

INSPECTION REPORT

**COLKIRK CHURCH OF ENGLAND
(VOLUNTARY AIDED) PRIMARY SCHOOL**

Colkirk, Fakenham

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121112

Acting Headteacher: Mr A Day

Reporting inspector: Mr P H Cole
2616

Dates of inspection: 15th – 18th April 2002

Inspection number: 198448

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant and Junior

School category: Voluntary aided

Age range of pupils: 4 – 11 years

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Road
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Nr Fakenham

Postcode: NR21 7NW

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr J Woodhouse

Date of previous inspection: November 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
2616	P H Cole	Registered inspector	Mathematics Information and communication technology History Foundation Stage curriculum Equal opportunities	The school's results and pupils' achievement. How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
11437	A Anderson	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
1678	D Peckett	Team inspector	Science Geography Music Physical education Special educational needs	How good are the curricular and other learning opportunities?
1615	E Parry	Team inspector	English Art Design and technology	How well does the school care for its pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Colkirk CE (Voluntary Aided) Primary is a small school with 81 pupils in roll and currently slightly more girls than boys. This makes it slightly larger than at the time of the last inspection. It is a popular school that attracts pupils from neighbouring villages and small towns. Pupils are admitted in the September of the year in which they reach their fifth birthday, initially on a part-time basis. The children are from white backgrounds and speak English as their first language. The current level of free school meals entitlement is lower than in most schools. None of the 15 pupils identified as having special educational needs has a statement. The movement of pupils in and out of the school is slightly greater than is usually found and reflects the professional backgrounds of many of the parents. Most of the children have had pre-school experience before coming to school and their attainment on entry is above average. At the time of the inspection the school was being led by one of the local authority's supply headteachers who had just taken up his appointment following the resignation of his predecessor.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school provides a satisfactory education for its pupils. They are well taught and achieve satisfactory standards that are above the national expectations in English and mathematics. Although there are weaknesses in leadership and management, the school provides sound value for money for a school of this size.

What the school does well

- Teaching is good and most consistently so in Years 1 and 2.
- Pupils are very positive about learning, their behaviour is very good and they get on very well with each other.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development very successfully. Very good provision is made for their spiritual and social development and good provision is made for their moral and cultural development.
- Very good relationships have been forged with parents and they make a very significant contribution to the life of the school.
- The governors demonstrate great commitment to the school.

What could be improved

- Leadership and management are unsatisfactory.
- Little is done to monitor and evaluate the standards pupils' achieve and the quality of the education that is provided, in order to bring about improvements.
- The assessment of pupils' learning is underdeveloped and little use is made of it to make their learning better.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in November 1997. Since then some aspects of the school's life have become better but others have not shown sufficient improvement or development. Teaching is now better and standards have continued to be above expectations with improvements being made in pupils' attainment in information and communication technology (ICT). Pupils' attitudes and behaviour have continued to improve and their personal development is now very effectively promoted. The weaknesses found in the planning of the curriculum have been tackled, but assessment of pupils' learning has lagged behind developments in other schools. The partnership with parents, which was satisfactory, is now a strength of the school. Overall, leadership and management have not improved sufficiently. Teachers' roles as co-ordinators of subjects are underdeveloped. The planning for school development is better in some respects, but is insufficiently based on a secure understanding of what is working well and what needs to be improved. This is because there are few systems to check how effectively the school is working and how well pupils are achieving. On balance unsatisfactory progress has been made since the last inspection.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

As in all small schools, results in national tests vary markedly from year to year and comparisons with other schools can be unreliable. This is because so few pupils are tested and any one pupil's results can have a disproportionate effect on the overall results for the school. In English in 2001, the results appear to be very disappointing, being in the lowest five per cent of schools that are similar to Colkirk, based on entitlement to free school meals. This reflected the proportion of pupils who had special educational needs specifically related to language development and the school's tracking information shows that they made sound progress. A more valid comparison can be made if several years' results are taken together in order to even out the variations. When this is done, English was just below the national average, reflecting the 2001 results, and both mathematics and science were above. The test results for pupils in Year 2, over the last few years, have shown results that were in line with the national averages in reading and writing and above them in mathematics. The inspection found standards in English to be better than the test results, reflecting good teaching. Pupils currently in Year 6 and Year 2 are attaining above national expectations in English and mathematics and in line with expectations in science. By Year 2, pupils are attaining above expectations in history and ICT. Across the school pupils attain above expectations in geography and the standards they achieve in art are high. Standards in swimming are also better than those that are usually found, as a result of the good provision

that is made. Children in the reception class are achieving above expectations. Overall, standards are appropriate, as the attainment of pupils when they come into school is mostly above average.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very positive.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils get on very well with each other and with adults.
Attendance	Satisfactory.

Across the school pupils are very well behaved in class and during break and lunchtimes. They are enthusiastic in lessons and work hard. The pupils' very good behaviour, enthusiasm, interest and high levels of involvement in lessons all contribute to effective learning. Older pupils take good care of younger ones, for example in assembly and during break times and they are confident, polite and friendly towards the many adults they see and work with during the school day. They are confident to explore their own feelings, for example when writing poetry, and understand and value different ways of life, as seen in their 'Newsround' journals.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

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

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

Teaching overall is good. However, some of the strengths are not consistently found across the school. For example, where teachers and pupils are clear about what is to be covered, the pupils make good progress. Conversely, where planning is less sharply focused or not followed closely, pupils' learning over time can suffer. This is the case in Years 5 and 6 in English, although the teacher's love of language is a great strength that pupils respond enthusiastically to and leads to thoughtful and careful work. Overall, both literacy and numeracy are being taught effectively. Teachers often use resources well, for example to support explanations and discussions. Adult helpers, both teaching assistants and parents, are used very effectively to help groups and individuals, including those with special educational needs, and to enable all pupils to benefit from the lessons. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and as a result their involvement is high and they work hard on the tasks they are given. Interesting and often demanding homework is set and enhances pupils' learning in class. In the reception class, basic skills in English and mathematics are taught well but too few activities are planned that extend pupils' learning through play and experimentation and the youngest pupils find it difficult to maintain their concentration through long sessions led by the teacher. Although pupils' work in Years 5 and 6 is marked regularly

and conscientiously it does not always help them to understand what they need to do to make their work better. The recent setting of individual learning targets in Years 1 and 2 is beginning to help pupils to improve their work.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. There is now an appropriate balance between subjects; sufficiently detailed plans are in place to support teaching and learning. Extra-curricular provision is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	There are weaknesses in the assessment of their specific needs and in the planning of appropriately detailed education programmes to meet them. Good levels of adult help are available in Years 1 and 2.
Provision for pupils who speak English as an additional language	There are currently no pupils learning English as an additional language.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural, development	Very good. The provision for spiritual and social development is very good and it is good for moral and cultural development. Pupils are given many opportunities to be reflective and to work together. They are successfully encouraged to understand what is right and wrong and to appreciate different cultures.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are satisfactory arrangements for ensuring the pupils' well-being but arrangements for assessing and supporting their learning are unsatisfactory.

A major strength of the school is the very good partnership it enjoys with parents. They provide very effective help in classrooms, raise large amounts of money to support developments and generously give practical assistance to improve the school's environment. With more detailed information about what children would be learning in Year 3 to 6 classes, they would be able to make a greater contribution to supporting their children at home. Few records are maintained of what pupils have learnt and little use is made of assessment to identify strengths and weaknesses in their learning in order to bring about improvements.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Unsatisfactory. The previous headteacher was successful in promoting the school in the community but did not develop key aspects of leadership and management.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors work very hard and are very enthusiastic and supportive of the school but are not effective critical friends to the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Poor. Very little analysis of standards or monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning have been undertaken.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory.

As in many small schools, the headteacher has an extensive teaching commitment. This has significantly limited the time available for key management tasks. As a result little has been done to identify what the school does well and what could be improved. Governors have not been encouraged to question results and teachers have not been expected to monitor and evaluate standards and quality in their own subjects. The acting headteacher has already recognised the need to tackle these weaknesses. The school has sufficient resources to support teaching and learning but its accommodation limits what can be done in subjects, such as physical education and ICT. Because of the weaknesses described above, the school is not able to make effective use of the principles of best value when planning developments and using its the budget.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school, work hard and make good progress. • Behaviour is good. • Teaching is good and staff are approachable and helpful. • There are interesting things for children to do out of lessons. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some parents would like more information about what their children will be learning.

