

INSPECTION REPORT

MIDDLETON PRIMARY SCHOOL

Middleton, Saxmundham

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124600

Headteacher: Mrs Kath Cook

Reporting inspector: Mr Paul Nicholson
25406

Dates of inspection: 6 – 8 November 2000

Inspection number: 225274

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First school
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	4 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Rectory Road Middleton Saxmundham Suffolk
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Telephone number:	01728 648251
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Appropriate authority:	The governing body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs Molly Smith
Date of previous inspection:	September 1996

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
Paul Nicholson 25406	Registered inspector	English Science Art and design Design and technology Information communication technology Physical education Children in the Foundation Stage Special educational needs Equal opportunities	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? (Interpretation of the school's results) How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
Christine Wild 19369	Lay inspector		How high are standards? (Attitudes, values and personal development) How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
Sylvia Gatehouse 26945	Team inspector	Mathematics Geography History Music Religious education	How well are pupils taught? How good are the curricular and other opportunities?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in the rural village of Middleton, which is 20 miles north-east of Ipswich. It serves the small communities of Middleton, Westleton, Dunwich, Eastbridge and Theberton where social circumstances provide a typical mix of privately owned and rented accommodation. Currently, there are 54 pupils on roll (27 girls and 27 boys) including seven reception-age children who attend part-time. None of the pupils has English as an additional language. Seventeen per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals, which is similar to the national average. Thirteen per cent of pupils have been identified as having special educational needs, which is below the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need. On entry to the school children's attainments vary greatly but are generally below average for their age, particularly in their social and personal development.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school with some good features. It is a caring school where pupils' attitudes are positive and relationships are good. As a result of the satisfactory, and at times good, teaching pupils' overall attainment by the age of nine is appropriate for their age. The school is soundly led and managed and provides satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- Pupils achieve high standards in mathematics and science.
- Pupils respond well to the school and, overall, their behaviour is good. They have positive attitudes and relationships between staff and pupils are good.
- The school is a caring community and there are good procedures for supporting pupils' personal development, including their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.
- The school makes good provision for children in the Foundation Stage and they make good progress in their early learning.
- The school's partnership with parents is good and has a positive impact on learning.

What could be improved

- Standards in information and communication technology, as they are low.
- Standards in writing, particularly in Key Stage 2, as they are not as high as they should be.
- The planning for the future development, as the school has not clearly identified its priorities.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school has made satisfactory progress since its previous inspection in September 1996. It has successfully addressed most, but not all, of the key issues raised at that time. The school has introduced planning procedures to ensure appropriate progression in pupils' learning. Effective procedures are now in place to monitor teaching and learning throughout the school. It has introduced satisfactory procedures to assess pupils' progress. Teachers make effective use of this information and so their daily planning now provides relevant activities for all pupils, including the more able. These improvements are beginning to have a positive impact on standards and the quality of teaching. While the school has made some progress in the way in which it plans for future improvement, this remains an area for development. The school has introduced clearer criteria for identifying pupils with special educational needs. However, it needs to do further work to ensure that it sets more precise learning targets for these pupils and that it monitors their progress more closely. Since the last inspection standards in mathematics and science have improved, but standards in information and communication technology have declined.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by seven-year-olds based on National Curriculum test results.

Performance in:	compared with				Key
	all schools			similar schools	
	1998	1999	2000	2000	
Reading	C	*	C	D	well above average A above average B average C below average D well below average E
Writing	B	*	D	D	
Mathematics	C	*	A	A	

* No results are shown for 1999 as there were fewer than ten pupils in the relevant year group.

The results of national tests for seven-year-olds (the end of Key Stage 1) in 2000 show that, while pupils achieved high standards in mathematics and average standards in reading, standards in writing were below average. Teacher assessments in science show standards in science to be well above average. Standards in the current Year 2 reflect an improvement in standards within the present small group of pupils. By the end of Key Stage 1, standards are broadly average in reading and writing, and above average in mathematics and science.

Currently pupils' standards in Key Stage 2 (the very small group in Year 4 and the larger group in Year 3) are appropriate for their age in reading. However, standards in writing remain below average. The school has identified this as a weakness and it has begun to address this issue. Although pupils develop appropriate literacy skills, they do not use them consistently well in their writing. Standards in mathematics and science are above average, as pupils have developed good skills in these subjects. Pupils' standards in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and religious education are in line with the expectations for their age both at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of nine. Standards in physical education are in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1, but it was not possible to judge the standard by the age of nine. Throughout the school, standards in information and communication technology are below average. Pupils have not had sufficient experience of using computers in order to develop appropriate skills.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have positive attitudes towards their learning and are keen and enthusiastic.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Overall, behaviour in lessons and at play is good. Pupils are courteous and polite. The immature actions of a very small number of pupils mean their behaviour is not always as good as it could be.
Personal development and relationships	Relationships between pupils and between pupils and staff are good. Pupils' personal development is good and they respond well when given responsibility.
Attendance	The rate of attendance is above the national average. Pupils are punctual and lessons begin on time.

Pupils' positive attitudes and generally good behaviour, together with the good relationships between pupils and staff are strengths and help to support the positive caring ethos within the school.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged up to 5 years	aged 5-7 years	aged 7-9 years
26 lessons seen overall	good	satisfactory	satisfactory

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

The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and at times good. There was no unsatisfactory teaching during the inspection. Two-thirds of lessons were satisfactory and a third were good. As a result pupils make sound progress in their learning and development of skills. The teaching of children in the Foundation Stage and in numeracy and science is good. This results in good progress and high levels of achievement in these areas. The teaching of literacy is satisfactory, though the school needs to give greater attention to the development and use of writing skills.

Teachers use an effective range of teaching methods and have an enthusiastic approach. They share their learning objectives with pupils at the beginning of lessons and discuss what the pupils have learned by the end. This gives pupils a good knowledge of their own learning and promotes good levels of interest. Teachers make good use of resources and learning support assistants. In the best lessons the pace is brisk and expectations are high and clear.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school's curriculum is satisfactory. It meets statutory requirements and provides pupils with a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities. It makes good use of visits and visitors.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Overall, the provision for pupils with special educational needs is satisfactory. This ensures they make sound progress in their learning. The pupils with statements of special educational needs are particularly well supported and are well integrated into school life.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	The school makes good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. There is an effective programme for personal, social and health education.
How well the school cares for its pupils	There is a high standard of care. Good procedures are in place to ensure the health and safety of pupils.

