

INSPECTION REPORT

DRAYTON V.C. MIDDLE SCHOOL

Drayton, Norwich

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 131287

Headteacher: Mr M White

Reporting inspector: Mrs R J Andrew
21460

Dates of inspection: April 3rd - 6th 2000

Inspection number: 215581

Inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed primary

School category: Voluntary controlled

Age range of pupils: 8-12

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: School Road
Drayton
Norwich

Postcode: NR8 6EF

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Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chairman of governors: Canon Philip Harrison

Date of previous inspection: 10.06.1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members	Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Rachael Andrew Registered inspector	French religious education music	What sort of school is it? Results and achievements
David Hirons Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
David Matthews Team inspector	science art design and technology equal opportunities	How well is the school led and managed?
Henry Moreton Team inspector	English history physical education special educational needs English as an additional language	How well are pupils taught?
Derek Pattinson Team inspector	mathematics information technology geography	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Drayton Middle (deemed primary) School is a voluntary-controlled Church of England school situated in the village of Drayton in the outskirts of Norwich. It caters for pupils aged eight to twelve. As a result of extensive building in the area, the school has expanded rapidly. It has undergone extensive remodelling and reorganisation within the last three years. There has also been a significant turnover of staff. Six teachers are new to the school this year. There are currently 318 boys and girls on the school's roll. The school is slightly smaller than the national average for middle schools. There are three parallel classes in each of four year-groups. Only one percent of the pupils is of ethnic minority background. Two pupils speak English as an additional language, neither of these is at an early stage of language development. The background of the pupils is favourable and, although the proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals is increasing year on year, it is currently only five per cent. This is below the national average. There are currently 50 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs. This is 16 percent of the total intake and is well below the national average. Attainment on entry is above average.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school with sound leadership and management. By the time pupils leave the school, standards are high in English, mathematics, science and French but there is some underachievement in science and mathematics for higher-attaining pupils. The quality of teaching is good. The school provides a wide range of good quality learning opportunities. There are very good relationships in the school and a calm working environment where pupils are well behaved and keen to learn. The school provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The quality of teaching is good. It contributes well to pupils' learning.
- Pupils work productively and at a good pace.
- Progress in English is good and pupils attain high standards, particularly in their written work, by the time they leave the school.
- Pupils make a very good start in French and develop an enthusiasm for the language.
- The quality and range of learning opportunities are good; extra-curricular opportunities are very good.
- The behaviour of the pupils is very good and they have positive attitudes to their work.

What could be improved

- Assessment procedures: the use of the information gained about pupils' progress in the planning of future work; ensuring that work builds on what pupils already know particularly in maths and science for higher-attaining pupils.
- The evaluation of what is successful and where improvements need to be made in individual subjects.
- The allocation of the current budget surplus to identified priorities.
- The identification of professional development needs, and strengths and weaknesses in teaching; the use of this information to improve teaching further.

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 June 1997. The school has made as much improvement as could reasonably be expected given the large number of key issues identified at that time. The extensive recent building programme and the high turnover of staff have resulted in some initiatives being delayed. Schemes of work are now in place and provide a useful framework for planning in most subjects. In some subjects, particularly religious education further work is required. There have been good improvements where specific subjects were weak, for example information technology and design technology and this has helped to raise standards. Where a shortage of resources was identified this has been rectified. The school development plan is a more useful document for identifying where the school needs to move forward and how this can be achieved. Progress in some initiatives has, however, been ineffective in raising standards. For example, further work needs to be done to the school's assessment procedures to ensure that the information they provide is useful in future planning. The role of subject co-ordinators has been clarified and strengthened but in practice their impact is inconsistent. There has been an extensive building programme that has greatly improved the accommodation. This has dealt with the concerns expressed in the previous report about cramped classrooms.

It has had a positive impact on the quality of pupils' learning especially in information technology.

The quality of teaching and learning has improved overall. The school has made improvements to the range and quality of the curriculum. Pupils' attitudes are more positive and their behaviour has improved further. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities remain a strength of the school. Standards have risen over four years in English and in mathematics and have sustained their standing in comparison with other similar schools. Standards in science have not improved in line with the national trend and standards are now below those in other similar schools. Governors and senior managers are continuing to develop systems for evaluating school improvement. There are good working relationships across the school and a commitment to continuous improvement. Parents are pleased with the increasing interest that pupils show for their schoolwork as a result of the improvements that have been made to the quality of the curriculum.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	Compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1997	1998	1999	1999	
English	A	A	A	C	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Mathematics	B	B	B	C	
Science	A	A	C	D	

The results in the table above indicate that English is the strongest subject. Pupils' achievements are good. In mathematics, although standards are above average higher-attaining pupils could do better. In science, standards were not as good in 1999 as in English or mathematics or in comparison with previous years. Standards in science were not high enough, being below other similar schools. Evidence from the inspection indicates that standards for 11 year olds in English and mathematics this year are similar to the test results above. Standards in science this year show an improvement overall. Although the achievements of the majority of pupils are sound, higher-attaining pupils could still achieve more in mathematics and science. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of 12, their achievements in English, French, art and physical education are high. They are sound in mathematics and science although some underachievement remains for higher-attaining pupils.

The school has established realistic targets for the next two years. It is likely to achieve the targets it has set for the number of pupils achieving Level 4 and above in English, mathematics and science.

Standards in information technology are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 2 and when pupils leave the school. Standards in religious education are below those expected by the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus at the end of Year 6.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils are interested in their work and sustain concentration over long periods. They listen well to their teachers. They enjoy coming to school.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Pupils behave very well both in classrooms and around the school. They are polite and respectful.
Personal development and relationships	Adults and pupils get on very well together. Pupils co-operate well in practical activities and sport. Although pupils carry out classroom and school duties efficiently, the school provides insufficient opportunities for them to undertake significant responsibilities.
Attendance	Attendance is good. The amount of unauthorised absence is low.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 8-11 years	aged 11 –12 years
Lessons seen overall	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 was satisfactory or better in 96 per cent of lessons. It was good or better in 52 per cent of lessons including 18 per cent where it was very good. There was a small amount of excellent teaching. The amount of unsatisfactory teaching, at four per cent, was much less than that identified in the previous inspection report. The quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Teachers expect pupils to behave well and work hard. This and the range of teaching methods used contribute to effective learning. The teaching of English is good at Key Stage 2 and very good at Key Stage 3. The teaching of mathematics is good at both key stages. Literacy and numeracy skills are taught well enabling pupils to use them productively in other areas of the curriculum. Good teaching of French develops pupils' fluency and enthusiasm for the language. A few teachers have insecure subject knowledge in music. This slows pupils' progress. Teachers do not always use assessment information effectively to provide work that offers appropriate levels of challenge for different groups within the class. This hinders the progress of higher-attaining pupils, especially in mathematics and science. Pupils with special educational needs are given effective support in lessons and specialist help to improve specific weaknesses.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The curriculum provides a broad range of relevant learning opportunities of good quality. The range and quality of extra-curricular activities are particular strengths. There is insufficient emphasis on problem solving in mathematics, and some elements of information technology and geography. The time allocated to religious education at Key Stage 2 is insufficient to cover the curriculum in sufficient depth.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. The school's policy meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. Pupils receive the support they need within lessons and help with specific difficulties in small groups.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	These pupils are all fluent English speakers. The provision ensures that they make similar progress to other pupils of the same age.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good overall. Moral and social development are particularly good. Spiritual development is satisfactory although there are insufficient opportunities for reflection especially during the act of worship. The diversity of culture within British society is given insufficient emphasis.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There are good procedures for ensuring the health, safety and welfare of the pupils. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to plan effectively for individuals and groups.

Relationships between parents and the school are good. Parents are keen to support the school and have positive views about its work. The information the school provides for parents about pupils' progress is not sufficiently helpful in indicating strengths and weaknesses to enable parents to work more effectively with their children at home.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The leadership and management of the school are satisfactory. School development planning is effective in identifying priorities for improvement. The monitoring of teaching by senior managers and subject co-ordinators, although improved since the last inspection, requires further development.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	A wide range of expertise is represented on the governing body. Governors support the school well. There is no system for assessing the professional development needs of teachers.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school's capacity to evaluate how well it is doing through the school development plan is sound. Insufficient use is made of assessment information to investigate areas of weakness and remedy them through the planning process.
The strategic use of resources	Financial planning is satisfactory overall. It is linked to the priorities in the school development plan. There are plans for the current large financial reserves accrued through funding anomalies but these have not yet been put into action. The school is aware of the principles of best value and is beginning to apply them.

Staffing, accommodation and learning resources are satisfactory overall although the number of support staff is low in comparison with other schools. There is evidence that this is having a detrimental effect on pupils'

learning in a small number of lessons, for example in the lower mathematics sets. Insufficient use is made of the library for the development of pupils' independent learning skills.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pupils like going to school and enjoy the range of learning opportunities provided. • Standards of behaviour are good. • The quality of teaching is good and has improved. • Pupils respond positively to teachers' expectations that they will work hard. • Parents can approach the school confidently with questions or problems. • The school develops pupils' good attitudes and values. • The effective leadership and management and the improvements that the school has been able to make as a result. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount and quality of homework and the information about what is expected. • Information about their children's progress especially the annual progress reports.

Inspection findings support parents' positive views of the school. There are conflicting views about homework. Some parents feel there is too much and some too little. The biggest concern relating to homework is the lack of information provided for parents about what to expect and how to help. Inspection judgements support these concerns. Although the amount of homework is generally appropriate for different age groups, it is not always sufficiently demanding for higher-attaining pupils. The information the school provides about pupils' progress is not clear enough about pupils' strengths and how they could improve.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. The results of National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds in 1999 indicate that, when compared with all school's nationally, standards are:-
 - well above average in English;
 - above average in mathematics;
 - average in science.

