of good attendance. Parents are regularly reminded of the importance of sending their children to school through meetings with the headteacher and through regular newsletters. The registers are marked in accordance with current requirements for recording and coding attendance, at the beginning of both the morning and afternoon sessions. Registers are regularly checked and any concerns are raised by the headteacher with the education welfare officer who visits the school termly. However, these procedures lack rigour and have not improved the levels of attendance which remain well below the national average.

46. The arrangements for the monitoring and promotion of good behaviour are satisfactory. Staff use the behaviour policy consistently across the school. Pupils devise their own class rules at the beginning of the school year. Good behaviour is acknowledged by class teachers and in assembly. There are no formal procedures for recording and monitoring behaviour other than those used by the mid-day staff at lunchtimes, but class teachers discuss any concerns regularly with the headteacher.

47. The monitoring of pupils' personal development is carried out informally through teachers' knowledge of the children in their care. Staff know their pupils well and this enables them to give appropriate care and support. Personal development can be tracked through comments in the written annual reports for parents.

48. Since the last inspection, there has been satisfactory improvement in the development of assessment procedures. The school has introduced new assessment systems in English, mathematics and science, following the key issues from the 1997 inspection. These procedures are largely satisfactory but the information they generate is not being used well enough to monitor pupils' progress or help teachers to plan challenging lessons that meet the needs of higher attaining pupils. The headteacher and senior staff do not make best use of assessment information to monitor the effectiveness of the school. The tracking of pupils' progress is not consistent or rigorous enough.

49. The gathering of assessment information is cumbersome. Moreover, assessments are not always completed at the best time to be useful when planning the next steps of learning for pupils. For example, in science, assessments occur right at the end of a block of work and so do not allow enough time to revisit aspects, which pupils have not understood before moving on to new work. Some

assessment procedures are very general, which means that teachers cannot identify exactly what it is that pupils can and cannot do. This makes it difficult to plan progressive steps of learning. Teachers do not have quick systems to identify which pupils are working at different levels of the National Curriculum.

50. Assessment procedures work well in writing and this is due to the good efforts of the school's literacy co-ordinator. Procedures are clear, helpful and focused on specific skills, resulting in pupils' having individual targets for improvement. The assessment of national test results has been used effectively to plan a programme for school improvement.

51. The assessments for pupils with special educational needs and for pupils from Traveller families are good. Teachers and support assistants know their pupils well. Their contributions are valued highly and their achievements well recognised. This is particularly true for those pupils who have statements of special educational needs. Pupils' needs are quickly identified when they enter the school and appropriate arrangements are made for the regular review of their progress. However, this is not linked to a tracking system to record the standards they achieve as they move through the school. Effective use is made of agencies outside the school to provide help and support for individual pupils and their specific educational needs.

52. Assessment procedures are good for children in the Nursery and Reception classes and are used well to help children to settle in and make speedy progress, particularly in their personal and social skills. Staff make a visit to every child's home, before children start school and they are quickly able to identify how to best help the children when they join the school. Record keeping is thorough and clearly shows the overall progress which individual children make in their early days at school. However, records are not precise enough to show exactly which levels children are working at and, as a result, in aspects of mathematics, the work is often not challenging enough for more able pupils.

53. Across the school, reading assessments are not as precise and focused as those in writing and this hinders pupils' progress as teachers are less able to provide suitable work to move their pupils on in their learning. Currently, there are no systems in place for evaluating speaking and listening beyond those in the very youngest classes. This is a weakness of assessment, particularly as the pupils in the school have very poor speaking and listening skills when they start school. However, there are plans to improve this later this term, when the school receives guidance from a local advisory teacher.

54. Overall, assessment in mathematics and science is not rigorous enough, especially in helping pupils to progress in their skills with number work. Ongoing assessments within lessons are underdeveloped and are not linked to clear learning objectives for different groups of pupils. In other subjects, assessment procedures are general and tend to focus on what pupils have worked on rather than their level of understanding and knowledge. Assessment is better in music and information and communication technology, where teachers note what pupils can do. In physical and religious education, in Years 1 and 2, there is very little assessment.

55. Marking of pupils' work is broadly satisfactory as it gives pupils plenty of praise and this helps raise their self-esteem. Sometimes, teachers give helpful comments about how to improve, but this is inconsistent throughout the school. An example of good marking was seen in some Year 2 reading home diaries. Here, teachers gave specific suggestions about looking for words with such sounds as 'ou' and these enabled parents to support their children appropriately at home. Marking in science and mathematics hardly ever gives further challenges. The marking of pupils' writing sometimes includes good individual comments to help pupils to achieve their personal targets for improvement, with the best practice being in one of the Year 1 classes.

56. The policy for assessment has not been updated since 1997. Samples of pupils' work are kept as they move through the school. Although teachers write comments on them, they rarely record levels at which the pupils are working.

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

57. Overall, parents have positive views of the school. They say that their children like coming to school and that they feel safe and secure. They say that staff are always welcoming and that they are happy to approach the school about any concerns. These concerns are always looked into and dealt with. These views were expressed by the parents who responded to the questionnaire, about a quarter of the parents, and the two parents who attended the meeting before the inspection. Parents have a satisfactory impact on their children's learning. A small number of parents support the school well by helping in classrooms and many contribute to their children's learning at home by listening to them read and supporting them with other homework. However a significant number do not support their children at home. There is currently no parents' association although, when the school does organise fund-raising events, these are well supported by parents. The school encourages a number of parents to attend Family Learning courses, which are run regularly with the support of the Basic Skills Agency.

58. The school provides satisfactory information for parents. Parents of children in the Nursery and of children with special educational needs receive very good information which lets them know what the school is doing for their children and how they can support them at home. Parents of children in other classes are given information about what topics will be covered during the coming term. Regular newsletters provide parents with general information about what is happening in school. Parents are invited to attend curriculum information evenings, for example, on literacy or about the national tests for children in Year 2. They receive satisfactory information about their children's progress in the annual reports sent home in the summer term. The school's prospectus is informative, but the governors' Annual Report to parents does not meet statutory requirements as some required information is missing. There are good opportunities for parents to meet staff informally at the beginning and end of the school day, as well as formal opportunities at parents' meetings. These arrangements mean that concerns are dealt with quickly and efficiently.

59. Links with parents and carers of children in the Nursery and Reception classes are very good and this has a positive effect on children's learning. Teachers give good guidance to parents to help them support their children at home. For example, they discuss how to phrase conversations so that children have to think for themselves and answer questions. This is especially important, as children's language and communication skills are very poor. The delightful collection of photographs in the Nursery photograph albums includes good information about the curriculum. On entry to the school, the very good procedures for home visits act as a positive and helpful means of getting to know the children and their parents. Local education authority support staff have very good links with Traveller parents, which help children to settle successfully into school.

60. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the annual reviews of their child's progress. Regular consultations are offered to all parents of pupils with special educational needs and they are encouraged to become involved in their child's support.

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

61. The last inspection judged leadership and management to be strong but currently it is satisfactory, with some areas of strength and some weaknesses. The headteacher has maintained the strong ethos of teamwork in the school, ensuring that everyone works together to meet the school's aims. All the

staff show a strong commitment towards improvement and this was noted in the way everyone, including the headteacher, appreciated the feedback given by inspectors. Although the turnover of staff has been fairly low, there have been significant changes to the senior management team and to key staff over the past two years. The school has recently appointed an acting deputy headteacher who is currently providing a real drive to the school's work in the Foundation Stage and in the provision for pupils with special educational needs. She is providing very good support for the headteacher and together they form a well-balanced team, capable of driving the school's work forward effectively in the future.

62. The changes in key staff have had an impact on the rate of improvement which has been satisfactory overall since the last inspection, although more rapid in recent months. There has been a lack of urgency in raising standards and the quality of teaching and learning by a rigorous system of monitoring and professional development.

