

INSPECTION REPORT

HOPTON CE VC FIRST SCHOOL

Hopton-on-sea, Great Yarmouth

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121098

Head teacher: Mrs R Barker

Reporting inspector: Mr A Margerison

21666

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th March 2002

Inspection number: 217403

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

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GLOSSARY of terms

Baseline assessment – tests for young children when they join the school or in their first year.

Co-ordinator – teacher in charge of organising a subject, such as English or physical education.

Curriculum – everything the school teaches pupils in and out of class, such as English, science and health education, visits and visitors.

Foundation Stage – (young children up to the age of 5+) The curriculum includes the ‘Areas of Learning’ - language development, mathematical understanding, knowledge and understanding of the world and creative, physical and social development. There are ‘Early Learning Goals’ for children to attain at five.

ICT – information and communication technology.

Key Stage 1 – pupils aged 6 to 7 years old.

Key Stage 2 – pupils aged 7 to 11 years old.

National averages – refer to National Curriculum test results and teachers’ assessments in English, mathematics and science where there are national comparisons with all schools and similar schools.

National expectations – most pupils are expected to reach Level 2 in all National Curriculum subjects at the age of 7 years and Level 4 at the age of eleven.

Scheme of work – courses of lessons in eg. English, for teachers to use when planning lessons. The school uses national guidance provided by the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) to help them plan lessons for some subjects.

School development plan – set of plans that show how the school will improve over the coming year or longer, what its priorities for action are and how it will spend its money.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils:	4 - 8
Gender of pupils:	Mixed

School address:	Coast Road Hopton-on-Sea Great Yarmouth Norfolk
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Postcode:	NR31 9BT
Telephone number:	01502 730489
Fax number:	01502 732857

Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs D Atkins

Date of previous inspection:	12 June 2000
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INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Mr A Margerison	Registered inspector	English Geography History Foundation Stage Special educational needs	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? How well are pupils taught? What should the school do to improve further?
Mrs J Moore	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?
Mr R Fry	Team inspector	Mathematics Science Information and Communication Technology Art and design Design and technology Music Physical education Religious education Equal opportunities	How good are the curricular and other opportunities? How well is the school led and managed?

The inspection contractor was:

Lincolnshire Inspection Team

37 Park Drive
Grimsby
North East Lincolnshire
DN32 0EG

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The Registrar
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hopton CE Voluntary Controlled First School is situated in the coastal village of Hopton-on-Sea, 9 miles south of Great Yarmouth, in the county of Norfolk. Most pupils live in the village, which is comprised of mainly privately-owned housing. A few parents from neighbouring areas choose to bring their children to the school. With 88 pupils on roll aged four to eight years, it is smaller than most first schools. The school role has fallen by nearly a quarter since the last inspection, with all classes now taught as single year groups. There are four full-time teachers, including the head teacher, and one part-time teacher who enables the head teacher to fulfil her management responsibilities. All pupils are of white heritage, with two pupils who speak English as an additional language. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is 7.1 per cent, which is below the national average. Twenty five per cent of pupils, above the national average, are on the school's register of special educational needs. There are no pupils with statements of special educational need. Most of the 20 children in the current reception class went to play school before transferring to Hopton First. Although attainment on entry varies from child to child, overall it is below that typical of their age, particularly in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is part of Great Yarmouth Area Education Action Zone.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Hopton First School is a very welcoming school that fully values the contributions and achievements of pupils. Following a period of significant staff turnover, it now provides a good education for its pupils. The school is very well led by the head teacher, resulting in good improvement since the last inspection. Very high commitment by all staff and adults associated with the school gives a firm foundation for the very good care and support for pupils, the good quality of teaching and the very good provision for pupils' moral and social education. In the 2001 national tests for pupils at the end of Year 2, standards were below average in reading, in line with the national average in writing and above average in mathematics. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Hopton First School gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils are taught well with the result that they achieve well as they move through the school.
- Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good, so that they behave well and have very positive attitudes to work. Relationships between pupils and adults are very good.
- Pupils with special educational needs are taught well with the result that they so they achieve well.
- Pupils are cared for and supported very well in school.
- Leadership by the head teacher is very good, so improvement since the last inspection has been good.

What could be improved

- Standards achieved by pupils in reading and writing by the age of seven.
- Standards and consistency of teaching in Years 1 and 2 of pupils' science investigation skills.

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 September 1999 and found to have serious weaknesses. A subsequent inspection by Her Majesty's Inspectors in June 2000 found that satisfactory progress had been made towards the key issues identified in September 1999. This inspection concludes that the school has made good progress since June 2000 and that it no longer has serious weaknesses in any aspect of its work. The appointment of a new head teacher has led to the school's improvement. The head teacher gives very good leadership to the school and is well supported by the other members of staff and the governors, so the school now has clear direction. Consequently, no unsatisfactory teaching was seen during the inspection. The majority of lessons in all year groups were taught well or better, with support staff and learning resources used very effectively to support pupils with special educational needs, and other groups, in lessons. Pupils' attainment has improved in information and communication technology, so that the majority of pupils in Years 2 and Year 3 meet national expectations. Hopton CE VC First School is now an effective school that values its pupils and provides very well for their personal development. From a low starting point the school ensures they make good educational progress and attain close to national expectations in most subjects by the time they leave the school.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 7 year olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

The results in the table need to be treated with some caution due to the relatively small numbers of pupils involved. Of the 23 pupils who took the tests for seven year olds in 2001, 39 per cent were on the school's special educational needs register and, because of staff changes, had been taught by a large number of short-term or temporary teachers for most of that academic year. Taking the three years above together, pupils' performances exceeded the national averages in writing and mathematics and was in line with the national average in reading. Inspection findings indicate that currently much of the good progress is in the reception class, particularly in personal and social development, language and literacy and mathematics so children attain the early learning goals in all areas they study. As a result, they are well able to do National Curriculum work when they enter Year 1. By the end of Years 2 and 3 the proportion of pupils achieving expected levels are below average in reading and writing. This is partly due to the number of pupils with special educational needs in a small class, although these pupils make good progress. Attainment in science at the end of Year 2 is also below average, due to pupils' limited investigation skills. However, the school has identified these areas in the current school management plan and has implemented a number of ideas that have been partly successful, but have not yet had time to have a significant effect. Pupils' attainment in mathematics at the end of Years 2 and 3 meets national expectations.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils enjoy coming to school and have very positive attitudes to learning. The majority of pupils are well motivated and work hard.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour throughout the school is good. Pupils understand and follow the established routines and generally meet the high expectations set for them.
Personal development and relationships	Pupils' personal development is good and is reflected in the very good relationships that enable the school to function as a well-ordered and caring community.
Attendance	Attendance is satisfactory.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	Rception	Years 1 & 2	Year 3
Lessons seen overall	Good	Good	Good

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

Teaching is good throughout the school. Teaching is consistently good in the reception class. This ensures that children make good progress from when they start school, so they attain national expectations by the end of their first year in school. The good quality teaching is maintained in Years 1, 2 and 3. The majority of lessons seen during the inspection were good, with a significant proportion very good. One lesson seen was excellent. Overall, teachers' management of pupils and organisation of lessons are very good and support staff and resources are very well used. This helps pupils maintain good levels of concentration and interest in lessons and to behave well. Support staff also have a clear role in making sure that all pupils are fully involved in lessons and to monitor the contribution to class discussions of pupils of all abilities and of boys and girls. Basic skills of numeracy are taught well in mathematics lessons and through other subjects such as science. However, in English, when teachers are planning other subjects, not enough emphasis is given to finding ways to give pupils opportunities to practise their literacy skills. The quality of marking is inconsistent and this is reflected in the variable quality of pupils' presentation of their work. Teachers do not clearly identify for pupils what they have done well and how they can improve.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. All pupils have equal access to a broad and balanced curriculum that meets their needs well. Strategies for teaching numeracy and links with the local community are good, but the range of activities outside lessons are unsatisfactory
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Good. Pupils' individual plans are good and are used well to plan activities and support in lessons.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. The few pupils with English as an additional language are fully included in all aspects of the school's work so they learn well.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Provision for pupils' moral and social development is very good. Teachers consistently expect pupils to respect and value each other. They have a clear sense of right and wrong. Cultural and spiritual development are both satisfactory.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Procedures for pupils' welfare are very good. Support for pupils in lessons and personally are very good. Very good procedures for promoting pupils' behaviour contribute very positively to the behaviour of pupils. Assessment procedures are good.

The school has established very good links with parents. The quality of information they receive about how well their children are getting on is very good. The School Administrative Officer and Secretarial Assistant make important contributions to the life of the school. They ensure that the very high quality presentation of newsletters and the annual report to parents from Governors shows the importance the school places on keeping parents well informed.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the head teacher and other key staff	Very good. The head teacher has a clear vision for the school and is the main driving force in raising standards and for the school achieving its aims for improvement. She has successfully created an effective ethos of team work in which she is well supported by the staff. Subject co-ordinators have a good overview of teaching and learning in most subjects and manage developments well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. Governors are committed to the school and keep a close eye on its work. They have a secure understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the school. They support the head teacher well in identifying and carrying out

	priorities for improvement.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Very good. Appropriate targets are set for improvement and progress towards these targets is evaluated carefully.
The strategic use of resources	Resource management is good, with spending appropriately linked to identified priorities. Funding and support from outside sources, such as the Education Action Zone, is very well used to provide new resources and to raise standards of attainment for identified pupils. The projected underspend is to be used to maintain existing staffing levels next year.