When compared with schools with pupils from similar backgrounds, standards are:-

- average in English and mathematics
 - below average in science.
2. There are no significant differences in the attainment of boys and girls. Taking the three subjects together, results have improved steadily over the last three years. In science, however, whilst results nationally have shown a significant increase year on year, the school's results remained steady. The school has set realistic targets for English, mathematics and science for the next two years drawing on information about each cohort. These targets are high enough and those for higher-attaining pupils are particularly challenging.
 3. Inspection findings indicate that standards reflect the 1999 results in English and mathematics. In science standards are above average, an improvement on last year. This provides evidence that the school is making progress towards its targets. The work provided for higher-attaining pupils, however, is insufficiently challenging to ensure success in meeting the targets for the higher levels in national tests.
 4. Standards are high in English. By the end of Key Stage 2 and when pupils leave the school, the quality of their writing is a particular strength, both in English lessons and in other subjects of the curriculum, especially history. Most pupils speak confidently. The quality of drama activities is a contributory factor. Pupils read fluently and with understanding. Their research skills are effective in locating and using information from a range of sources. Pupils make good gains in all aspects of English during their time in school as result of the broad curriculum and the quality of the teaching. Pupils are achieving well in terms of their attainment on entry to the school.
 5. In mathematics, standards are above average. Good teaching of number work results in pupils' numeracy skills being particularly strong. Pupils make good gains in number work during their time in school. By the end of Key Stage 2 and when they leave the school at the age of 12, pupils have developed a range of strategies for calculations and good levels of speed and accuracy. Most pupils have a thorough understanding of the number system, patterns and relationships. This helps them to transfer their knowledge of number facts below 20 to calculations with bigger numbers. Higher-attaining pupils are able to make approximations and handle large numbers with ease. Applying their skills to problem solving is a relative weakness as it is given insufficient attention throughout the school. Standards in data handling, probability, shape and space are average. Most pupils' achievements are sound but some higher-attaining pupils could achieve more if teachers provided more challenging tasks.
 6. In science, standards show an improvement on last year's test results. The majority of pupils have a good understanding of living things. They know about the structure of plants, for example. They relate their understanding of physical processes to their own experiences explaining how forces such as friction operate. Higher-attaining pupils have a good grasp of the

pollination process and explain how mixtures and solutions can be separated. Progress over time is good. Teachers' provide too few opportunities for pupils to carry out the experiments they have designed themselves. This limits pupils' achievements in investigative science, although these have improved. This affects higher-attaining pupils particularly.

7. Standards in information technology are satisfactory overall. Pupils' ability to handle data and communicate information is stronger than their control technology and modelling capabilities. Pupils display and interpret information well but most are not able to use sensors or sequence and frame instructions for controlling models. This is influenced by the amount of time spent on the different aspects.
8. Pupils in Year 6 have significant gaps in their knowledge in religious education. This results in attainment that is below that expected by the Norfolk Agreed Syllabus at the end of Key Stage 2. The school's scheme of work has only recently been introduced. Pupils make steady progress in lessons but the amount of time spent on religious education, although more than at the time of the previous inspection is still not enough to cover the work planned in sufficient depth.
9. Pupils in Year 6 and 7 are working to their capacity in French and achieving good standards as a result of high expectations, expert teaching and the brisk pace in lessons.
10. There was insufficient evidence to make judgements about standards in music. Pupils make sound progress and achieve standards that are similar to most schools in all other subjects. There are notable strengths within some subjects. By the time they leave the school, pupils have a good understanding of the major events in history. They achieve high standards in the swimming and games aspects of physical education. In art pupils' drawing skills are well developed and their pottery is of a good standard.
11. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress in literacy because teachers work with the special education needs co-ordinator to plan their work appropriately. They receive additional support, which is well matched to the literacy targets set out in their individual education plans.
12. Pupils with English as an additional language are fully integrated into the life and work of the school. They are fluent English speakers and make similar progress to other pupils of the same age.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

13. Pupils' attitudes to learning are very good. They have improved since the previous inspection. Almost all pupils in Key Stage 2 and Key Stage 3 are keen to learn and willingly complete the tasks set by their teachers. The very good relationships that exist between teachers and all pupils further promote a positive climate for learning. Teachers' use of praise provides encouragement and promotes pupils' self esteem. Pupils show enthusiasm in lessons and are eager to respond to questions. They answer questions thoughtfully when asked by the class teacher. Pupils enjoy coming to school This is recognised by an overwhelming majority of parents. There were two justifiable fixed-period exclusions last school year for serious breaches of the schools' rules. There have been none recently.
14. Pupils' behaviour is very good. It is a strength of the school. The lack of a formal behaviour policy document does not have a negative impact on pupils' ability to behave well in the classroom and move sensibly around school during the daily break times. Where classroom management is very occasionally less than satisfactory, however, some pupils become impatient to wait their turn and standards of behaviour deteriorate. This was a feature of pupils' behaviour identified in the previous inspection report. For example, during an information technology lesson in Year 4 unsatisfactory lesson planning resulted in too many pupils waiting

near the printer. This prevented other pupils still using computers from working effectively. Incidents of inappropriate behaviour are however, very isolated and are not an accurate reflection of the otherwise very good behaviour of pupils in lessons. Inspection evidence overwhelmingly confirms that pupils' general behaviour is of a high standard, an improvement since the previous inspection. During the lunchtime and break periods, pupils' play activities are lively and friendly. There are very few instances of inappropriate behaviour and pupils understand the routines of entering the school in an orderly manner. All pupils stop their activities immediately on the appropriate signal from teachers and enter school sensibly. The width of the corridors presents some difficulties in accommodating pupils during the hanging up of coats and school bags; however, pupils' sensible behaviour enables this process to be completed quickly and safely. Pupils with special educational needs behave well and are able to work independently with the help of teachers and support staff. The school makes good use of information technology to enable some of these pupils to work with concentration for longer periods of time. This enhances their learning opportunities by promoting interest in their work. It also has a moderating and positive influence on their behaviour. Teachers use the computer skills of some of these pupils to good effect in helping less confident pupils with their work. This further promotes their personal and academic development and enhances their self-esteem. Pupils make good use of time when they receive support out of their classroom, even though sometimes they would have preferred to remain with the rest of the class in their lesson.

15. Pupils' personal development is good. Pupils are polite and courteous to each other, to all staff and visitors to the school. They hold open doors eagerly for visitors and staff, going out of their way on occasions to do so. They treat the accommodation sensibly, use resources for learning carefully and keep classrooms tidy. They readily clear away following design technology lessons, for example, and follow established routines. They work independently which allows teachers to give support to other groups of pupils with minimal interruption. Pupils readily assume responsibility for routine tasks such as library and register duties in Years 6 and 7. There have been improvements since the last inspection in the responsibility given to pupils although this area of their personal development is still under-emphasised. A notable exception is the group of pupils in Year 7 who take on considerable responsibility to produce a termly newspaper. This contains a broad range of topics relevant to pupils in school. The use of the school's information technology facilities enables the paper to be produced to a high standard. The 'Tell Aunt Judy' agony aunt column demonstrates pupils' developing social, personal and moral opinions and attitudes to life's challenges outside school. The residential visits to the Lake District for pupils in Year 6 and to France for pupils in Year 7 in support of their studies are an important part of school life. Pupils benefit from the opportunity to develop their academic and social skills further.
16. Attendance is good and has been maintained over recent years. Incidents of unauthorised absence are below national standards.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching is good and enables pupils to learn effectively. Teaching was good or better in over half the lessons seen. In around one in six lessons it was very good or better. Some unsatisfactory lessons were seen. These were not confined to one class or year group and at less than 5 per cent, this represents a significant improvement since the last inspection. Teaching is most effective in English and French. It is least effective in religious education and music. Some outstanding teaching was seen in Year 5 that led to very good progress in lessons.
18. Teachers' knowledge of the National Curriculum is sound and ensures that pupils learn new skills effectively and develop their understanding well. Literacy is well taught throughout the school and the teaching of numeracy is satisfactory. Teachers have a sound knowledge and understanding of the technical aspects of their subjects. An example of this was seen in an information technology lesson in Year 5. The teacher's good knowledge of spreadsheets

promoted a good pace in the lesson and ensured that pupils' made good progress. Teachers' knowledge is sometimes unsatisfactory in music. In a lesson in Year 6, for example, uncertainty about the correct use of terminology led to confusion for pupils.

19. Basic skills are taught well. In a history lesson about Roman Baths, pupils in Year 4 were able to develop and use writing to good effect, as well as reading and listening. The higher-attaining pupils were also able to consolidate their research skills.
20. Teachers plan their work satisfactorily in most of the subjects of the curriculum. Planning is especially good in English. In the best lessons, teachers explain the activities to their class at the beginning of the lesson. This helps pupils to develop knowledge of their own learning. Good examples of planning were seen in lessons in Years 5 and 7, where well-chosen texts interested pupils of different attainment.
21. Teachers have high expectations in respect of pupils' work. As a result pupils put a good deal of effort into their work and are productive during lessons. Some teachers are particularly good at ensuring pupils of all levels of attainment are given work appropriate for the next stage of their learning. However, this is not always the case for the higher-attaining pupils especially in mathematics and science lessons. As a result, some higher-attaining pupils do not achieve as much in lessons as they might.
22. Teachers make good use of a range of methods and organisation to ensure that pupils make mainly satisfactory, and often good, progress. They use a range of teaching approaches that include whole class and group teaching. Teachers work quietly and encouragingly with pupils and create a pleasant working atmosphere within their classes. This enhances the quality of work achieved. In a geography lesson in Year 7 for instance, the teacher moved around constantly, providing guidance and encouragement to pupils about the task in hand. In some subjects, however, teachers give insufficient attention to the development of pupils' independence and initiative. For example, in mathematics, science and geography they provide too few opportunities for pupils to be involved in investigative activities.
23. Teachers' management of pupils is very good. Teachers expect pupils to pay attention to instructions. Clear rules of behaviour are established and little time is wasted in keeping pupils on task. As a result the majority of pupils make satisfactory, and often good progress during lessons because they concentrate and work productively. This is most marked in English lessons in Year 7.
24. Teachers' use of time, support staff and resources is good. Where a brisk pace is maintained as in a mathematics lesson in Year 5, in French lessons and in many English lessons in Year 7, pupils make rapid gains in knowledge. However, where the pace is unsatisfactory, as in a Year 5 mathematics lesson, pupils are not always fully engaged in activities and progress is slowed.
25. The quality of teachers' daily assessment of pupils' work is satisfactory. Teachers speak to pupils positively and make constructive comments during lessons that help them to increase their learning. Teachers' procedures for assessing work at the end of topics vary in detail and purpose. Assessments are not always related to National Curriculum levels. The information they provide is not always helpful when teachers plan the next steps in learning. As a result the work does not always match the needs of different groups and individuals. This applies to a lesser extent even when pupils are set for mathematics and has an adverse effect on progress. Marking is satisfactory overall. It is good in English but less helpful in indicating what pupils' do well and how they can improve in mathematics. The range and amount of homework is satisfactory and supports the work undertaken in lessons. It is, however, undemanding for the higher-attaining pupils.
26. The teaching of pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory overall. It is good when teachers' plan well. In an English lesson in Year 7, for instance, the work is so carefully

presented that all pupils are interested and are able to complete well the writing task that follows from it. It is also good when pupils spend half-hourly sessions with the co-ordinator for special education needs. The work is clearly focused on pupils' individual needs and enables them to improve areas of weakness. Sometimes, however, the benefits are outweighed by the disadvantages when pupils miss important parts of other lessons.