The school has an effective partnership with its parents. It provides parents with good quality information. Parents make a positive contribution to supporting children's learning both at home and in the classroom.

The school's caring environment, which includes good provision for pupils' personal development, has a positive impact on pupils' learning.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	The headteacher provides sound leadership and is committed to raising standards. The staff support her well. Subject co-ordinators are beginning to develop their role in monitoring standards of teaching and learning.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governors are supportive of the school and fulfil their statutory responsibilities. They are beginning to develop their role in monitoring the work of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The governors, headteacher and staff do not evaluate the work of the school sufficiently to achieve clear identification of priorities and relevant actions aimed at further improvements in standards.
The strategic use of resources	The school makes satisfactory use of financial resources, including specific grants and funding. It is not yet applying the principles of best value when evaluating its performance.

The school has a good number of staff and sufficient resources for the number and age of pupils. The school's accommodation has benefited from a new classroom since the last inspection. However, the lack of a hall and storage space and the small playground restricts the activities the school is able to offer in physical education. The school helps to compensate for this by the use of a hall at a nearby school.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Twenty-six parents completed a questionnaire and 18 parents attended a meeting to discuss their views.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The children like school. • The school is well led and managed. • Members of staff are approachable. • The school works well with parents. • The school expects children to work hard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The pupils' behaviour. • The quality and quantity of homework set.

Parents are pleased with the school and agree that it is a caring environment. Inspection evidence generally supports the positive views of the parents. The school is soundly led and managed and has good relationships with parents. It has an appropriate homework policy, which includes supporting reading, spelling, multiplication tables and on occasions research for topics. However, the school admits that it does not always apply the policy consistently. Overall, pupils' behaviour is good. However, the immature behaviour of small number of pupils does reduce the pace of learning in some lessons. This is an area for the school to address.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and achievements

1. At the time of the last inspection overall standards were in line with national expectations throughout the school. However, some more able pupils were underachieving. A key weakness was in the teachers' planning, which did not ensure full coverage of the National Curriculum and appropriate progression from year to year. Since that time, the school has improved its curriculum and provided appropriate challenge for more able pupils through the use of ability groups for literacy and numeracy. This has resulted in a general improvement in standards. By the time pupils leave the school at the age of nine, they achieve good standards in mathematics and science. In English, their standards in reading, speaking and listening are appropriate for their age, but standards in writing are below average. Pupils achieve average standards in all other subjects except in information and communication technology, where standards are low.
2. Children start school in the reception class with levels of attainment below those expected for this age group. Assessments based on the local education authority's testing procedures indicate that, over recent years, children's attainment on entry has been close to or below the average found through the county. Children's attainment in personal and social skills is particularly low. The school makes good provision for these children and overall they make good progress in the reception class towards their early learning goals¹.
3. Children in the Foundation Stage make especially rapid progress in personal, social and emotional development. They play and work well together and show improving levels of concentration. They make good progress towards the goals for their communication, language and literacy development and acquire appropriate skills in speaking, listening, reading and writing. Children make good progress through the nationally recognised 'stepping stones' in their mathematical development. They recognise the numerals 0 to 10 confidently and use relevant mathematical vocabulary. Children make satisfactory progress in developing their knowledge and understanding of the world. They develop appropriate skills when using simple programs on the computer. Children enjoy art and music and are given appropriate opportunities for role-play. This results in satisfactory progress in their creative development. Children's physical development is hampered by the limitations of the outdoor accommodation and outdoor resources. While they develop their fine motor control well in using pencil, paintbrushes and construction kits, children have few opportunities to use large apparatus. By the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children are on course to achieve the early learning goals for each area of learning. The exception is in physical development where children do not reach the expected levels. The school is aware of this and is developing plans to improve the provision for this area of learning.
4. End of Key Stage 1 National Curriculum test results in 2000 show a mixed picture. In comparison with all schools, the results were average in reading, below average in writing but well above average in mathematics. In comparisons with similar schools², results were below average in reading and writing but well above average in mathematics.
5. While the overall results in reading show average standards, only three-quarters of pupils achieved Level 2, the expected standard for a typical seven-year-old. This was well below

¹ Early learning goals – these are expectations for most children to reach by the end of the Foundation Stage. They refer mainly to achievements children make concerning the following six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development; communication, language and literacy; mathematical development; knowledge and understanding of the world; physical development; and creative development. There are many goals for each area of learning.

² National benchmark information bands together 'similar schools' based on the proportion of pupils known to be eligible for free school meals.

that found nationally. This was mainly due a small group of pupils with particular learning difficulties. However, the proportion achieving Level 3, the higher standard, was broadly similar to the national average. In writing, the reverse was true. The proportion achieving Level 2 was similar to the national average, but no pupils achieved the higher standard, which was below the national average. The results in mathematics are particularly pleasing as the proportion that achieved the expected standard was above the national average and the proportion that achieved the higher standard was well above. In teacher assessments in science, the results were well above average, with all pupils achieving the expected standard and nearly half achieving the higher standard.

6. Evidence from the inspection indicates a broadly similar pattern, with some improvements, to that of 2000 by the end of Key Stage 1. By the age of seven, overall standards in English are in line with national expectations. Standards in speaking and listening, reading and writing are appropriate for the age of the pupils. This improvement on the previous year is due to there being fewer pupils with special educational needs within this small group of pupils. The literacy hour and the additional time given to reading are also having a positive impact on learning. Pupils make good progress in both mathematics and science as a result of good teaching and standards are above average in the current Year 2. Standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations. Pupils have had insufficient opportunities in the past to develop their knowledge and skills. By the end of the key stage, pupils achieve appropriate standards for their age in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education.
7. In Key Stage 2 (Years 3 and 4 only), pupils consolidate their learning and by the time they leave the school they achieve average standards in English overall and above average standards in mathematics and science. In English, pupils' speaking, listening and reading skills are in line with national expectations for their age and more able pupils achieve appropriately higher standards. However, in writing, standards are below average. Very few pupils produce writing of a consistently high standard. This reflects their results in national tests when they were seven. The school has identified this as an area for development. Pupils maintain the above average standards in mathematics and science. They show good levels of understanding in both these subjects. As in Key Stage 1, standards in information and communication technology are below national expectations. Pupils have had insufficient opportunities in the past to develop their knowledge and skills. By the end of Year 4, pupils achieve appropriate standards for their age in art and design, design and technology, geography, history and music. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards in physical education.
8. Throughout the school, pupils' overall achievements in religious education are in line with the expectations of Suffolk's agreed syllabus for the subject. Pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the principal teachings of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism.
9. As pupils move through the school they make good progress in the Foundation Stage. The school has addressed most of their weaknesses noted on entry by the time they begin Year 1. Throughout the school, pupils make good progress in numeracy and in the development of their scientific knowledge and understanding. This is a result of good quality teaching in these areas. Pupils make satisfactory progress in all other subjects, except in information and communication technology where learning is unsatisfactory and, to a lesser degree, in the using and applying of their writing skills where progress is inconsistent.
10. Pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to their peers in relation to their prior attainment as a result of the school's adequate provision. This includes good support from learning support staff and satisfactory individual education plans. Those pupils with statements for special educational needs are particularly well supported by teachers,

learning support staff and good resources. This ensures they have full access to the curriculum and make good progress in their learning.