There is a good number of support staff who are well trained and knowledgeable. They are very well deployed to meet the needs of pupils and make a very good contribution to learning. The accommodation is good. Teaching and learning resources are good and used well in lessons, although the range of large play equipment for use outside by children in reception is limited. "Best value" is sought routinely when ordering resources and considering spending priorities.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children enjoy school. • It helps their children become mature and responsible. • They are comfortable at approaching the school with problems or questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of work their children get at home. • The information they get about their children's progress • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team agrees with parents that the range of activities outside lessons is limited and needs to be improved. However, the team does not agree that the information parents get about their child's progress needs improving. The opportunities parents have to talk to teachers, and the newsletters and annual reports, are very good. The team consider that the amount of homework is appropriate and similar to other schools.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. In the national tests for seven-year-olds in 2001, standards of attainment were below average in reading and in line with the national average in writing. When compared with similar schools, standards in reading were well below average and below average in writing. In mathematics in 2001, standards were above those attained nationally at the age of seven and in line with those attained by similar schools. However, the proportion of pupils who attained the higher than expected Level 3 was above average in writing and mathematics, and in line with the national average in reading. These results suggest a fall in standards from 2000, when the school's results in reading, writing and mathematics were above the national averages. However, Hopton First School is a small school that has gone through a period of considerable turbulence and staff changes. In addition, the composition of class groups varies considerably. For example, the Year 2 class in 2001 were taught by at least five different teachers during that academic year and the proportion of pupils on the school's register of special educational needs, who took the tests, was slightly under 40 per cent. However, the school's results, taking the three years 1999-2001 together, pupils' performance has exceeded the national average in writing and mathematics and has been in line in reading.
2. Children enter reception with a broad range of prior attainment which varies from year to year. The majority of children have pre-school experience in the village play group, but local authority baseline tests indicate that, for the current reception group, children's attainment on entry to school was below average, particularly in language and literacy. The well-planned curriculum means that children now make good gains in knowledge, skills and understanding in all the areas of learning with the result that they attain the standards children are expected to the end of reception. These are known as the early learning goals. Children attain similar standards as at the time of the last inspection, but at that time attainment on entry was average and children now achieve better due to the effective planning which is based on the recent national guidance.
3. The inspection finds that standards of attainment for the current Year 2 class is in line with national expectations in mathematics but, due to the significant proportion of pupils with special educational needs in that class, are below average in reading and writing. Standards of attainment in science are close to national expectations, although pupils' investigative skills are below average. From a below average starting point in language and literacy, mathematics and personal development when pupils start school in reception, they achieve well as they move through the school. Currently, for most pupils much of this progress is made in the reception class. In Years 1, 2 and 3 they achieve satisfactorily, so the standards they attain are appropriate to their ability. However, pupils with special educational need make good progress towards the targets in their individual plans. This is because the school has good procedures for identifying early those pupils who may have difficulties, and for putting in place good plans with appropriate and clear targets that teachers can use to plan activities and support. School data indicates that, in writing and mathematics, boys and girls attain similarly over time, but boys do not do as well as girls in reading. Although the numbers of boys and girls are similar, overall, there are consistently more boys on the register of special educational needs, which is reflected in their lower attainment. Two pupils in Year 1 are identified by the school as being gifted and talented. Both of these pupils and those with English as an additional language, both of whom are fluent speakers of English, make similar progress to the majority of pupils in their class.

4. Standards of attainment in the current Year 3 class reflect the 2001 national tests for seven year olds. Standards in reading are below national expectations. Overall, pupils' standards of writing are close to national expectations for their age, but their presentation and handwriting are weaker aspects. In mathematics, standards of attainment at the end of Years 2 and 3 are presently average and pupils achieve well. In science, pupils are attaining close to the national expectations for their age. This is because the teacher places more emphasis on giving pupils opportunities to develop their investigative skills in science lessons.
5. Pupils use the skills of literacy and numeracy satisfactorily in other subjects, although weaker writing skills inhibit written work in Year 2. Pupils use reading skills well to find information from books and the Internet. Numeracy skills are well used in science and geography lessons.
6. In other subjects, pupils achieve well in history and physical education, so that they attain standards better than expected for their age by the end of Years 2 and 3. In history, pupils have a very secure understanding of different events and how peoples' lives change over time. In physical education, the very good opportunities pupils have to learn to swim from a young age means that standards in this aspect of the subject are good. Standards in information and communication technology are in line with those expected by the end of Years 2 and 3, but pupils achieve well as they move through the school.
7. Standards in art and design, design and technology, music, and geography are in line with national expectations at the end of Years 2 and 3. No judgements have been made on standards in religious education because of the timetable arrangements, which meant that no lessons were seen, and the amount of written work to look at was very limited.
8. Although the results for 2001 and inspection findings indicate that, in reading and writing, standards are not as good as they were in previous years, attainment in mathematics is in line with national averages and pupils' performance has consistently exceeded national averages. However, pupils in Year 1 attain national expectations for their age in reading, writing and mathematics. The school is very well led by the head teacher and teaching, by a now stable staff, is consistently good so the school has good capacity to improve further.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' attitudes to school and their relationships with each other and with staff are strengths of the school. Pupils are enthusiastic and keen to come to school. Their behaviour and personal development are good. They are interested in lessons and eager to learn. This eagerness sometimes spills over into calling out in class instead of first putting up their hands, but the comments are always relevant. Pupils understand the systems around school well and move about safely responding well to the support they receive from teachers and other adults. For example, pupils who receive extra help with their literacy behave well in the sessions and try hard with their work. They also respond well to the cook's healthy eating competitions and break-time snacks, often performing difficult mental arithmetic in order to decide just which pieces of fruit that they can afford.
10. Pupils and children in the reception class have very good attitudes to school and their enthusiasm for learning enables them to concentrate well even when faced with difficult tasks. For example, the reception children thoroughly enjoyed themselves when making models and experimenting with different fillings for Teddy Bears. These activities were related to a story they had read. The children were encouraged to decide for themselves

just how to tackle the different projects, and to discuss their thoughts and feelings with each other. The school understands the children's needs and so enables them to learn and develop personally in a safe and secure atmosphere of mutual trust and respect.

11. Relationships between pupils and teachers, and with each other, are very good and this enhances their learning in the classroom. They work well together in pairs and groups, and support each other in their work, responding well to instructions from staff. Pupils help around the school and tidy resources in the classrooms quickly and efficiently at the end of lessons. They respond well to the incentives, which support good behaviour and achievement, and these are varied and given consistently. Children are encouraged to think things through for themselves and to understand the consequences of their actions on themselves and others.
12. There has been one fixed-term exclusion during the last year. Attendance is in line with the national average. The registers are marked and closed correctly. Parents are encouraged to play their part in the prompt and regular attendance of their children, and they need to fully understand the implications of withdrawing their children from school for holidays during term time. Children are inducted into the school well and settle quickly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

13. During the inspection, 23 lessons or parts of lessons were observed. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen, and most of the teaching was good. This represents good improvement since the last inspection. The quality of teaching, in particular the very good management of pupils and the very effective use of support staff and resources in all classes, is directly responsible for this improvement and pupils' very good behaviour in lessons.
14. The Foundation Stage caters for children up to the age of six. At Hopton First School this stage includes only the children in the reception class. All the lessons seen in this class during the inspection were good. Notable strengths of the teaching in the reception class are the planning of lessons and the teaching of basic skills of literacy and numeracy. Lessons cleverly consolidate and extend children's developing skills, knowledge and understanding in these areas, so they make good progress in attaining the early learning goals by the end of their first year in school. The teacher has a very clear understanding of how to deploy other adults effectively in lessons to support individual children or small groups. The teacher allows children some free choice of activity, but balances this well with directed work, when she focuses on developing particular skills. For example, most sessions, but particularly those in literacy and mathematics, begin with a whole class activity in which she teaches a specific skill or new idea. Children are then provided with an interesting range of activities that extend their learning across all the recommended areas of learning, but with specific focused activities that consolidate the initial teaching. Children respond very well to these activities, showing great interest, concentration and enthusiasm. The supporting adults have specific activities that they do with different children. At the beginning of sessions, they listen to children read and record how well the children have done. This has a very positive effect on how quickly children learn to read. Adults place a great deal of emphasis on children's personal development and on improving their speaking and listening skills. The teacher uses class discussions and questioning effectively in whole class parts of lessons to encourage children to contribute their ideas and to take part in lessons. In other activities the teacher and classroom assistant constantly discuss with children what they doing. Consequently, they make very good progress in these aspects of the curriculum and attain above the expected levels for the end of the Foundation stage. The success of this work

is also reflected in children's very good behaviour. They quickly learn the expectations of the teacher, and school and class routines. So, for example, they sit patiently in assembly with the rest of school and listen attentively to the speaker.