27. Teachers are responsive to pupils' individual needs. They ensure that boys and girls mix well in lessons. They treat pupils fairly and this develops effectively the principles of tolerance and respect. Teachers celebrate the work of pupils of all attainments through displays of their work in classrooms and around the school.
28. The quality of teaching has improved since the previous inspection. Teachers have improved their teaching skills overall. Provision for teachers to broaden their subject knowledge is now satisfactory. The proportion of good teaching has increased and the ratio of unsatisfactory teaching has dropped. There is not such a wide variation in teaching, but some weaknesses still remain in music, religious education and aspects of information technology.
29. As a result of the quality of teaching, and pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour, the quality of learning is good overall. For most pupils the acquisition of skills, knowledge and understanding of their subjects is good. Pupils are increasingly encouraged to think for themselves as in science investigations. The productivity and pace of pupils' learning are often good. The effective teaching ensures that many pupils are interested in their work, concentrate well and develop an interest in learning.

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

30. The school provides a good range of learning opportunities for all its pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language. The curriculum is suitably broad, and fully meets statutory requirements, with all National Curriculum subjects appropriately represented. However, although the curriculum for information technology meets statutory requirements, the control, monitoring and modelling elements are under-represented. There is good emphasis given to the teaching of literacy across the curriculum, and within English. The National Numeracy Strategy has been successfully introduced. The teaching of numeracy is given good emphasis within mathematics, and is beginning to be used across the curriculum. The curriculum effectively promotes pupils' intellectual, physical, and most aspects of their personal development, and prepares them well for the next stage of their education. There are effective links with other middle schools especially in decisions about which areas of the Key Stage 3 curriculum are to be taught.
31. The school provides a mainly relevant curriculum, which interests and motivates pupils well. However, the current geography curriculum is too knowledge based in the upper school, with insufficient attention given to the development of important skills and to pupils finding information for themselves. This influences some pupils' attitudes to this subject, and hinders learning. In most subjects, the teaching of knowledge, skills and understanding are emphasised to ensure that pupils have access to a balanced curriculum. In some subjects, such as, in religious education, an over-emphasis on breadth and an insufficient time allocation leads to a too superficial study of chosen topics, resulting in pupils acquiring limited depth of knowledge and understanding. There is insufficient structure in some subjects, such as, in mathematics, to provide appropriate levels of challenge to enable more able pupils to make the best possible progress, because work is sometimes not matched carefully enough to their needs. However, in English, the curriculum ensures that pupils of all abilities are appropriately challenged, resulting in most pupils making the progress of which they are capable.
32. In most subjects and aspects of the curriculum time allocations enable work to be covered in

sufficient depth. For example, personal, social and health education is well represented within the school's curriculum. This includes the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, water safety, drugs education, including issues relating to drug misuse, and sex education. The governing body approaches curriculum review with suitable rigour, discussing, amending and adopting revised curriculum policies. The curriculum ensures that there is equality of access and opportunity for all pupils, although the needs of higher-attaining pupils are given insufficient attention in mathematics and science. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. The school has a clear special educational needs policy that meets the requirements of the Code of Practice. The withdrawal of some pupils from classes for their specialist teaching, however, results in their missing important sections from lessons and compromises their curriculum entitlement.

33. The National Curriculum is taught effectively in most classes through subject teaching in both mixed-ability and single-ability groups. There is some specialist teaching of other classes successfully taking place, to use the specific curriculum expertise of staff for the benefit of pupils. Curriculum planning is detailed, and thorough, and increasingly includes clear and focused learning objectives. The school is in the process of adopting national guidelines for schemes of work in many subjects, such as, information technology. However, though the various plans currently used provide essential coverage of statutory requirements in all subjects, they do not always provide sufficient structure to enable pupils of different abilities to develop important skills, acquire knowledge and build on levels of understanding in logical sequence. They are not consistently linked to National Curriculum levels to assist learning, and ensure that all pupils make the progress of which they are capable. However, links in planning with other subjects are developing well in practice to enable pupils to appreciate how subjects can be inter-related to help make learning more relevant for them.
34. The provision for extra-curricular activities is very good, and is a strength of the school. These extra-curricular activities extend and enrich the curriculum. They are wide ranging, well attended and of good quality. They include pottery, design and technology, choir, orchestra, Russian, football, netball and cross-country. There are some notable successes in competitions, which help to raise the school's status within the locality. A good range of educational visits, including two annual residential visits for older pupils to France and the Lake District, and a satisfactory number of field trips, successfully broaden pupils' experiences. Educational days, such as, the recently held "Rainforest Day", and the "Design Technology Day", which took place for pupils in Year 7 during the inspection, make further contributions to curriculum enrichment.
35. Taken as a whole, the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Aspects of the curriculum, particularly personal and social education, make a good contribution.
36. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual development is satisfactory. Pupils are encouraged to consider the inspiration of well-known artists and the expressive qualities of works of art. Their own artistic endeavours are valued by teachers and displayed with care. Good links are made between visual expression and creative writing when pupils write poetry to describe emotions. In religious education, pupils gain an understanding of the beliefs and values of other major faith groups. Personal and social education provides opportunities for pupils to discuss fundamental events such as birth and death. There are, however, few opportunities either in lessons or during the daily act of worship to provide pupils with time to reflect on new learning and ideas.
37. Provision for moral development is good. Some good opportunities are made in history to consider important issues such as the effect of war on people's lives and the treatment of the Jews in World War II. In religious education lessons, although the emphasis in many lessons is on the teaching of facts, there are a few good opportunities to discuss how religious belief affects moral behaviour. Opportunities for involvement in drama, as part of the English curriculum, encourage pupils to consider moral dilemmas. The exploration of a particular

theme, for example during the “Rainforest Day”, makes pupils aware of their responsibility for the environment. Pupils’ personal behaviour is promoted well through the high expectations staff have of them. Pupils are made aware of what is, and what is not, acceptable behaviour. They help to develop their classroom rules, which enables them to gain an understanding of rights and responsibilities and the reasons for rules. Teachers and other adults provide good role models, valuing all pupils as individuals.

38. Provision for pupils’ social development is good. The ethos of the school enables pupils to work well together. The very good provision for extra-curricular activities makes an effective contribution through teamwork, particularly in sport and music and through meeting pupils from other schools. There are many informal opportunities for pupils to take responsibility, although pupils are not encouraged to take on more demanding roles or to show high levels of initiative apart from a small group who produce a school newsletter. There is insufficient attention given to the use of the library for independent work and for pupils to take responsibility for their own learning. The school promotes an understanding of citizenship through some of the links with the world of work and the local community. Pupils are encouraged to think of people less fortunate than themselves through a range of fund raising activities. The annual residential visits for older pupils provide opportunities for them to be more independent and to cope with life away from home.
39. Provision for cultural development is good. Throughout the school, pupils are encouraged to appreciate their own cultural heritage and the culture of ancient civilisations, through the study of history. In art pupils become familiar with the work of famous European and American artists and learn about art in non-western cultures. They have visited an exhibition to broaden their experiences. In music pupils are building a repertoire of songs from their own and other cultures and take part in a music day at the local high school. They learn about the stories and music in opera and ballet. The Russian club and the residential visit to France make pupils more aware of European culture. Cross-curricular themes, for example rainforests, contribute to pupils’ understanding of other cultures. Religious education ensures pupils learn about the world’s major religions. There are a few opportunities for pupils to learn about the lives of people of other cultures in Britain, for example through the study of festivals, but these are currently too few to prepare pupils adequately for life in a multi-cultural society.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. There is a positive and supportive ethos in school that promotes pupils’ interest in their learning and directly influences their very good behaviour and attitudes to work.
41. The attention given to pupils’ welfare, health and safety is good. It has improved since the previous inspection. The school follows the locally agreed procedures for child protection and they are implemented effectively. There is a designated and suitably trained person within school responsible for all child protection issues. Procedures in place ensure that all newly appointed staff receive advice and guidance on the school’s child protection procedures. Systems in place ensure that all statutory checks relating to health and safety are systematically carried out and records accurately maintained. Whole school risk assessments are carried out annually by staff and a member of the governing body. Areas identified as requiring attention are recorded together with follow-up actions and completion dates. The recent school building development work was identified as a potential risk to all in school. Exemplary daily monitoring and recording ensured that the school remained a safe environment for all pupils, staff and visitors.
42. The procedures for monitoring pupils’ attendance are very good. Systems in place ensure that all pupil absence is systematically followed-up by the administration staff. This has resulted in the maintenance of consistently good levels of attendance and below average incidents of unauthorised absence. This good practice enhances pupils’ learning opportunities.
43. Procedures for promoting, monitoring and supporting pupils’ personal development are good.

Through the personal, health and social education programme the school prepares pupils well for the risks and dangers, for example drug misuse, associated with their growing independence. Pupils are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions through learning about water safety, healthy eating and the benefits of exercise. Teachers encourage pupils' interest in extra-curricular activities especially the opportunities for co-operation and teamwork. Teachers and support staff know their pupils very well. They build up accurate assessments of their personal development to report annually to parents. They use their insights into pupils' personal development to influence their planning. This was very evident during a personal and social education lesson in Year 5 where pupils watched a video of the birth of a baby. The teacher's good knowledge of pupils enabled pupils' individual needs to be anticipated and effective support provided.

44. The previous inspection identified as a key issue the lack of a policy or any useful systems for assessing pupils' attainments and for tracking progress. The school has come some way to addressing these concerns but insufficient progress has been made to ensure assessment procedures are effective. A whole-school policy has been drawn up but there remain important shortcomings in its implementation that affect pupils' progress. The links between the assessment of pupils' attainment and the school development plan are also unclear. Plans to introduce a portfolio of pupils' work have been delayed. The school has identified this as an important initiative in helping teachers to make more accurate assessments and to raise their expectations of what pupils can achieve.
45. Teachers assess and record pupils' academic progress in English, mathematics and science in Key Stage 2 and 3. There is little consistency, however, in how this is carried out. Some teachers make use of their own assessment systems but these vary greatly in detail, content and purpose. Some do not relate to the National Curriculum. This limits teachers' ability to make accurate judgements of pupils' levels of attainment. These records are not routinely passed to the next teacher. This restricts their effectiveness. Teachers have insufficient knowledge of what pupils know, understand and can do in most subjects to enable them to track progress during the year and to plan effectively for different groups within the class. This hinders the progress of higher-attaining pupils especially in mathematics and science and prevents them from making the gains in learning of which they are capable. There is some assessment of other subjects but this is not carried out systematically throughout the school.
46. The school has a good deal of useful information about pupils' attainments as a result of annual tests. The introduction of optional maths and English tests for Key Stage 2 pupils in Year 4 and Year 5 and statutory tests in Year 6 provides a reliable overview of progress from one year to the next. This information is not used effectively to predict pupils' achievements for the next year, to compare individual progress in different subjects, to monitor pupils' progress against predictions or to set targets for those pupils whose progress gives cause for concern. The school is in discussion with its feeder school to agree a scheme to include optional testing for pupils in Year 3, prior to their arrival in school. This would enable progress

between the time of entry in Year 4 and the end of Key Stage 2 to be assessed more accurately. This has not yet been established.