11. The school has successfully developed pupils' personal and social skills and this has given pupils the confidence and ability to work independently. Their achievements in mathematics and science are good. The school is aware of the weaknesses in pupils' standards and shows a commitment to further improvement by raising standards in information and communication technology and writing.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Pupils have maintained the positive attitudes and good behaviour noted at the time of the last inspection. This area remains a strength of the school.
13. Pupils' attitudes to the school are good. In the morning, pupils arrive early, eager to start their school day. Parents agree that their children are happy to be at school. Overall, the satisfactory and at times good teaching throughout the school ensures pupils are motivated in their work. In the classroom, pupils are enthusiastic in their desire to ask and answer questions. They readily talk about what they are doing. In a minority of lessons, the pace is too slow due to the unrestrained outbursts of the pupils. Occasionally the pupils are expected to listen to the teacher for lengthy periods, which results in the pupils becoming restless and fidgeting. Due to a minority of pupils disrupting some lessons, the school has not maintained its strength, identified in the previous inspection report, in attentive listening skills.
14. Overall, behaviour in the classrooms, around the school and at play is good. Movement around the school takes place in an orderly manner; pupils form a queue in the playground as a matter of course. At lunchtime, behaviour in the hall is good and pupils are well supervised. In the playground, behaviour is generally good. Occasionally instances of inappropriate behaviour, for example pushing each other and throwing the recently purchased equipment, occurs. Discussions with pupils indicate that physical bullying is not a problem and that the school deals with the infrequent occurrence of verbal bullying to their satisfaction. Pupils could recall the school rules and look forward to the recognition of their achievements in the weekly celebration assemblies.
15. The school functions as a close knit community where staff, pupils and parents know each other well. Relationships throughout the school are good. Staff and parents who assist in the school provide good role models. At lunchtime, apart from the occasional minor disagreements, the recent introduction of play equipment has ensured that pupils enjoy playing together. Pupils are sociable, courteous and polite to each other and to visitors. Assemblies and effective personal, social and health education lessons ensure that pupils' understanding of the need to respect and value the feelings of others is developing. No instances of sexist or racist attitudes were displayed during the inspection.
16. Good opportunities to show initiative take place at lunchtime. Older pupils have duties in the dining room and take responsibility for the play equipment in the playground. Children in the Foundation Stage are given simple duties to perform, for example returning registers to the office. They take the assignments seriously and gain in confidence by performing the tasks successfully. Older pupils are self-assured and explain willingly to visitors the work that they undertake. The school plans for pupils' personal development through a good programme of work in personal and social education. It encourages pupils to reflect on the impact of their actions on others. One lesson gave pupils examples of incidents that could occur and good discussion took place on what their reactions would be and how they could improve. The school supports a charity each term, which enables pupils to gain an understanding of those less fortunate than themselves.

17. Attendance at the school is good. In the previous inspection report, attendance was in line with the national average and has now improved significantly. Punctuality is good. The school regularly reminds parents in newsletters of the importance of good attendance. Holidays in term time do occur occasionally; however, the school actively discourages such absences. Registers and registration meet the statutory requirements.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

18. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory and at times good. During the inspection two thirds of teaching was satisfactory and one third was good. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. The school has improved the quality of teachers' planning since the last inspection and has maintained the quality of teaching. The considerable proportion of good teaching makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of pupils' learning. Parents are satisfied with the quality of teaching and most of them indicated that they felt the teaching was good.
19. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is never less than satisfactory, and in half the lessons it is good. This provides a secure foundation for these young children. In Key Stages 1 and 2, the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies provide a strong framework for all teachers, supporting their planning and providing a clear structure to these lessons. The teaching of literacy skills such as punctuation is satisfactory in literacy lessons but there is not a sufficiently strong focus on transferring these skills to pupils' general writing and in other lessons. The overall quality of teaching in information and communication technology is unsatisfactory but the school has recognised the need to develop teachers' skills in this subject in the light of new initiatives.
20. The school has experienced a number of staff changes since the last inspection. The present headteacher has successfully assembled a team whose special strengths complement each other. For example, teachers use their expertise well throughout the school in art, science, religious education, music and personal and social education. In extra-curricular activities this is also the case. For instance, the teaching in the music club is particularly effective as the teacher has good subject knowledge and the headteacher provides additional support for the group of recorder players.
21. The common features, which thread through all the teaching, are teachers' secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum, the teaching methods they use and the effective use of support staff and resources. To achieve these features, teachers plan their lessons appropriately in accordance with the National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies or other national or local guidelines. The activities for the children in the Foundation Stage are planned in accordance with the early learning goals for young children. In religious education, teachers' planning is fully in accordance with the Suffolk Locally Agreed Syllabus. Teachers use a good range of methods during lessons such as direct teaching to the whole class, group work, paired work and individual work. They use a range of teaching skills effectively, for instance questioning and listening. They satisfactorily assess pupils' responses during lessons to check for understanding before moving on to the next point. Teachers value the skills and contribution of their support staff and deploy them effectively, providing them with written and verbal instructions about the part that they will play in the lesson. Therefore, support staff work alongside pupils in all classes, actively supporting their learning. For instance, they supervise reception children outside when playing with small apparatus and in the classroom they help children match sounds with pictures as they listen to a tape. Pupils with statements of special educational needs are very well supported and as a result play a full part in lessons. Teachers make good and careful use of their resources such as flipcharts, whiteboards and 'big books'.