The parents are very positive about the school. The inspectors agree with most of the strengths identified by parents. They believe that pupils would make better progress if assessment was more effective and have identified weaknesses in leadership and management. The information given to parents about what their children will be learning is good in Years 1 and 2 but could be more helpful elsewhere in the school.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1 As in all small schools, care must be taken when comparing its results with national results and with those in similar schools (based on entitlement to free school meals). Because so few pupils take the national tests in Years 2 and 6, results can vary considerably from year to year. If an average is taken over a number of years then this variation is evened out to an extent. Over the last three years, results for Year 6 pupils have been close to but just below those nationally in English, while those in mathematics and science have been above the average. There is no national data by which results over time in one school can be compared to results over time in similar schools. In 2001, the English results were poor compared to those in all schools and very poor compared to those in similar schools; but this particular year did contain pupils who had very specific learning difficulties related to language development and this has depressed the three year average considerably. The school's records for the pupils who took the tests in Year 6 show that they achieved in line with what could reasonably have been expected. The Year 2 results over a similar period have been in line with national averages in reading and writing and above them in mathematics. Girls have achieved better than boys in the national tests in both Year 2 and Year 6. The school has met the targets it has been setting itself for results in the national tests at Year 6.

2 The inspection found standards to be better than previous test results would indicate. In both English and mathematics, pupils are attaining above national expectations by both Year 2 and Year 6 and in science they are attaining in line with expectations. Because of the small numbers of pupils in each year group it is not possible to see any clear pattern of difference in the attainment of boys and girls. As the pupils' attainment on entry to the school is mostly above average, overall, pupils are achieving appropriately.

3 In English, pupils have good speaking and listening skills and confidently contribute in discussions. By Year 2, pupils read with expression and use phonic skills well and by Year 6 they are able to read a wide range of texts with good understanding. Handwriting is not as well developed as other aspects of writing by Year 2, but pupils express their ideas well and make effective use of punctuation. Pupils in Year 6 present their work with pride and are keen and effective writers, who use different styles well.

4 Pupils have good skills in working out mathematical questions in their heads and have good knowledge of number facts and tables. They confidently use a range of appropriate strategies when calculating and work accurately on paper. By Year 6, they have a good understanding of mathematical terminology and a balanced understanding across the different aspects of the subject.

5 Pupils' attainment in science is not always well balanced between the different strands of the subject. For example, by Year 2 pupils have a good knowledge and understanding of living things and satisfactory knowledge of physical processes, such as light, sound and electricity. By Year 6, pupils also have good knowledge and understanding of living things and satisfactory attainment in most of the other strands, although their understanding and skills in devising and undertaking fair tests and investigations are a weakness.

6 There are some real strengths in other subjects, for example in geography in Years 1 to 6 and standards across the school are high in art. Pupils also achieve well in swimming reflecting the good provision made for this aspect of physical education. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 attain above expectations in history and ICT. Standards in ICT are clearly better than at the time of the last inspection although they are still just below expectations by Year 6. Pupils are now making good progress in using computers and are rapidly closing the gap as a result of the good teaching provided by the specialist teacher employed by the school.

7 Children in Year R, who are in the Foundation Stage, are on course to exceed the learning goals for personal, social and emotional development; communication, language, and literacy; mathematical development; and their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are on course to achieve the goals for physical and creative development.

8 The progress made by pupils with special educational needs could be better. Their individual education plans are too vague to ensure well-focused support. However, the school has made good provision for higher attaining pupils by, for example arranging for them to be taught with older pupils and as a result they make good progress.

9 Overall standards are appropriate, given the pupils' attainment on entry to school. This reflects teaching that is mostly good but insufficient use is made of assessment to fine tune teaching and learning in order to raise standards further. Standards have been maintained at similar levels to those found at the time of the last inspection.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

10 Pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are very good. Pupils' attendance at the school is satisfactory.

11 There were many examples observed throughout the inspection week in which pupils displayed very good attitudes both to their work and to their fellow pupils and teachers. Pupils were also observed to be very respectful to the inspection team and to other visitors to the school. There is no documentary evidence of unsatisfactory attitudes displayed in the classroom or around the school and there have been no recent exclusions. Most pupils display a significant enthusiasm for school and an interest in curricular activities. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 were seen to be very enthusiastic and very much involved in a music lesson in which they were encouraged to develop their skills in performing clapping and skipping rhymes. Pupils were also observed to enhance their spirituality through the reading and writing of poetry and through their quiet observation and reflection during the daily act of collective worship.

12 Pupils' behaviour in lessons and in the school hall is very good and it was sometimes excellent as observed in a Key Stage 2 art lesson. During a school assembly, children were delighted to see a computerised presentation of journeys linked to story telling and this had a significant moral and spiritual theme. A few children are a little hesitant with regard to the school rules and many pupils are not aware of how well they are achieving and what they need to do to improve. Older pupils have a good understanding of how people in other parts of the world live, as a result of the school's effective use of the BBC 'Newsround' programme.

13 The day-to-day relationships between pupils and teachers are good and pupils get on very well with each other in the playground and in classrooms. Older pupils show real care and concern for younger ones in the paired reading sessions. Pupils carry out a wide range of tasks responsibly for teachers, such as taking attendance registers to the office, setting out chairs and operating the computer for assembly, tidying up classrooms and giving out

books and other resources. Children enjoy participating in the good range of extra-curricular activities.

14 The overall attendance at the school is satisfactory and is broadly in line with the national average. The incidence of unauthorised absence is low and is below the national average.

15 The attitudes, behaviour and personal development of pupils are very good, reflecting the high expectations that teachers place on them. They are now significant strengths of the school and noticeably better than at the time of the last inspection when they were judged to be satisfactory overall.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

16 Teaching is good. It varies from being satisfactory for pupils in Year R to good across Years 1 to 6. Literacy and numeracy are taught well, but as in much of the teaching in the school there are some inconsistencies and variations found between classes. In Year 3 to 6 there are some significant strengths in the teaching of literacy that contribute well to pupils' learning but also some relative weaknesses that limit their overall attainment. The teacher, who takes all the pupils in Year 3 to 6 for English lessons, has a real love of language and literature and this enthuses the pupils and leads to some very good quality work. However, the planning of the lessons for these pupils is not sufficiently focused on the literacy framework and is not always followed in practice and as a result teaching does not ensure that pupils will cover all the aspects of English they could be tested in. Similar weaknesses are also seen in the planning for other subjects, such as history, in Years 5 and 6. The teaching of literacy is much more tightly focused in Years 1 and 2 and all other subjects in Year 1 to 4. Objectives are clearly identified for lessons and carefully explained to pupils, which successfully enables them to work with their teachers. A similar and equally effective approach is seen in numeracy lessons in Year 3 to 6, all of which are taught by one teacher.

17 Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and ensure that they work hard and no time is wasted in lessons. Teachers benefit from generous levels of help from parents and they make very effective use of both parents and classroom assistants to support groups and individual pupils. This enables those who have special educational needs to access learning and to achieve the objectives identified in the lessons. However, their individual education plans are very general and do not provide teachers with guidance that would enable them to plan activities that would also enable these pupils to work towards improving their particular learning difficulties. This limits the overall progress they make.

18 There are very high expectations placed on pupils to present what they do to a high standard in Years 5 and 6 and this is reflected in their finished pieces, particularly in English and in art. Less stress is placed in presentation elsewhere in the school, and, with the exception of art, presentation is satisfactory. Art is taught well across the school and pupils respond very well to the challenges regarding quality and care that they are set.

19 Teachers are knowledgeable about subjects, particularly in art. They provide clear explanations and effectively question pupils, which helps to ensure that they achieve the intended learning by the end of lessons. Teachers often make good use of resources to make learning more interesting and to enable pupils to develop their skills, such as observing and recording in some science lessons, where fresh fruits were used in Years 1 and 2 and plants in Years 3 to 6.

20 The planning of lessons in Year R is not always effectively balanced between teacher-directed sessions and pupil-initiated exploration and play. This can limit the effectiveness of pupils' learning; for example, in the creative aspects of their development pupils have few opportunities to experiment with and discover the properties of paint and other materials. Basic skills in literacy and numeracy are well taught and are leading to pupils making at least satisfactory progress in these areas but the youngest pupils find it difficult to maintain their attention through these long sessions.

21 The quality and effectiveness of marking lack consistency. In Years 5 and 6 and in English across Years 3 to 6 pupils' work is marked very conscientiously but is not as effective in helping pupils to improve as it could be. Too often the teacher polishes pupils' work and does not encourage them to look for ways of making it better themselves. Marking elsewhere is satisfactory and in Years 1 and 2 the teacher's ongoing assessments have recently been used to provide pupils with individual learning targets that are beginning to give them a clear idea of what they need to do to improve. This approach is appropriate and should help to raise attainment over time, if it is maintained.

22 Homework is set regularly and marked carefully and is used well to extend and enhance what is covered in class, for example providing opportunities for pupils to write, often at length, for different purposes.

23 Teaching has improved since the last inspection when it was judged to be satisfactory. All of the teachers have joined the school after the last inspection. Work is better matched to different groups of pupils, although tackling weaknesses still evident in assessing pupils' learning would improve this further, particularly for pupils with special educational needs. The teaching of ICT is clearly much better as a result of the input from the specialist teacher employed by the school.