47. The progress of all pupils with special educational needs is reviewed regularly. The school employs a suitable range of strategies and methods to develop pupils' skills, particularly in reading and writing. This includes effective use of information technology. Individual education plans contain appropriate targets and contain sufficient detail to help class teachers in their planning of daily work. Pupils with special educational needs are identified effectively. There are good procedures for assessment. Procedures for recording progress are good, using information technology well.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

48. Relationships between parents and the school are good. Parents are appreciative of the work of the school in providing good standards of education for their children. They indicate that the school provides a safe and caring environment in which their children can learn effectively and that they enjoy coming to school. They believe the school promotes high standards of behaviour and they feel comfortable about approaching staff with questions or concerns relating to their children. Inspection evidence confirms these positive views held by parents.
49. The parent teacher association is an active and supportive group. They raise substantial sums of money through social events and activities held in school and the immediate community for the benefit of the school and pupils. School discos are particularly successful and well attended. These occasions enable teachers, pupils and their parents to mix socially which enhances pupils' social development and strengthens the relationship between parents and the school. Of particular note has been the purchase of the school mini bus that enables pupils to take part in additional extra-curricular activities travelling as a team for sporting competitions. These activities serve to enhance pupils' personal and social development.
50. A few parents assist in school and provide valuable additional learning opportunities for pupils, such as using the Internet to improve their research skills when seeking information. Other parents assist teachers in hearing readers.
51. Information provided in school newsletters to parents is regular and generally informative. Parents of pupils identified as having special educational needs receive satisfactory information on their children's needs. They receive sufficient information relating to the planned programme of study and of the progress they are making towards achieving targets indicated in their individual education plans. The school prospectus and governors' annual report to parents are detailed and meet statutory requirements. The school provides occasional opportunities for 'open days' and three consultation evenings during the year. Parents can speak with teachers about the progress their children are making and view the work they undertake in school. Many parents dislike the current format of the annual report of pupils' progress. The school uses a computer processed document which contains substantial information on what pupils know, can do and understand. Reports do not however, inform parents of areas for development or targets for improvement or how parents can assist with their children's learning at home. The reports for pupils in Year 7 do not contain statutory information relating to their studies in religious education. The consultation evening held in the spring term provides opportunities for teachers and parents to discuss in more detail, areas for future development. Homework diaries are not used consistently by all teachers to inform parents of the work their children are to undertake at home or the times when the work is to be completed. This is of concern to many parents and limits their ability to fulfil their agreed partnership with the school as part of the home/school agreement. During the parents' meeting prior to the inspection, parents expressed strongly opposing views about the quantity and quality of homework set and of its relevance to the work their children undertake in school. There was no clear consensus. Inspection evidence supports parents' concerns about the information provided about homework. The amount of homework is generally appropriate but it

is undemanding for higher-attaining pupils.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

52. The leadership and management provided by the headteacher and key staff are satisfactory overall. The headteacher has a clear vision for the future of the school, the need to maintain existing high standards and raise those that are not yet high enough. The governing body and staff share his commitment to succeed. Since the last inspection the headteacher has introduced a range of measures to achieve these aims and to address the many key issues identified in the previous report. The requirement to introduce the Literacy and Numeracy Strategies during this time and to make arrangements for the extensive alteration of the school has caused some initiatives to be delayed. There has also been a significant turnover of staff, some with management roles and this has also had an adverse effect on the implementation of the school's priorities for development. Although overall sufficient movement has taken place towards addressing the key issues and other areas for school improvement, there remain some areas where progress has been slow or ineffective.
53. The headteacher and the governing body use performance data to compare the school's results at the end of Key stage 2 with similar schools and they are aware of trends in pupils' attainments. For example they have identified less favourable comparisons in the 1999 statutory science tests than in previous years. They have considered a number of factors that may be contributing to pupils' attainment and progress across the curriculum, including the extent to which higher-attaining pupils are challenged and the relatively low number of classroom support assistants. Specialist teaching in Year 7 has been introduced to improve the quality of pupils' learning experiences and this has been effective in raising standards in Key Stage 3. Specific action has been taken in Key Stage 2 to raise standards in science, for example giving more emphasis to building pupils' skills of investigation. The headteacher and key staff have yet to evaluate the quality and consistency of teachers' assessments and the extent to which they are effective in planning pupils' work.
54. The school has agreed aims and values that are effectively communicated to parents in the school prospectus. The governors, headteacher and all staff are successful in ensuring that the school's values are reflected well in the pupils' good personal development, their very good relationships and the absence of oppressive behaviour such as bullying. The school ensures equality and access of opportunity for all pupils. The previous report pointed out that the school had no written policy on equality and access of opportunity for pupils. Although the school now has a written policy, this does not relate to pupils and practice is not evaluated.
55. The school's priorities for development are appropriate and are clearly set out in its development plan, together with specific targets to help it to achieve its intentions. There is a suitable focus on national initiatives such as literacy and numeracy as well as areas for development that are specific to the school, including outstanding issues from the last inspection. The previous inspection found that the school's development plan did not contain sufficiently defined criteria by which the governing body could measure the extent to which it had been successful in addressing its targets. The plan now includes specific criteria that are effectively used to evaluate the school's success in meeting its identified priorities. The previous report found insufficient detail of the school's long term needs in its development plan. The school has addressed this with planning over three years. There are, however, a large number of targets with little indication as to which are the main priorities. Financial planning identifies the cost of each initiative and links spending with priorities in the school's development plan.
56. The governing body is well organised, with its members bringing a wide range of skills and experience to the management of the school. Governors are committed to and supportive of the school and they are playing an increasing role in its daily life. For example, the school develops good links through a recent initiative giving each governor the responsibility for the overview of a subject of the curriculum. There is a designated governor with responsibility for

overseeing the provision for pupils with special educational needs who is knowledgeable, provides good support and visits the school on a regular basis.

57. The governing body shares duties effectively between committees in order to ensure a clear view of its life and work. It is closely involved in drawing up curriculum policies. Governors consider school issues thoroughly and they question the headteacher when further information is needed. They have very effective procedures to ensure that the school meets health and safety legislation. The governing body has an appropriate understanding of the strengths of the school, and it has begun to explore measures to improve pupils' attainment through its discussions about the provision for higher-attaining pupils and the number and quality of support assistants. Some annual reports do not inform parents about individual pupils' attainment and progress in religious education. Apart from this omission, the governing body carries out its duties and responsibilities conscientiously and ensures that statutory requirements are met. This includes provision for information technology, which did not meet statutory requirements at the last inspection. Governors have a positive role in shaping the direction of the school.
58. A range of responsibilities is appropriately delegated to staff, such as the year group leaders, so that teachers make positive contributions to the standards of care and provision pupils receive. The previous inspection found that the role of the subject co-ordinators was not specific enough. A key issue was to develop the role of co-ordinators to include the monitoring of standards. The school has moved some way towards dealing with this issue with written job descriptions for co-ordinators. However, there are inconsistencies in the extent to which co-ordinators undertake their responsibilities. The history co-ordinator for example has undertaken very thorough and systematic analysis of samples of pupils' work from all the classes, but this approach is not consistent across all subjects of the curriculum. As a result co-ordinators have insufficient knowledge of the attainment and progress of pupils in each year group. This is compounded by an insufficiently precise system of assessing pupils' work. The school finds it difficult, therefore, to account for significant changes in attainment such as the drop in science results at the end of Key Stage 2 in 1999. The previous inspection reported the absence of monitoring of teaching, and a key issue was to improve teaching skills. Arrangements have been implemented for the headteacher, deputy headteacher and co-ordinators to observe teaching. All teachers have been observed teaching literacy and numeracy. The implementation of the monitoring policy is, however, inconsistent. Some co-ordinators have not observed teaching in their subjects and some planned observations have not taken place. The overall quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection but the monitoring process is still not rigorous enough in ensuring the effectiveness of curriculum coverage or in identifying specific strengths and weaknesses.
59. Financial planning supports the school's educational aims and objectives as set down in its development plan. Governors take account of the school's priorities when allocating financial resources, and the chair of the finance committee monitors on-going expenditure closely. The headteacher ensures that grants for specific purposes are targeted accurately at designated areas. The previous inspection reported a large financial surplus. The school has a current surplus that the headteacher understands is too large. There are historical reasons for this excess relating to staff and to recent building improvements. The governing body rightly plans to reduce these rather excessive reserves, whilst ensuring it can meet longer-term commitments. As yet, however, these intentions are not recorded or sufficiently focussed on initiatives for raising pupils' attainment. The school uses new technology well in pupils' learning, including the support of pupils with special educational needs. The governing body is beginning to apply the principles of best value in seeking value for money in its spending decisions.
60. There are sufficient teachers to meet the demands of the curriculum. Some are very experienced and others have been recently trained. This provides an appropriate balance within the teaching team. Teachers have a range of subject expertise and school makes effective use of this. For example, French is taught by specialists and the science co-ordinator uses his subject knowledge effectively in teaching all classes in Year 7. The leadership of special educational needs is good. The co-ordinator for special educational needs shows an

enthusiastic commitment to the role. This is evident in good planning and effective support for pupils, including those with statements. Mid-day supervisors, office staff and those with responsibility for the cleanliness of the building all make positive contributions to the smooth running of the school. The support assistant who teaches pottery is particularly successful in enabling pupils of all levels of attainment to achieve high standards in the quality of their work. The school has a relatively low amount of such good quality classroom support, in spite of large budget reserves and this hinders progress in a small number of lessons. The governing body has only recently begun to consider the impact of this on standards of attainment in different subjects, specifically in the lower-attaining maths sets.