63. The drop in standards since the last inspection must be viewed within the context of the falling levels of children's attainment on entry to the school. This is borne out by the assessments which teachers in Reception classes carry out when children transfer from the Nursery. The quality of teaching and learning remains satisfactory, as at the last inspection, although some of the areas of weaknesses identified in 1997 have been improved, for example, the management of pupils and teachers' provision for pupils with special educational needs. However, teachers are still not providing challenging enough work to ensure that more able pupils make effective progress. There are now sound systems in place to assess pupils' progress in English and mathematics and national test results are analysed each year. New systems have also been introduced to try to monitor the curriculum and the quality of teaching and learning. Curriculum co-ordinators monitor pupils' work and teachers' plans and the English and mathematics co-ordinators have assisted the headteacher in monitoring teaching and learning in classrooms. Governors also monitor the curriculum through regular reports from the headteacher and visits to the school.

64. All teachers in the school have some management responsibility. Subject co-ordinators generally have a good overview of their subjects and many have put a great deal of effort into developing plans to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered as pupils move through the school. All have basic action plans which identify aspects which require further development.

65. The acting deputy, who is also the co-ordinator for special educational needs, carries out her responsibilities effectively and efficiently. She is experienced and provides good leadership and support for pupils with special educational needs. Teaching assistants are highly motivated and all are used to their full potential in lessons across the curriculum. The special educational needs designated governor is fully involved in the work of the school.

66. The acting deputy is teaching the Nursery class and provides a good example to her colleagues. She works well with the Reception teachers but there is no overall co-ordinator for the Foundation Stage. There is insufficient monitoring of Foundation Stage provision to ensure that pupils are receiving a consistent approach. Furthermore, the Foundation Stage does not have a budget to work with, therefore, it makes it difficult to plan for a rolling programme of improving resources. Currently, there is no overall, written improvement plan for the Foundation Stage.

67. The school's finances are used appropriately for the benefit of the pupils. A minimum of funds is carried forward each year as governors are determined to spend funds on the pupils currently in school. However, governors ensure through their premises committee that the buildings and grounds are kept in good repair, for example, by replacing fencing to the school boundaries to deter vandalism. They seek best value effectively when obtaining quotations for the work to be done. There are sound

systems in place to monitor budget spending through regular scrutiny by the finance assistant and headteacher. The governors' finance committee also receives regular reports which helps them keep a check on spending. What is lacking, however, is a long-term development plan and a detailed short-term plan, showing clear targets set against expenditure so that governors can assess how well their funds have been spent and what effect this has had on standards and teaching and learning.

68. Governors have an established system of committees which help them to carry out their roles and responsibilities appropriately. Many show a good commitment to the school and support its work well. The curriculum committee meets regularly to review subject policies and the headteacher provides useful information through reports and discussions. However, the rolling programme of subject monitoring and review is not planned rigorously enough to ensure that governors are kept up-to-date with developments.

69. The school shows commitment towards ensuring equality of opportunity for all pupils but has not put enough procedures in place to ensure that this commitment is carried out successfully. For example, the quality of teaching in Year 1 classes varies considerably and means that some children are receiving a better experience than others. Also the school is not catering well enough for more able pupils and this means that they do not have the same opportunity to make as much progress as other groups.

70. Systems to monitor the quality of teaching and learning are in place. The headteacher and senior managers observe lessons and keep records of their visits. However, the observations lack enough focus to influence what is happening in the classrooms. Teachers are not given enough feedback to tell them how to improve their work. Consequently, lesson observations have little impact on improving the quality of teaching and learning generally and, in some cases, addressing significant weaknesses. Some good work has been done by subject co-ordinators to analyse test results to assess the progress of certain groups of pupils and to identify aspects which pupils find difficult. However, not enough use is made of the findings of this work to help improve the quality of teaching and learning and ultimately the standards reached by the pupils. Performance management systems were implemented last year and all teachers have suitable targets to judge their effectiveness. These will be reviewed later in the year.

71. There are enough teachers to meet the needs of the curriculum. Teachers move to different year groups each year and this means that they understand how the learning process develops through the school. The school enjoys very good accommodation, with extensive grounds, pleasant areas for the pupils to play, a large hall, separate dining facilities as well as a computer suite, well-resourced library and designated music room. The school uses most of its accommodation efficiently, although the library is under used. Generally the school appears bright and inviting although there is a great amount of unnecessary clutter stored in classrooms and other areas which makes the school look untidy.

72. Resources in all subjects are at least satisfactory and are good in many subjects, including English, music and physical education. The school has also developed a good range of resources to represent different cultures, including musical instruments, paintings and fabrics. However, much of the equipment in the Nursery and Reception classes is old and worn and does little to stimulate children's interest and excitement.

## WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

73. The school should now:

**(1) Improve pupils' standards in English by:**

- devising and implementing a policy and clear plans to develop pupils' speaking and listening skills as they move through the school;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to draft and edit their written work to improve content and accuracy;
- giving pupils more opportunities to develop their speaking and listening, reading and writing skills in other subjects;
- ensuring that independent activities are matched well enough to the needs of different groups in the class and help to move them on in their learning;
- ensuring that all teachers make it clear to the pupils at the beginning of lessons what they are going to learn and review their success at the end of lessons;
- developing suitable assessment procedures to track pupils' progress in reading;
- using the library more effectively to stimulate pupils' interest in books and develop their library skills.

(Paragraphs 1,3,4,6,7,25,26,28,29,31,33,48,49,51,53,55,56,63,71,82-91,102,103,105-111)

**(2) Improve pupils' standards in mathematics by:**

- ensuring that all teachers use the initial part of the numeracy lesson to give pupils enough practice in developing mental number skills;
- ensuring that mathematical vocabulary is clearly explained and that pupils are given opportunities to use it in their work;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to use their mathematical skills in practical, investigative situations;
- ensuring that lesson objectives are more clearly defined and enable teachers and assistants to assess pupils' progress at the end of lessons;
- providing more opportunities for pupils to record their work independently, without the constraints of worksheets;
- using the results of assessments to target underachieving groups of pupils more effectively;

(Paragraphs 1, 3,4,6,7,19,25,26,28,29,31,33,48,49,52,54-56,63,69,92,93,112-116)

**(3) Improving pupils' standards in science by:**

- ensuring that work planned is at a suitably challenging level for more able children;
- ensuring that scientific vocabulary is clearly explained and pupils given opportunities to use it in their work;
- developing suitable assessment procedures to track pupils' progress in science;
- ensuring that all teachers plan suitable practical work to engage pupils' interest through first-hand activities;
- giving pupils more opportunities to record their work in their own ways;
- giving pupils more opportunities to research their work through books and information and communication technology;
- ensure that there is enough time spent on science lessons in all classes.

(Paragraphs 1,4,7,25,26,28,48,49,54-56,63,68-70,117-124,126,127)

- (4) **Monitor teaching and learning and the curriculum more effectively by:**
- ensuring that the headteacher and senior managers monitor lessons more often and that there is a clear focus to the observations;
  - ensuring that teachers are given clear feedback about what they must do to improve their work;
  - ensuring that subject co-ordinators monitor teachers' planning more rigorously and analyse samples of pupils' work more carefully to identify strengths and areas for development;
  - implementing a more rigorous system of review so that governors are kept up-to-date with developments.
- (Paragraphs 28,33,62,66-68,70,116,127)
- (5) **Use the results of assessments more effectively to target specific individuals or groups of pupils who are underachieving and ensure that teachers use the results of ongoing assessments to plan work at suitable levels for pupils, particularly the more able.**
- (Paragraphs 25,48,49,52-56,70,109-111,115,116,118,121,122,140,150)
- (6) **Improve the rate of pupils' attendance.** (Paragraphs 15 and 45)
- (7) **Develop a long-term plan for the school's improvement and ensure that the short-term plan has enough detail so that governors and staff can judge its effectiveness.**
- (Paragraph 67)

#### **OTHER ISSUES WHICH SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL**

- Improve resources for the youngest children in the school. (Paragraphs 72,91,98)
- Encourage all parents to support their children's education effectively. (Paragraph 57)
- Ensure that provision for the Foundation Stage and for art is co-ordinated effectively. (Paragraphs 66,132)
- Ensure that the governors' Annual Report to parents meets statutory requirements. (Paragraph 58)

## PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

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

Number of lessons observed	48
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	23

### *Summary of teaching observed during the inspection*

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	17	25	4	0	0
Percentage	0	4	36	52	8	0	0

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

### *Information about the school's pupils*

<b>Pupils on the school's roll</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	26	176
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	40

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

<b>Special educational needs</b>	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	4	47

<b>English as an additional language</b>	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	5

<b>Pupil mobility in the last school year</b>	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	19
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	14

### *Attendance*

#### **Authorised absence**

	%
School data	7.5

#### **Unauthorised absence**

	%
School data	1.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	35	28	63

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	23	31	28
	Girls	25	26	27
	Total	48	57	55
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	76 (73)	90 (90)	87 (89)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	31	30	28
	Girls	25	27	26
	Total	56	57	54
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	89 (81)	90 (84)	86 (83)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

### Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	1
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	6
Indian	0
Pakistani	1
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	110
Any other minority ethnic group	10

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	1	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	0	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

### ***Teachers and classes***

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

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	7
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	25.1
Average class size	25

#### **Education support staff: YR – Y2**

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	148

#### **Qualified teachers and support staff: Nursery**

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.7
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	25
Number of pupils per FTE adult	11.8

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Recruitment of teachers***

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

*FTE means full-time equivalent.*

### ***Financial information***

Financial year	2001/2002
	£
Total income	454,704
Total expenditure	450,165
Expenditure per pupil	2251
Balance brought forward from previous year	0
Balance carried forward to next year	4,539

## ***Results of the survey of parents and carers***

### **Questionnaire return rate**

Number of questionnaires sent out	202
Number of questionnaires returned	55

### **Percentage of responses in each category**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	65	31	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	53	45	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	25	67	2	0	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	29	51	13	0	5
The teaching is good.	65	31	2	0	2
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	62	35	4	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	71	27	2	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	40	0	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	64	31	5	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	65	29	2	0	4
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	53	47	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	15	44	22	4	13

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

### **AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE**

74. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is a strength of the school. Children benefit from being in a happy and very caring environment. When children start in the Nursery they have had very few experiences of learning and show very poor attainment in almost all areas of development. Children make good progress due to good teaching and, as a result, they achieve well compared with their starting points.

75. The findings of this inspection confirm those found in the 1997 inspection about high quality provision in the Nursery. Further improvements have also been made to the provision in the Reception classes and these are helping to ensure that children receive a good start to their education. Particular strengths include the very good support for children's personal, social and creative development. Furthermore, the development of speaking skills is good and results in children having a wider understanding of their world.

76. The quality of teaching and learning is good in the Foundation Stage, but generally stronger in the Nursery class, where there is greater consistency in the amount of good teaching. Teaching is very well supported by a very good Nursery Nurse and several other teaching assistants and the local education authority's Traveller Education Service.

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

77. Children's personal and social development is very poor when they start school. They make good progress and achieve well by the time they start in Year 1, although they still show lower than average skills. Teachers keep good records of development.

78. Good organisation allows adults to concentrate on small groups of children, while others choose activities for themselves. As a result, children learn how to focus their attention and concentrate for longer periods of time. The good teaching encourages the development of children's confidence.

79. The good organisation of resources and methods of teaching help children to become curious. In one lesson, the children looked at snails and their spiral shapes and then, in another session, went out exploring in the undergrowth to find many in their natural environment.

80. Time is used very effectively. Staff make learning interesting and the children often become excited about their work. Even so, this excitement tends to be expressed physically rather than in words. A good example occurred when a duck unexpectedly flew onto the Nursery garden. Staff encouraged the children to go and look at what was happening, but even then, although many jumped up and down and waved their arms about in excitement, few talked about what the duck was doing until the adults helped them to talk about this exciting event

81. Personal and social development is enhanced by good teaching about different cultures, and beliefs. There are good opportunities to learn how to become a good friend. The very good use of snack time supports learning well as children begin to initiate conversations with others.

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

82. Overall, children make good progress and achieve well from the Nursery to the end of the Reception year. Nevertheless, only a few children are on course to meet the nationally recommended levels for children of their age by the time they start in Year 1. The teachers have effectively adapted the National Literacy Strategy to meet the needs of most children, although the organisation of this time is inconsistent between the two Reception classes and this influences the rate of progress in these classes.

83. Children begin their schooling in the Nursery with very poor speaking and listening skills. Most are only able to communicate basic needs by pointing, using eye contact or facial expressions and lack confidence in speaking beyond a single word or maybe a two or three word phrase. Only a very small number of children can use words to link two ideas together. By the time they reach Year 1, standards are still considerably below average, but all have made good progress. Most can communicate with adults and other children when they feel confident, taking turns using simple sentences, but they do not have a wide vocabulary and rarely pose 'where' and 'what' type questions. The quality of teaching and learning for speaking and listening skills is good. Teachers and assistants often ask good and challenging questions, but sometimes there is a tendency not to wait long enough for children to answer.

84. Good planning shows that new and interesting words are introduced daily. At the snack table, teachers and assistants encourage general and informal discussion. For example, in one group, they talked about putting on hand cream to soften hands after washing up, whilst in another, they discussed the inside of an apple. In the Reception classes, children learn more describing words. For example, good descriptive words are taught through singing fun songs, which the children love. They learn a wide range of rhymes. Children in the Nursery begin their schooling with almost no experience of books. They make good progress and, by the time they start in Year 1, their attainment has improved, although it is still below average.

85. Teachers' planning shows the steady development of letter sound and alphabet work, using a good range of resources and activities. This results in children having a solid and growing knowledge of letters. Nevertheless, the organisation for reading for Reception children is too variable, with inconsistent use of guided daily group reading. For example, in one satisfactory session, the teacher read a big book called 'Daisy Duck', which helped children to learn about words beginning with 'sh' and the use of exclamation marks. However, opportunities to engage children in the book were missed as the teacher did not encourage them to read along with her. Moreover, when this part of the lesson had finished, there was no opportunity for children to read in small groups.

86. Overall, although the teaching of reading and writing are satisfactory, children are not being engaged directly enough in books. Teachers read plenty of stories, but children do not often sit and look at books on an individual basis. The reading areas are uninspiring and do not invite children to browse or listen to taped stories.

87. Reading assessments are broadly satisfactory, but focus more heavily on phonic skills than other important aspects of becoming a confident reader, for example, by using picture clues to develop the story in words and make predictions about what is happening in the story.

88. One lesson in one of the Reception classes was of a very high standard and shows how books are helping to support language development. It brought together speaking, listening, reading and writing very well. Learning was very good because the teacher dressed up as Mrs Wishy Washy and acted in role as she read the big book. The children were entranced and immediately engaged in reading. Furthermore, there were plenty of challenges, as children worked independently matching sentences from the book and putting sentences in order. However, they needed help to recognise individual

words, although they were very clear that words had meaning. Here, the very good intervention by the adults in the class resulted in speedy learning as children began to identify each word.

89. Children's understanding of how to write is very poor when starting school and some have never seen a pencil. The vast majority are at the earliest stages of making marks. By the end of their time in the Foundation Stage, they have made good progress and can distinguish between print and pictures in their own work. More able children can write in simple sentences. Most hold a pencil appropriately to form letters, but these are not always correctly formed.

90. The teaching of writing is well thought out, so that it comes naturally from play and investigation activities. Writing in role-play is good, with plenty of opportunities to use it meaningfully. For example, children have made labels for their flowers in the flower shop. However, in the Reception class, there are too many worksheet activities, which do not help children to think for themselves. Furthermore, writing skills are not practised regularly on a daily basis for every child, for example, by writing their name or by working on a specific piece of writing.