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

24 The curriculum has improved since the last inspection. The long-term plan ensures that statutory requirements are met and that provision is broad and satisfactorily balanced. By planning for all subjects within a two-year cycle for Key Stage 1 and a four-year cycle for Key Stage 2 the school provides effectively for the mixed-age classes. National model schemes of work have been adopted and give appropriate structure with units of work appropriately allocated across the cycle to help progression and to prevent repetition. These units provide a firm foundation for planning lessons for each half term. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies have mostly been satisfactorily implemented although the literacy strategy is not always followed closely enough in Years 3 to 6 and the school cannot be sure that all the elements are effectively covered. Additional literacy support materials are used appropriately with identified groups

25 The school provides very limited space for physical education but this is compensated for to a considerable extent by the good provision made for swimming which results in high standards in this strand of the subject.

26 The curriculum for children in the Foundation Stage, who are in the reception class, is appropriately based on the early learning goals that are identified for them and the National Curriculum. In practice, it does not always enable children to learn sufficiently through carefully planned play activities, and overlong literacy and numeracy lessons are tiring for some of the youngest children.

27 Good opportunities are sometimes identified, and used well, to link learning in English, mathematics and ICT to other subjects. For example, Year 5 and 6 pupils had written sensitively about their exciting visit to the art gallery in Norwich. In geography, Year 3 and 4 pupils have used their reference and research skills to gather information about countries from across the world, while Year 1 and 2 pupils have used a series of graphs to show how the weather changes with the seasons.

28 The provision for pupils with special education needs is satisfactory in Years R to 2 but is weaker in Years 3 to 6, where there are fewer helpers to support groups and individuals. Although the requirements of the current Code of Practice are met, work remains to be done to implement the new code. The major weakness in the provision made for special educational needs is found in the individual education plans of pupils. These are too general. They do not identify specific needs of the pupil, nor set appropriate targets for improvement that can be used to inform teachers' planning or to monitor and evaluate progress made before identifying what these pupils need to learn next. Good care has been taken to meet the needs of the more able pupils by rearranging the timetable to accommodate them when necessary and by enabling a group of Year 6 pupils to attend a mathematics club at the secondary school.

29 The statutory curriculum is broadened by the inclusion of personal, social and health education and the governors' statement on sex education now includes an appropriate addendum about parents' rights to withdraw their child. However, there is no written and agreed statement for the inclusion of education about drug misuse.

30 Learning opportunities are enriched and extended by the effective use made of the school's grounds, visits to places of interest, both locally and further afield, including residential experiences and a good range of out of class activities and additional provision. These include French, recorders, art club, various sporting activities and instrumental tuition. Each year there is a whole-school production that involves everyone and is one of the highlights for pupils, staff and parents. The links to the church are strong and add important opportunities that enhance the wider curriculum.

31 Overall, the provision for spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is very good. This is a marked improvement from the previous inspection when it was judged as satisfactory. Parents are very happy with this aspect of school provision.

32 Spiritual awareness is developed within the Christian ethos of the school and is very good. The vicar is a regular visitor and leads assemblies. Assemblies generally provide a suitable context for pupils to reflect on important aspects of in their lives, for example, in considering issues such as forgiveness. The religious education syllabus includes lessons about different faiths, contributing to both spiritual and cultural development. Pupils are being encouraged to understand faith and commitment and why religious artefacts are considered to be so special. Years 1 and 2 visited the church to understand and sense its special and spiritual atmosphere as well as to observe the building and the symbols of the Christian church. Teachers use opportunities to foster a sense of awe and wonder when these occur, such as the beauty of the structure of a flower and its component parts, their complex construction and purpose. Poetry and stories are used well to encourage reflection and the consideration of the issues of spiritual development; these include the beauties of the natural world and events that help pupils think about other people and communities. There were examples of writing with sensitivity and empathy following the Queen Mother's death and the volcanic eruptions in Congo.

33 The provision for pupils' moral development is good. There is a very clear ethos in which pupils know and understand right from wrong and the consequences of their behaviour

on others. Personal and social education lessons include good opportunities to consider issues, such as the qualities of a good friendship and caring for others. Teachers respond quickly to situations and help pupils to understand and learn when their behaviour falls short of the expected high standard. For instance a group laughed at a wrong answer and the teacher carefully explained how we learn from mistakes and used it as a positive teaching point.

34 Provision for pupils' social development is very good. There are regular opportunities for pupils to work co-operatively with one another, both within their own year group and with pupils from other year groups. Relationships throughout the school are very good and there are many strategies in place to develop and maintain a family atmosphere. In assemblies pupils sit in a 'House System' to encourage social mixing. In lessons, teachers expect pupils to consider how to work together effectively, for example in science, ICT and design and technology. Pupils are encouraged to care for each other: at meal times older pupils ensure the younger ones can manage their packed lunch or school meal. In the paired reading session there is a complete mix of age groups working together in a most constructive way. The residential visit made by the older pupils provides a valuable opportunity for them to gain independence and to develop their social skills.

35 The school's provision for pupils' cultural development is good. There are visits to galleries and cultural centres. The religious education programme enables pupils to learn about their own culture and several major faiths. Other subjects, such as geography, history and English, include opportunities for pupils to learn about cultural traditions of the past and present. The school uses the strong link with the church and with the local area to foster an understanding of aspects of the pupils' own culture. When buying new resources and artefacts for English, history, geography and religious education, care is taken to ensure they promote cultural and multi-cultural education as part of a diverse society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

36 The procedures for child protection, pupils' welfare are satisfactory but there are weaknesses in the monitoring and supporting of their academic progress.

37 Child protection procedures are in place and effective. The teaching staff, well supported by the classroom assistants and a significant number of parents, know their pupils well and, as a team, they provide a positive level of welfare support and guidance. During the inspection there were a few examples of pupils receiving minor bumps in the school yard and the lunchtime supervisors and administrative staff were quick to offer an appropriate level of care. Detailed records are maintained of all accidents and there is a separate head bump book. The system for informing parents about pupils' accidents is inconsistent. The necessary health and safety checks are undertaken and there is a termly fire drill.

38 The present system of monitoring the individual levels of pupil attendance is unsatisfactory, mainly because it is not clear when pupils are marked late in registers. The administration of medicine to pupils is effectively undertaken by trained staff.

39 The school has few formal systems for monitoring and managing behaviour, mainly because this is not an issue at this school. The success of this low-key approach can be seen in the very positive pupil attitudes and very good behaviour in the classroom and around the school. The school acknowledges pupils' individual achievements through the praise given to them in the classroom and, more formally, during merit and reward assemblies in which both pupils' and house team successes are shared. This works well in motivating pupils and making them feel good about themselves.

40 The satisfactory procedures for assessment described in the previous report have not been sustained. Although the school has some measures in place, current procedures and practice are unsatisfactory.

41 The children are assessed when they come into the school using two baseline procedures in line with the local education authority's guidance. However, since all the children start in September and many of the current reception class are very young with summer term birthdays, the assessments do not give reliable information by which to judge or predict their attainment or to enable valid comparisons to be made with other schools who administer the tests differently. Some ongoing information is collected on number and letter recognition and some examples of reception children's work are maintained in folders. Since there is no rationale for keeping these, nor are examples dated, they are not useful in terms of showing children's progress. As written records are not maintained, the folders are the only system for providing examples of children's current attainment.

42 In Key Stage 1 and 2, there are some strengths in assessment but more weaknesses. Practice and procedures are inconsistent. For instance, in 2000 a portfolio of work in English was created with good examples which showed how assessments were made and matched to the criteria in the National Curriculum. Nothing was added in 2001 and the samples which were included in 2002 are only awarded levels. Pupils' work, including homework, is marked extremely conscientiously in Key Stage 2, but comments are always positive and never say how the pupils could improve. As a result, the pupils say that they are doing well but have no knowledge of how well or what they can work on to improve. In addition, the teacher's practice of suggesting improvements on drafts which pupils copy up, leads to pieces of work which are of a better standard than pupils can write by themselves. In Year 1 and Year 2, targets have recently been introduced for English. The children have responded positively to these and are beginning to understand what they need to do to get better. This approach could usefully be used in Years 3 to 6 in order to improve learning and raise standards further. At present the only consistent practice for keeping records is the tracking system that records individual pupils' levels in statutory and non-statutory national tests. In almost all subjects, no records are kept of pupils' progress in meeting key learning objectives. The exception is ICT, where the specialist advisory teacher has established a good system for assessing and recording pupils' progress. Test information is not analysed to identify strengths and weaknesses in the learning of individuals and groups.

43 Pupils with special educational needs are successfully identified but their individual education plans contain very general statements. As a result, they are an unsatisfactory record of how pupils' needs were assessed, what those needs are, how they will be met and what progress has been made in meeting them.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44 Parents' views of the school are very positive, as are the school's links with parents. The impact of parental involvement with the school is excellent and the information provided to parents about pupils' progress is good.

45 A large majority of parents who completed the questionnaire are very supportive of the school and of its aims and objectives. Parents feel that their children like school and that they are making good progress. However, a small minority of parents felt that would like more information about what their children would be learning.