22. In the best lessons teachers make the learning intentions crystal clear to pupils at the start. They explain what they expect pupils to learn and do in the lesson ahead. This is so with reception children and provides them with a routine that becomes second nature. For instance, the teacher says, "This is what we're going to be doing this morning. First...". The children respond enthusiastically to this as if they are opening a box of treasures. Teachers plan to make learning a continuous process that makes it more meaningful. Therefore, they introduce lessons by making clear links to past work and set clear targets for the future. This provides pupils with a clear idea of the lesson ahead, helps to focus their attention and provides a sense of purpose.
23. Where teaching is good, teachers plan activities to match pupils' needs and abilities. Plans include special work for the more able pupils, and separate activities for the two year groups in the mixed-age classes. Teachers set work for all groups which is challenging but achievable. They have a clear idea of what they want their pupils to complete in a given time. Pupils in Year 1 are acquiring good work habits as the teacher makes reasonable but challenging demands of them, using phrases like "Quick as you can!" to spur the children on to greater efforts. Lessons have a clear shape, especially in English and mathematics, with a strong sense of direction. Teachers introduce lessons in a lively manner, providing opportunities for pupils to join in a discussion, for instance when converting speech bubbles into reported speech in an English lesson. Teachers also use the beginning of lessons to enthuse their pupils and motivate them. For example, in a numeracy lesson the teacher expected all pupils to write down different ways that they can think of to make 20, 50 or 100 and show their results as quickly as possible. She kept the pace of the activity brisk as she asked for their responses in quick succession. In the best lessons, teachers create a sense of urgency by using phrases such as "You have five minutes to jot down ...". Requests like these also serve to keep pupils 'on their toes' and give lessons pace and shape.
24. Pupils learn well when teachers use effective teaching methods such as organising activities to engage all pupils so that they make best use of time and everyone is contributing. For instance good questioning skills, use of resources to focus attention and a brisk pace kept pupils in reception and Year 1 on task as they discussed what they will use to measure various objects around their class. Teachers usually manage their pupils well. They organise the classrooms efficiently although during registration times pupils are not provided with short, sharp written tasks to complete, such as handwriting or mathematical problems to solve. However, teachers are particularly conscientious in planning to meet the differing needs in the mixed-age classes.
25. Teachers have a very good understanding of their pupils and usually structure their lessons well with good balance between listening and doing. Unfortunately this is not always the case. On occasion discussions are too long, with only a few pupils contributing their opinions whilst others sit passively letting others do the work. A few pupils stop listening, lose their concentration, become restless and fail to manage their behaviour in a manner appropriate to their age. Teachers do not always manage these few instances of unacceptable behaviour successfully so the flow and pace of lessons are interrupted. An element of this is present in all three classes. The school has recognised this and intends to take action in the near future to remedy it. In the main part of most lessons, most pupils settle well to their work and teachers and support staff monitor achievement regularly as they move around the class checking pupils' work. At the end of lessons teachers make time for a summing-up or 'plenary' session. During this time they make good use of their questioning skills, finding out whether pupils have understood their work, listening to their responses and comments, and conducting assessments of how well their pupils are doing. On many of these occasions, teachers provide opportunities for pupils to recognise for themselves what they have learnt. This practice provides pupils with a satisfying sense of achievement.

26. The quality of marking pupils' work varies considerably between teachers. There is a marking policy but teachers do not yet use it consistently. From a scrutiny of past and present work it is evident that teachers are not regularly setting targets to help pupils improve their presentation or increase their output. However, most teachers evaluate pupils' work by making comments such as "Well done", although this does not provide a guide to what they could still do to improve further, or what was particularly pleasing about the piece of work. Teachers do not pay enough attention when marking to the quality of pupils' presentation of their work. Teachers do not draw attention to work which is undated, untitled or when work could be improved by the use of a ruler or by better handwriting. There are indications that teachers marking work in mathematics concentrate on the mathematical content but do not correct spellings.
27. Pupils with special educational needs, and those who need support with literacy beyond that available in class lessons, receive effective help during the day. A team of committed support staff who are fully aware of their pupils' needs and abilities provide this help. However, teachers do not scrutinise and review the individual targets in the individual education plans for these pupils regularly enough to ensure their appropriateness.
28. In their pre-inspection questionnaires, most parents felt that pupils got the right amount of homework, though a small number disagreed. The school has established appropriate homework routines although teachers do not always apply these consistently. The inspection team observed pupils taking home their reading folders, and pupils knew that they usually got weekly homework in spellings and multiplication tables. On occasion teachers ask pupils to conduct research for homework, such as finding out all they could about the recent Olympic Games, or making a book about life in hot places such as Africa. When given, this homework provides effective support to pupils' learning.

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

29. The last inspection found flaws in the management and organisation of the curriculum, which it identified as three key issues for the school to address. The school has worked hard to improve these issues. The headteacher and her staff have implemented a number of strategies that are having a positive impact upon the curriculum and pupils' learning.
30. Currently, the curriculum provided by the school fulfils statutory requirements. The school plans appropriate coverage of the early learning goals for children in the Foundation Stage and provides a broad and balanced curriculum for them apart from physical development, which is affected by the accommodation restraints. All the same, the teacher plans for this aspect to take advantage of what is available. At Key Stages 1 and 2, all subjects of the National Curriculum are taught and the school has successfully taken into account the new Curriculum 2000. Religious education is taught in accordance with the locally agreed syllabus. The allocation of time per subject is appropriate providing a curriculum which is well balanced with an emphasis on literacy and numeracy in accordance with the national strategies. The regular use of a neighbouring school's hall and the local swimming pool supports physical education. The provision for information and communication technology is unsatisfactory but the school is aware of this and plans action to redress this deficiency. The training of staff, new resources and closely structured lessons in literacy and numeracy are having a strong impact upon standards in these subjects, particularly mathematics.
31. The school has improved planning the curriculum to meet the needs of the more able pupils, an issue at the last inspection, and all teachers include references to particular activities and tasks for those pupils in their classes. In addition, the school looks closely at ways it can reorganise arrangements for pupils with special needs to provide the best match for their needs, for instance by transferring pupils into other age groups if necessary. This

is working very well. Long-term planning of the curriculum has been improved and the school has established systems that ensure appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum and progression from year to year. Teachers follow these when drawing up their termly plans and the headteacher checks planning to ensure compliance. Lastly, the school has now securely established the link between curriculum planning and assessment (see paragraph 51). The inspection team observed or scrutinised all aspects of these three key issues and evidence shows that the school has satisfactorily addressed all three.