15. The majority of teaching in Years 1 and 2 is good, with this standard seen in more than three quarters of lessons. Teachers have good subject knowledge and manage and organise lessons well, so pupils generally behave well. However, on occasions the explanations and instructions given to pupils are not clear enough, so they do not fully understand what they have to do. This leads to some inappropriate behaviour from a few pupils and some lack of clear direction at the beginning of group activities. However, pupils are enthusiastic and they try hard and learn well. Lessons are briskly paced, which helps stimulate pupils' interest and keep them concentrating. An important factor in promoting the pace of learning in many lessons is the very good use of support staff and resources. Support staff work effectively with pupils with special educational needs in group activities, and often sit with pupils during whole class sessions, helping them to answer questions by rephrasing the question or prompting answers. They also record which pupils contribute to discussions and answer questions. This helps teachers to target questions and to draw all pupils into discussions. This has a positive effect on pupils' speaking skills and confidence.
16. Overall, lesson planning is good and has improved since the last inspection, but there are inconsistencies across subjects. The objectives for lessons in numeracy and literacy planning are securely based on the national strategies and clearly identify what pupils of different abilities will do. Planning for numeracy generally clearly shows what different groups of pupils are expected to learn within the overall weekly objectives. However, this is not as clear in some literacy planning. Although a range of activities are planned for pupils of different abilities they do not always build upon what they have done before. This means that some pupils' skills, particularly those of average ability, are not always developed progressively through the series of lessons. In English and mathematics lessons, pupils are taught basic skills well, but there are some inconsistencies across classes in other subjects. For example in science, pupils do not always have enough opportunities to practise their investigative skills which has a negative impact upon the standards pupils attain
17. Teaching in Year 3 is good. The strengths are similar to those in Years 1 and 2, with resources and support staff used very effectively to support pupils of different abilities. However, management of pupils in lessons is very good. The teacher has high expectations of pupils' behaviour, and gives clear and unambiguous instructions, so pupils know exactly what they have to do.
18. Throughout the school pupils do not have sufficient opportunities to use their literacy and information and communication technology skills in other subjects. For example, in history or geography the opportunities they are given to write in different styles and for different purposes is limited and this affects how well they achieve in this aspect of English. Standards of writing are also affected by teachers' expectations of presentation of work and some inconsistent marking. Teachers' response to pupils in lessons is very good and helps them to develop confidence and feel their efforts are valued, but this is not as clear in marking. In the best examples, pupils are clearly shown what they have done well and how their work can be improved, but frequently this is not the case. Pupils are not in the habit of dating and headlining work and, at times, untidy and poorly presented work is allowed to go unchecked. Consequently, pupils are not given enough guidance about their work to remind them, in subsequent lessons, what they need to concentrate on and teachers do not have enough information to easily evaluate how each pupil has improved.

19. Pupils with special educational needs are taught well, so they make good progress as they move through the school. Individual learning plans clearly identify specific targets for them and these are used effectively to plan activities for them in lessons. Teaching of specific initiatives is good, such as in the additional literacy support. Support staff work well with groups on these activities, so pupils make good progress in developing their basic skills of literacy. Generally, teachers use assessment information well to identify those pupils who will benefit the most from these sessions and although pupils with special educational needs are included, for the most part this is appropriate to meet their needs. However, occasionally this is not the case and the effect they have on the group, due to their low concentration and demands for attention, limits the learning of the whole group because the supporting adult has to cater for their needs to the detriment of the other, more able, pupils. The 'CatchUp Reading' programme that is provided through the Education Action Zone is very effective in raising the attainment of those pupils who take part. Pupils with English as an Additional Language also learn well. This is because they are fully included by teachers and support staff in all activities and discussions in lessons.

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

20. The whole curriculum reflects the school's aims well. There are good links with the community and the wider world, which make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The curriculum provides good opportunities for all pupils, including those with special educational needs and those who attain at a higher level. Pupils of all ages and capabilities benefit from a curriculum that meets their personal and social needs well. The content and organisation of the curriculum ensures that all pupils have equal opportunities to experience what the school offers.
21. Since the last inspection there has been a good improvement in the curriculum. Curriculum policies for all subjects are not in place but the school uses nationally recommended guidance for the curriculum well. Teaching resources for information and communication technology have improved substantially and sufficient time is given to all subjects. The national strategy for numeracy has been implemented effectively. The emphasis on practical activities in mathematics and other subjects is particularly good. Pupils learn the sounds of letters and how to spell and write. The effect of the good management of the curriculum and teachers' hard work is evident in the improvements made in the provision.
22. The National Curriculum is taught in an interesting and stimulating way and pupils achieve well in most subjects. All aspects of subjects are taught across the school and this ensures that the school meets statutory requirements, including the arrangements for collective worship. Religious education is taught according to the locally agreed guidelines. There are good links between many subjects, such as those made during the 'book afternoon.' Pupils, for example, listened to a South African tale with a moral, and found out more about the equipment that builders use to make a house.
23. The curriculum for children in the reception class is good. It is planned to make sure that every child has experience of all the 'Areas of Learning' and there is a particular emphasis on developing children's use and understanding of language and mathematics in many practical ways. There is a very wide range of opportunities for pupils to learn and activities are well prepared and challenging.
24. At the time of the last inspection, the provision for supporting pupils with special educational needs was weak. It is now good. The main improvements are in the quality of the learning targets, which are now more consistent, and the support available for

pupils in literacy lessons and to help them learn to read. Pupils are identified early and there are suitable plans in place for all pupils on the register of special educational needs. These plans are reviewed three times a year by the co-ordinator, the class teachers and parents. Support staffs' views are sought, although they are not always invited to make a formal contribution, and parents are always involved. Although targets for learning are generally specific, those for developing pupil's behaviour are not as clear. This reflects the lack of assessment procedures designed to identify the precise areas of difficulty a pupil is experiencing. For pupils at higher stages of the special educational needs register, external specialists from, for example, the Learning Support Service, are used well to provide advice and support.

25. Provision for sex education and personal, social and health education is satisfactory, and is based on the school's own programme for teaching good health topics, the life cycle of plants and animals in science, and circle time discussions. The school's approach to recycling is a strength. Pupils learn that it is necessary to conserve the world's resources and the school raises quite considerable amounts of money by recycling tins, newspapers and clothes. The whole village contributes to the collection boxes. The school has strong links with the church and a nearby holiday resort. Joint community projects have included the planting of bulbs, the refurbishment of a nature area and the preparation of reading sacks for pupils to use.
26. The provision for extra-curricular activities is unsatisfactory and parents were right to draw inspectors' attention to this matter. There is an after-school music club only and no provision for sports or creative arts. However, good use is made of visits to enhance pupils' learning. The local village provides the focus for many activities, for looking at the buildings and the environment. In addition, visits to theatres and the circus effectively broaden pupils' experience of the world.
27. The work of the school has benefited from its membership of the Education Action Zone. New systems to help pupils learn better have been put into action. There have been mathematics clubs on Saturday mornings, the school has started a 'paired reading' system, where people from local business work as volunteers in the school. In addition, lower attaining pupils in Year 3 receive extra reading help and teaching assistants have received extra training to help them become more effective.
28. The school has very good links with the village playgroup. This leads to a sharing of staff, knowledge, information and resources, which greatly benefits the children by ensuring a good induction into the school and providing a pool of willing helpers about the school. There is very good community involvement in the school. For instance, several people came in to school on World Book Day to read stories to the children. The stories were linked to the readers' lives and the children were encouraged to choose which story to hear. There are strong links with the local church and the Vicar is a governor and comes in weekly to take assembly and to help with religious education lessons. He has worked extensively in South Africa and brings many interesting stories and experiences to share with pupils at the school. The Women's Craft Group has made book bags for the children and the school joins in various religious festivals at the local church throughout the year, for example on Mothering Sunday. The good use of the local environment and community ensures that the children have many good adult role models and a realistic idea of their place in the world.
29. There are good arrangements for the transfer of pupils to the middle school and at the time for admission of children to the reception class. The school has made a good link with a nearby 'beacon' school. The school has discussed how to improve pupils' standards of writing and studied how the 'beacon' school manages curricular planning and delegation of responsibilities. The head teacher feels that this has been time well

spent. In addition, a strong link has been established with the management staff of a local leisure and holiday complex, who provide the school with their full professional stage equipment, including sound and lighting systems, for its Christmas and other productions.