46 School academic reports provide a good level of information to parents in terms of the general details of what their children have been studying over the past year and of the progress they have made. The depth of information about future targets for improvement are a little limited and the attendance information provided does not always meet with statutory requirements because the level of absence is not clearly shown. Parents really appreciate the monthly 'drop in' sessions that enable them to discuss their children's progress. They believe that these complement well the autumn and spring term consultation evenings. The school also sends out regular newsletters to keep parents informed and these provide a good level of detail, covering curricular topics and other relevant domestic issues. The governors' report to parents is good and provides parents with detail of the school's progress and activities over the past 12 months. Parents are provided with a useful overview of what is going to be taught. One teacher provides a more detailed half-termly breakdown which parents like and which enables them to help their children at home and to provide resources to support learning in school. This approach could profitably be extended into other classes. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are appropriately involved in the reviews of their children's individual education plans.

47 A significant number of parents are regular visitors to the school and provide classroom support, helping with groups, listening to pupils read and assisting with extra-curricular activities. There are also a wide range of external visitors to the school who provide academic, medical, and pastoral support to both pupils and parents. The school's parents and teachers association is a very active and effective body that raises large amounts of money each year as well as organising many social events. Their efforts have paid for a climbing frame, crash mats for physical education, a kiln and a cooker and the pupils' pantomime tickets. Governors, many of whom are parents, also provide a considerable amount of their own time, making improvements to the physical environment of the school.

48 The day-to-day partnership with parents is a major factor in the life of this school and it has a very positive impact on pupils' personal development and achievement and was very successfully promoted by the previous headteacher.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49 The leadership and management of the school have been unsatisfactory. At present the school is being led by an acting headteacher from the local education authority's team of supply headteachers. He had been in post for only a week prior to the start of the inspection and was still finding out about the school. Despite this he has already identified several important areas for development and has the appropriate experience to guide the school until a permanent headteacher is appointed.

50 The previous headteacher had very little time free from teaching to devote to key aspects of his role. He did put considerable effort into improving the image of the school in the community and has been very successful in this. However, virtually no monitoring of teaching and learning has been undertaken in the school. There has been no analysis of test information to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and the present arrangements for assessing and recording the progress that pupils make are inadequate. The programme for performance management is behind schedule and provides little information to inform planning for the staff's professional development. All of these deficiencies make it difficult for the headteacher and governors to identify what the school does well and where it needs to improve.

51 Despite the above, improvements have been made to how the school plans developments. Governors and staff are fully involved in the process and use their personal

knowledge of the school to identify priorities to tackle. These are more focused on raising standards than at the time of the last inspection and developments are planned over more than one year and are now linked to the school's budget. However, the priorities would be sharper and more helpful in raising standards if they were based on analysis and evaluation of test information, pupils' ongoing learning and the quality of teaching and curriculum provision.

52 Governors are very enthusiastic and show great commitment to the school through their weekly meetings, working groups and support in classrooms. They have a sound understanding of the school's general strengths and weaknesses through their personal visits but their ability to be effective 'critical friends' is hampered by lack of detailed management information and, to a certain extent, training in using useful data that is made available by government departments and the local education authority. Aspects of their work, such as the overseeing of special educational needs provision, also need to be sharpened, to ensure that provision is as effective as it could be.

53 Teachers' roles as co-ordinators of subjects are underdeveloped. They are appropriately involved in producing policies and managing resources but have not been expected or given training and time to undertake the monitoring and evaluation of teaching and learning. They do not analyse pupils' work, evaluate the effectiveness of teachers' planning for subjects or, in the core subjects, analyse test information to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning.

54 The school's budget is effectively managed and careful account is taken of all the funding that is available to ensure that planned developments can be achieved despite the financial constraints imposed by small carry forwards. Governors have not had training in the use of best value principles and are given little relevant information that would enable them to make effective use of them when making decisions.

55 The school does provide satisfactory equal opportunities to pupils and staff in the school but because little analysis and evaluation, for example of the performance of boys and girls, is undertaken, it has no relevant information that would enable it to check that this is the case.

56 The resources to support teaching and learning are satisfactory. However, the current and the planned accommodation for ICT resources (based in a classroom used to teach a class) are unsatisfactory and make it difficult to effectively manage the teaching of ICT. The hall is also very small and provides an inappropriate space for teaching gymnastics.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

57 In order to raise standards and further improve the quality of teaching and learning the governors, headteacher and staff should:

1 Improve leadership and management by:

- Reviewing the roles of teachers so that they are fully involved in monitoring and evaluating standards and the quality of teaching and learning in the subject they are responsible for. This could involve monitoring planning, sampling pupils' work and, when appropriate, observing lessons.
- Providing sufficient time for the headteacher to undertake leadership and management responsibilities, and for teachers, in their roles as subject leaders, to undertake their monitoring and evaluation roles.
- Providing governors with training so that they can become more effective in their roles as critical friends.

Please refer to paragraphs 50, 52, 53, and 54.

2 Monitor and evaluate the standards achieved by pupils and the quality of the education they receive by:

- Analysing national test results and non-statutory test results to identify where there are strengths and weaknesses in what pupils know, understand and can do; and, using the information gained to tackle any weaknesses.
- Establishing programmes to check the effectiveness of teachers' planning, to examine the work that pupils do and to observe lessons; and, using the information to help teachers to become more effective and to tackle any weaknesses that are evident in pupils' completed work.

Please refer to paragraphs 42, 50, 53, 86, 93, and 101.

3 Establish manageable systems to assess and record the progress that pupils make in achieving the learning that is planned for them. This information should be used together with information from other assessments, such as standardised tests and special needs assessments to:

- help teachers' fine tune their planning to ensure that their teaching is well matched to pupils' needs;
- provide pupils with appropriate learning targets that they can work towards;
- provide pupils with special educational needs and their parents with clear, precise and manageable targets that are well matched to their particular needs.

Please refer to paragraphs 21, 41, 42, 43, 85, 92 and 100

58 In addition to the above the school should also consider the following minor issues:

1. Provide better balance within sessions in the reception class so that pupils have more opportunity to learn through purposeful play activities and to ensure that literacy and numeracy sessions are not overlong for the youngest children (*paragraphs 20, 26, 62, 66, 74 and 77*);
2. Accelerate the programme for performance management so that it can provide useful information to inform the planning of staff development (*paragraph 50*);
3. Improve the monitoring of pupils' attendance by ensuring that lateness is recorded properly (*paragraph 38*).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	31
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	16

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	2	18	6	1	0	0
Percentage	0	7	67	22	4	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	0	81
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	0	2

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs

	Nursery	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	0	15

English as an additional language

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	8
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	9

Attendance

Authorised absence

%

Unauthorised absence

%

School data	5.4
National comparative data	5.6

School data	0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year. The numbers of boys and girls tested were too small to include in the table below.	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	9	7	16

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	NA	NA	NA
	Girls	NA	NA	NA
	Total	14	15	15
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (100)	94 (100)	94 (100)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	NA	NA	NA
	Girls	NA	NA	NA
	Total	14	15	16
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	88 (100)	94 (100)	100 (100)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

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

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year. The numbers of boys and girls tested were too small to include in the table below.	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2001	5	6	11

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	NA	NA	NA
	Girls	NA	NA	NA
	Total	7	11	11
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (100)	100 (83)	100 (83)
	National	75 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	NA	NA	NA
	Girls	NA	NA	NA
	Total	8	11	11
Percentage of pupils	School	73 (67)	100 (83)	100 (83)

at NC level 4 or above	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)
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Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	81
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	18.8
Average class size	20

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	3
Total aggregate hours worked per week	46

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

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

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2001
	£
Total income	164,310
Total expenditure	161,636
Expenditure per pupil	2,485
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,882
Balance carried forward to next year	6,566

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	1.3

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	1
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.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	81
Number of questionnaires returned	43

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	77	21	0	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	74	21	5	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	47	51	0	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	37	47	12	0	5
The teaching is good.	84	14	2	0	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	63	28	9	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	81	14	5	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	84	12	5	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	67	26	7	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	77	19	2	0	2
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	65	26	7	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	67	26	7	0	0

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59 Children are admitted to the school in September in the year of their fifth birthday, sometimes on a part-time basis until the term they are five. At present there are 17 children in the reception class with birthdays spanning the year. Few children had birthdays in the autumn term and a large group in the spring term which makes the class still comparatively young. This makes the baseline assessments completed in the first half term difficult to use in comparisons with other schools in Norfolk since there is no system for comparisons which take account of age. However, based on observations of where they are now and discussions with the class teacher, this current class started with above average skills. Their attainment exceeds the national expectations in personal, social and emotional development, in communication, language and literacy, and also in mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world. Many are working within the first level of the National Curriculum. As they started with above average skills, this is what you would expect to find and therefore they are making satisfactory progress.