32. Although the balance and overall breadth of the curriculum are appropriate, the balance within literacy and numeracy is slightly askew. For instance, the school does not allow enough time for the practice and development of handwriting skills, with the result that pupils in Key Stage 2 are not using a joined script. Standards in writing are too low in Key Stage 2 as pupils do not get enough chances to improve their spelling and develop and consolidate the literacy skills they have learned. In other areas of the curriculum such as history and religious education, teachers give pupils appropriate opportunities to write expressively about their feelings. In mathematics, since the introduction of the numeracy strategy there is an emphasis on number so that presently there is little evidence of work in data handling. Additionally, due to the emphasis on the acquisition of skills in mental calculation, the amount of work pupils are recording is limited. The school is aware of this and is seeking to strike a balance particularly in Key Stage 2. For instance, the school has recently bought a new mathematics scheme which will remove the dependence on worksheets which deny pupils the opportunity to develop and improve their presentational skills.
33. Literacy skills in other areas of the curriculum are evident in the use and understanding of subject-specific vocabulary. For example, reception children referred confidently to 'measure', 'longer' and 'shorter' in a numeracy lesson and used a wide range of words when describing special occasions in their lives such as 'birthday', 'Christmas' and 'wedding'.
34. Numeracy skills are satisfactorily developed across other subject areas. For example, in physical education Year 1 and reception children count to four and get into groups to carry the mats. In science pupils record the results of their experiments using block graphs and in history teachers set up time lines to help pupils understand the passage of time. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 use their knowledge of shape as they 'tessellate' photographs and self-portraits in a reconstruction of a self-portrait in the style of David Hockney.
35. There are good policy documents to underpin the school's philosophy with regard to the curriculum. These are particularly good for personal, social and health education and for the provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Under the leadership of the headteacher, the school takes a strong stance on both of these curricular features which are both strengths of the school. There is a good scheme of work for personal, social and health education and recently it has become a regular subject for all classes. This has had a positive impact upon pupils' learning in these areas, particularly social and health education. The impact on personal development is yet to have its full effect. There are good guidelines for implementing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils. These make clear links with other areas of the curriculum and map out where these aspects can be incorporated. For example in history, pupils try to see things from others' points of view and gain an understanding of the qualities and attitudes which guided people's lives in times long ago.
36. The school is establishing satisfactory schemes of work in other subjects based on teachers' long-term and medium-term planning documents. It also makes good use of national guidelines designed to develop pupils' skills and knowledge. The school has

organised the history and geography curriculum in 'cycles' so that pupils in mixed-age classes do not repeat the same material at the same level in subsequent years.

37. The governors have approved the school's sex education programme, which is based on the county's guidelines. The school strongly promotes healthy living. The headteacher has successfully engaged parents in a well-structured programme of study with regard to raising drugs awareness.
38. A good range of visits and visitors to school enriches the curriculum. All pupils have the opportunity to visit the village church and describe features that can be found inside. The school organises excursions associated with historical, geographical, scientific, artistic and religious studies to stimulate interest and enable pupils to gain knowledge of their own locality and its culture. Pupils' records of their annual residential visit to Derbyshire show they particularly appreciate their stay there.
39. Staff regularly organised a satisfactory range of extra-curricular activities. These include hockey and football practices. The latter takes place on the village playing field. Both activities enjoy the support and interest of parents who help alongside staff. Music club is very well supported and enriches pupils' cultural knowledge and understanding as they learn and perform an African version of 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes'. A small group of beginner recorder players practises with the headteacher before joining in with the African song. A member of the support staff runs a French club once a week.
40. The individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs provide appropriate targets for these pupils. However, the special educational needs co-ordinator gets insufficient time to monitor the progress of these pupils, to evaluate the success of the targets and to set new ones. In accordance with the school's stance on equal opportunities all pupils, including those with special educational needs, have access to the curriculum and school activities. The funding of visits by the parent-teacher association means that the school can enrich its curriculum provision with confidence.
41. The monitoring and review of the curriculum is planned over a four-year period during which each subject area will come under scrutiny by the staff and the governing body. The governors have recently established a curriculum group which plans to meet each term to have a specific focus and receive and discuss reports from subject co-ordinators.
42. The school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is good. Assemblies, religious education lessons and personal and social education lessons have a considerable impact upon developing pupils' spiritual awareness. For example, in an assembly, pupils gained an understanding of the value of true friendship compared with 'fair weather' friends such as those who befriended the 'Prodigal Son'. They have time to reflect upon what friends are for and are confident in expressing their views and feelings in front of each other. Pupils, who read with true feeling and respect, lead prayers said in assembly. Prayers are also sung before lunch and said at the end of the day as pupils set off for home. Staff welcome contributions by pupils with special educational needs and the rest of the school listens to them with care and understanding. In their written work, pupils record their feelings about spiritual matters and reflect upon life's meaning through their own experiences. In studying other religions they gain knowledge and understanding about the importance of symbols, such as light to followers of Hinduism, and write in detail about the customs that rule the lives of Jews.
43. The school provides pupils with many opportunities to develop their awareness of right and wrong. It has recently provided playground equipment for pupils to share, such as balls, skipping ropes and stilts in the shape of flowerpots. Pupils work together fairly in playing games. Teachers provide good opportunities in religious education for older pupils to

consider 'rules'. Personal and social education lessons allow reception and Year 1 pupils to discuss different types of medicines and whether they should take them. They learn that they should tell their parents before taking any medicines and that it would be wrong not to speak to them first. Teachers in Years 3 and 4 encourage pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of how to behave when helping others. They work in groups, discussing situations when they should behave in particular ways, for example when they should show respect and kindness. The use in class discussions of a video on drugs awareness, made with the help of Year 12 pupils from the local high school, developed pupils' awareness of right and wrong.