30. The provision for pupils' personal development is good overall. Provision for pupils' spiritual and cultural development is satisfactory; their social and moral development is very good. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection.
31. School assemblies and acts of collective worship are calm, orderly occasions and provide opportunities for pupils to reflect on the world around them and to respect individual differences. They are enhanced by the quality of the singing and the music played as pupils come into the hall. Pupils consider the beauty of the world through art, music and literature. Displays around the school make a good contribution to the positive climate of the school, in which pupils are encouraged to grow and flourish, to respect others and be respected.
32. The provision for pupils' moral and social development provides a very good framework in which pupils can grow. Pupils have a clear understanding of what is right and wrong, as their reactions show when they see their classmates being rewarded during an assembly for doing good things. The school's rules and use of rewards recognise positive aspects of pupils' work and behaviour. Relationships in the school are very good and provide pupils with good examples on which to model their own social and moral behaviour. Pupils work co-operatively, share ideas and support each other as needed, and older pupils are given opportunities to contribute to the smooth running of the school by undertaking responsibilities. The school fosters a sense of community and makes all pupils feel valued although the limited range of activities out of lessons limits pupils' opportunities for social interaction.
33. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. Stories, music, art and literature from other countries and cultures are used thoughtfully throughout the school. During the year, pupils learn about some festivals held by other faiths. There have been assemblies about, for example, Divali and Commonwealth Day. African dancers have visited the school.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. The care that the school takes of its pupils' welfare is a great strength. It is a very caring and supportive community, with very good relationships between staff and pupils. The school is a safe place for the children to develop and grow, where they are valued and supported within its Christian ethos. The school encourages its pupils to think for themselves as they learn in supportive environment. Children who are upset are settled quickly and all pupils are valued equally. This is reflected in the results, which show that all pupils progress well, irrespective of gender, and including the pupils with special educational needs. Systems for monitoring behaviour are good and teachers generally manage the pupils' behaviour very well, thus enabling them to concentrate and learn.
35. The school values the pupils' contributions in class and around the school, and celebrates their successes. Pupils' learning is supported well and several initiatives linked with the Education Action Zone have already had a positive impact upon pupils' enthusiasm for school which results in them being eager to come to school to learn. Teachers are well supported by the classroom support staff, and all staff contribute to the happy learning atmosphere at the school. This includes the cook who promotes the importance of

healthy eating through selling fruit at break-time. Pupils also learn about mathematics as well as healthy eating, as they work out the amount of money they are spending.

36. The school has an effective child protection policy, which is working well in practice but this is not formally included in an induction book for new staff or a staff handbook. The head teacher ensures that all staff are aware of, and follow, all the procedures for dealing with concerns about pupils, and also that the relevant agencies are used to support pupils and their families. A wide range of outside agencies is used by the school to support the welfare of its pupils, and families are happy to seek help and backing from the school. The school is mindful of the necessary health and safety issues, and has been made aware of the need for formal written risk assessments for all areas of school activity. There are several examples of very good practice in health and safety provision such as the separate fire drill for dinner times, guidance for which is prominently displayed alongside the normal drill. The caretaker ensures that all the statutory requirements are met and regularly monitors the site with the health and safety governor. Attendance is monitored well and absences followed up appropriately. Parents are helped to understand the need for regular attendance at school as well as their role in their children's learning.
37. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are good. The school has made good progress in this area since the previous inspection. Trends are analysed over the years and appropriate use is made of the information gathered to help the setting of whole school targets. The school looks closely at the results achieved by boys and girls, although the analysis is less effective at comparing the achievements of other groups of pupils, such as higher attaining pupils or those with special educational needs. When pupils start school in the reception class, they are assessed using the local education authority's initial scheme for assessing children's attainment. When they are aged seven, pupils are assessed in English, mathematics and science against National Curriculum expectations. The school is introducing the optional national tests for pupils in Year 3 this year to enable them to evaluate pupils' progress in their final year, before they transfer to the middle school. The school uses some basic assessment methods to analyse the learning difficulties of pupils with special educational needs.
38. There are now effective procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress. In most subjects these are mainly informal, although in some subjects, such as English and mathematics, practical strategies are in place for monitoring the academic performance of pupils by using 'target books'. Support staff make a good contribution to this aspect of the school's work by monitoring the contribution of pupils to discussions in English and mathematics lessons. They do this by observing and noting details about individual pupils in the classroom and making teachers' aware of any concerns. However, these procedures are recent initiatives and, although teachers know their pupils very well, the procedures have not had time to have a significant effect on pupils' achievement or teachers' planning. As yet the information is not used as the basis for setting individual pupils specific targets so they know what they need to do to improve their work.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

39. Parents' views of the school are positive and the effectiveness of the school's links with parents is very good. The school has very effective links with parents which has a positive effect on pupils' learning at school and at home.
40. The parental response to the questionnaire was good and their views positive. Parents had two areas of concern; that the school did not set the right amount of homework and that the range of extra curricular activities was too narrow. The inspection found that the

homework set was satisfactory in range and quantity for pupils of this age, but that the range of extra-curricular provision provided needs to be broadened, and should include some element of physical activity. Parents feel that their children like school, that they make good progress, and that the school is approachable and sorts out any problems quickly. The information sent to parents is consistently of a very high standard. The letters, newsletters, the brochure and governors' annual report to parents are printed in colour and are in an easily accessible format. The School's administrative officer and Secretarial Assistant, who is also the Clerk to the Governors make important contributions to the life of the school. They are instrumental in ensuring that the very high quality presentation of newsletters and the annual report to parents from Governors show the importance the school places on keeping parents well informed. However, there are two minor statutory items missing from the governors' report to parents.

41. The school values the parents as partners in their children's learning and they are encouraged to help in school and out. Their role in learning is explained in the brochure and annual report, and the home/school agreement is due to be re-written. Written progress reports to parents are clear, concise and inclusive. They contain valuable information about pupils' learning and understanding. They show areas that need improving and how parents can help with this at home. It is also made clear which teachers have been involved in making the assessments of pupils' work. Comments by staff include social as well as academic progress and provide good information to parents about their children's learning and development.
42. Parents' involvement in the classroom, on trips, and on the governing body has a positive effect on learning and is greatly valued by the school. Parents feel happy to approach the school with problems, knowing that they would be handled sensitively and efficiently. There is a fledgling 'friends association', and parents help by raising much-needed funds and by providing good social events that benefit the children. There is much good will for the school in the village. For example, members of the local community moved six tons of topsoil during the holidays to develop the nature area in the grounds.
43. The school works well with parents of pupils with special educational needs and keeps them well informed of their children's progress. Parents are always involved if the school has concerns about a pupil and wants to involve outside agencies.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

44. When the school was last inspected, Hopton First School provided satisfactory value for money but had serious weaknesses. Since then, it has made good progress and it no longer has serious weaknesses in any aspect of its work. The school now gives good value for money because the weaknesses identified have been put right.
45. The governing body has effectively overseen the necessary changes since the last inspection. The governing body makes a good contribution to the smooth and effective running of the school and it fulfils its statutory responsibilities. Governors keep a good check on the budget and the school has a small surplus. The chair of governors has a clear view of the school's strengths and weaknesses and of the many influences on the school. She knows about pupils' standards of work and how much progress pupils make. She provides good support and direction for the school and knows it very well. The head teacher receives good support from the committees in most areas of the school's work, such as in making financial decisions and developing links further with the Education Action Zone. However, although they are kept fully informed and spend time in classrooms, many governors have limited appreciation about the standards pupils' attain or about the main priorities in the school development plan. Apart from two minor

exceptions, the contents of the school's prospectus and annual report to parents meet statutory requirements.

46. The school is very well led by the head teacher and her influence is the foundation of the school's improvement. The head teacher has provided a clear sense of direction for dealing with the key issues from the last inspection. She promotes a supportive working atmosphere that has facilitated the improvements in the school's performance. Improvement is based on very good relationships between adults in school, close teamwork amongst staff and clear expectations of what needs to be done, particularly in curriculum development. The school is keen to improve further and the staff shares the vision for the school. The school's aims are evident in the school. The school's development plan is good. There are priorities for the coming years with criteria for success, so that the school knows when it has achieved a target. All aspects of the school's work are covered and the three main priorities about raising standards in reading, writing and science are correct.
47. The head teacher is responsible for many checking activities, for example of teachers' lesson planning. Teachers receive helpful comments and points for development and standards of teaching are, consequently, better than at the time of the previous inspection. Strengths and weaknesses in the school's results and in teachers' assessments are carefully evaluated in, for example, English and mathematics. These analyses guide plans effectively and pupils' achievement is good. Teachers have adequate opportunities to develop teachers' quality of work. Teachers who are responsible for subjects watch colleagues at work in classrooms on occasions and they know what needs to be done next to improve the way subjects are taught. Co-ordinators work hard and often provide useful ideas for their colleagues to use in their planning, such as in mathematics.
48. The school is part of an Education Action Zone. It has several aims, for example to improve pupils' reading skills. The emphasis is on inclusion, that is, to ensure every pupil has an equal opportunity to benefit fully from what the school offers. The project is effective and has proved helpful for the school. There has been good progress in a number of areas. Facilities for information and communication technology have improved. The progress that some pupils make with their reading has been good as a result of the extra adult support that pupils receive. This group have better access to other subjects because they can read more.
49. The co-ordination and management of special educational needs is good. Reviews of pupils' individual plans are carried out three times each year. Outside agencies' advice is sought appropriately and teachers are given good guidance about how they can support pupils. The co-ordinator is fully aware of the requirements of the new code of practice for special educational needs and has made a satisfactory start to adjusting the school's procedures to comply with the requirements of the new code.
50. The head teacher allocates funds to ensure that the school maintains its good provision. The head teacher and finance committee are aware of the school's likely future costs and of any predictions that might require action. The school roll is expected to fall slightly in the short term so an underspend is kept in reserve to ensure that the school's current levels of staffing can be maintained in the immediate future. The use of resources, including funds for teachers' courses, is effective. The school applies the principle of best value to the purchase of consumables, but tenders for large projects are not explored before making decisions. The evaluation of spending in relation to improvement of standards is limited. The school does not compare itself with similar schools to judge how well it is doing, nor does it challenge itself to justify its use of resources. However, the very efficient administrators and head teacher check the value for money of small purchases. Proper use is made of new technology to save time.