61. Teachers receive a range of training that is suitably related to the priorities in the school's development plan. The previous report found that there was no appraisal of teachers and that this limited staff development initiatives. Although teachers identify their own individual training needs, the school still has no effective system for objectively identifying teachers' development needs either through appraisal or through professional development interviews. The school has plans to implement a performance management policy. Satisfactory arrangements ensure that teachers who are new to the school are well supported, for example through the allocation of a mentor.
62. The accommodation is good. The previous inspection reported cramped classrooms and some areas in urgent need of redecoration. A major building programme has provided the school with specialist teaching areas including those for science, design and technology and art. The school has a combined information technology suite and library although this is as yet insufficiently used to develop pupils' independent research skills. The under-use of the library was a weakness at the last inspection. The interior of the school is clean, attractive and well cared for. There is very good accommodation for pupils with special educational needs.
63. Learning resources are good. They have improved since the last inspection, which identified a lack of resources for science, information technology, gymnastics and religious education. There were limited artefacts for geography. Science resources are now good. Information technology hardware is good; software is satisfactory and developing. Physical education resources are good and the school makes good use of other facilities locally. Religious education resources are now satisfactory and include appropriate artefacts. The range and quality of books in the library are sound.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

64. In order to raise standards further, the headteacher and governing body should include the following key issues in the post-inspection action plan:-

- (1) Improve assessment procedures to provide work that is more closely matched to the needs of different groups within classes, especially more demanding work for higher-attaining pupils in mathematics and science, by:-
 - linking assessments to national curriculum levels
 - using assessments to inform planning
 - predicting more accurately what individuals can achieve
 - setting more precise targets for individuals and groups
 - tracking progress towards the targets set(see paragraphs 21,31,44,45,46, 83,88,104)
- (2) Improve the effectiveness of subject management by enabling co-ordinators to identify strengths and weaknesses in their specialist areas through :-
 - monitoring the planning of work in all classes and analysing assessment information
 - monitoring teaching and learning and evaluating standards and progress
 - preparing samples of work for subject portfolios, linked to National Curriculum level descriptors, to support teachers' judgements.(see paragraphs 58,90,95,100,135)
- (3) Reduce the current budget surplus by spending on identified priorities in the school development plan.(see paragraph 59)
- (4) Ensure that the professional development of teachers is more closely linked to the monitoring of the effectiveness of teaching and learning in order to identify;-
 - strengths and weaknesses in teaching
 - training needs
 - opportunities for career development(see paragraphs 58,61)

The following less important weaknesses should also be considered: (see paragraphs 130,51,62,77,110, 61)

- the time allocation for religious education at Key Stage 2
- the quality of information provided for parents about pupils' progress
- the use of the school library
- opportunities for pupils to be involved in using and applying mathematics in different situations and in controlling and modelling activities in information technology
- the small number of support staff.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	71
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	25

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	15	34	44	4	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y 4-Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	318
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	17

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Y4- Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	1
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	50

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

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

Attendance

Authorised absence	%
School data	4.8
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence	%
School data	0.2
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	1999 (98)	44(49)	33(33)	77(82)

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	36	33	35
	Girls	31	30	30
	Total	67	63	65
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	87 (79)	82 (72)	84 (85)
	National	70 (65)	69 (59)	78 (69)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	34	31	38
	Girls	31	29	31
	Total	65	60	69
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	84 (85)	78 (87)	90 (93)
	National	68 (65)	69 (65)	75 (72)

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	1
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	314
Any other minority ethnic group	3

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	2	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y4 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	13.8
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	23:0
Average class size	26.5

Education support staff: Y4 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	3.0
Total aggregate hours worked per week	18

Financial information

Financial year	1998/99
	£
Total income	521285
Total expenditure	535537
Expenditure per pupil	1722
Balance brought forward from previous year	80514
Balance carried forward to next year	66262

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	318
Number of questionnaires returned	157

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	44	51	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	35	60	3	0	2
Behaviour in the school is good.	31	62	1	1	5
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	13	53	27	5	2
The teaching is good.	32	63	1	1	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	23	54	21	1	1
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	62	35	1	1	1
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	49	49	1	0	1
The school works closely with parents.	28	55	12	1	4
The school is well led and managed.	45	46	3	1	5
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	35	60	3	0	2
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	44	8	0	3

Other issues raised by parents

The parents expressed concerns about the loss of the music specialist as they felt that music had been a strength of the school. They feel that the range and quality of the learning opportunities available to pupils and their interest in school life are much improved. The quality of pastoral support for pupils and parents is of a high order.

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

English

65. The results of National Curriculum tests for eleven year-olds, in 1999, show that standards were:-
- well above average when compared with all school nationally.
 - average when compared with other similar schools.
66. There is no significant difference in the attainment of girls and boys. The school's results in English have been well above average over the last three years. There has been a steady increase in the proportion of pupils attaining the expected Level 4 and especially the higher Level 5. Inspection findings reflect this picture of well above average attainment. Pupils' writing is a particular strength. The school has set itself suitably challenging targets for both the 2000 and 2001 tests; these are likely to be achieved. When pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7 standards in writing, listening, speaking and reading are similarly high.
67. Pupils enter the school with standards in English above those expected for their age. Most pupils, including the lower-attaining pupils and those with special educational needs, make good progress during Key Stage 2 and especially in Year 7. Higher-attaining pupils also make good progress. Pupils made good progress in most of the lessons seen. In Year 7 they make very good progress in lessons. In Key Stage 2, the best progress is made in Year 6. The school's commitment to the National Literacy Project is having a positive impact on the quality of teaching of English. Teachers manage and organise their literacy lessons effectively, ensuring that pupils are employed on tasks that challenge and motivate them. Pupils of all prior attainment respond well, and often very well. Their commitment is a significant factor in enabling teachers to cover so much ground, especially in Year 7.
68. Throughout the school pupils listen attentively to their teachers, and also listen very well to the views of other pupils in the class. A good example of this was observed in a science class in Year 5, where pupils discussed how to find an effective material for muffling the sound of an alarm clock. In geography, pupils in Year 7 considered the vested interests in both the destruction and retention of the rain forests. In most lessons, where appropriate, there is plenty of dialogue and negotiation and many pupils speak confidently. Pupils of all abilities listen well, for example when taking part in the weekly drama lessons, a strong feature of provision. Pupils show satisfactory listening skills while in assemblies.
69. By the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, pupils read a variety of texts and many are reading two or more books at any one time. In their story reading pupils read fluently and enthusiastically. They talk confidently about plot and characters. Pupils of all attainment develop effective research skills. They know how to locate information. By the end of the Key Stage 2, most pupils spell words correctly, and many make good attempts at less familiar words. Regular tests and good marking is helping many to improve their spelling. Most pupils use dictionaries and thesauri as a matter of course. Most structure their writing effectively and use paragraphs well. The higher-attaining pupils produce longer stories with interesting vocabulary and more advanced forms of punctuation. The work on vocabulary encourages pupils to use a good range of descriptive words, as can be seen from their writing in the 'Georgian Times'. Throughout the school, pupils write for a good range of purposes, including writing advertisements and anthologies of 'Gory Ghosts'. Pupils' good handwriting enhances presentation throughout the school. The quality and quantity of writing in other subjects is also good. An example of this was in a history lesson in Year 5 where pupils were comparing Tudor schools with schools today, and in Year 7 when pupils were writing about medieval pastimes. Sometimes, pupils make notes when they are not sure about spelling, and they also draft their work. They use information technology to develop their word processing skills, for example

when in design and technology, pupils in Year 7 write an order form for their 'felt mascots', and use desk top publishing to produce a colour brochure.

70. Pupils' literacy skills are used and developed in other subjects and they use their recording skills well enough to enhance the quality of their oral and practical work. Research skills are developed in history and geography, and pupils use reference books in lessons. In religious education pupils in Year 6 are given Bible references and they use research skills to make notes from the text. The use of information technology for research is improving but is limited by poor access to the Internet and opportunities for independent study.
71. Pupils' response to teaching and learning is good in Key Stage 2. In Year 7 it is very good. In lessons pupils listen attentively to the teacher, and offer their ideas enthusiastically. They settle to their individual talks well and show good levels of concentration. They enjoy reading aloud and make sensible and helpful suggestions.
72. At the last inspection the quality of teaching in English was satisfactory. The quality of teaching has improved. It is now good. Many lessons are very good. The quality of teaching improves further up the school. It is very good in Year 7. This level of consistency is now a pleasing feature of the teaching.
73. The management of pupils is often very good and consistently so in Year 7. This results in a working atmosphere where pupils' learning is productive. Lessons are well planned, with clear objectives that are usually achieved through efficient and effective management and organisation. Teachers' have good personal knowledge and they motivate pupils by their own enthusiasm. They plan their lessons particularly well over the course of a week to incorporate plenty of opportunities for pupils to write. They make time for pupils to read on a regular basis, but sometimes these sessions are too short to be really effective. They are well supported by their colleagues, and led well by the subject co-ordinator. Most pupils make good progress because they know exactly what to do, and are kept active and interested by well-focussed discussion and written work. They know how long they have to complete tasks and what to do when they are finished. Teachers assess pupils' attainment in the full range of skills, and marking of pupils' work is helpful and informative. Pupils with special educational needs are well supported, making good progress. Sometimes though they leave lessons to receive additional support at inappropriate times. Homework is set regularly but is sometimes undemanding. Drama is well taught and is a strong feature of provision.
74. At the last inspection attainment in English was higher than expected nationally at the end of Key Stage 2 but broadly average at Key stage 3. Since then standards have improved. Pupils' listening, speaking, reading, and especially writing are now well above national standards in both key stages.

MATHEMATICS

75. The results of National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds in 1999 show that standards were;
 - above average when compared with all schools nationally.
 - average when compared with other similar schools.
76. The proportion of pupils attaining the higher Level 5, at approximately one in four pupils, was similar to that found nationally. Trends in results over time show no obvious pattern, although results in 1999 rose considerably when compared to 1998. This is an improvement since the last inspection in 1997 when standards were judged as broadly in line with national levels. Predicted results for the years 2000 and 2001 represent appropriately challenging targets for the respective cohorts. Inspection findings mirror test results. Pupils of lower and average ability, including those with special educational needs, make sound progress in many areas of

mathematics by the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. This is especially true in numeracy, which is well represented in all years, and is mostly taught systematically, with teachers carefully building on prior learning. This enables pupils to develop confidence, and increase knowledge and understanding of number as they move through the school. Higher-attaining pupils in both key stages however, do not always make the gains in learning of which they are capable. This is because teachers do not always use assessment information effectively to set work that is appropriately matched to their abilities. For example, more able pupils sometimes complete too much reinforcement of clearly understood work, and are given tasks also completed by pupils of average ability, which do not appropriately challenge them. This unnecessary consolidation prevents them from making the best possible gains in learning over time. Grouping of pupils by ability, while having a positive impact overall on helping to raise standards, does not always cater for the needs of different groups within each set. Teachers regard the grouping by ability as sufficient for this purpose and rarely provide appropriately challenging work for higher attainers.