91. Teachers sometimes write as children dictate their ideas, which helps children to feel confident in having a go themselves. When children write in groups or at the special writing table, there are insufficient additional resources to help them to become more independent. For example, there are not enough displays of helpful words to use when writing or easy wordbooks. Furthermore, the writing areas, although satisfactory, are too dull, which does not make writing an exciting option.

### **Mathematical development**

92. Children begin their schooling in the Nursery with extremely poor understanding of numbers, counting, shapes and sorting. Progress is good in the Nursery and satisfactory in the Reception classes. Achievement is good, although most children are still below average in their mathematical development by the time they start in Year 1. This is because work in the Reception classes does not focus enough on number or the systematic development of skills. There is variation in the quality of teaching from lesson to lesson. Too many worksheets are used which limits opportunities for children to record work in their own way.

93. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. There is good use of number rhymes to support learning, but not enough challenging investigative work in number. There are good opportunities to promote learning through building upon children's natural curiosity through play. For example, when playing at the sand tray, children have opportunities to understand words and concepts such as 'full', 'empty', 'half full', or 'holds more or less'. Within the classrooms, there are few number displays or resources so that children can explore counting, ordering, addition or number recognition, especially beyond ten. In the role-play area, there are missed opportunities to extend mathematical skills.

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

94. When starting school, children have a very poor knowledge and understanding of the world. They make good progress in the Nursery and Reception classes. By the end of the Foundation Stage, their knowledge is lower than average, as some children find it hard to express themselves. Nevertheless, they show good achievement from their low starting point.

95. The quality of teaching and learning is good. Work is well planned so that children can develop a growing understanding about their lives and the cultures and history of others. Much of this work shows good challenge and high expectations from teachers. Skills using information and

communication technology resources are developing steadily. Children use construction apparatus with growing confidence. For example, they spent about 15 minutes making a wooden area for the toy dinosaurs. Children talk simply about changes in the growth of their sunflowers.

96. Opportunities to learn through their senses are very good. For example, bubbles were put into the water tray to link to their reading of Mrs Wishy-Washy. Opportunities to observe are also very good and support language development effectively. The outside play area is excellent for this, especially in helping children to learn about changes in the seasons and in the habitats of different creatures.

### **Physical development**

97. When starting school, children show lower than average physical skills. Hand control is very poor, but they are generally confident in the early stages of using their whole body for movements. With the good provision, children make very good progress in developing their skills in this area, especially with pencils. Achievement is good overall: standards are broadly average for their age by the end of the Foundation Stage, although fine hand control is still below average.

98. Teachers' planning for this aspect is good, with opportunities for children to develop a good range of skills in the outside play areas, including riding bicycles, controlling scooters, using rope ladders and working with others to drive the bus. Assistants work well to help children to learn how to skip, by giving them time to persist and make progress. The range of resources for physical development is satisfactory, but some are shabby.

### **Creative development**

99. When starting school in the Nursery, children have very poor creative skills. The quality of teaching and learning is consistently good and, sometimes very good, and results in the children making rapid progress and reaching average standards for their age by the time they start in Year 1. The good teaching of singing makes learning fun, although there was limited experimentation using musical instruments during the inspection. Similarly, in the singing session, there were no opportunities to get up and move imaginatively to the music. Role-play is well organised to develop children's imagination.

100. Painting is of a high standard; children's work is full of life and very individual. This work shows high expectations and good demonstration about how to mix and use colour to widen children's language skills. For example, they mixed shades of pink and purple when talking about the letter 'p'. The development of children's imagination is a strength of creative painting work, as the delightful paintings of flowers in the classroom demonstrate.

101. Children have access to dressing up clothes from different cultures and enjoy stories and activities from numerous cultural traditions. They learn about the work of different artists. When learning about spirals, for example, they touched a range of shells, spiral pasta and looked at liquorice catherine wheels. Following this, they talked about 'The snail' by Matisse, 'The Interwoven Circle' by Andy Goldsworthy and 'Expectation' by Gustav Klimt. Moreover, their understanding was further enhanced as children drew spirals with chalk on the pavement area and made finger painting prints.

## **ENGLISH**

102. Overall, in Year 2, standards in English are well below average. They are well below average in speaking and listening and in reading, but below average in writing. This shows a decline in standards when compared with the school's inspection in 1997. However, there has been a considerable increase in the number of pupils with special educational needs joining the school over the

past two years, some of whom present challenging behaviour. There are few higher achieving pupils in both reading and writing. Standards have also been influenced by a number of pupils who have experienced a disrupted education and join the school during Year 2.

103. The inspection's judgements about reading standards are similar to the results of the 2001 national test and reflect the view of the school that, pupils in Year 2 are on course to still be well below average. In the 2001 tests, boys did less well than girls and teachers this year have tried to engage boys more in the work by providing more practical activities. In writing, however, standards have declined from average to below average. This is due to a number of factors: low attainment on entry to the school originally, more pupils with special educational needs and a number of pupils who have recently started in Year 2 who have experienced considerable disruption to their education. They have poor skills.

104. Assessment data show that the present pupils in Year 2 entered the school with well below average attainment. Therefore, their achievement in English is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language make steady progress and achieve satisfactorily. This reflects the school's well planned support provided for these pupils.

105. Many pupils enter school with poor communication skills. In Year 2, standards attained in speaking and listening are well below average. Many pupils do not speak clearly and have a limited vocabulary. They often remain passive and are unable to answer questions in detail without prompting from the teacher. Although the majority of pupils listen attentively, both to their teachers and to other pupils, a significant minority still call out during class discussion. However, they do enjoy listening to stories. In a Year 2 lesson, pupils listened carefully to the story of 'Dogger', and with the teacher's encouragement, put forward ideas about the characters in the book. They made appropriate contributions based upon their understanding and put forward suitable descriptions of what they thought the characters were like. However, many pupils do not have a sufficiently wide range of vocabulary to draw upon and as a result are more hesitant about expressing their ideas.

106. Standards in reading are well below average in Year 2. Pupils generally read simple texts accurately and like to read with their teachers. Through their work in the literacy hour, they have a good understanding of how books are organised. More able pupils confidently tackle relatively difficult words and use appropriate expression. Lower achieving pupils draw on their knowledge of sounds to read simple, regular words but often need support. They have a satisfactory understanding of the stories. Higher achieving pupils know how to locate information from non-fiction books. Although they talk about their likes and dislikes in the books they read, they have little knowledge of the authors who wrote them.

107. Standards in writing are below average in Year 2. Although most pupils show satisfactory skills at writing for a variety of purposes in literacy lessons, their writing lacks vocabulary that is well chosen for effect. Pupils use a broad vocabulary and are beginning to develop interesting ideas, as for example, when writing their own version of the Nursery rhyme 'Little Miss Muffet'. However, many pupils are restricted by a narrow range of vocabulary. Simple and some complex words are usually spelt correctly but there is some variability in the use of appropriate punctuation. Handwriting is usually carried out carefully but size and shape are not always consistent. There is little evidence of pupils learning to re-draft their work to improve its content and accuracy. Pupils with special educational needs achieve satisfactory standards, relative to their previous attainment, with well-focused support in class. Some pupils receive extra well-structured support when they are withdrawn from literacy lessons, which help them to achieve the targets on the individual educational plans. Pupils with English as an additional language also make satisfactory progress and attain in line with their capabilities.

108. Throughout the school, standards in literacy reflect those found in English and the use of associated skills across the curriculum is relatively underdeveloped. In many subjects, there are too few opportunities for pupils to develop and use their speaking and reading skills. The school is aware of the need to address this issue and is currently reviewing its approach to the teaching of reading.