51. The accommodation is good and it is well looked after by the caretaker. The school has a small hall that doubles as an ICT suite, but some space is lost because it is used to store equipment and dining tables. This restricts its use for teaching aspects of physical education. However, there are sufficient classrooms, with one mobile classroom used to teach small groups and music. This is effective use of the space and enables pupils with special educational needs to work with minimal distraction. It also ensures that music lessons do not disturb other classes. The library is easily accessible, but not big enough for whole-class sessions. However, the school has plans to extend it and add additional storage space, which will ease the pressure on the school hall. Books and equipment for use in lessons are good. There are sufficient well-qualified teachers and support staff to meet the demands of the National Curriculum. All these features have a positive effect on pupils' work, the school conducts its business effectively, and it provides good value for money.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

52. In order to further improve, the school should:
- (a) Raise standards in reading and writing by:
- developing a whole-school approach to teaching handwriting and the presentation of work by pupils; (paragraph references: 18, 69)
 - ensuring that planning in all subjects takes account of the full range of abilities within the class; (paragraph references: 16, 68)
 - identifying in planning for subjects other than English opportunities when pupils can practise their reading and writing skills; (paragraph references: 16, 18, 92 ,100)
 - improve the quality and consistency of marking so pupils clearly know what they do well and how they can improve their work; (paragraph references: 18, 68, 69)
 - using assessment information to identify individual pupils whose reading skills are below expectations, and devise specific strategies to work with these individuals on their own areas of weakness. (paragraph references: 70)
- (b) Raise standards in science at the end of Key Stage 1 by:
- developing an investigative approach to learning that is consistently applied throughout the school; (paragraph references: 3, 16 ,89)
 - improving the marking of pupils' work so that it focuses on pupils' science skills, knowledge and understanding so they know how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve in this aspect of their work. (paragraph references: 89)

OTHER ISSUES THAT COULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

53. Develop a broader range of activities outside of lessons by:
- Providing more clubs and activities outside of lessons, such as for physical education or the creative arts (paragraph references: 26, 109, 113).

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

23

Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils

14

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	1	3	14	5	0	0	0
Percentage	3	13	61	22	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR– Y3
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	88
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	5
Special educational needs	YR – Y
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	17
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	5
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	5

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	5.7
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.4
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	15	8	23

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	12	15
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	18	20	23
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (91)	87 (94)	100 (97)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	10	13	13
	Girls	8	8	8
	Total	18	21	21
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	78 (94)	91 (97)	91 (94)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	88
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	0	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	1	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y3

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	4.4
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	22
Average class size	22

Education support staff: YR – Y3

Total number of education support staff	6
Total aggregate hours worked per week	80

Financial information

Financial year	2000-01
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	£
Total income	254,840
Total expenditure	235,896
Expenditure per pupil	2359
Balance brought forward from previous year	2,623
Balance carried forward to next year	21,567

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	7
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	8
Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	1
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	92
Number of questionnaires returned	34

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	68	32	0	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	41	56	0	0	3
Behaviour in the school is good.	65	29	3	0	3
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	24	47	21	3	6
The teaching is good.	47	47	3	0	3
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	41	41	15	3	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	82	18	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	68	26	6	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	41	41	12	3	3
The school is well led and managed.	68	26	0	0	6
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	50	0	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	20	32	21	12	15

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

54. At the previous inspection, children made satisfactory progress in all areas of learning and achieved satisfactory standards by the end of their reception year. Since that inspection, the school has successfully introduced the recent national guidance for children in the reception class. The teacher plans a very wide range of activities that allows children to experience activities from across all the areas of learning and they now make good progress. Many children attend the local play school before coming to school. However, local education authority baseline tests show that many children begin school with skills in language and literacy, mathematics and personal development that are lower than would be seen in most schools. However, by the time they are ready to start in Year 1 the majority of children attain the early learning goals in all areas of learning, except in personal, social and emotional development, where they exceed the expectations.

Personal, social and emotional development.

55. Many children enter the reception class with immature skills in personal and social development. However, by the end of their reception year, the majority of children meet the early learning goals in this area and many exceed them. They are very well prepared for their next year. The very good progress children make as they move through the reception class in this area of learning reflects very skilful teaching, so that all of the children develop very positive attitudes to their work. They are interested and enthusiastic in their lessons and show well developed levels of concentration and attention. Teachers and support staff provide very positive role models for the children, always treating each other and the children with respect, with the result that they very effectively learn school routines and how to work with others. All adults are very consistent in their expectations of behaviour, so children fully understand how they should behave whatever the situation. The emphasis placed on this area of learning sets the foundation for the very positive attitudes, good standards of behaviour and relationships seen throughout the whole school during the inspection.

Communication, language and literacy

56. By the time children end the reception year, they nearly all attain the early learning goals in this area of learning. Childrens' speaking and listening skills develop particularly well. They have many opportunities to discuss their ideas and to speak in extended sentences. The speaking skills of many children when they enter school are still quite immature, with some evidence of a restricted vocabulary, but improvements are clear and good progress is made. Listening skills are developed well through a variety of activities, including story time, listening tapes and many incidental discussions throughout the sessions. Children achieve well because the adults ensure that all children listen carefully to a story or instructions and they join in with all activities in school, such as assemblies. They make sure that all children join in discussions by targeting questions to specific children. The teacher has a very good understanding of the importance of providing different learning experiences for children, and provides aural, visual and practical activities aimed at developing and reinforcing the same skill or understanding. Role-play activities effectively develop childrens' speech and extend their vocabulary.
57. Children are taught early reading skills very well. They have many opportunities to look at books and to listen to stories, so they quickly learn the correct way to hold a book and turn the pages. They enjoy looking at books and are eager to share stories with others. They begin to learn some common letter sounds, and higher attaining children learn to

read simple books. Support staff are used very well to work with groups of children and to listen to individual children read. With the good support the school gets from many parents at home, most children make good progress. When reading independently, the older, higher attaining children are fluent, competent readers. They read the title of the book, know that an author writes a book and that an illustrator draws the pictures. Early skills at using a variety of strategies to tackle unfamiliar words are already well established and are used successfully. Average attaining children read simple texts and talk enthusiastically about the book they have read or are reading. Below average attaining children are developing good attitudes to their reading. They enjoy talking about their favourite stories and rhymes and are eager to take books home to share with their families. They know a more limited range of words, but use those they know and the pictures to help 'read' the story.

58. The teaching of writing is good. Teachers provide children with many opportunities to write for a range of purposes. Children are encouraged to learn the shapes of letters and the activities provided at the writing table give children plenty of opportunities to practise writing resulting in all children using pencils correctly and forming clear, recognisable letters. A very good variety of interesting resources are made available, so that most children can write their own names. The older and higher attaining children are competent writers. They write simple sentences, sometimes using capital letters and full stops in a neat, legible style.

Mathematical development

59. This area of learning is taught well. The teacher concentrates on developing correct concepts and, in particular, developing correct mathematical vocabulary. Children are taught in accordance with guidance from the National Strategy for Numeracy, thus ensuring they are well placed to begin their National Curriculum work in Year 1. By the end of the reception year, nearly all children attain the early learning goals in mathematics. The teacher ensures they have very good opportunities to use mathematical skills and knowledge in many activities, so that progress over time is good and children achieve well. The priority is to teach mathematics in a practical way. Activities are very well planned. Most children can count forwards and backwards to 10 and higher attaining children know numbers to 20 securely. Higher attaining children create repeating patterns using different shapes, whilst average attaining children sort objects into sets depending on colour, shape or size. The teacher uses resources very well to provide children with interesting and enjoyable activities. Consequently, very good attitudes to learning are well established. Other adults are used effectively to give good support to small groups, ensuring that the children are kept busy and make good progress.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

60. Children enter the Foundation Stage with a basic general knowledge, but make good progress in their knowledge and understanding of their local area and of themselves. Due to the good learning experiences provided by the teacher, most children achieve the early learning goals by the end of their year in reception. The curriculum provided is broad and enriched by many practical and interesting activities. For example, children were investigating different teddy bears by handling them and looking at their different shapes, sizes and textures of the fur. Most children suggest reasons why the bears may be old or new, and refer in their explanations to specific teddy bears. Many of these teddies were brought from home and children took great care with each other's toys. They have good opportunities to play with water and sand, investigating and experimenting with different containers. Children now have regular opportunities to

work on computers and have access to a good range of programs designed to develop their knowledge and understanding in language, mathematical and drawing skills. This is beginning to have a very positive effect upon the pace at which children learn computer skills and gives them confidence. They use the mouse to move the cursor on the screen and children understand how computers can be used to control movement and direction. For example, Two children were seen playing very competently with a remote controlled car, steering it between obstacles and when using one program, two children showed others how to select different objects on the screen and to move them around. A strength of the teaching is the constant use of correct vocabulary to develop good language skills. Teachers and support staff encourage children to speak about their experiences and explain to others what they have found out.

Physical development

61. Teaching in this area is good and most children will attain the early learning goals in this area by the end of reception. All children have a well-developed sense of space. They respond well to new challenges and are aware of their own safety and that of others. Children use scissors and other simple tools carefully to cut paper and play dough. The outside play area is spacious and is used appropriately for children to play simple games and to use large wheeled toys, but the range of outside play equipment is inadequate to enable the teacher to plan a broad range of different activities for children to do on a regular basis.