Personal, social and emotional development

60 There is good provision for this area of the children's development and the school often makes profitable use of its smallness to support younger pupils. For example, older pupils are matched with younger ones to help with paired reading; the reception class goes swimming with older ones who help to look after them; the house system is reflected in assemblies where the youngest children can sit with others they know. The school's openness also helps to make children confident. Parents delivering and collecting children have time to talk to the teacher and share information at the start and finish of the day and there are regular helpers in class who extend the children's social skills. Consequently the children are confident, friendly and at ease with adults and with each other.

61 The adults provide good role models for children. They are constantly cheerful and polite with children, parents and each other and this creates a warm ethos where children feel safe and secure. Children are expected to be polite, to share and take turns, for example when they are answering questions during class sessions or playing together. They are corrected firmly if this does not happen as was the case when children were making a garden in a soil tray. One did not want to share her flowers and was getting quite difficult but was quickly and firmly corrected by the classroom assistant.

62 There are some opportunities for children to select their own resources and activities but these are limited by the more formal structure of the teaching and also by the smallness of the room which means the equipment is quite often put out for the children. However, when the chance is offered, the children are quite capable of making their own decisions.

63 Children celebrate special occasions in their personal lives, such as birthdays, and they learn about the faiths and beliefs of others with a strong emphasis on Christianity which can be seen in their pictures and stories about Jesus.

Communication, language and literacy

64 Children are exceeding the expectations for this area of learning and many are reading and writing quite competently. Children enjoy listening to stories and most are patient in listening to instructions about what they are going to do. Almost all of the children talk happily to each other to explain what they are doing or to ask for information. Children ask

questions to satisfy their curiosity and adults encourage conversations, especially during more informal activities.

65 Children handle books with care and turn pages correctly. Because they are used to sharing books, they can tell themselves stories from pictures when the text is too difficult to read. At this point of the year, almost all of the children have begun to read simple words and phrases. The most competent are reading well and the least competent can recognise at least their names. The literacy hour is being followed. As they looked at the Big Book together, many of the children were able to read a good amount of the text and others followed their lead. Children develop a good understanding of letter names and sounds through the good teaching of phonic skills. Some recognise the letters and sounds of all of the alphabet and can construct simple three-letter words as they play a game with bean bags. All can write their names; some are writing simple stories or retelling well-known ones such as 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears' and others can write a number of words independently or copy stories.

66 Because the class size is small and there are often three adults in the room, the children are closely supervised and work quite intently for extended periods of time on literacy activities. This limits the opportunities they have to develop language skills through role-play and similar activities. It is also too long and intense when children follow a literacy hour with a very short outdoor play and then paired reading. Some children, especially the youngest, were too tired to concentrate on reading with their partner.

Mathematical development.

67 At this point of the year, most children have exceeded the expectations for reception class and are working within level 1 of the National Curriculum. They can count, some up to 50 with confidence, order numbers to 10, undertake formal written sums to 10 and sometimes beyond, and understand what one more or less means although they are not so correct with answers which involve less than. They recognise coins and can put together simple sums of money involving pence. Children's folders contain examples of work on measurements and graphs as well as sequences of shapes.

68 The one lesson that was seen was well taught. It got off to a good start with oral work which involved the pupils and showed them to be keen and enthusiastic as well as confident with numbers. Practical work was varied and well supported by adults to ensure that children could succeed at the tasks. As a result, children worked well and made good progress in the lesson.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

69 Children are likely to exceed the expectations in this area of learning.

70 Planning for science is more in line with the guidance in the National Curriculum at level 1 but the lesson seen was an appropriate experience for the children. During the first part of the lesson the class discussed a runner bean and what the various parts of the plant are called. Children showed their interest in the attention they gave to the discussion and through the questions that they asked. They all knew about leaves, referred to the stalk rather than the stem and began by likening the roots to grass or hair. However, once they learned that these were roots, they were able to apply the correct term to a different plant. The teacher asked some challenging questions that really made the children think as they discussed what plants eat and how food gets inside when a plant has not got a mouth. A weakness was that the taught part of the lesson for the class was effective, but the children's activities were too short and there were not enough alternatives for them to move on to once

the science tasks were completed, resulting in too many children in the very small garden shop and some quite aimless activity from a few.

71 During an outside play activity, a group of children tried to make a trolley from large construction equipment. They knew that the pictures helped by giving them a plan to follow and worked with enthusiasm to join sections together. Unfortunately the task had to be abandoned because they were unable to join sections together with what was available.

72 Children are very confident with computers and quite happily used a program about the natural world which linked to the work they had been doing in science. Although the text was too difficult for them to follow by themselves, they obviously knew how to use a mouse and click on to various buttons and icons to make changes on the screen. In a session led by a visiting teacher, they talked about the various parts such as the screen, keyboard and mouse. The children did well to listen to the teacher's instructions for so long. Later, one of them produced a flag using an art program which showed that the instructions had been absorbed and followed carefully.

73 There are good opportunities for children to develop a sense of time through work such as that on old and new toys when they begin to learn about the past and compare it to the present.

Physical development

74 The children demonstrated typical skills in the activities seen. In a short 10-minute session outside, they put together a small obstacle course. They balanced across beams or jumped in and out of hoops or over small sticks safely. The time was too restricted to give them better experience and the teachers were more involved in this short space of time in helping their pupils to put the equipment out and away than to develop their skills. Once the course was completed, children moved in a circle around and this resulted in some longer queues in some parts and less profitable use of time because of this. The children have the additional experience of learning to swim and the teacher reports that some of them are confident in water and are beginning to put several strokes together.

75 Pupils develop their hand and eye co-ordination as they use small tools, such as scissors, pencils and paintbrushes, or put together pieces of construction equipment which involve screwing or pressing pieces together. Some of them use pencils, crayons and paintbrushes skilfully and with good control whereas others have skills which are typical for reception class children.

Creative development

76 Overall, arrangements for children's creative development are satisfactory as are their standards and the teaching and learning. Currently their imaginative play is linked to a garden shop which they are helping to create. It occupies a small area which is sufficient for a few pupils but does not promote effective play when a lot of children use it at the same time. The children have a music lesson once a week and this forms the bulk of their experience with music. During a lesson that was observed the pupils were able to choose instruments and could identify long and short notes as they played them. Artwork is quite tightly structured and supervised. During the week, the children made garden gnomes of clay with a parent helping them and painted pictures with spots and stripes. Work on the walls and in their folders shows that a good range of techniques is covered and that pupils do particularly well in their observational drawings such as those of spring flowers. As in the main part of the school, artwork is sometimes inspired by nature and also by the work of

artists. In the reception class, the children have made splash pictures that represent the style of Jackson Pollack.

Teaching

77 Overall, teaching in each of the areas for learning is satisfactory. Although a baseline assessment is completed in the first half term, other forms of assessment are limited and there are very few useful records of pupils' progress. Teaching is much more geared to the National Curriculum than to the curriculum for younger children and the good work on teaching specific skills is not balanced by sufficient attention to children learning through play and experimentation. Some sessions are well balanced, with activities directed by the teacher and those that pupils can choose, and some are too formal, without a sufficiently wide range of activity for the children. Adults working with the children are positive and supportive, and together they create a secure and welcoming classroom that helps children to become confident. Parents are welcomed and good links formed early on through informal daily contact as well as through the opportunities parents have to help in classrooms.

ENGLISH

78 Standards vary from year to year but are currently above average by Year 6 and Year 2. This represents a satisfactory level of achievement given that pupils also start with above average skills and knowledge.

79 By the time they are seven and eleven, pupils have good speaking and listening skills. They talk with confidence in social situations as well as in response to questions and discussions in lessons. A good example of this confidence, and also of their curiosity and interest, was noted when Year 2 pupils talked informally as they walked to the park to do work in design and technology. They remarked on the similarity between the inspector's accent and their teacher's and discussed the differences between those two northern accents and their own in a very mature way.

80 Reading is above average at the ages of seven and eleven. Pupils start in Year 1 with a good knowledge of sounds and many are already reading simple phrases and sentences. Younger pupils read to older ones and books are regularly taken home so that by Year 2 most read well. They can use voice to show character as when Years 1 and 2 read as a class a play version of the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff'. Years 3 and 4 read a folk tale together, confidently modelling themselves on the teacher's style. They were quick to answer questions and showed a good understanding as they explored the vocabulary. By Year 6, pupils read a wide range of literature for pleasure including Enid Blyton, Tolkien, poetry anthologies and non-fiction. Lower attaining pupils are quite competent. They read more slowly and sometimes need to pause before sounding new words out. Higher attaining pupils read with confidence, expression and understanding. One was able to tackle a difficult information book and had only the slightest difficulty with terms in Latin. This did not stop her from being able to discuss the contents with understanding. In lessons, pupils are encouraged to read and consider the work of authors such as Roald Dahl to see how authors create their own style.