44. The school's provision for social development is good. Staff provide good role models in their dealings with each other and when managing pupils. Some teachers always say 'Thank you' when pupils deserve a special word of encouragement, for instance when they remember to put their hand up when replying to a question rather than just shouting out the answer. Teachers encourage pupils to be helpful and, as a result, they clear up at the end of lessons, tidy up their resources and put equipment back in its right place. Some older pupils help set up the area for assembly, moving tables and chairs co-operatively, helping each other as they stack the chairs and carry their tables. Pupils share the organisation in assembly, taking it in turns according to a weekly rota, for instance announcing the number of the song, operating the CD player and leading the school in prayer. However, on occasions a few pupils show that they have not securely developed their social skills, for instance they do not help to tidy up sensibly or pass their hymnbooks properly to the monitors at the end of assemblies. However, excursions and the annual residential visit to Derbyshire for the older pupils develop relationships and social interaction.
45. The curriculum provides pupils with an awareness of their own and others' cultures. For instance, the close proximity of the school to the village church makes its use as a resource as convenient as it is powerful. Pupils discuss their memories of being in the church confidently and it clearly has made an impression on their knowledge and understanding of its importance. Reception and Year 1 pupils have looked at village houses and are beginning to understand which are old and which are new. A regular visitor provides pupils with a graphic way of understanding how Middleton has changed in the past half century using a model of the village. Pupils have extended their knowledge of music by taking part in a Christmas concert at the local high school and in Britten's 'Noye's Fludde' at Aldeburgh Church. A local education authority advisor has visited the school to enrich pupils' experience of art and pupils have visited a local arts centre. In religious education pupils have studied the world religions of Judaism and Hinduism. They have handled a range of artefacts to help them gain a deeper understanding of the importance to the believers of such items as the menorah and the diva lamp. In assemblies pupils have opportunities to listen to a range of music from different times and cultures, for example Mozart's 'Eine Kleine Nachtmusik', music by Albinoni and by Vaughan Williams. In music lessons and music club they learn to sing, play and move to African chants and songs, and in art lessons they study the work of famous artists such as David Hockney.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

46. The school provides good care for its pupils. It is a close knit community. Staff know their pupils well and establish good relationships with them. Pupils are confident, relate well to teachers and other adults who in turn respect and value them. Since the last inspection the school has improved the procedures for assessing pupils' progress and now makes effective use of this information in planning future activities.
47. Procedures to promote pupils' well-being, health and safety are satisfactory. The governing body has a suitable health and safety policy and the headteacher ensures the school complies with the policy on a day-to-day basis. For example, two members of staff are fully

qualified to administer first aid and appropriate written or verbal notifications of bumps to the head are provided to parents. The school ensures that the appropriate staff undertake training in safety procedures and the correct use of materials and equipment. Fire procedures are adequate and regular testing of fire equipment takes place. Although the school does not have an electrical alarm system to alert the staff to possible fire, it has sought the local authority guidance on manual alternatives. The school is kept clean and provides a safe and secure environment for pupils.

48. Child protection procedures are in place. The headteacher, who is the designated person with responsibility for child protection, is a member of the Police Education Partnership and has provided training for all staff. The school receives appropriate support when needed from outside agencies. The school helps the pupils to help themselves through the strong programmes of work in personal and social education.
49. The school has satisfactory procedures for the promotion of good behaviour. A system of rewards and sanctions supports the behaviour policy. A weekly celebration assembly emphasises the importance of showing respect and being kind to others. Responses to the parents' questionnaires indicated that a fifth of parents disagreed that standards of behaviour were good. During the inspection no observations were made of unacceptable conduct. However, there were instances in the classroom when pupils did not understand that shouting out their answers disrupted the pace of the lessons and affected their own and others' learning. This immature behaviour is an area for school to address. Mid-day supervisory staff maintain satisfactory order and provide information that contributes to the rewards that pupils receive. The school is effective in dealing with oppressive behaviour. Discussion with pupils and parents revealed that bullying was not a problem in the school and, in the few instances that it has occurred, the school has dealt with the situations. There were no exclusions in the previous academic year.
50. Although the school does not have a formal written policy for monitoring of pupils' personal development, informal procedures are in place. Teachers know their pupils well and keep written records of their attainment in personal and social education lessons. Annual progress reports contain some pastoral information, but not in enough depth to be beneficial to parents and pupils.
51. In the last inspection it was found that the link between assessment and curriculum planning was weak. The headteacher and staff have taken steps to address this issue. Teachers complete and use a weekly evaluation sheet recording pupils' progress and future needs appear side by side with the curriculum planning for the following week. The headteacher checks these to ensure that the link between assessment and curriculum planning is secure. A number of assessment systems are now in place which together provide a bank of data to help teachers plan the curriculum more effectively and efficiently. There is now a good policy that underpins the school's philosophy on recording, reporting and assessing pupils' progress. There is a marking policy but this is not yet having an impact as not all teachers use it consistently. However, the intention of both of these documents is to provide guidelines to all staff as they assess pupils' work and achievements. In practice, the systems include a local education authority assessment on entry to reception, national assessments at the end of Year 2 and optional assessments at the end of Year 4. In addition, the school operates spelling and reading tests as formal systems for all pupils from Year 2. Teachers maintain informal assessment systems, too, which they use on a day-to-day basis to fine-tune lesson content in line with pupils' attainment and needs. The headteacher and staff analyse the data collected and share it with the governing body. The school sets and regularly reviews targets for the future attainment of pupils as they move through the school.

52. Procedures for the promoting and monitoring of attendance are satisfactory. Registration takes place at the beginning of each morning and afternoon and fulfils the statutory requirements. Attendance at the school is well above the national average and has shown a significant improvement in the last two years. The school does not retain the letters of explanation for absence received from parents after the codes for absence have been entered in the registers. The school outlines the need for good attendance in its communications to parents. However, it needs to review its procedures in tracking reasons for absence when it has not received an explanation. Good support from the school and outside agencies is available for the few pupils who have extended periods of absence.
53. The school cares well for pupils with statements of special educational need. The school fully meets the requirements of these statements and provision for these pupils is good. For example, a good range of appropriate equipment is provided to ensure that a pupil with a physical disability is able to take a full part in the life of the school and to support his learning. Learning support assistants provide good quality support to other pupils on the school's register for special educational needs. As a result these pupils make sound progress in relation to their prior attainment. The school uses satisfactory individual education plans to set appropriate targets for these pupils, but does not give sufficient time to monitoring the pupils' progress towards them and the setting of new targets to ensure better progress.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

54. The school has a good relationship with parents, which has a positive impact on the learning and achievement of the pupils. This is a strength of the school, which has been maintained since the last inspection. Parents have positive views of the school and they make an effective contribution to their children's learning. The school provides good levels of information to parents.
55. Parents are supportive of the school and state that their children like coming to school. Most parents at the meeting held before the inspection and in the parents' questionnaires strongly agree that they feel comfortable in approaching the school. A member of staff is on duty in the playground every morning prior to the start of the day. All members of staff accompany the children into the playground and are available to talk to parents at the end of the school day. Parents feel happy with the school and the provision for their children. Two areas of concern for some parents were in the amount and frequency of homework and in the standards of behaviour. While homework was found to be effective in supporting pupils' learning, teachers did not apply it consistently as stated in the school's policy. Overall, inspectors found behaviour to be good. However, the immature behaviour of a small number of pupils does reduce the pace of learning in some lessons, particularly when introductions to lessons are too long. This is an area for the school to address.
56. The school provided good information to parents. The quantity and quality of weekly newsletters are good and provide a useful insight on the school's activities. Booklets detailing the curriculum to be taught at each key stage assist the parents in understanding what their children will be studying in the coming year. Apart from minor omissions, the prospectus is an informative document which enables parents to have a good understanding of the school's expectations. The governors' annual report to parents does not give parents a good overview of the work of the governing body. Although the report contains some statements on the required areas, the information is too brief to meet the statutory requirements fully. The school provides appropriate information for parents of children new to the school and for the ease of transfer to the middle school for the next step in their education.