Creative development

62. The teaching of creative development is good. Activities are very well planned, resources are used effectively and support staff work with children in small groups, so that children's knowledge and skills are developed thoroughly. Consequently, all children make good progress and most achieve the early learning goals in this area by the end of their reception year. Children are provided with an interesting curriculum and, in particular, experience a good variety of materials, tools and equipment. Basic skills are taught very well. For example, nearly all children mix paint independently to make shades and tones of other colours. Language skills are constantly being developed alongside these activities because children are encouraged to describe what the materials feel like, or to explain what they are doing. In music, the teachers in many different situations use songs well, such as opening and closing sessions or to reinforce number or language skills. Consequently, children sing familiar songs with enthusiasm and securely develop early skills in rhythm and beat.
63. The teacher in charge of the reception class and the support staff work very well together. Although the support staff are not formally involved in writing lesson plans they contribute to the general planning and consequently have a clear understanding of their role in lessons and, on occasions, take a leading role in whole-class sections of lessons. The school has established a very good relationship with the local playgroup and has developed good induction procedures, so children are well prepared for school.

ENGLISH

64. By the end of Years 2 and 3, standards are above the national average in speaking and listening, but the proportion of pupils attaining the standards expected for their age are below average in reading and writing. However, pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school to attain levels appropriate for their abilities. Pupils with special educational needs make good progress and the school has identified two pupils who are gifted and talented. These pupils achieve satisfactorily and their class teacher provides appropriately for their specific needs through an individual learning plan. There are no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls. In National Curriculum tests in 2001, standards of attainment in comparison with schools nationally were below average in reading and in line with the national average in writing. In comparison with similar schools, standards were well below average in reading and below average in writing. Over a three-year period, standards have been in line with the national average in reading, but exceeded them in writing. The apparent fall in standards since the last inspection is largely explained by the differing abilities of successive years. However, another possible contributory factor to the lower than usual standards attained in 2001 is the large number of temporary and short-term teachers these pupils had during their Year 2.
65. The majority of pupils in Year 2, and by the end of Year 3, exceed the expected level in speaking and listening. They are good listeners, who follow their teachers' explanations closely, responding eagerly to questions with full and thoughtful answers. They readily engage in conversation about their work, and higher attaining pupils are very confident in expressing their opinions. They express their ideas clearly and fluently. During presentations, pupils concentrate well and sustain attentive listening.
66. Overall, pupils achieve satisfactorily in learning to read, although standards pupils attain in reading are below average. However, a quarter of pupils in the group are on the register of special educational needs, so the proportion of pupils achieving the expected levels for their age is below average. Higher attaining pupils know the common features of books and have positive attitudes to reading. They know some authors and can explain what they enjoy about the book they are reading. They have secure understanding of how to use letter sounds to work out unfamiliar words, use dictionaries confidently and are fluent, confident readers. However, average attaining pupils do not have a secure understanding of how to use a broad range of skills to work out quickly what new words say. They understand how to use letter sounds to break a word down, but do not always use these skills effectively so, consequently, their reading is hesitant, lacks fluency and has little expression. Pupils with special educational needs are learning the full range of letter sounds and groups of letters. Consequently, they read simple texts satisfactorily when most of the words are familiar to them, but have difficulty when they meet a word they have never seen before.
67. Standards in writing throughout the school are below average. The school has identified this weakness, and standards, particularly for pupils in Year 1 are improving. Again, the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs has an effect on the number attaining the expectations for their age, but there are still significant areas to be tackled. In Year 2, although most words are spelt as they sound, many pupils have a limited range of words that they can spell correctly. Most pupils organise their work in a series of short sentences that develop an idea logically, but too few pupils use full stops and capital letters consistently in their writing. Most pupils write legibly, but the size and shape of letters are inconsistent, and very few pupils tackle, or are expected to write, in a joined script. Higher attaining pupils in Year 3 write more extended passages and produce interesting pieces of work using a good range of vocabulary and powerful

adjectives to capture the interest of the reader. However, spelling is often weak, although pupils use a wider range of punctuation correctly. When working, pupils are not in the habit of checking their work thoroughly, using a dictionary regularly or getting a partner to check their work.

68. Overall, the quality of teaching of English is satisfactory. Teaching in lessons seen during the inspection was good, but not enough emphasis is placed on planning in other subjects to reinforce what pupils learn in English lessons. This lack of planned opportunities to use their writing and reading skills affects the progress that pupils make. The basis of the teaching in English lessons is teachers' secure subject knowledge. Consequently, lessons have clear objectives based on the national guidance for literacy and these are generally discussed with the class at the beginning of the lesson so pupils know what it is they will be learning about. In whole-class parts of lessons, particularly in Years 2 and 3, teachers use questions well to check pupils are acquiring the intended new knowledge and skills. Lessons are well structured, giving appropriate time to each part of the lesson. This helps maintain pupils' concentration and attentiveness, so they behave very well in most lessons. The few instances of inattentiveness seen in lessons were mainly from a few pupils who have difficulties with their behaviour and lose their concentration. Although management of pupils and organisation of lessons is generally very good, in these instances, the teachers were not always sufficiently assertive enough and did not have a range of specific planned methods to manage these pupils. Expectations are very clear and instructions explicit, so pupils understand what they have to do. Teachers are very aware of the need to provide extension activities for more able pupils, and additional activities or support for pupils with special educational needs, which contributes to the good progress they make. However, in some lessons, activities provided for average attaining pupils in group work parts of lessons are not securely matched to their ability and do not build effectively on previous work, which limits the progress they make when they are not working with an adult. Where information and communication technology is included in a lesson, the tasks are appropriate to the lesson, but not enough attention is paid to planning carefully how these resources can be used systematically in lessons. Overall, teachers use support staff very well to support groups and to observe pupils' responses in whole class parts of lessons. They give sensitive and effective support, which contributes well to the progress pupils' make in learning and reinforcing their knowledge. Individual education plans are used carefully to provide work for pupils with special educational needs. Support staff teach specialist programmes, such as Additional Literacy Support well
69. Teachers' verbal response to pupils in lessons is very good. They give positive comments to pupils about what they are doing that helps them develop their ideas, but marking of work does not always tackle weak spelling and punctuation. Comments do not always remind or help pupils to understand how they could improve their work further. Nor do they help teachers to refer back to previous work to compare how well each pupil is doing and whether they have heeded the advice. These factors reflect the lack of a whole school approach to the presentation of work and the teaching of handwriting, so teachers' approach is inconsistent and pupils do not learn to present their work with care and pride.
70. The subject co-ordinator has taken a very active and enthusiastic role in developing the subject and has given good direction since the last inspection. The planning has been refined, so that lesson objectives are clearly identified and daily lessons work towards those objectives. Consequently, the quality of teaching has improved since the last inspection. Assessment information is beginning to be used to identify areas of the subject that need to be developed, which has resulted in the introduction of specific programmes for literacy and reading. However, this is at an early stage of development and is not sufficiently refined to identify individual pupils, apart from those with special

educational needs, who may need more attention to help them learn basic skills, particularly in reading. The library is small and easily accessible, but is not big enough for whole classes to use it at the same time. However, the school has recognised this and has plans to extend it. The range of books and other resources for teaching English are good.

MATHEMATICS

71. Standards of attainment at the end of Year 2 and Year 3 are presently average, and pupils achieve well. There are no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls. In National Curriculum tests in 2001, standards of attainment in comparison with schools nationally were above average. In comparison with similar schools, standards were average. Over a three-year period, standards have been above average. The variations are largely explained by the differing abilities of successive years. The school attributes the good achievement to the implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection. Pupils who have special educational needs are taught effectively. They achieve very well in relation to their prior attainment. As pupils move through the school they make very good progress in mathematics due to the detailed planning and the very effective use of support staff in lessons.
72. In Year 1, pupils answer problems successfully, such as, 'If there are 12 ladybirds on a leaf and 7 fly away, how many are left?' Higher attainers make up their own number sentences using dice and number cards. Lower attainers work with numbers up to 14 and use a combination of dominoes to make numbers such as 12.
73. In Year 2, pupils measure accurately in centimetres, share 12 between four and subtract three from 10. Higher attainers know that two halves make a whole one, find quarters of shapes and record some of the properties of cubes and pyramids. They add $40+9+50$ successfully. Lower attaining pupils subtract single digits from one another, share 20 by 10 and measure lengths as well as average attaining pupils. They struggle to record the words to explain about the properties of shapes.
74. In Year 3, pupils recognise equivalent fractions. They colour in shapes mostly correctly to show that, for example, four eighths is the same as a half. Higher attainers are very quick to respond to the teacher's questions. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support and they attain well. With some help, for example, pupils understand that nine eighteenth is the same as a half.
75. Work in other subjects helps pupils develop wider mathematical skills. For example, in science lessons, pupils use basic measurements and counting in their investigations. In design and technology, pupils estimate the dimensions of materials that they need to make things. Early work on dates in history and religious education helps pupils to understand four-digit numbers.
76. Pupils' attitudes and behaviour are good. They respond eagerly to the subject and enjoy working with numbers. Pupils show that there is a strong link between enjoyment and learning. They know how they should behave and listen carefully to instructions and explanations.
77. Teaching of mathematics is good. Work is well matched to the different ability groups in classes and the work set for higher attainers is often more demanding than other pupils' work. Pupils are managed well and routines are well established. Books and equipment for pupils to use in lessons are plentiful and adults who support pupils are very clear

about their role. Group and individual activities link well to the main teaching elements of lessons and offer pupils many chances to develop their skills.