81 Pupils usually start in Year 1 with the confidence to write short phrases by themselves and by Year 2 they write down their ideas in several subjects and with different styles. Their work is not always carefully presented but their ideas are good. There is a developing awareness of punctuation and higher attainers are starting to use speech marks in the correct places. A joined-up style is taught in Years 1 and 2 although few of the pupils use it consistently. By Year 6, pupils have become confident writers with a keenness to

present their work well and an evident pride in what they do. A feature of pupils' writing throughout Key Stage 2 is that always they produce a first draft, even in their homework, and the final pieces are beautifully written into their books. There is an unusual amount of poetry and pupils often choose this as their preferred way of writing. They experiment with different styles such as when they study Ted Hughes' poem about a March morning and reproduce it or when they write about snowdrops :-

Drips of paint
Run down
The delicate edges
Of the petals

Work in history, geography and about the news sometimes gives good opportunities for pupils to write, as when they wrote moving poems about the Queen Mother's death, but sometimes too much emphasis is placed on presentation and the completion of set tasks, and opportunities for pupils to hone their broader writing skills are missed. Handwriting quickly develops in Years 3 and 4 so that by the end of the key stage, all pupils write with a neat, legible joined-up style.

82 Teaching in Years 3 to 6 is good. All the literacy lessons in both the classes are taught by one teacher. A significant strength is the love of language that is transferred from teacher to pupils. Pupils like to write and this shows particularly in their homework where they take the same care of preparation and completion as can be seen in classwork and where pupils choose to write poetry as often as prose. Marking is very conscientious and equally thorough for homework. Comments are written with care to praise pupils' work but do not offer criticism or ways forward. Consequently, although pupils believe that they are doing well, they do not know how well nor how they could improve. Often the teacher puts better words, phrases or constructions in draft work that the pupils copy up. This makes the finished pieces of a higher standard than the drafts but does not make an equal impact on pupils' learning. It is a reason why pupils' assessed unaided work, especially at the higher levels 5 and 6, is lower in test situations than their corrected work. Reports of pupils' work to parents at the end of the year are written with a better balance and do contain criticisms and points for development. Planning is loosely in a literacy format, a little vague and not always carried out. Although there are clear indications on the planning of what the teacher intends to assess, there is no mechanism for recording this for others to see.

83 Teaching at Key Stage 1 is good. Planning for the literacy hour is succinct but clear. Phonic skills are taught well so that pupils use them effectively and this supports their writing and spelling. Very good use is made of the parents who help in classrooms. During the inspection, there were two or three parents in a lesson which meant that each group had help and the teacher was able to spend her time intently focused on the pupils she was working with. Literacy targets have begun to be set so that pupils are very clear about their personal targets for improvement. Some records and assessments are being kept but there is no systematic use of assessment.

84 Teaching assistants provide useful extra help with literacy to small groups of pupils in each key stage. Whilst some of their work is with pupils who are having some difficulty, at other times they work with different groups, supporting specific skills such as work with Year 2 on suffixes and prefixes.

85 Many of the pupils who are on the school's register for special educational needs have identified literacy needs but the individual education plans are not written with precise enough targets to guide the person helping or to act as a basis for checking progress. Typical

of these was a target on a Year 2 pupil's individual education plan, which said, 'continue with look and say vocabulary and other reading skills'.

86 In such a small school, having a co-ordinator for each key stage is inefficient since each is co-ordinating only their own work and there are no systems for monitoring across into the other key stage. Co-ordinators have a general view of standards and progress but have not been involved in evaluating information, such as that provided in the tracking system or the analysis of test information.

MATHEMATICS

87 Standards in mathematics found during the inspection are above expectations by both Year 6 and Year 2. Results inevitably vary from year to year because of the small numbers of pupils being tested. They have been above national averages, when taken over a number of years, and are appropriate given the above average attainment of pupils on entry to school.

88 Pupils in Year 2 enjoy a well-balanced mathematics curriculum that places an appropriate emphasis on calculation and number work but also enables pupils to develop their understanding of shapes and measures and data handling. Lessons are well taught and sometimes very well taught and enable pupils to make at least steady progress. Better assessment of their learning and use of targets for improving individual's performance, as have been recently introduced for literacy, would provide a stronger platform for even better progress to be made. Lower attaining pupils are working at expected levels and average and above average pupils, who represent the very large majority of the pupils, are working comfortably at the expected level 2 in all aspects of mathematics and often show attainment in the higher level 3. Very occasionally, as in their work on using line graphs, they work above this level. Almost all the pupils are comfortable performing calculations in their heads and they can confidently explain what they have done and use a range of different strategies to arrive at their answers. They have a secure understanding of place value to 1000 and add and subtract tens and units and multiply tens and units by units. Pupils are confident handling fractions and understand about equivalence and decimals. When measuring length and mass they estimate sensibly and use standard measures, such as centimetres and grams and kilograms accurately. They also have a good knowledge of two and three-dimensional shapes and make effective use of the correct language to describe their properties.

89 The work of the older pupils is less well balanced across the different aspects of mathematics, with a strong emphasis being given to number work. By Year 6, pupils are able to perform complex calculations in their heads, for example adding hundreds, tens and units together and, as in Year 2, they use a range of strategies, such as rounding and doubling, to make their working out easier. Their knowledge of tables is good. When working on paper, all but the lowest attainers consistently work with good accuracy using all four operations including with large numbers. They have a very good understanding of fractions, decimals and percentages and can identify and continue number patterns. A strong feature of their learning is pupils' understanding of mathematical terminology as shown by their explanations of 'mean', 'mode' and 'median' during a discussion. Despite there being less emphasis on data handling and shapes and measures in pupils' work, they have a secure understanding of these aspects of mathematics. They can, for example, work out the area and perimeter of shapes and name and describe the properties of three-dimensional shapes. They can also choose the correct type of graph to use to display information for different types of data, for example using line graphs to show change over time. They also choose appropriate units to use when measuring.

90 Teaching is good. The Years 1 and 2 class teacher teaches mathematics to younger pupils while one of the Years 3 to 6 teachers takes both the junior classes. This works well.

Both teachers plan carefully and identify very clear objectives for lessons. They explain them clearly to pupils and, together with the careful instructions they provide for tasks, this enables pupils to work purposefully and successfully towards the planned objectives with their teachers. Most lessons are pitched towards the oldest pupils in the class and additional support and simplified tasks are given to the younger and/or lower attaining pupils when this is necessary. In the lessons seen, this worked well, but in pupils' work there are examples of the lower attaining pupils struggling with some of the work they had been given. Teachers follow the structure suggested in the numeracy strategy and provide an appropriate balance between the mental sessions, developing and consolidating new learning and reviewing what has been achieved, tackling any problems that have emerged and sowing seeds for the next step in pupils' learning. They question pupils effectively to challenge them to explain how they work answers out or how they would tackle a problem. Adults who help in class are effectively used to help individuals and to work with groups and this helps pupils who find mathematics more difficult to take a full part in the lessons. Regular homework is set and helps to prepare the older pupils for the national tests. All work is marked regularly and some useful comments are made but more could be done to make marking more effective in helping pupils to improve.

91 Pupils behave well and work hard in mathematics lessons. They are keen to answer questions and listen well, and positive attitudes provide a firm basis on which their learning can be built.

92 The school has made effective use of the national numeracy materials to inform the planning of mathematics and has identified the need to challenge and extend more able pupils. Where necessary, the school will place gifted pupils with an older group and this enables them to make more rapid progress. Higher attaining Year 6 pupils attend a weekly mathematics club at the linked secondary school which enables them to access higher levels in their work. Progress in developing effective and useful assessments and records of pupils' learning has been unsatisfactory. The only formal record is the tracking sheet, which identifies pupils' levels in national statutory and optional tests and predicts what they might achieve in the next year. No records are kept of how well pupils have learnt the key concepts and skills they have been taught and no analysis of test papers has been done to identify strengths and weaknesses in the learning of individuals and groups of pupils. As a result, pupils have not been provided with any personal or group learning targets that would help them to achieve better.

93 Leadership and management are unsatisfactory, as it has only been concerned with developing a policy and managing resources. It has not been concerned with monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning and with identifying what could be done to raise standards.

SCIENCE

94 As in English and mathematics, results in the national tests for Year 6 pupils vary from year to year because of the small cohorts. When averaged out over three years, results have been just above the national average and only just good enough.

95 Pupils in Year 2 have completed an appropriate range of work in science this year and are achieving comfortably in line with the national expectations. Their work on life processes and living things shows standards that are above expectations. Much of what they do is practically based and their skills in observing and recording what they have found out are at least satisfactory and much of their observational work, for example their field sketches of plants, is very accurate. They have good understanding of plants and animals and can explain

the differences between different groups of creatures, such as birds, amphibians, mammals and insects. Pupils understand about the movements of the earth and the sun and how these make the seasons different. They are also developing a secure understanding of electricity as a source of energy for light and of power for all kinds of machinery around the home. They are achieving expected levels in their understanding of light and sound.