77. Pupils in both key stages make slower than expected progress in their ability to use and apply mathematics practically, in real life problems and within the subject itself. For example, pupils in Year 5 find difficulty in answering questions about a shopping list, which required them to seek solutions to problems by making use of their mathematical knowledge, despite the fact that they were using calculators to assist them. This is because the using and applying mathematics component is currently given insufficient attention across the school. The school is aware of this, and is introducing modifications to the planning to help ensure that all pupils make the required gains in learning in this important area.
78. By the end of Key Stage 2 and in Year 7, pupils have developed flexible and effective computation methods. They increase their speed and accuracy of mental response, to levels higher than found nationally. Pupils in Year 4 swiftly and accurately double and half numbers mentally, begin to find out about equivalent fractions, and begin to solve subtraction problems in different ways. Year 5 pupils begin to understand long multiplication, use negative numbers, and add decimals to two decimal places.
79. By the end of Key Stage 2, most pupils have developed their own strategies for calculating and can seek a pattern by trying out their own ideas, such as, when identifying square and triangular numbers. They use a variety of written and mental computations using all four operations when solving number problems. Most pupils have a thorough understanding of place value, and can explore and describe number patterns and relationships, such as, multiple, factor and square. Higher-attaining pupils in Year 6 round numbers to the nearest 10, 100, and 1000. They handle large numbers when comparing and ordering the populations of different American states. They calculate correctly the surface area of different solid shapes, and understand fractions and percentages. Most pupils in Year 6 select and correctly use appropriate units of measurement, and find perimeters and areas of shapes accurately and confidently. They extract, communicate and interpret information through tables, lists, bar charts and pictograms. They are beginning to construct and interpret line graphs, but are unable to demonstrate a secure understanding of probability or compare simple distributions. Most are not yet able to show understanding of situations by describing them mathematically using symbols, words and diagrams.
80. Pupils in Year 7 continue to make satisfactory progress in most aspects of their mathematics. By the time they leave the school, higher-attaining pupils in Year 7 collect discrete data and use frequency tables for recording purposes. They use simple mathematical formulae, understand ratios, and can produce accurate scale drawings.
81. Teaching varies from excellent to unsatisfactory in Key Stage 2, but is sound overall. In Year 7, it is consistently sound. Very strong features of an excellent lesson in Year 5 included brisk pace, excellent use of resources and a variety of strategies to keep all pupils fully motivated and involved. The teacher has secure subject knowledge and provides high levels of challenge for pupils of all abilities. Other significant strengths include very good use of praise to enhance

self-esteem and frequent references to the lesson's aim to provide a clear focus for learning. Good questioning skills ensure pupils articulate their developing understanding. An especially useful session at the end of the lesson consolidated learning effectively. The one lesson judged unsatisfactory lacked effective control. This led to a significant loss of time. Work was not well matched to pupils' abilities resulting in slow pace and restricted learning. The lack of a support assistant in this low set contributed to the slow progress that pupils made. Teachers are familiar with the requirements of the National Numeracy strategy, with all sections appropriately represented. However, the quality of the mental arithmetic activities at the start of each lesson is too slow in some lessons to enable pupils to make the best possible progress. Opportunities to share gains in learning at the end of lessons are sometimes too short to be effective, preventing teachers from making accurate assessments of knowledge acquired.

82. The subject is well led. The temporary co-ordinator has a good overview of the subject in the permanent post holder's absence. There are clear, relevant and realistic priorities for further development. There is an increasing emphasis on the development of Numeracy skills in other subjects. These are now given greater prominence, for example in information technology, where pupils increasingly collect, communicate and interpret statistical data. The introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has been carefully monitored for compliance with requirements.
83. The school's emphasis on mental mathematics, and on challenges in homework, especially well received by pupils in Key Stage 2, are both helping to raise standards in the subject. A range of formal and informal assessment procedures is helping to provide important information about what pupils know and understand. However, information is not used consistently to inform future planning or to help track pupils' progress. The analysis of previous test data is not sufficiently detailed to help improve the accuracy of target setting for groups and individuals. There is no consistent approach to marking, which is not being used effectively for assessment purposes. This was an issue at the time of the last inspection. The presentation of pupils' work is unacceptably variable, ranging from neat to untidy. There were examples observed, especially when practical work was taking place, when pupils would have benefited from support staff, to facilitate learning, especially in larger groups.

SCIENCE

84. The results of National Curriculum tests for eleven year olds in 1999 show that standards were:
 - average when compared with all schools nationally
 - below average when compared with other similar schools.
85. The school has not maintained the well above the national average results of the previous two years. This arises from improvements in national results whilst the school results have remained steady. The targets that the school has set itself for pupils' levels of achievement in the National tests in the year 2000 are appropriately challenging. Teachers are more aware of the need to move pupils on. The attainment of pupils in the current Year 6 shows an improvement and is above the national average. The targets for an overall improvement are achievable. The school anticipates that a greater proportion of pupils will attain the higher Level 5 than in the previous year. The level of demand made on higher-attaining pupils in some lessons, however, prevents them from making the gains of which they are capable. As a result, it is unlikely that the targets for Level 5 will be achieved. All Year 7 pupils have received a strong focus on science through teaching by the subject co-ordinator, and consequently they have gained good levels of knowledge. This has enabled them to build effectively on their performance in the 1999 tests. As a result, when these pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7 their attainment in science is likely to be above that found nationally.
86. By the end of Year 6, pupils identify the organs of a flower such as stigma and style. They have

an understanding of friction, including how it can heat things and how its effects can be reduced. Pupils use appropriate terms such as evaporation and condensation to describe physical changes, and they take account of identified patterns in drawing conclusions from their investigations. Higher-attaining pupils know how mixtures such as salt, water and sand can be separated, they describe the main functions of the organs of a plant and they have an increased understanding of life processes including pollination.

87. By the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 7 they have a developed knowledge of the properties of gases, liquids and solids. They present systematically recorded observations and measurements, such as those showing the temperature when hot water is added to ice. They have a developed knowledge of the properties of materials including the viscosity of certain liquids, and they use a good range of technical terms such as suspensions, acids and alkalis. Pupils describe some theoretical ideas such as stationary objects revealing a balance of forces. Teachers ensure that pupils' learning about the human body makes a valuable contribution to their sex education.
88. Teaching is generally good. Teachers have very good relationships with pupils. The previous inspection found that teachers did not develop pupils' scientific skills sufficiently and as a result their attainment in the investigative and exploratory aspects of science were not as good as their knowledge. Since the last inspection the co-ordinator has effectively led an increased focus on these skills and teachers now place a generally appropriate emphasis on them in their teaching, which is resulting in pupils improving their attainment in this important aspect of science. Teachers provide good opportunities for pupils to explore and investigate at a level that is appropriately matched to their attainment. On the few occasions where this is less successful, teachers effectively enable pupils to plan investigations using their own ideas but they do not always provide opportunities for them to test the effectiveness of their suggestions by applying them. This sometimes slows the learning of the higher-attaining pupils in their acquisition of science skills. Teachers are aware of pupils' different levels of attainment in their classes. Although their lesson plans take account of this, there is sometimes insufficient rigour in meeting the needs of these different groups. As a result some pupils, notably the higher-attaining pupils, do not always make the progress of which they are capable. The previous inspection found that resources were insufficient to meet the demands of the science curriculum. Resources are now good. They are readily accessible and well used by pupils in lessons. The new science and technology room provides very good accommodation for the subject. Teaching fosters good contributions to pupils' speaking and listening, for example in their group work. It supports numeracy skills well, for example in pupils' use of line graphs in Years 6 and 7, although some opportunities are missed to develop their learning, such as including angles of slopes in their investigations of friction.
89. Pupils' good attitudes to science and their good behaviour contribute significantly to their learning. They relate well to teachers and they respect them. They co-operate very effectively in their working groups, sharing ideas well and treating resources responsibly. They listen and concentrate very well. Pupils in Year 7 have very good attitudes to the subject.
90. The recently appointed co-ordinator has made important improvements in the planning of science that are having a positive impact on standards. However, some weaknesses in monitoring and evaluating remain. Further work needs to be carried out on identifying strengths and weaknesses in teaching across the whole school, and in pupils' attainment and progress in different year groups. The analysis of test results and assessment information is not detailed enough to be useful in forward planning, in anticipating trends and in providing remedial support for areas of weakness.
91. The previous inspection found that the information gained from assessing pupils' work was not used sufficiently to inform the planning of their future learning. Teachers' records in some classes, for example in Year 7, provide useful information about pupils' skills, knowledge and understanding. There are inconsistencies, however, and as a result, information is still not always specific enough to assist teachers in the planning of pupils' future work. The school is

planning a portfolio of pupils' work illustrating attainment at different levels to improve teachers' judgements.

ART

92. Standards of pupils' attainment broadly reflect those expected by the end of Key Stage 2. Year 7 pupils produce work of a good standard and this is attributable to good teaching. For example, when pupils were given the opportunity to explore the qualities of different types of pencil, there was a noticeable improvement in the accuracy and detail of their subsequent sketches, some of which were outstanding. This represents an improvement since the last inspection when attainment by the time the pupils left the school was in line with national expectations.
93. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils are well informed about the work and distinguishing features of a wide range of artists, such as Matisse and Kandinsky. They produce intricately shaded architectural sketches, and detailed observational drawings. Their work on patterns is carefully executed and they use shading techniques skilfully. By the time pupils leave the school they represent details effectively in their drawings, for example of training shoes. Higher-attaining pupils produce meticulous sketches of glass bottles, conveying the impact of light and shadow.
94. The quality of teaching is satisfactory at Key stage 2 and good at Key Stage 3. The teaching of pottery in Year 7 and art in Year 5 both have significant strengths that contribute very effectively to pupils' very good learning. In both lessons the expertise of the support assistant and the teacher strongly influenced pupils' very good attitudes to the subject. Good encouragement of pupils in Year 5 to be original and to talk about what they had achieved led to very good learning and some high quality representations of fruit and vegetables using different media such as inks. The support assistant in the Year 7 class successfully fostered pupils' exploration of tools and techniques that resulted in clay artefacts with good levels of originality. Pupils' very good attitudes to art are shown in their persistent concentration, their confidence in exploring media and methods and the way they express themselves artistically.
95. The curriculum is effectively enriched by good use of the new art room, and through popular extra-curricular activities. Art contributes well to the development of pupils' cultural awareness through, for example, the study of a range of artists, visits to exhibitions to see the work of surrealists and looking at art in other cultures such as the Romans. The co-ordinator is aware that the textiles could be used more effectively to develop learning. Her role as co-ordinator has yet to be extended to a systematic observation of all teachers to spread good practice.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