109. The quality of teaching and learning in English is satisfactory overall. In four of the five lessons seen, teaching was satisfactory or better. One lesson was unsatisfactory. This was broadly the finding of the previous inspection. All teachers have supportive relationships with their pupils that create a positive climate for learning and enable pupils to enjoy their work. Strengths of the teaching and learning in English in the school were well illustrated in a Year 2 literacy lesson. The teacher immediately involved and interested pupils in the book 'Dogger' with her own enthusiasm and well pitched questions. Good subject knowledge enabled her to help pupils use appropriate phrases to describe the characters in the text. The teacher provided a warm supportive atmosphere in which pupils felt secure and confident to explore their. Good subject knowledge is also evident in teachers' lively presentations and confident management of the literacy hour which, in general, secure pupils' interest and attention. Teaching assistants are well deployed and provide particularly good support to pupils with special educational needs, so that the progress they make in literacy lessons is good. However, there are some examples of inappropriate group activities which, although designed to promote pupils' reading and writing skills, are not sufficiently well matched to meet the needs of the pupils. For example, in a Year 1 lesson, after introducing pupils to words ending in 'er', the teacher provided a worksheet for the pupils, which involved matching words to endings such as 'ss', 'ng' or 'ck'. There was no opportunity for pupils to consolidate what they had learnt in the previous activity and, as a result, the pupils did not manage to grasp the idea of how to segment words to help them with their reading and spelling. By contrast, in a parallel Year 1 class, the teacher provided written instructions on the board and talked with the pupils about their individual targets. As a result, the pupils knew what they were expected to learn and set about their writing without prompting. By the end of the lesson, most pupils had managed to write a short sentence, such as, 'I went to the Zoo and saw a monkey with its mummy'. However, opportunities are often overlooked for developing spoken language.

110. In lessons where teaching is weaker, although still satisfactory, the group activities are not well suited to meet the needs of the pupils. At times they provide an inappropriate challenge for the pupils, whilst, at other times, the activities for higher achieving pupils provide a comfortable rather than an extending range of work. In addition, the purpose of the lesson is not always fully explained to the pupils or reviewed.

111. Although the curriculum in English is reasonably balanced and meets the requirements of the National Curriculum, the school has not developed a policy to support the teaching of speaking and listening. The National Literacy Strategy has been implemented satisfactorily. The school is very aware of the need to raise pupils' attainment in English and has put effective strategies in place that already are impacting well on the pupils' standards of achievement in writing. Less success has been achieved in reading. Assessment procedures for writing are good, but this good practice has not been extended to reading. Although there is evidence of some teachers setting individual targets for pupils, this practice is not consistent throughout the school nor is there evidence of talking with individual pupils to ensure they know exactly what they need to do to improve their work and go up a level. All teaching assistants provide effective support to both the teachers and pupils during the literacy hour. The co-ordinator is very committed and has a realistic view of the issues facing the subject. Her monitoring role in classroom observation, planning and sampling pupils' work is sufficiently well developed to enable her to have a good overview of the subject and give guidance to other teachers. She is now working to raise the profile of role-play and drama throughout the school by building up

resources to support this, such as story sacks and the related accessories. Resources in English are good overall and the library is well equipped with a good quantity of books that are well organised and attractively displayed. Although each class is adequately equipped with a suitable range of books, the book corners are not conducive to encourage pupils to sit quietly and develop a love of reading. Little use is made of displays of pupils' work in English. Information and communication technology is used satisfactorily to support teaching and learning. The subject makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development through the opportunity to experience a suitably wide range of literature.

## **MATHEMATICS**

112. The national tests for seven-year-olds in 2001 showed that pupils reached standards which were well below average when compared with pupils nationally. Compared with similar schools, the standards reached were marginally below average. This represents declining standards since the school's last inspection when standards were average. These results must be approached with great caution, however, as pupils entering the school in recent years have displayed far lower levels of attainment than previously. This is shown in the assessments made by the school when pupils enter the Reception classes. A higher than average number of pupils who sat the tests last year had special educational needs and a significant number had joined the school in Year 2 with very limited or disrupted schooling. Many of these were boys and this explains why boys performed much worse than girls last year.

113. This inspection shows that the pupils currently in Year 2 are on track to reach similar standards to last year. Again, there is a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and a significant number whose disrupted education and extended periods of absence mean that they are unlikely to reach nationally expected levels for their age. Despite this, standards are not high enough. Although most pupils have a reasonable grasp of two-dimensional shape and their properties, their work in number shows low levels of skill and understanding and this limits the work they can do in many other aspects of mathematics. It influences their work in measuring time as many are not confident in their understanding of halves and quarters. They find basic mental calculation extremely difficult. Most are not confident of their basic facts about numbers up to 20, having to use their fingers to calculate, for example, nine and seven. The facts are not established firmly enough in their minds. They lack confidence in applying their mathematical knowledge to other problems because teachers do not provide enough opportunities for pupils to practise their skills in real-life situations. Lesson observations and analysis of pupils' work show that, this year, boys are working at similar, if not higher, levels than girls. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are supported appropriately and make satisfactory progress. However, more able pupils are not always fully challenged by the work and often make unsatisfactory progress.

114. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall, as it was at the last inspection, although there are areas of weakness. Most teachers manage their classes well, gain pupils' attention successfully and keep them on task during activities. A few teachers have good questioning techniques which challenge the pupils to explain how they arrive at their answers. However, these opportunities are too few and teachers do not introduce new vocabulary well enough and give pupils sufficient opportunities to use it in discussion. Resources, including real money, are used effectively to help pupils with their work. Although teachers are following the format of the National Numeracy Strategy, many are not structuring the oral and mental part of the lesson carefully enough to ensure that pupils receive enough practice in number skills. This is not always the case, however, as in one class, the teacher used a game to involve all the pupils in counting in twos or tens as they threw and caught a teddy bear. The class was divided into three groups with clear directions having been given

to the classroom assistant and a parent helper. The groups worked at different levels and all were actively involved for the ten minute introductory session.

115. The main teaching part of the lesson is usually clear and teachers give appropriate explanations and instructions about the activities which the pupils are going to do. Activities are arranged at three different levels, for the less able, average and more able pupils in the class but not enough thought is given to matching these activities closely to the existing levels of understanding of the pupils. Objectives are often too wide and make ongoing assessment by teachers and assistants very difficult. Teachers often use worksheets indiscriminately, and this restricts opportunities for pupils to record their work in their own way and become used to setting it down correctly. In all lessons, not enough use is made of information and communication technology to develop pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. There is limited evidence to show that pupils are using their numerical skills in other subjects.

116. There are appropriate systems in place to record the development of pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. These inform the annual reports to parents about their children's progress which generally provide good information to parents about mathematics. Tests and assessments are carried out half-termly but the results are not being used well enough to identify the needs of different groups of pupils and target them effectively. Also the assessments stand alone and it is difficult to track progress as pupils move through the school. Although individual targets are given to pupils in literacy, this is not the case in mathematics. Consequently, pupils and their parents do not know what they have to do to improve. The co-ordinator analyses national test results to identify areas of weakness but the action taken is not monitored well enough. There has been some good work done on comparing the results of national tests against the assessments made when pupils enter Reception classes. This shows that the vast majority of pupils have made progress against their previous attainment. However, not enough has been done to find out how and where this improvement has occurred and how to apply these findings to improve provision in other areas. The role of the co-ordinator has been strengthened since the last inspection but does not have a real impact on raising standards in the school.

## **SCIENCE**

117. By the age of seven, pupils attain standards that are well below average. Many pupils in Year 2 last year and also this year have special educational needs and this affects the standards reached in the national tests. Despite this, they make satisfactory progress through the school. Girls and boys achieve similar standards. Few pupils speak English as an additional language, but those who do, are suitably supported and make satisfactory progress. Traveller pupils are often given additional and helpful support which supports their progress.

118. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily by the age of seven, which reflects the satisfactory quality of teaching and learning as pupils move through Years 1 and 2. However, pupils' achievement is not monitored sufficiently due to the lack of a rigorous system for tracking pupils' progress as they move from year to year. As a result, a few more able children, in particular, do not make enough progress in the subject.

119. Since the last inspection, improvement has been slow, due to changes in the co-ordination of the subject. Improvement in the last five years is unsatisfactory but, within the last year, it has become more rapid as the new co-ordinator has begun to identify how to develop the subject. Standards are considerably lower now than in 1997, but pupils continue to make satisfactory progress. The current lower standards largely reflect the changes in the intake to the school, which show a considerable increase in the number of pupils who have special educational needs. Nevertheless, there has not

been enough progress in improving the provision for more able pupils which was identified as a weakness at the last inspection.

120. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, as was also found in 1997. Teachers have a satisfactory understanding of how to teach the subject and most pupils acquire, skills, knowledge and understanding at a steady pace. However, although pupils enjoy science, they find it hard to put their ideas into words and explain a sequence of events. For example, in a Year 2 lesson, the teacher had organised a good variety of horse chestnut plants to help pupils to see how conkers sprout and grow roots and leaves. Although the pupils delighted in using magnifying glasses to investigate different parts of the plants, hardly any of them could talk with clarity about why plants have roots or explain the sequence of growth once a conker drops to the ground. Very few understood that plants need water, light and a food supply to grow.

121. The school has worked on developing assessment procedures, but these are unsatisfactory, as they are cumbersome and are not sufficiently helpful to teachers when planning their lessons from week to week. The marking of work shows how teachers encourage pupils through praise, but rarely are there any examples of teachers writing comments to challenge or further develop pupils work.

122. Currently, teachers' planning is too general, as it rarely identifies different work for different abilities within the classes. Teachers do not have a quick and easy way of using the current assessment information to identify how many and which pupils are working at different levels of the National Curriculum. Thus, when planning science lessons, they have insufficient information to ensure that they are planning work to ensure that all pupils are working at a suitable level.

123. Teachers use good methods to help pupils to learn through investigation, although they are sometimes inconsistent from class to class. For example, in Year 1, pupils learnt about the importance of washing their hands to prevent germs being spread. In one class, all of the pupils tried the hand washing investigation, whilst in another class, only one child from each group carried it out and the impact on the rest of the pupils' learning was lost.

124. Overall, there are missed opportunities to improve pupils' literacy and speaking and listening skills through science. There is limited attention to vocabulary and not enough opportunities for pupils to write about their investigations. Overuse of worksheets stifles pupils' ability to think for themselves. Although there are examples of reading as a support to learning about science, this is also underdeveloped. For example, research books do not have a not high profile within lessons and, during the course of the inspection, hardly any pupils used the well organised library to help them with their work. Information and communication technology is not being used enough to help pupils with their learning.

125. Pupils are well managed by teachers. This is especially effective, because some pupils get over-excited and silly in science lessons, so that they sometimes lose concentration and are distracted by others. As a result of good management, pupils are quickly brought back on task and get on with their learning.

126. The curriculum is satisfactory, with strengths in the work on forces, including opportunities for pupils to invent their own experiments using toy cars to measure the distance travelled on ramps placed at varying angles. Here, there are good links with mathematics, as pupils measure in centimetres. A weaker aspect of the science curriculum is work on sound, which was very limited in the sample of work seen, although is developing through music.

127. Leadership and management are both satisfactory. The co-ordinator understands what needs to be done to improve the subject. However, monitoring is not yet rigorous enough to ensure equality of coverage between classes and to identify strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning.

## **ART AND DESIGN**

128. Standards in art and design are above average by the end of Year 2 but this represents a decline since the school's last inspection when they were well above average. The decline is due mainly to the loss of the school's co-ordinator and, at present, the headteacher is leading the subject in a caretaking role. Judgements are based on a small sample of lessons, pupils' work on display and in the samples provided for analysis. All pupils make good progress and achieve well. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the effective support that they often receive from teaching assistants and this consolidates their good achievement.

129. On the evidence of the few lessons observed and pupils' previous work, the quality of teaching and learning is good overall. However, one lesson observed was unsatisfactory. Pupils get off to a good start from the time they enter the school, where teachers provide well planned opportunities for them to draw, paint and work with textiles. As they move through the school, they are given the opportunity of experiencing a good range of techniques and developing a wider range of skills. There is good teaching of basic skills, such as drawing techniques, printing, working with pastels and weaving. Teachers' high expectations mean that pupils move on from basic art techniques quickly. Pupils' understanding of the effects of colour develops well across the school and earlier experiments with shades lead to effective paintings by the oldest pupils. Work done in the style of Kandinsky, Mondrian and Picasso show an increasing awareness of the artists' approach. Their use of line and colour is good and authentic when using both pastels and paint. Similarly, there are examples of pupils' using a wide variety of collage and textiles to communicate ideas. For example, they have used natural materials and fabrics of contrasting textures to make large weavings to create very effective wall hangings. Pupils have good observational skills and use these to record quite intricate detail accurately.

130. In a Year 2 lesson, the pupils were taught how to use a viewfinder to help them look closely at the detail to be seen on leaves and flowering plants. They closely observed the lines and shape of the plants and, with the good guidance of the teacher, they explored ways of using the viewfinder. They used pens with care and produced a good selection of close-up observational drawings. In a parallel Year 2 class, the teacher helped pupils to produce their best results when they used pastels and paints to sketch and paint a variety of fruit and flowers. A good range of resources was easily accessible for the pupils and, together with the enthusiastic teaching and careful guidance given, the pupils saw how their work could be improved. Where teaching was unsatisfactory, the range of resources was inappropriate for the task and, as a result, limited the progress that pupils could make. Little guidance was given on how pupils could improve their drawings and there were missed opportunities to build on the skills and techniques that the pupils brought with them from previous learning.

131. A particularly good feature of pupils' work is the strong link that it has with other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 1 use pastels skilfully to match the colours of fruit in science and in Year 2 pupils use pens carefully to sketch plants. In work linked to music, they draw musical objects, which show they have been taught to observe detail carefully. In design and technology, older pupils design and make puppets. Tasks have sufficient challenge to stimulate pupils' interest and to extend their knowledge and understanding of art of different cultures. For example, the pupils used ideas taken from the patterns seen in African textiles to produce some very good designs of their own. They investigated different forms of print-making and produced some very good batik work and tie and dye work that showed bold use of colour, shape and pattern. The quality of displays around the school

does much to create a rich, colourful environment. However, not all classrooms reflect the same high quality of art work.

132. The scheme of work ensures that pupils receive a wide range of experiences but does not provide guidance for the progression of skills in the key elements. Assessment procedures are generally satisfactory, although there is no consistent format for the recording of individual skills. There is a satisfactory range of resources for the subject and teachers make good use of information and communication technology to support pupils' learning. The subject contributes well to the pupils' spiritual, social, moral and cultural development as, for example, they learn about other cultures, collaborate with others on projects and have the opportunity to work with artists who have been invited into the school. The subject enjoys a high profile within the school.

## **DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY**

133. In Year 2, pupils attain standards that are broadly average. Girls and boys achieve similar standards. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported. However, the more able pupils are not always fully challenged because teachers plan whole class activities and do not identify exactly how to extend these few pupils.

134. Since the last inspection, standards have been maintained but, in other aspects, there has been insufficient development. Plans are not detailed enough to show how specific skills will be developed during the pupils' time at school. There are no assessment systems in place to track this development. Nevertheless, the new co-ordinator has a clear understanding of how to develop the subject in the future and satisfactory skills to do this.

135. The school allocates a higher than average amount of time to the teaching of this subject. However, it was not possible to see any lessons during the inspection as the curriculum is organised so that pupils work on design and technology projects during the next part of the summer term. The curriculum is well planned and broadly based, but does not identify enough how skills build up progressively from year to year.

136. There was little evidence of work saved to evaluate the quality of teaching and learning. However, the available evidence suggests that it is satisfactory, with good opportunities for pupils to link learning to other subjects including science and art. Wooden vehicle designs show how pupils think about and modify their ideas to improve the way that the vehicles move using four wheels and an axle. Pupils learn how to use a range of tools such as saws and know how to make a secure base for their vehicles using triangular corner sections. Pupils' work shows creativity and perseverance. Teachers plan opportunities for pupils to use a wide range of construction apparatus to develop their ideas and independence in design.