96 Pupils in Year 6 are achieving in line with expectations, which points to them making progress that is only just satisfactory while in junior classes. They often have good knowledge but their skills are weaker. They are good at observing experiments and investigations but have little understanding of what a fair test is and find it difficult to suggest ways an investigation could be conducted to produce reliable results, for example to show how to test the force of friction on different materials. They are able to measure and record their findings with satisfactory accuracy but make little use of tables and graphs when doing this. Pupils have a good understanding of basic parts of plants and of animals, including the organs of different plants, and they are very knowledgeable about the ear, how sound travels and how we hear sound. Their understanding of materials is satisfactory; for example they can explain how filtering can separate materials in a suspension and that heating solutions enables substances that have been dissolved to be reclaimed. Equally they know that some changes to materials are not reversible. Their recall of technical terms, such as 'solution', 'dissolving' and 'sound waves', is often insecure and this lowers their achievement in science. In the lessons seen the pupils were very interested in the practical tasks they were given and they were sensible and responsible in their use of equipment and materials.

97 Pupils with special educational needs are able to participate satisfactorily in lessons, mainly due to the help they are given by adults in class. Little is done to identify their particular needs and to target these with appropriately matched work.

98 The pupils enjoy science and are enthusiastic about the subject. They have a good attitude to learning and work is presented to a high standard.

99 The lessons observed were well taught but analysis of pupils' work shows weaknesses in the teaching of the pupils in Years 5 and 6. Overall teaching is satisfactory. Lessons begin promptly in an atmosphere of quiet and clear purpose. Routines are well established and relationships between teachers and pupils are very good. All teachers show good subject knowledge and their lessons are prepared to match the requirements of the National Curriculum and the agreed scheme of work. They are particularly knowledgeable and enthusiastic about life processes and living things and environmental issues. This shows in the higher standards attained in this aspect of the subject. The teachers carefully explain to the pupils what they are going to be doing and this is effective in focusing their efforts, and lessons build appropriately on pupils' earlier learning. Lessons are often well resourced to support their particular focus. Teachers are skilled at asking questions and then using the pupils' answers to extend their thinking. Where teaching is best, often in Years 1 and 2, pupils are encouraged to find out for themselves through close observation. A weakness in the teaching of the older junior pupils is the lack of emphasis given to pupils conducting their own investigations. This limits the development of their skills and understanding of 'fair testing'. Their recording is also directed by the teacher and often results in the pupils copying text that is too difficult for them to understand and does not represent their learning.

100 Much of the work has been marked very conscientiously but does not include many points to help pupils improve. The science curriculum is soundly based on the national schemes of work and the long-term planning ensures that pupils do not miss or unnecessarily repeat elements in the mixed-age classes. Assessment and the recording of the progress that pupils make in science are unsatisfactory. Few assessments are made and no records of how well pupils have achieved the planned learning are being maintained. It

is difficult therefore for teachers to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning and to take steps to bring about improvements.

101 The co-ordinator is knowledgeable and confident in this subject and she has ensured that the curriculum is now planned more effectively. However, there are significant weaknesses in other aspects of leadership and management. There has been no analysis of test information, or monitoring of teaching and learning. These would have identified areas for improvement that would help to raise standards further. Overall, the progress made since the past inspection has been unsatisfactory.

ART AND DESIGN

102 Standards in art have improved since the last inspection and are now well above the average, due to the very good quality of the teaching in both key stages and the breadth of experience that pupils are given.

103 By the age of eleven, pupils have a very good knowledge of art and artists because teachers introduce them to an interesting variety of major artists and different cultures. These range from aboriginal art to modern painters such as Kandinsky and Miro. Pupils talk and write convincingly about their response to art, such as what they liked or did not like about the work of Giacometti, whom they were studying.

104 Pupils possess a very good range of skills because teachers have good knowledge of the subject and high expectations of their pupils. Pupils have an eye for detail which is very evident in their observational work. Older pupils have, for instance, produced some paintings of shells with sensitive colouring and good shape; there are good drawings and paintings of parts of the school building and younger pupils have completed some convincing portraits of their teacher in the style of Modigliani. Teachers constantly seek ways to broaden pupils' experiences. A recent visit to an exhibition, for example, has produced some fascinating three-dimensional work based on the sculptures of Giacometti, and Henry Moore's sculpture of a mother and child was well represented in clay. Teachers also use the natural world very effectively to stimulate pupils' observational skills. For instance, pupils in Years 5 and 6 were meticulous when drawing game birds prior to painting them, and paintings of daffodils and snowdrops from across the school were completed with care and character. Pupils really enjoy the variety and concentrate hard to become accomplished.

105 The teaching of art is very good. As well as a broad experience within art lessons, teachers ensure that art permeates most areas of curriculum and skills are fostered in many different situations. For example, Years 1 and 2 pupils carefully sketched different types of joints they could see as they examined equipment in a children's play area for their work in design and technology. Teachers work hard to make the subject highly focused, enjoyable and a fundamental part of learning. Pupils fully appreciate this and work with considerable concentration and obvious pride in what they do. The subject co-ordinator provides a good lead and the staff share the value that is put on pupils' work in art. Although there is no formal monitoring and assessment of pupils' work, the standards that pupils are reaching show that what happens effectively raises pupils' attainment. Displays help to make the school a stimulating learning environment although a point for development is that they do not contain any information that would help a visitor to know the source of some of the inspiration. Art exhibitions enable parents and the wider community to see the range and quality of the work that pupils do.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

106 There was too little evidence to make reliable judgements about the standards that pupils reach by the age of eleven. By the age of seven, however, work on display and in progress suggests that standards exceed expectations, which is better than was reported in the previous inspection.

107 At Key Stage 1, pupils have recently worked on producing models that light up and photographs of earlier work show good links with science as they made models move by using air. These were clearly well constructed and effective in fulfilling their purpose. In their current work, the class were taken out to a nearby park to look at playground equipment to see what materials were used. The planning shows that the pupils will study equipment in and around the school and from the local environment to collect ideas for their own work later. The pupils looked carefully at the way swings and slides were constructed to see what materials were used and how sections were connected. The best work produced by the pupils was quite sophisticated because they concentrated well on the task and were able to produce detailed, labelled drawings of joints and materials. Others were no less careful but were more artistic representations than concentrating on the design and construction elements. The teacher and other adults gave the pupils good support by focusing their attention on the task and pointing out details. The pupils were lively and interested in their work and well behaved on the visit.

108 At Key Stage 2, too little evidence was seen to judge the standards that pupils reach by the age of eleven. One example seen was of a food technology task where pupils looked at different types of bread and judged them by different criteria. The project was not complete but looked of an average standard. Another example seen in Key Stage 2 was of puppets that had been made with material. Again the skills used and the finished products looked about average.

109 There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about the quality of teaching at Key Stage 2 but at Key Stage 1, the evidence suggests good teaching. Parents clearly made a good contribution by helping to accompany the class on their walk to the park and keeping the pupils focused. More importantly, there is regular support from a parent who uses his specialist engineering skills to help groups with technical parts of their work.

110 The national guidance provides the structure for the subject, which was not evident in the last inspection. There are no systems developed for monitoring and assessment and co-ordination continues to be informal and underdeveloped. However, there clearly has been a response to the criticisms in the previous report which show in the improvements in Key Stage 1 and the fact that food technology is now included.

GEOGRAPHY

111 At the last inspection the standards were considered to be satisfactory. There was no scheme of work and no consistency in the development of pupils' learning. There have been improvements since then with the development of an agreed scheme of work. Only one lesson was observed during the inspection and no overall judgement has been made about teaching. Work from pupils across the school, teachers' planning and other documentation were examined and discussions held with pupils from Years 2, 4, 5 and 6. Standards are now just above expectations.

112 Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are studying settlements and landscape features using photographs and maps and they are able to successfully compare the features of the local inland area with nearby coastal areas that they have visited. They have also been following

Katie Morag stories and using the geographical information to look at the features of a small island and the way of life of its settlements compared to Colkirk. They are gaining a good understanding of public services, facilities and environmental issues and they are developing confidence in using public maps and simple compass directions. There are some good links made to other subjects that have benefited pupils' learning, including their personal writing about life on a small island and the use of maps of London in history. Groups of pupils are also successfully using the Internet to study a coastal location.

113 Chambakoli in India is the village being studied by pupils in Years 3 and 4 and this work has enabled them to make valid comparisons with Colkirk and the local area. They have considered the climate, the agriculture and the economic opportunities of the two locations. Pupils have developed their geographical skills and knowledge successfully using a range of sources. They have a good knowledge of the map of the world and can identify many countries. In looking at large-scale maps they are able to use six-figure grid references with confidence and fully understand keys and the symbols used. Their factual recall of information is good and often above expectations. However, they do not always apply their learning successfully. Following some work on erosion and permeable rocks they did not know how this information was relevant to the world beneath their feet.