57. The school provides good procedures and opportunities for parents and children to visit the school before admission. These good links help children make the transition between life before school and entry to the reception class. Children and their parents and carers become familiar with daily routines and are helped to gain an understanding of what their children will be doing whilst in school as staff are available to discuss matters on a day-to-day basis. In the autumn term, all parents have an opportunity to discuss targets for their children. In the spring term, the school invites parents to work alongside their children on subjects such as drugs education. Early in the autumn term, it arranges an individual meeting with parents of children in the Foundation Stage to discuss their initial assessments on entry to the school. It invites all parents to come into school in the summer term to discuss their children's progress reports. The annual progress reports celebrate the pupils' academic achievements. However, the reports do not include pupils' weaknesses and the targets for improvement. As yet, pupils are not contributing to their own reports and setting themselves targets for improvement. Reports do not give a clear picture of whether pupils' attainments are typical for their age or not. The inspection team agrees with parents that the format of the reports provides insufficient information on how well the children are doing, whether it is good enough or what they have to do to improve. The school involves and consults parents of pupils with special educational needs on the reviews of the individual educational plans for their children.
58. The school welcomes and values the important contribution parents can make in helping with their children's learning. Parents are encouraged to help in the school, assisting with literacy each morning, in the library and with swimming. Parents volunteer their help and provide cycling proficiency training to ensure the safety of the older pupils. An active parent-teacher association holds social events and raises funds for the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

59. At the time of the last inspection the strengths of the leadership were in the pastoral aspects of the school. There was a strong emphasis on creating a caring environment with a clear focus on pupils' personal development. Staff and governors worked well as a team. Weaknesses at that time related to the lack of emphasis on the educational direction of the school. It did not monitor and evaluate teaching and learning, and the school development plan was not an effective tool for school improvement. Currently, the school has sound leadership and management. It has maintained its strengths in this area and satisfactorily addressed most of the issues raised at the last inspection.
60. The school has clear aims that focus on pupils' personal development, good relationships and pupils achieving their fully potential. While maintaining the importance of personal development, the headteacher is now providing a clearer emphasis on the educational direction of the school. Much of the day-to-day work reflects the headteacher's focus on raising standards. The school is making satisfactory progress towards achieving its aims. For example, the improvements in teachers' planning brought about since the last inspection have had a positive impact on standards in mathematics and science. Parents feel the school is well led and managed and most feel that members of staff are approachable and responsive to their concerns.
61. The headteacher provides sound leadership and is committed to raising further the standards of achievement in the school. She has satisfactorily addressed most of the weaknesses identified at the last inspection. The headteacher provides effective day-to-day management and, as a class teacher, provides a good example to the staff.
62. Subject co-ordinators are in place for each subject and, though they do not have clear job descriptions, they make a positive contribution to the management of the school. They manage resources and monitor planning to ensure an appropriate curriculum is in place.

The school makes effective use of teachers' interests and specialisms, for example in the teaching of music and personal and social education. The headteacher and staff work well together as a team.

63. The co-ordinator for special educational needs provides satisfactory leadership in this area, though he receives insufficient time to carry out his duties. Individual pupils' records are not thorough enough to show what pupils' specific needs are and what progress they have made towards their targets. The school has an appropriate policy, which satisfactorily guides the provision and is based on the nationally recognised Code of Practice³. Since the last inspection the school has identified clearer criteria for identifying pupils with special educational needs. A newly appointed governor for the area is developing her knowledge of the school's practice and is supportive and effective in questioning policy. The school makes effective use of learning support assistants. They ensure pupils with special educational needs receive appropriate help within the classroom and that they have equality of access to the school's curriculum.
64. The governing body fulfils its statutory responsibilities. It meets regularly and has an appropriate structure that includes committees for finance, personnel, curriculum and premises. All legally required documents are in place, including a policy for special educational needs and a school prospectus. However, there are some omissions from the governors' annual report to parents. Governors play a satisfactory role in shaping the educational direction of the school. They are developing their knowledge of their role through attending relevant training courses. Governors have recently begun monitoring pupils' work, which is providing them with a better insight into the work of the school. They are supportive of the school and many help in the classroom. They recognise the need to develop a programme of more focused classroom visits to develop further their knowledge of the strengths and weaknesses of the school.
65. The school has improved the monitoring of teaching and learning that was a weakness at the last inspection. There are now good procedures in place and they are having a positive impact on the quality of education provided. The headteacher, supported by the local education authority advisor, monitors teaching, planning and pupils' work. Subject co-ordinators satisfactorily monitor planning and pupils' work and are developing their role in monitoring teaching. Currently, the school is not a provider of initial teacher training, though it has the potential to do this.
66. The school development plan, though an improvement on that observed at the last inspection, fails to provide clear priorities for future development. It does not provide a sufficiently long-term view of school improvements, nor is it closely linked to the setting of the school budget. Procedures for monitoring and evaluating progress towards the targets set are insufficient to guide future strategic planning. The input of governors into the action plans is limited.
67. Educational priorities, such as providing resources for the new classroom, receive support through careful financial planning. The governors satisfactorily monitor the budget but as yet do not evaluate the effectiveness of their spending decisions. The school uses specific grants well, for example for staff training and special educational needs provision. The school makes satisfactory use of new technologies, for example to store financial and pupil data.
68. The school has a good number of appropriately qualified teachers and a sufficient number of support staff. Currently, there is adequate classroom accommodation for the number of

³ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

pupils on roll. However, the lack of a large hall and the limited playground space restrict the activities the school can offer in physical education. However, it makes effective use of the hall at a nearby school for gymnastics. Overall, there are sufficient learning resources. There is a good range of resources for the teaching of literacy, numeracy and science. While the school has an adequate stock of fiction and non-fiction books, the library and classroom book areas do not provide pupils with stimulating areas to excite their interest in books. There is insufficient large outdoor apparatus for pupils in the Foundation Stage to fully support their physical development. Despite recent additions, resources for information and communication technology are barely adequate.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