96. By the end of Key Stage 2 and when pupils leave the school a year later, standards are broadly in line with those expected. This represents an improvement since the previous inspection when standards at the end of Key Stage 2 and also at the end of Year 7 were below those found nationally. The development of planning for the subject, together with curriculum enrichment from visitors and from extra-curricular activities have contributed to this improvement in pupils' performance. Pupils make good progress in projects that enable them to apply their science knowledge, understanding and skills; as a result, in Year 6 for example, they produce effective artefacts, such as vehicles that incorporate electric circuits. Pupils' skills in making are appropriately developed by working with a range of media and methods. Their skills in designing and in evaluating the end product are less well developed. For example, pupils' planning in Years 6 and 7 often does not include dimensions or different types of planning such as step-by-step plans and alternative designs. Similarly, the evaluation of their end-products is sometimes too general and does not relate specifically to planning criteria such as suitability for purpose. Increased detail and precision in these aspects of the subject will help the school to build on its improving standards.
97. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils produce end-products that have effective working parts, such as wheels that are driven by electricity. All pupils can measure, mark out and cut different materials including wood, and they use various methods for joining such as glue. They use pneumatics effectively in mechanisms, and carefully describe how the models work by using switches to change the movement of platforms. Pupils show careful attention to the quality of their finished product.
98. By the end of Year 7, pupils have an increasing knowledge of factors involved in marketing such as slogans and packaging, and they represent these in things that they make. Higher-attaining pupils extend this to include catalogue numbers. Pupils modify their designs when making their mascots as a result of difficulties that they encounter, and their finished artefacts show attention to detail, for example in their stitching,
99. The quality of teaching is satisfactory overall. Good teaching was observed in lessons in Year 7. There were significant strengths in the pottery lesson which enabled pupils to learn new skills from the strong expertise of a support assistant. A good contribution was made to pupils' learning during a day that focused on science and technology. Pupils have very good attitudes to design and technology in Year 7 and they were very well behaved during the science and technology day. This resulted in good levels of learning from the opportunities presented by the visitor. Pupils relate well to one another, they share resources effectively and agree tasks democratically.
100. The leadership of the subject is satisfactory overall although there remain some weaknesses. The assessment of pupils' work does not focus precisely enough on the development of skills. As a result it is of limited value in the planning of future learning. Resources have improved significantly since the last inspection, for example the provision of a well-equipped food technology room, and this has enabled the school to improve its provision for design and technology.

GEOGRAPHY

101. Pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school in a limited range of geographical activities. They develop a sound knowledge and understanding of places and themes and associated geographical vocabulary by the end of Key Stage 2, and by the time they leave the school. Standards in this important component of the subject are close to national levels by the end of Key Stage 2. However, there is too much emphasis in Year 7 on the acquisition of factual geographical knowledge at the expense of important skills. For example, pupils in Year 7 learn that Aconcagua, Chimborazo and Cotopaxi are mountains in

the Andes in South America, yet many do not know how to use an atlas to find this information for themselves! Throughout the school, there is an over-emphasis on learning geography from textbooks, which reduces some pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. Pupils have too few opportunities to describe and interpret their surroundings using appropriate geographical vocabulary, and to carry out fieldwork, which includes the use of measuring instruments and techniques. Pupils rarely use information technology to help in handling, classifying, and presenting evidence and to provide access to additional information sources. However, in Year 5 there is more evidence of the teaching of important skills and of applying gained geographical knowledge to real-life situations, such as, through the making of comparisons with their own locality.

102. Pupils are given a few opportunities to observe and ask questions about geographical issues, to collect and record evidence to answer them, and to analyse evidence and communicate their conclusions. The current absence of a suitably structured scheme of work, however, hinders the teaching of geographical skills in logical sequence to ensure that learning carefully builds on what has gone before. In Year 4, through a study of a farm in the Lake District, pupils draw maps with a simple key, learn about contour lines, and find out about land use in the area. In Year 5, through a study of photographs, pupils learn about the impact of the River Nile on the inhabitants of Egypt and the importance of irrigation. They make comparisons with Norfolk and appreciate that contrasting places have characteristics that are both similar and different. Pupils link their knowledge with their own experiences by observing water movement around the school. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils know about rivers and waterfalls, through a study of The Great Lakes of North America. They learn to record and analyse evidence, and to draw geographical conclusions. In a study of weather, they learn how the Beaufort scale measures wind speed, and how weather extremes affected Norwich in 1999. In Year 7, pupils learn how an ecosystem is related to human activity, with particular reference to the Brazilian rainforest. Pupils study, from different perspectives, how deforestation has affected the region.
103. Teaching is satisfactory overall, with good teaching observed in Years 5 and 7. Good features of teaching include secure subject knowledge, imaginative presentation of geographical material to instil interest and good questioning to develop geographical understanding. Teachers organise pupils and resources effectively which promotes learning and contributes to progress. Attitudes to learning are variable in geography. Where pupils are motivated and involved, they were enthusiastic about their learning. However, other pupils when asked, commented that geography was "quite boring".
104. The new subject co-ordinator has clear plans for the subject's needed development. These include a revision of planning to adopt and modify national guidelines to suit the school's needs and to ensure that the development of skills is given appropriate emphasis. There are plans to improve resource provision, and to consider extending the use of specialist teaching, which has recently been introduced in Years 5 and 6. Links with other subjects are developing well. For example, pupils in Year 5 learn to communicate geographical information using Venn diagrams. The subject is secure within the school's curriculum, and is represented in different ways, such as, through maps, diagrams and written work, in all years. However, assessment is rarely used to inform future planning. The school has identified that consultation is required with the first school to ensure that local study work in Year 4 effectively builds on prior learning.

HISTORY

105. Both at the age of eleven and when the pupils leave the school, standards in history match those expected for their age. Pupils make satisfactory progress in gaining historical knowledge and skills during their time at the school. Pupils with special educational needs also make satisfactory progress.
106. Pupils have sound knowledge of historical events over a longer time scale, such as the key milestones in Medieval England including the Black Death and the Peasants Revolt. They acquire a sound level of factual information about the daily lives of people in the past such as Sir Francis Drake. They investigate evidence to find out about daily life in Roman Times. They carry out research and write imaginatively about the different shelters used during World War II. They use a range of information, including documents, artifacts, videos and living theatre, and consider what they tell us about the past, selecting and combining information from different sources. They understand that it is possible to get conflicting descriptions of the same person or event. They use information technology well, as when writing Harold's Diary detailing the days of the Conquest.
107. Pupils enjoy history. They make good use of opportunities to look at pictures of places and to examine old objects, photographs and documents for the information they provide. They present their work very well, especially when inspired by visits, for example to Colchester castle and Oxburgh hall. Visitors to the school who discuss with pupils the themes of the 'Blitz' and 'Monks and Monarchs' also add interest and breadth to the work. The classroom walls and the displays around the school reflect pupils' interest and the enthusiasm of the staff. The subject makes a significant contribution to the development of pupils' writing.
108. Teaching is satisfactory. Lesson activities are planned to help pupils make progress in the various aspects of the subject, especially in looking at evidence, and to ensure that resources are ready for their use. The quality of visual materials and some displays, such as the experiences of an evacuee is high, stimulating pupils' interest. A good feature of the subject is the way in which teachers make effective links with other subjects of the National Curriculum, especially drama, to enliven the work. Good opportunities are also provided in English to use historical texts when pupils consider different types of writing. Teachers use a good range of books and other resources. Displays and examination of pupils' work show that over time effective teaching enables them to produce work of a good standard. In particular, pupils are taught to look for the underlying causes of major events, patterns and trends. This gives them a good foundation for further work in the subject.
109. Standards have been maintained since the last inspection. Management of the subject is good. The monitoring of work to assess standards is a strong ongoing feature. It provides useful insights into the quality of pupils' learning.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

110. By the end of Key Stage 2, and when pupils leave the school, standards in information technology are close to national expectations in pupils' ability to communicate and handle information. Progress is sound across the school in this important component of the curriculum. They are below national standards in controlling, modelling and monitoring, where insufficient time, a lack of some resources, and a lack of confidence and expertise among some staff is hindering the development of this area. However, these judgements represent a significant improvement since the last inspection when all components were judged to be below national levels, and the subject was not fully secure within the school's curriculum. There are a number of reasons for the rise in standards in pupils' ability to communicate and handle information, and the higher profile of information technology now as compared to 1997. Resource provision has improved considerably through the installation of a well-equipped computer suite, and the quantity and range of software has been extended. New teachers are

mostly fully computer literate and existing teachers have increased their knowledge and understanding of the new technology through in-service training to help them teach more effectively.

111. Pupils make sound progress over time in their ability to communicate ideas and information using text and graphics. They make satisfactory gains in organising, reorganising and analysing ideas and information. Pupils made good gains in learning in lessons seen in Key Stage 2. For example, pupils in Year 4 use a simple database to store, display and analyse represented information in different forms. All pupils know how to log on, load a programme, generate a bar graph, print work, log off and close down their computer. Higher-attaining pupils use colour to enhance the clarity of displayed graphs to assist learning. Pupils in Year 5 use a spreadsheet to produce a table of data with a minimum of ten entries, enabling them to carry out calculations. They show that they can organise and present ideas using information technology. By the end of Key Stage 2, when compiling a database of planets in our solar system, pupils generate, organise, amend and present information using information technology. They also seek information from their represented data and are beginning to interpret their findings. Their keyboard and mouse skills are improving and they handle equipment confidently. However, though some pupils understand the control of equipment by a series of instructions to achieve particular results, most are not able to control events in a predetermined way, sense physical data and display it using information technology systems. Although the curriculum now meets statutory requirements, pupils have insufficient opportunity to explore patterns and relationships with the aid of computer simulations. The school is fully aware that this is an area for development.
112. Pupils' response to computers is consistently good. Most are enthusiastic, and demonstrate positive attitudes to work. When they are appropriately challenged, and work is well organised, their behaviour in the computer suite is good.
113. Teaching is sound overall, and good in Key Stage 2. Good features of teaching include secure subject knowledge and confidence. This helps to ensure pupils make progress, appropriate emphasis on the development of important skills, good organisation which ensures pupils have maximum "hands on" experiences to assist learning. In the best lessons there are appropriate levels of challenge and frequent encouragement. Where teaching is less effective organisation is flawed, very few questions are asked to extend understanding, and control strategies are inadequate to keep pupils on task.
114. The management of the subject is sound. The co-ordinator has monitored classroom practice to assess levels of competence and consistency of developing provision. There are clear plans for the subjects continued development. These include improvements to planning, and the compilation of a new policy. All pupils now have lessons regularly in the computer suite. This ensures that they make good use of the computers and improve their technical skills. Computers are increasingly used to support the work of other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 7 represent collected information in various ways, such as, using tables and graphs, to analyse the effects on their pulse rates of vigorous activity, which involves mathematics and physical education. However, weaknesses are still evident, most of which are recognised by the school. These include an imbalance in the curriculum, technical support, which is not always quick enough to respond to the school's needs, and little opportunity for pupils to extend their knowledge and understanding using the Internet. The absence of knowledgeable support staff inhibits the progress of some pupils and results in pupils waiting for attention.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