137. Information and communication technology supports design and technology work satisfactorily. For example, pupils design and make Christmas cards using word processing and art programs. In addition to this, pupils make good use of digital cameras to record some of their work.

## **GEOGRAPHY**

138. By the age of seven, pupils attain standards that are broadly average. This reflects the standards found at the previous inspection. The school allocates five per cent of its teaching time to geography, which is higher than average but this is helping pupils to achieve well and attain average levels of understanding. Girls and boys achieve similar standards. Few pupils speak English as an additional language, but those who do, make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational

needs make sound progress and are well supported, as are Traveller pupils. Overall, pupils achieve a good standard for their ability, especially when considering their limited knowledge when starting school.

139. Improvement since the last inspection is good. The curriculum has been re-organised to widen experiences and help pupils to understand about different localities close to the school and further away. For example, they compare the White House estate with Bramford or Somersham. Visits to such places as Hallow Tree, show good links between science and geography as pupils have to follow maps in order to get to different activities. The curriculum now includes more work to help pupils to learn about life in other countries. This includes work on the Gambia which enriches pupils' social and cultural development well. In addition to these improvements, the co-ordinator has purchased resources to support pupils' learning using information and computer aided technology. This is now of a good overall standard. For example, the Felixstowe project work allows pupils to see and use power point presentation materials. Books have been purchased to link guided reading in the literacy hour to geography, although this was not seen in action during the inspection.

140. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Even though it was only possible to see one lesson, this was good. Further evidence suggests that learning is well supported by visits, which help pupils to learn by doing practical activities. Additionally, the curriculum is broad and time allocated to teaching is generous. Pupils have a good understanding of maps. For example, in the lesson seen, pupils confidently found symbols on large and small scaled maps and then learned about how different beaches are identified to show shingle, pebbles, mud and sand. The resources in the lesson were well organised to help pupils to think and learn for themselves. The teacher circulated around the classroom assessing what pupils understood and provided additional help when pupils were trying to find routes to the coast. However, there is no formalised assessment system which influences, most especially, the rate of progress for the more able pupils. Teachers are not clear enough about how to help pupils to work at higher level activities.

141. The quality of leadership and management is good. There is a clear plan for continued development, which rightly identifies the need to develop the provision for more able pupils and monitoring procedures. Vision for development and the capacity to succeed are good.

## **HISTORY**

142. By the age of seven, pupils attain standards that are broadly average, even though there is a high proportion of pupils in the current Year 2 with special educational needs, who do not find learning easy. The school allocates five per cent of its teaching time to history, which is higher than average. This is helping pupils to achieve well for their ability, especially when considering their limited knowledge overall, when starting school.

143. Girls and boys achieve similar standards, although girls write about their history work with more confidence. Few pupils speak English as an additional language, but those who do, are suitably supported and make satisfactory progress. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and are well supported, as are Traveller pupils. More able pupils are encouraged to write more about what they know or do additional research using simple books. However, this is not totally consistent from class to class.

144. Improvement since the last inspection is good. Average standards of attainment have been maintained, despite considerable changes in the intake of the pupils to the school. The former subject co-ordinator organised the curriculum well and this continues even though she has now become acting deputy headteacher and a temporary teacher is overseeing the co-ordination of history.

145. It was only possible to see two history lessons. However, in discussion with pupils and by looking at the evidence from pupils' work, the quality of teaching and learning is at least satisfactory, with some good features. For example, the use of visits and artefacts help pupils to acquire new knowledge effectively. Even though pupils have difficulty in expressing their ideas with clarity, they can remember simple historical facts. For example, they can talk about the first landing on the moon, the sinking of the Titanic and the journey of The Mayflower.

146. Teachers use effective teaching methods, supported by a range of good resources to help children to think and learn for themselves. There is good management of pupils' behaviour. In several classes, especially in Year 2, pupils quickly lose concentration and call out inappropriately. The teachers quickly address this but it requires patience and perseverance, as a small number of pupils do not understand that they are affecting others' learning. However, most pupils show positive attitudes.

147. Overall, pupils cover a good range of historical work, which is supported by several interesting visits to such places as Orford Castle. This good breadth of experience successfully helps them to understand historical events, characters and ways of life. They visit The Museum of East Anglian Life and find out how butter was made before machines were introduced. In lessons, teachers make good use of videos to help illustrate their teaching points. For example, when pupils watched the video about Grace Darling, the teacher stopped the video periodically and used the discussion time to help pupils to talk about women in the past compared with today and the use of songs as a means of retelling historical stories. The pupils' writing and pictures show individuality and a clear understanding. Furthermore, they understand how old newspaper reports can provide them with evidence of events in the past.

148. Books are used to help pupils to learn about history. Some teachers set books out on tables, which they read with pupils or with the class as a whole. However, in one lesson, although the teacher used questions well to help children to look at pictures in the 'Peepbo' story to compare lives with those in the 1940s; there were missed opportunities to get the pupils to read along with the teacher and develop their reading skills.

149. Information and communication technology is used well to support the subject, especially in some Year 2 classes. A particular strength is the way in which pupils are using CD-ROMS to research changes in transport and then link these to writing using a word processor. Following this, pupils add their research to a class time line, so that they can see, for example, that a Dan horse bike of 1817 was built before Stephenson's Rocket in 1829, which came before Concorde in 1970.

150. The quality of leadership and management is currently satisfactory, but is in a period of transition. A new policy and scheme of work have been written, which show how work will be developed from the Foundation Stage to Year 2. Currently, assessment of what pupils can do and the monitoring of teaching and learning are insufficiently developed. The subject contributes very effectively to pupils' cultural and social education.

## **INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY**

151. Standards in information and communication and technology are average by the time pupils are seven years old. Although standards are the same as at the last inspection, the school has done a great deal of work in the subject to enable it to meet the demands of the revised National Curriculum. A new computer suite has been developed to enable teachers to teach specific skills and the amount of software has been improved. Evidence from lessons and from work on display shows that all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language

are developing sound skills in all aspects of the subject and that they achieve well, compared with the levels at which they start in Year 1. Each class, including those in Reception, receives a weekly lesson, usually as half a class, while the remainder are engaged in another activity such as art. The groups change over to allow them all to experience both activities. This works well as the adult teaching the group has more time to support individual pupils.

152. Year 2 pupils can use a word processing package to present their poems and written work imaginatively, using different fonts, sizes of letters and colours. With help, they can use 'word art' to make their titles more interesting and eye-catching. They use a variety of CD-ROMs to help them research aspects of their history work, for example, when they find out about different forms of transport through the ages. Most can print out their work with little support. In a good lesson seen in Year 2, the teacher guided her pupils through the process of searching a dictionary program to find out about different insects. They used the menus well and showed good levels of skill in using the mouse and in playing the 'sticker' game to practise search techniques. Pupils always show high levels of enthusiasm in lessons in the computer suite and most listen very carefully to their teachers' instructions. They are keen to learn and to achieve success. The subject co-ordinator is aware that this enthusiasm is not adequately channelled into other aspects of their learning and is considering different ways of doing this, for example, the use of a commercial program to help develop individual mathematical skills.

153. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory overall. Teachers have all been trained in the use of computers and show confidence in presenting their lessons to the pupils. Classroom assistants have also benefited from the training and are able to take an active part in supporting children's learning. Both teachers and assistants make clear teaching points to the pupils, provide appropriate activities to teach the skills and give good feedback to pupils about their performance. Although lessons seen in the suite showed satisfactory and sometimes good teaching, little use was made of computers in classrooms during the inspection to support pupils' learning. Insufficient use is made of computers to support literacy and numeracy skills, where pupils' enthusiasm and interest are less apparent.

154. A good deal of work has been done by the co-ordinator to develop the subject and, in particular, to devise useful long-term plans to ensure that pupils develop their skills and knowledge as they move through the school. The plans are constantly being reviewed and amended in response to teachers' evaluations. An audit of needs is currently being carried out to assess where resources could be improved still further. The school is considering updating the equipment in classrooms to fit in with the higher specifications of those in the computer suite. This would enable pupils to transfer their skills more effectively and teachers to be more confident in using the computers in classrooms to support other subjects.