78. Pupils were observed learning many different things. They learn to use the four rules of number and teachers break down the skills into small bits, so that pupils have time to practise their new knowledge. Pupils' learning is well supported by the wide range of equipment that they have to use. Teachers also use a range of games to make mathematics interesting, and pupils learn better this way. Teachers take great care to display mathematics work. For example, in the hall there is a very good display about things you could buy for given amounts. As pupils pass by the display, it makes them think about using money and working out change.
79. Teachers make some use of information and communication technology but the school is short of programs to fully explore the potential of computers in mathematics. Teachers encourage good independent working. The procedures in place to assess progress and set targets for groups and individuals are good. The co-ordinator has made a booklet of key mathematical statements for every pupil. Teachers mark off the statements that pupils have attained and immediately know what each pupil needs to learn next. Work is marked regularly and pupils are always advised of their errors, such as the reversal of numbers. However, work is often untidy and pupils have difficulty at times in reading what they have written. Teachers do not make enough use of paper and exercise books with appropriately sized squares to help pupils understand the value of numbers more easily when they are placed in columns.
80. The co-ordinator's guidance has had a very good effect on the school's work. The National Numeracy Strategy clearly supports teachers in planning lessons that develop pupils' knowledge systematically. The monitoring of teaching and learning is sufficiently rigorous to enable the co-ordinator to have a proper overview of the subject. For example, the co-ordinator has looked closely at what pupils have not answered well in national tests, so that teachers know to spend more time in future on those areas to boost attainment further.

SCIENCE

81. Pupils' attainment in Year 2 last year was close to the standards expected for their age. Teachers' assessments of pupils' standards of work last year indicated that pupils met the national standards in most areas of science, but that pupils' understanding of investigative science was limited. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory in Year 2. Pupils' good achievement and attainment has been maintained in Year 3 since the last inspection. There are no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls.
82. In Year 2, pupils' standards of knowledge and understanding are generally in line with national expectations, but because they have had fewer opportunities to carry out investigations as they have moved through the school, their skills and understanding in this aspect of the subject are below those expected. However, many pupils have a satisfactory understanding for their age of the importance of fair testing. Pupils know that some surfaces will allow vehicles to travel faster or slower. They have classified colours and textures and know where oil comes from. Pupils rarely use headings for their work that help guide their thinking, such as, 'What I want to know,' 'What I predict will happen,' 'What I did,' and 'What I found out.'
83. In Year 3, pupils sort foods into different groups. They use results to form a conclusion about their work. They can explain what they have done, for example which materials a magnet attracts, and they write a sequence of events effectively. Pupils use bar graphs to

help explain their results. Pupils have gone into considerable detail about the qualities of, for example, wood and cotton. Higher attainers reflect on why an experiment cannot be done with interest. Lower attainers have limited reading and writing skills, but understand much of what they have done.

84. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory in Year 2 and is good in Years 1 and 3. The main difference in Years 1 and 3 is that pupils develop their understanding of science mainly through experiments and investigations. The teaching is interesting, practical activities are common and these ways of working help pupils to understand new ideas. Pupils discuss their findings, reach sensible conclusions, and have many chances to think about their work.
85. In Year 1, pupils discovered that some materials are waterproof and others are not. They also discovered that waterproof fabrics, such as tin foil, are not necessarily suitable for making umbrellas. Pupils have learned to investigate consistently and to make decisions about whether water passes through the material or just spreads out. The teacher brought in the notion of fair tests, such as, would it make a difference if different amounts of water were poured on each piece of fabric? They also learnt that scientific results can be inconclusive.
86. Pupils respond well and show interest. They work hard, largely because they relate well to teachers. Lessons are well managed and they proceed at a brisk pace. Pupils gain a range of knowledge and understanding, building on their experience of the world. They learn about forces when pushing or pulling toys, they know which foods are good for us, they expand their understanding of how electrical appliances work by constructing simple electrical circuits, and learn about properties of materials when choosing them for different purposes.
87. Pupils with special educational needs receive a good level of support from teachers and support assistants. Adults help them in a variety of ways to overcome their difficulties, and pupils make good progress. Higher attaining pupils have work that challenges them in some lessons, but they are not always sufficiently challenged by the tasks they are given to do. Teachers are well aware of equality of opportunity and make sure that girls and boys, including those with special educational needs, have equal amounts of time and appropriate support to help them make progress during lessons.
88. Teachers' planning ensures that pupils cover topics at broadly the right level for their age. The planning enables pupils' knowledge and understanding of living things, materials and physical processes to develop systematically throughout Years 1, 2 and 3. The school's emphasis on practical, investigative work in Years 1 and 3 is good. The co-ordination of the subject is good. The co-ordinator checks teachers' plans and has made visits to colleagues' classrooms to see science lessons. This work, in the main, has been successful. Good use is made of information and communication technology to display results in graphs.
89. The general points for development are:
- to improve the way pupils' record their findings using the Year 3 method as an example;
 - to ensure teachers mark pupils' work with science in mind as well as literacy;
 - to match work to pupils' capabilities better;
 - to improve the tidiness of pupils' work;
 - to develop a more consistent approach to investigative work in Years 1 and 2.

ART AND DESIGN

90. Pupils' standards of attainment in art and design at the end of Year 2 and Year 3 match national expectations, and pupils' achievements are satisfactory. Since the last inspection, standards have improved and pupils' progress in learning skills is better. There are no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls. The management of art is satisfactory, but the school does not have an up-to-date policy for the subject.
91. Although no lessons were observed, evidence from displays of pupils' work on the walls shows that there is a wide and interesting curriculum for pupils to experience. In Year 3, pupils have made rubbings of different textures. They have also designed interesting sculptures and showed how they have been improved. Some of the work is based on the Angel of the North sculpture that towers over the road near Gateshead. Higher attainers paint realistic landscapes, with a high degree of perspective. In Year 1, pupils have made sculptures from string, paper and wool. They have painted on fabric, interwoven paper strips to make pleasing patterns and produced interesting tie-dyed patterns. Pupils have used charcoal and have drawn often amusing portraits of themselves.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

92. Two design and technology lessons were observed, so no judgements have been made about the quality of teaching or pupils' responses. From talking with the subject co-ordinator, reading school documentation and looking at completed work around the school, it is clear that pupils undertake an adequate range of work and attain standards similar to those expected of seven and eight year olds nationally. Pupils' achievement is satisfactory. The main area for development is in the way that pupils record their work. Pupils record less about their work than is typical in many schools. Not all teachers give pupils sufficient opportunities to write about their work, such as detailed evaluations of what has worked well or not.
93. The curriculum has improved since the last inspection and standards have improved consequently. The curriculum for design and technology is firmly based on some investigations and seeking the solutions to problems.
94. In Year 1, pupils explored the patterns they could create by weaving fabric and plastic. The teacher gave clear instructions about the targets for the lesson and pupils settled well to their work. The teacher introduced all the different materials very well. Most pupils got on well and produced satisfying results. Pupils also discovered something of the science of materials by noticing that some were hard or soft and easy or difficult to bend.
95. The lesson in Year 3 concentrated on how different mechanisms work. Pupils looked at springs, hinges, levers and pneumatic devices. The lesson was well organised and pupils had a range of different tasks. For example, one group looked at how different toys moved. Another group found the designing aspect of the lesson difficult to do and more guidance was needed from adults if pupils were to make good progress.
96. The co-ordinator manages the subject adequately and has a clear understanding of what is taught and learned in each class. There are some good photographic records of pupils' work. She ensures that all planning reflects the requirements for the subject. Resources for pupils to use in lessons are good. The co-ordinator has rectified weaknesses identified during the last inspection. The school now develops pupils' skills

systematically from year to year. The school does not have an up to date policy for the subject.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