115. French is taught to pupils in Year 6 and Year 7. Pupils in Year 6 have half an hour a week and are introduced to the language through speaking and listening activities. The teaching is good and provides a range of activities that interest all the pupils and enables them to make good progress. The teaching provides opportunities for introducing new vocabulary, practising it until it is secure and using it in role play situations, games and question and answer sessions. Pupils work at a good pace and quickly become confident through the encouragement they receive and the opportunities to practise together as a class or in pairs before speaking individually in front of the class. The teacher uses French wherever possible, for example to give instructions for tidying up after an activity and demonstrates by actions where necessary. This helps pupils to make further gains in knowledge of the language. Captions under pictures are used when learning new vocabulary to familiarise pupils with the written form of the language in preparation for the next year's work. Pupils' achievements are high.
116. Pupils in Year 7 have two half-hour lessons a week taught by a modern language specialist. The teacher is aware that this is less than the recommended time. It is offset to some extent by the introduction of French in Year 6. The teacher compensates for the remaining shortfall by setting homework twice a week and by very good use of every available moment during the lesson. The quality of teaching in Year 7 is excellent. The teacher's expertise enables pupils of different attainment to make very good progress. The pace of work is breathtaking but care is taken to consolidate new learning through a wide range of activities, for example role play, games, repeating phrases modelled by the teacher, question and answers sessions, listening to recorded conversations and reading from texts.
117. The teacher has very high expectations of levels of concentration, speed of response, the effort pupils make when they practise in pairs or take part in role-play and the accuracy of their accents. The pupils do not disappoint her. They work hard for the entire lesson, listen carefully and respond with enthusiasm in role-play. They work productively in pairs, settling to work and beginning to converse the minute they arrive for lessons, making good use of every available moment until all pupils are settled. Their enjoyment of the subject is evident.
118. The vast majority of the pupils show considerable confidence in their use of French in a variety of situations, some of them even to the extent of adding humour to their conversation. One particularly effective activity that combined reading, listening and speaking activities involved the pupils in listening to a recording of directions being given to a visitor to places of interest. The pupils referred to a map in their textbooks whilst they listened to the tape, making brief notes about the information and whether it was true or false. This enabled them to repeat the accurate information and correct the inaccurate in the question and answer session led by the teacher afterwards.
119. Pupils build up vocabulary quickly and are beginning to use the language in reality as well as for practising skills. Standards are high, as indicated in the previous inspection report. The residential visit to France, combining lessons, the use of the language in real situations and opportunities to take part in social and cultural activities provides further valuable experiences.
120. Writing activities are usually set for homework to make the best use of time in the classroom. Completed work indicates that these activities are purposeful and include appropriate repetition of key phrases in different contexts. This consolidates vocabulary and extends pupils' ability to use it in conversation. There is a good range of written work including, answers to questions, translating sentences, composing speech bubbles to add dialogue to stories, completing sentences and giving directions. The marking of pupils' work gives useful guidance on how pupils can improve.
121. There is good liaison with other schools in the cluster to agree assessment methods and levels of attainment. This enables the receiving high school to set pupils accurately from the outset.

MUSIC

122. Until the current year, much of the music was taught by the co-ordinator, who has now left the school. This has left the school with little expertise in music and no pianist. For reasons beyond the control of the school it has not yet been possible to appoint a replacement. It is likely that an appointment will be made for September. At the time of the previous inspection music enjoyed high status in the school. It has not been possible to maintain this, although staff, including visiting teachers, have worked hard to keep the orchestra and choir going. Parents expressed their concerns about pupils' dwindling enthusiasm but felt that the school was doing all it could to maintain standards given the current difficult situation.
123. There is insufficient evidence to make judgements about the standards achieved or the quality of teaching and learning overall as many lessons were timetabled outside the period of the inspection. Specialist teaching is still provided for Year 7 but this takes place on a Friday. Of the teaching observed in Key Stage 2, a lack of confidence and expertise is evident. A published scheme of work provides the necessary structure and coverage of the National Curriculum. Recorded lessons are used as part of the scheme to provide a range of material for listening and appraising. Teachers' understanding of some of the technical elements is insufficient to ensure that pupils make satisfactory progress.
124. There are good opportunities for pupils to learn an instrument and groups of pupils benefit from brass, woodwind, string and percussion tuition. There are valuable extra-curricular activities, for example a music day at the local high school and performances by the choir and orchestra at community events. These broaden pupils' experiences and contribute significantly to their social development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

125. The subject has a high profile within the school. The curriculum is good, offering all pupils good opportunities to develop their skills and improve their performance in a wide variety of activities. There is very good provision for swimming. The range of extra-curricular sporting activities is very good and is a strength of the school. Many pupils are able to take part in some sporting activities. These include football, netball and badminton. Pupils are involved in these activities before school, at lunchtimes, after school and at weekends. They cater for both girls and boys. Pupils are involved in local competitions, which support not only their physical attributes, but also their personal and social development. The range and quality of the learning opportunities results in pupils, including those with special educational needs, making good progress and achieving above average standards by the age of eleven, and when they leave the school. They make particularly good progress in games. They practise and improve their skills and achieve good standards of throwing, aiming, retrieving and moving with a ball. They invent their own small-sided games. They develop a good style in a range of strokes in swimming.
126. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers have a secure understanding of the National Curriculum requirements. Teachers plan their lessons well to begin with an appropriate 'warm up' activity, and end with a good 'cool down' exercise. Discipline is well maintained and teachers have suitable expectations of what the pupils can do. Good use is made of resources and little time is wasted. Some teachers have a real enthusiasm for the subject and organise activities to promote a wide range of experiences and high levels of motivation amongst the pupils. Good links are made with information technology, such as when it is used by pupils to record their performance and fitness and compare it to others'. Very good attention is paid to the health and safety of pupils. They work safely alone, in small groups and as members of a team.
127. The pupils' attitudes to physical education are good across the school. They behave well and listen attentively to their teacher. They respond quickly to instructions and enjoy their work.

They sustain high levels of activity, and work well together. When pupils play competitive games such as soccer and netball, they make judgements about their own and others' performance. They use this information well to improve their level of attainment.

128. The high standards in the subject have been maintained since the last inspection, particularly in the range and frequency of extra-curricular provision.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

129. Many weaknesses were identified in religious education in the previous inspection report. The school has succeeded in remedying many of these but some weaknesses remain.
130. The amount of teaching time has been increased but this is still not enough at Key Stage 2 to cover the scheme of work in sufficient depth. Resources have been improved and are now adequate. There are particularly good improvements in the provision of artefacts, posters and teaching materials to support the study of the six major faiths. There is now an appropriate range of books of good quality in the school library. Liaison with first and high schools has informed planning. This aims to avoid repetition and provide consistency of curriculum coverage. The Norfolk Agreed Syllabus has now been adopted. A scheme of work has been developed to assist teachers in their lesson planning and to ensure that the syllabus is followed.
131. Although the new scheme of work has improved pupils' knowledge of the six major faiths, a weakness identified in the previous inspection report, its scope is such that teachers are unable to cover all the work expected in the time allowed. As a result some work is not covered and some other elements are not taught in sufficient depth. Although most pupils have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the work covered, pupils in Year 6 have significant gaps in their knowledge. For example, although other pupils in Key Stage 2 know about the importance of the Feast of the Passover for Jews, pupils in Year 6 were not able to recall this part of the curriculum when they talked about the events of Holy Week. They are also unclear about the main elements of Christian teaching. By the end of Key Stage 2 pupils' attainment is below the expectations of the agreed syllabus. Some weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and understanding at the end of Key Stage 2 can be explained by the relatively recent introduction of the scheme of work.
132. No teaching in Key Stage 3 was observed. Pupils' completed work indicates that they make appropriate gains in knowledge in most of the topics covered. Some of the work repeats topics covered in Years 5 or 6. Whilst it is appropriate that some areas of study should be revisited, the greater depth and higher level of understanding expected is not always clear.
133. The teaching is satisfactory overall. Teachers have a good understanding of the knowledge aspects of the subject and teach these aspects thoroughly. Teachers in Year 6 explain the political background to the events that took place in Jerusalem leading up to the crucifixion of Jesus. Pupils consolidate their knowledge by referring to passages from the gospels. Insufficient attention is given to links with other religions studied to improve pupils' understanding of the events, for example Jewish expectations and traditions. There are too few opportunities for pupils to discuss aspects of the story that have parallels with their own lives, for example the loyalty of friends when circumstances are difficult, and the betrayal of trust. Although it was clear that some pupils viewed the resurrection accounts with scepticism, the chance to debate them, to begin to understand why they are of such importance to Christians and to bring these lessons alive were missed. Although pupils concentrate well this results in a distinct lack of enthusiasm in some lessons.
134. In other lessons good links were made with everyday experiences and themes which cross religious boundaries. Pupils in Year 4, for example discussed respect. They considered how they show respect for adults, for the feelings of others, for property and the environment. This

starting point helped them to understand why Hindus start the day with a prayer about the sun and developed their own thoughts on making the most of each new day. They showed real interest in composing their own prayers. Similarly in Year 5, pupils were led sensitively by their teacher to consider how important religious leaders have given up material possessions to come closer to their followers. Good links were made between Buddhism and Christianity. The pupils were also able to understand how the Buddhist principles of right thoughts and actions link with Christian principles and affect moral behaviour. Pupils make good progress in these lessons but progress over time is undermined by the gaps that result from the partial or superficial coverage of some aspects of the curriculum.

135. The management of the subject is unsatisfactory. There is insufficient monitoring of planning, teaching and learning to ensure that the scheme of work is covered adequately and to ensure that the work builds effectively as pupils' progress through the school. There is no assessment of pupils' work against agreed criteria to ensure that end of key stage expectations are met. Reports to parents do not always include information about progress in religious education.