## **MUSIC**

155. In Year 2, standards in music are average. This broadly reflects the findings of the previous inspection. Pupils like music and their achievement is satisfactory in relation to the standards reached at the end of the Foundation Stage. Pupils with special educational needs and those with English as an additional language achieve appropriate standards and take a full part in all activities. Pupils singing in assemblies show that they are developing good control of pitch, dynamics and rhythm.

156. Pupils throughout the school benefit by being taught music by the headteacher, who has the expertise to teach the subject. Consequently, the teaching and learning in lessons are good. Lessons are appropriately planned and well prepared. Pupils are able to sustain a good rhythm for their age and compose by using body percussion and with instruments. This was well illustrated in a Year 2

lesson, when the headteacher used the story, 'Hairy Scary Castle' skilfully to develop pupils' understanding of how sounds can be combined to create different moods and effects. The pupils responded well and, with great enjoyment, used a keyboard, claves and brushes to make soft sounds on the drums, producing a very effective sound track to go with the story. In Year 1, imaginative methods enabled the pupils to use their voices expressively to represent the three bears in the story of Goldilocks. The headteacher used three soft toy bears of different sizes and matched them to three sizes of recorders. After demonstrating their different sounds, the pupils were asked to listen for the high and low sounds and use their voices to provide a match to the size of the three teddy bears. The pupils promptly responded and worked hard to use their voices in different ways. By the end of the lesson, pupils had made good gains in their understanding of pitch and were beginning to discriminate between high, low and 'in-between' sounds. Relationships between pupils in both lessons observed were very good as they co-operated well, shared the instruments and waited patiently while instruments were re-distributed. Pupils understand the terms, timbre and tempo and recognise the symbols used in music for 'forte' and 'pianissimo'. Evidence in pupils' work show that they have been introduced to a suitable range of music and have responded by creating musical patterns and pictures.

157. The headteacher provides good leadership through her knowledge and enthusiasm. The subject is well supported by a range of commercial schemes to support the teaching of music. The curriculum is also enriched by events such as a 'Music Week' when a variety of events are organised that involve visitors to the school and visits to other places of interest. For example, pupils visited a neighbouring school where they had the opportunity to play musical instruments from Indonesia and a group of African drummers visited the school. These make a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is well resourced with a variety of instruments that include a good range of instruments from other cultures. The school has a large separate room for the teaching of music where these instruments are stored and easily accessible. Pupils have good opportunities to learn to play the recorder and to take part in school productions at Christmas and at the end of the summer term.

## **PHYSICAL EDUCATION**

158. Seven-year-old pupils reach average standards in physical education. This matches the findings of the school's previous inspection. Plans indicate that pupils are taught a broad range of activities, including games, gymnastics, dance, swimming and athletics although only lessons in gymnastics and games were observed during the inspection. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, make steady progress.

159. Pupils take part enthusiastically in lessons, although a few have difficulty concentrating on what their teacher is saying. This means that, occasionally, teachers have to spend time attracting pupils' attention and repeating instructions and this makes the lesson longer than necessary and has a knock-on effect on the time spent on other subjects. Pupils try hard to improve their skills and work well together. This helps them to form positive relationships with one another and increases their sense of teamwork. Warm-up sessions prepare the pupils well for the main activity of the lesson and pupils in Year 2 show that they can throw and catch a ball with reasonable accuracy. A few can do this successfully while travelling around the hall. Games such as 'piggy in the middle' help pupils understand simple tactics such as marking their opponent and dodging to receive the ball. They run and jump with reasonable co-ordination and have the opportunity to improve their performance when they work in pairs to measure one another's jumps before having further attempts. All pupils receive swimming instruction during a ten-week block during the summer term, when lessons are given by qualified instructors in the pool shared with the junior school on the same site. Lessons are geared mainly towards developing confidence in the water and good links with the junior school enable these

skills to be developed when they transfer to Year 3. A few pupils in Year 2 are able to perform a simple swimming stroke before they leave the infant school.

160. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and teachers use the well-organised scheme of work to guide their lessons. However, some concentrate on the activities rather than the development of pupils' skills because their knowledge of how to make effective teaching points is weak. Teachers often have to work hard to maintain discipline and control as the pupils are often extremely excited but they do this well, considering the behavioural problems of many of the pupils. Some teachers give pupils good opportunities to improve their work and demonstrate so that pupils understand what is expected of them. Teachers sometimes ask pupils to demonstrate their work but opportunities are missed, however, to encourage pupils to talk about what they have noticed and why it is successful. In some lessons, teachers make pupils aware of the effects of exercise on their bodies as in a lesson in Year 1, when they were encouraged to feel their hearts beating before and after the activity.

161. The school has a good range of equipment to help the teaching of the subject and this is arranged carefully so that it is easily accessible to teachers and pupils. Much work has been done by the subject co-ordinator to adapt the local education authority's plans to meet the school's needs and to make it relevant to the pupils. In the autumn term, for example, a dance unit on the countryside and farming fits in well with the topic of 'harvest'. Ongoing evaluation from teachers about lessons in the scheme of work enables the co-ordinator to review the plans and adapt them where necessary. However, some teachers are less confident than others and lack sufficient expertise to enable them to teach specific skills effectively.

## **RELIGIOUS EDUCATION**

162. During the inspection, it was only possible to observe one lesson in religious education. Judgements are based on an analysis of pupils' work and teachers' planning throughout the school. Indications are that, in Year 2, pupils' knowledge and understanding of religious education meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. This represents a similar position to that at the time of the last inspection. The school has caring ethos which encourages pupils to respect the ideas and opinions of others. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. Pupils with special educational needs are well involved in lessons and make satisfactory progress.

163. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, overall, although good teaching was observed in the one Year 2 lesson taken by the headteacher. In this lesson, the pupils were introduced to the idea of non-verbal communication. A non-hearing, non-speaking visitor with her 'signer' showed the pupils how they communicated with one another by using sign language. The pupils sat engrossed and showed genuine respect when asking questions. After teaching the pupils to sign the letters of the alphabet and a number of everyday phrases, they both became involved with the lesson activity and worked alongside the pupils. As a result, the pupils developed a good knowledge and understanding of the different ways that signs can be used for communication. A strength of the teaching and learning in this lesson was the sensitivity and respect that the pupils showed towards the feelings of others.

164. The analysis of work shows that pupils have an appropriate knowledge of religions other than Christianity and an increasing understanding of the importance of learning from religions. They know some of the stories from the Bible, such as 'Daniel in the Lion's Den' and have a developing understanding of the significance of the story of Moses in the Jewish faith. They have a suitable knowledge of aspects of traditions and celebrations in the Jewish and Sikh religions and make appropriate links with their own lives. For example, after learning about the Jewish festival of Sukkoth,

they considered the special things they would take with them if they had to leave their homes quickly. In their work on Sikhism, they learned of the Naming ceremony and designed and made their own ceremony cards using the first letter of their own names. They have also discussed their feelings and drawn pictures of what makes them sad, angry, cross and upset. However, there are limitations in the opportunities given to pupils to extend their writing skills.

165. The subject is well led by the headteacher who is interested in and, committed to, its development. The school follows the locally Agreed Syllabus. Themes in collective worship reinforce learning in aspects of the subject such as the importance of festivals like Christmas and also the development of early ideas such as caring and sharing. The main weakness in the subject is related to the absence of regular consolidation of learning through writing. The school's resources for the subject are adequate to cover the teaching of the main religions. There is no whole school system of assessment and, generally, teachers gain an understanding of what pupils have learned by talking with them. There are satisfactory links with the local churches and clergy and pupils in Year 2 have visited the local Baptist church. During their time at school, as part of their studies of the Sikh faith, a representative visits the school to talk to the pupils. The subject makes a good contribution to the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the pupils, when they learn how to respect others and consider their own feelings. They are made aware of a wider range of world faiths and there are opportunities to reflect on their own ideas.