97. Standards of attainment in geography and history by the end of Years 2 and 3 are close to national expectations. The schemes of work are based on the recent national guidance from the qualifications and curriculum authority. As a result, pupils make sound progress in learning the skills, knowledge and understanding in both subjects. Due to the timetable arrangements, evidence available during the inspection was limited with only one lesson of geography seen. Judgements are primarily based upon discussions with pupils and from looking at their work.
98. By the end of Year 2, pupils have a secure understanding of time. They use words such as ‘today’ and ‘yesterday’, ‘old’ and ‘new’ correctly. They know that places change over time and that people’s lives change too. They compare people and things from different periods such as a modern kitchen and a Victorian one. Pupils know about some of the major events that have happened in Great Britain, such as the Great Fire of London, and some important historical figures, such as Guy Fawkes. They know how evidence is used to find out about the past, such as from artefacts and fossils. In geography, pupils’ mapping skills are particularly well developed. Most pupils can show where Hopton is on a map of the United Kingdom and understand at least the four main points of the compass. Most pupils draw detailed maps as part of the ‘Katie Morag’ topic. The maps are mainly pictorial, but detailed, with important places shown. Some pupils include a key to help identify specific places or features. Maps drawn by more able pupils show they are beginning to understand that maps are a ‘birdseye view’ of the landscape. They use a map of York to find interesting places to visit in the city. Pupils understand that different parts of the country have different physical features, which affect how people live and the jobs they do. In addition, pupils understand that countries around the world have different climates, and this affects what people wear, what food they eat and how they live.
99. By the end of Year 3, pupils continue to make sound progress and attain satisfactory standards in geography and history. They know the difference between countries and continents. Most pupils can name the continents and higher attaining pupils can correctly point to them on a map of the world. In history, pupils in Year 3 have a secure understanding of how peoples’ lives were affected during World War II, such as by food rationing and evacuation. They have a secure understanding about some civilisations from the past, such as in Ancient Egypt. They use timelines to show how the civilisation developed over time and when important buildings, such as the pyramids, were built or pharaohs, such as Tututankamen, ruled.
100. Teaching in both subjects is satisfactory. Teachers’ subject knowledge is secure, so the planning of topics effectively interprets the national guidance to give, where possible, a local relevance to activities. This helps pupils put the work into context and fuels their interest and enthusiasm. The one lesson of geography seen in Year 3 was a good lesson. Pupils were very enthusiastic, worked well with each other and generally demonstrated very positive attitudes to the subject. In this briskly paced lesson, instructions for tasks and general organisation were explicit, so pupils knew exactly what they had to do. These high expectations were reflected in pupils’ good behaviour. Tasks are varied appropriately to accommodate the different pupils’ abilities. However, over time, not enough emphasis is placed on giving pupils opportunities to write in different styles and from different viewpoints, or to practise their literacy and numeracy skills. In addition, not enough emphasis is placed on encouraging pupils to present and date their work.

These factors have a negative impact upon pupils' standards in English and mathematics. The recent developments in the school's resources for information and communication technology, and the training that staff are currently involved in, are leading to an increased use of information and communication technology in lessons. For example, in the lesson seen, pupils were given good opportunities to research a topic, using an encyclopaedia program. However, this good example of how information and communication technology can be used is not consistent across the school. The full potential of computers for pupils to present their work in different ways or to link specific parts or activities in topics to complimentary computer-based tasks such as creating a database and graphs of rainfall patterns is not fully exploited.

101. The subject co-ordinator gives sound leadership to the subjects. Progress since the last inspection in developing the planning procedures, resources and procedures for monitoring pupils' progress has been satisfactory. The school does not have an up-to-date policy for the subject.

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (ICT)

102. Standards of work match those expected nationally in Years 2 and 3, and pupils now make good progress. The school has made major improvements to the quality of provision since the last inspection. Now that the computer facilities are in place, the school's provision has improved considerably. The new facilities, with access to the Internet, have begun to make a positive impact on pupils' learning. Pupils now systematically build on their skills year on year. Teachers' arrangements are clear for assessing pupils' work and for recording what they have learned. Teachers' planning indicates that pupils are taught a good curriculum that covers all aspects of ICT during their time at the school.
103. In the two ICT lessons observed, teachers provided good, clear explanations and the right amount of support to help pupils learn at an adequate pace. Pupils very much enjoy the subject and are keen to learn. Virtually all pupils know how to use the basic functions of a word processor, how to save information, control the floor robot and make it go forwards and backwards over given distances. Pupils use a painting program successfully to make day and night pictures. They draw objects, such as a house, colour them in, and use the on-screen 'spray can' and thick and thin on-screen 'brushes' to make exciting pictures. Pupils have made pie and bar graphs about their work in science. In Year 3, pupils learn to make the robot zigzag. Pupils have drawn symmetrical patterns, made a graph of goal scorers for the local Division One team and completed an insect key. The football database work has proved very interesting and informative for pupils. Pupils have learnt to ask questions about and around a topic, so that their Internet searches are successful.
104. There is a particular strength in the way that pupils are taught to begin to understand how computers work. In Year 1, pupils learn to draw out some differences between a carefully selected number of objects by identifying their unique characteristics through the use of two questions. The computer network in the hall is an innovative way of using the limited space in the school. On one afternoon a week the computers are moved from classrooms into the hall, so that they can all be linked together for half-class lessons.
105. Teachers have begun to benefit from the extra training they have received from all sources, including the Education Action Zone and the local education authority. The training package provided through the New Opportunity Funding has proved to be poor. It has not met the school's needs.

106. Sufficient time is allowed for ICT in lessons, and pupils improve their skills. Although teachers plan to use computers in the classroom within other subjects, the school lacks sufficient programs to enable teachers to do this systematically to make ICT a useful tool in many lessons. The co-ordinator has very effectively raised the profile of ICT. The school has raised funds to supplement the government grant for equipment and all money has been used well. The computers have a good range of basic ICT programs for teachers to use that include painting, word-processing and spreadsheets. The school has recently agreed a policy for the subject after discussion with staff and governors.

MUSIC

107. Standards in music are in line with expectations at the end of Years 2 and 3, which is a similar judgement to that made at the last inspection. However, this is based on limited evidence drawn from observation of singing in assembly, a hymn practise and one lesson in Year 3. Pupils' singing is tuneful and in time. They have a secure understanding of how to vary the volume and tempo of their singing to reflect the changing mood of a hymn or song. With some adult help, pupils sing rounds, holding their lines well. Although some boys in Year 3 lack some enthusiasm, the majority of pupils enjoy singing. Pupils in Year 3 can combine the sounds of different instruments and rhythms to create a specific sound.
108. The quality of teaching was good in the one lesson seen during the inspection. The teacher managed pupils well and organised them effectively, so that they concentrated well and tried hard to do what was asked of them. The lesson built effectively on previous lessons and gave pupils good opportunities to practise and refine their skills in combining different instruments to create a simple sequence, reflecting a simple story. Pupils were very enthusiastic and worked very well together, sharing ideas and resources. The teacher has a secure subject knowledge so, as she moved around the groups, she was able to give good and clear advice to pupils about how they could improve their work.
109. The after-school music club enriches the music curriculum. This is well attended and gives pupils good opportunities to extend their interest in music. However, there are few regular opportunities for other musical activities out of lessons, which limits those pupils who have a particular ability in music from developing their interest. The school takes part with other schools in local music festivals. Resources for music are good. Funds from the Education Action Zone have been spent wisely to increase the number of and quality of instruments available for pupils to use. There is no up-to-date policy for the subject.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

110. Pupils' standards in swimming are above those expected nationally at the end of Year 2. Year 3 pupils' standards in dance are also above those expected nationally. Pupils of all levels of ability, including those with special educational needs, achieve well. Too little physical education was inspected to allow an overall judgement to be made about standards and achievement. Standards during the last inspection were satisfactory. There are no significant differences between the attainments of boys and girls.
111. Year 3 pupils engaged in dance with very good levels of concentration and produced well-controlled short sequences of movement about Pan Gu the giant. The teacher used a taped broadcast, that she stopped frequently, to give pupils extra verbal directions. Pupils showed that they could tread carefully and grow into shapes, and share ideas

successfully in groups. In the swimming pool, sixteen Year 2 pupils did their best to swim further than ever before. The highest attainer swam 800 metres. One pupil swam 50 metres and three more than 25 metres. Several more pupils swam 10 metres and all are growing in confidence in the water.

112. The quality of teaching and learning in both lessons was good. Teachers managed their classes very well, resulting in very good levels of concentration and behaviour. Teachers have a good range of techniques to challenge and motivate pupils, such as choosing stimulating music for pupils to interpret. Teachers encourage pupils to evaluate their own and each other's work. Pupils enjoy physical education very much and they worked particularly hard in the swimming pool. Teachers make clear teaching points as groups work, and give all pupils opportunities to show what they can do. All pupils are very well included in lessons, according to their capabilities.
113. The subject is adequately managed. The school successfully links healthy eating with the physical education curriculum. The school uses good published guidance to help teachers plan lessons. The provision for swimming is very good. There are pool staff on-hand to teach groups and the pool is very well supervised. The school hall is small but large enough for small classes of eight year olds, although some space is lost because it is also used to store dining tables. This places some restrictions on aspects of the subject, such as games, when the weather is not suitable to go outside. The school is well aware that it needs to replace or increase the quantity of some apparatus, such as outdoor equipment. There are no extra-curricular activities for physical education, and pupils do not have opportunities to enjoy extra physical activity. The good grassed areas are not marked out, so that they cannot be used for organised games and athletics easily. The school does not have an up-to-date policy for the subject.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

114. Standards were considered satisfactory at the inspection in September 1999. During this inspection no lessons of religious education were seen, due to timetable arrangements. The amount of pupils' written work was also very limited, reflecting the emphasis on oral work in lessons referred to in teachers' planning. Therefore, no judgement on standards can be made, because of insufficient evidence.
115. The school follows the locally agreed syllabus for religious education and teachers' planning indicates that this is followed satisfactorily. By the end of Year 3, pupils have a secure understanding of the main Christian festivals, such as Easter and Christmas and begin to learn about some other world religions, such as Judaism and Islam. They know some stories from the Bible and about some of the important Christian Saints and characters, such as St Francis of Assisi and Mother Theresa. The Vicar takes assembly weekly and draws upon the Christian faith for the basis of the assembly. He has spent much of his working life in South Africa and often refers to this in the assemblies, which helps pupils to develop and appreciate how people celebrate their faith in other parts of the world. The school is involved with the local church and uses it for special services during the school year. Also a number of pupils attend the church on specific occasions to represent the school at special church events.