114 Pupils in Years 5 and 6 are studying water, mountains and volcanoes in localities across the world. Their work shows effective research skills using atlases, globes and maps. They understand the stages of a river and how it erodes the landscape, and about the structure of the earth and how its plates are moving to create mountains. They have a good knowledge of the water cycle and conservation issues. The presentation and organisation of their work are of a high standard but contain too many examples of copied text that includes technical language they do not always understand.

115 Pupils enjoy geography and show very good attitudes to work. They enjoy learning about the environment and the wider world. The pupils' knowledge and skills in reading and writing are used well for research and recording their geographical studies. Work is usually presented very neatly. The curriculum is greatly enhanced by the use of homework. Pupils in Years 5 and 6 use the BBC programme 'Newsround' as a focus for note taking and personal study and this has led to some very good work about volcanic eruptions in the Congo and other world events.

116 The one lesson observed was well taught. Learning objectives were shared with the pupils and the lesson made good use of resources. The pupils were highly motivated. There are examples of good practice in the marking of pupils' work when it is linked to learning objectives but this approach is not consistent.

117 The adoption of the national model schemes of work has provided an appropriate structure for teachers' planning of lessons. At present there is no system for assessing and recording the progress that pupils make against the planned learning.

HISTORY

118 It was possible to observe only one history lesson during the inspection. This was in Years 5 and 6 and no overall judgement has been made on the quality of teaching in the subject. Judgements about standards are based on scrutiny of pupils' completed work and

discussions with them about what they have done. Current standards are in line with national expectations at Year 6 and just above them by Year 2.

119 Pupils in Year 6 have a secure understanding and knowledge of chronology. They can sequence the different periods of history they have studied correctly and understand terms such as 'BC', 'AD', 'decade', 'century' and 'millennium' that describe historical time. They have satisfactory knowledge of the main events in the periods they have studied and can give reasons why some of them happened, for example why the Saxons decided to invade and settle in Britain. Some of their empathetic writing is very effective and demonstrates a good understanding of what life was like in the past, for example for a Roman Legionnaire on a posting in the Britain. They have often produced effective extended pieces of written work based after researching from textbooks and sometimes information books. However, there are weaknesses in their skills in history. They are not very sure about the nature of historical sources and have limited understanding of how they can be used to find out about the past. This reflects the methods used in the one lesson seen. Pupils found information by paraphrasing information in a textbook and were not encouraged to tackle the task through enquiry – by finding out answers to questions using the sources that were available in the book, and better still using a range of books and other source material, such as accounts from the time, pictures, artefacts and maps. Much of their completed work reflects the use of a similar approach, which limits the development of pupils' skills as historians. This lesson also did not follow the objectives that were planned to be covered and time that could have been used to investigate and interpret sources was being wasted as pupils were required to copy up their accounts when the teacher had marked them.

120 By Year 2 pupils are developing a good sense of chronology through their sequencing of toys, comparisons of aspects of life in their parents' time and Victorian times and by making a time line that shows key events in history and in their own lives. They have a good knowledge and understanding of some important events from the past, including the Great Fire of London and how it started and how we know about it from the diaries and letters of Samuel Pepys. They have used dates in their detailed accounts of the fire and also written about the life of Charles II and explained why he was known as the 'Merry King'. Their empathetic writing of a letter from Samuel Pepys to Charles II shows a good understanding of what happened and a very good awareness of the forms of language used at the time. Some of their earlier work, for example on life in Tudor times, shows good use being made of sources of evidence, including a visiting expert, costumes, musical instruments and contemporary recipes for the biscuits they baked.

121 The leadership and management of the subject are not satisfactory. They do not ensure, through monitoring and evaluating teaching and learning, that there is consistency in the approaches used across the school and as a result key elements of the programmes of study are not being covered effectively.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

122 This standards by Year 6 and the quality of what was provided for ICT were unsatisfactory at the time of the last inspection. Pupils in Year 6 are attaining just below national expectations overall but are making good progress in closing the gap. Their skills in using computers to present information are broadly in line with expectations and better than those seen in many schools. They can set out their work effectively for different purposes, for example to produce book covers, as well as more formal pieces of writing. They use columns, insert pictures and change the shape and appearance of text to create dramatic effects as well as using the basic formatting tools for aligning text and emphasising it. They check the accuracy of what they have produced using spell checkers. Pupils also are able to

create interesting artwork using painting programs and the range of different tools in them. They can use spreadsheets to present information, which they have collected, in graphs but they are not secure in their ability to utilise the calculating power of this key ICT tool. In discussions they can describe how to give instructions to a Roamer, a programmable toy, in order to make it produce basic shapes but have not yet learnt how to use computers to monitor events such as changes in room temperature over time. Through their use of computers at home many talk confidently about using email and finding information from the Internet.

123 Standards elsewhere in the school are broadly in line with national expectations and sometimes just above. Pupils in Year 2, overall, are achieving above expectations. They are able to set out their work well when using word-processing software. They change fonts, letter sizes and colour and can use programs, such as *WordArt*, to create special effects. They have produced some very effective pictures of people and abstract patterns by selecting and changing shapes, using different size 'brushes', spray and fill tools, and colour palettes in art programs. They have also used email and found information from web pages and CD-ROM encyclopaedias. They are also able to collect and store information in simple data files. By Years 3 and 4 pupils have sent emails to pen pals in Spain, learnt about fields and records as they entered and sorted and graphed information using a database, and have begun to use spreadsheets. Recently they have developed a basic understanding of how to control the Roamer.

124 Effective steps have been taken to tackle the weaknesses found during the last inspection. New equipment has been purchased through the National Grid for Learning initiative and teachers are receiving training in using the new equipment and software. The biggest impact in improving the quality of what is provided for pupils and in raising standards has been the input from the advisory teacher support the school has employed. He has worked hard to develop a sensible programme for learning and good procedures to assess and record the progress that pupils make. He is currently doing most of the teaching of ICT and uses his skills very well to ensure that pupils are now making rapid progress in their learning. His lessons are well planned with clear objectives that progressively build on what pupils have already learnt, and are skilfully integrated into what pupils are learning in other subjects. Lessons are well prepared and skilfully delivered. He explains clearly and encourages pupils to work things out for themselves whenever he feels they are capable of this. Pupils respond well to his positive and enthusiastic approach and show pleasure and some times delight in what they are doing.

125 Overall, since the last inspection, good progress has been made in improving the quality of provision and the learning of pupils. Pupils are now mostly achieving appropriate standards. However, the limited space available in the library for the small ICT suite restricts the sizes of groups that can be taught at any one time. The plans to relocate it in one of the mobile class bases raises further problems in how it can be used effectively by pupils in other classes.

MUSIC

126 Only one music lesson was observed from Year 1 to Year 6 and other evidence comes from assemblies. It was not possible therefore to make firm judgements on standards and the quality of teaching. The limited evidence suggests that pupils attain the standards

expected for their age. Pupils from all age groups are given the opportunity to play the recorder. The tuition provided by visiting specialist teachers enables a number of pupils to learn to play the violin and keyboard and this helps to raise the standards. Singing in assembly is tuneful but sometimes lacks enthusiasm and confidence.

127 Younger pupils use their voices effectively as instruments to create sounds and explore how they can be changed and controlled. They are beginning to repeat patterns and rhythms using their voices and simple instruments. As they explore sounds they are learning to read simple notation that uses symbols to represent sounds. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 sing and clap rhythms well.

128 In the well-taught lesson in Years 3 and 4, the teacher maintained a lively pace that kept pupils' interest high. Homework was used effectively and enabled pupils to report back on their research on skipping rhymes. A wide range of different types of music is played as pupils enter assemblies and the name of the composer and the genre of the music are displayed for the pupils to read. This is successfully helping to widen pupils' appreciation of music. Pupils showed pleasure in the lesson and listen with interest in assemblies.

129 The scheme of work provides for better continuity and development of the subject and this is an improvement since the last inspection.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

130 Too few lessons were observed to make judgements on the standards in physical education. In a Years 1 and 2 lesson the pupils showed good skills as they kicked, caught, threw and rolled different sized balls. The lesson was well taught and the teacher maintained a demanding pace that kept pupils active and gave them good opportunities to practise their skills. He used demonstrations well to make teaching points that enabled pupils to refine and improve their techniques.

131 All the pupils in the school go to swimming lessons. The groups of pupils going together from the different age groups is another good example of how the school makes very good provision for the pupils' social development. All pupils learn to swim at least 25 metres and many become accomplished swimmers. In a recent swimming gala involving 20 schools Colkirk was ranked seventh, which reflects the high standards achieved in this aspect of the curriculum. The scheme of work provides appropriate continuity and progression. A good range of extra-curricular activities now enriches the curriculum provision. Pupils have the opportunity for specialist games coaching as well as football and netball clubs. There are competitive games with other schools involving both boys and girls. Parents fully support the additional activities and value the opportunities the school provides.

132 Resources for games and outdoor lessons are satisfactory but the school hall is far too small for a lesson to be conducted safely and restricts what can be taught.