69. In order to improve the sound quality of education provided by the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should now:

(1) raise the overall standards of attainment in information and communication technology throughout the school by:

- ensuring there is sufficient depth of teaching in all aspects of the subject;
- providing appropriate in-service training to improve the staff's subject knowledge and confidence in the use of information technology;
- developing strategies so that pupils have more opportunities to use information technology in all areas of the curriculum;
- continuing to develop the resources available;
(Paragraphs: 6, 7, 19, 30, 125-129)

(2) further raise the standards of writing, particularly at Key Stage 2, by:

- raising both teachers' and pupils' expectations of the standards of writing achievable so that the skills learned in literacy lessons are more consistently used in pupils' writing;
- improving strategies for the teaching of spelling;
- improving standards of handwriting and presentation;
- providing younger pupils with more opportunities to develop their early writing skills;
(Paragraphs: 5, 7, 19, 32, 81-90)

(3) clearly identifying relevant priorities and targets for school improvement and effectively monitoring and evaluating progress towards them by:

- developing the school development plan so as to provide clear priorities and targets;
- fully involving staff and governors in the identification of targets, in the monitoring of progress towards them and in the evaluation of their success;
- more carefully linking the priorities to financial planning;
- providing a longer-term view of future developments.
(Paragraphs: 66, 67)

In addition to the key issues above, the following minor issues should be considered for inclusion in the school's action plan. They are indicated by the following paragraphs:

Area for development	Paragraph/s
Develop more effective behaviour management strategies so as improve the behaviour of the small minority of pupils whose actions at times adversely affect learning	13, 28, 55
The management of special educational needs	27, 40, 53, 63
A more consistent approach to the setting of homework.	28, 55
The provision of large outdoor apparatus for children in the Foundation Stage.	3, 77
Marking of pupils' work	26
Information to parents	56, 57, 64

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	26
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	30

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very poor
0	0	33	67	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	51
Number of full-time pupils eligible for free school meals	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	7

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	2

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.0
National comparative data	5.4

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 1

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	9	11	20

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	15	17	19
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	75 (*)	85 (*)	95 (*)
	National	83 (82)	84 (83)	90 (87)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Total	16	18	20
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	80 (*)	90 (*)	100 (*)
	National	84 (82)	88 (86)	88 (87)

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

* The school's data for 1999 is not given as there were fewer than 10 pupils in the relevant year group.

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	47
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	3.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16.4
Average class size	18

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	5
Total aggregate hours worked per week	68

Exclusions in the last school year

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

Financial information

Financial year	1999-2000
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	£
Total income	150,192
Total expenditure	143,277
Expenditure per pupil	2,428
Balance brought forward from previous year	3,324
Balance carried forward to next year	10,239

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 50%

Number of questionnaires sent out	52
Number of questionnaires returned	26

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	73	19	8	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	58	35	4	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	64	16	12	8	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	46	38	13	4	0
The teaching is good.	62	31	4	4	0
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	42	46	8	4	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	85	4	4	8	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	69	23	8	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	54	35	8	4	0
The school is well led and managed.	69	19	4	8	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	54	38	0	8	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	65	27	8	0	0

Note: Totals for each question may not equal 100 per cent as a result of the rounding off of numbers.

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

70. When they begin school, children come with a wide range of different skills and experience. Overall, their attainment is slightly below the county average and is considerably below average in personal and social education. Children begin school on a part-time basis from the September in which they are four, as rising-fives. They become full-time at the beginning of the term in which they become five. The school provides a good foundation across all areas of learning, particularly in mathematical development and communication, language and literacy development. Children make especially rapid progress in personal, social and emotional development. Overall, children make good progress in reception. By the time they reach the end of the Foundation Stage, the majority of children are on course to achieve the early learning goals for children of this age. The exception is in physical development where children do not reach the expected levels because of the constraints of the accommodation and resources. The school is aware of this and already compensates as far as it can. It is developing plans to address this matter fully.

Personal, social and emotional development

71. Children make good progress in developing their personal and social skills and most achieve the early learning goals for this area by the start of Year 1. They are beginning to concentrate for longer periods, work well together and listen and converse with each other as they work and move around the classroom. They know each other's names, how old they are and how old their sisters, brothers and friends are. They are confident about this and quite emphatic in their opinions: "I am four and he is four but I'll be five before him because my birthday comes first". In conversation they talk about their families and their pets, showing an increasing awareness of the importance of the world they inhabit. They confidently share opinions and ideas about special occasions in their lives such as Christmas and birthdays and talk animatedly about their memories. They play together well and co-operate when using the small apparatus on the playground. The school takes a strong stance on this aspect and ensures children have many opportunities as possible to extend their personal and social development.

Communication, language and literacy development

72. Children make good progress in acquiring the skills of speaking, listening, reading and writing. They talk together constantly as they work at their tasks, beginning to understand that conversation involves listening to others and resisting the temptation to interrupt. They listen well to their teacher in lessons and know and articulate clearly what their work entails. For example, one child explained, "Well, we have to look at these and colour in the longer things yellow and the shorter things blue". They have many opportunities to practise their speaking skills as their teacher and the support staff have good questioning skills and conscientiously and purposefully engage the children in meaningful conversations. They are beginning to recognise patterns in words that correspond to sounds, and to attach meaning to words such as 'forgot'. Later they rearrange words to make a sentence, sticking them in the correct order in their books and then are eager to 'copy-write' the words below showing an increasing control of pencils and, in their accompanying illustration, of wax crayons. They are keen to share their reading books and know the convention of front to back and top to bottom, when reading stories. Some children hesitate when deciding where the text begins and ends in non-fiction books as these are not set out so clearly.

73. Children have many opportunities during the day to observe adults handle books as time is given every day to reading stories. Members of staff use a range of books including 'big books' and make good use of sticky labels to cover up words, inviting guesses from the children about what the word might be. The importance of books is reinforced in a subtle

manner, as the role-play area is presently a 'book shop'. The children take books and reading diaries home every evening and parents and the school keep a dialogue going about progress, any problems and whether the child enjoyed the book. Many labels enliven the classroom so children are gaining an understanding of the importance of the written word. The school is providing a rich environment to support children's development in communication, language and literacy. By the end of their reception year, children achieve the appropriate early learning goals in this area.

Mathematical development

74. Children make good progress through the nationally recognised 'stepping stones' in their mathematical development. Children begin to acquire some of their numerical skills and understanding through listening to and observing the activities that the pupils in Year 1 are embarking upon. They are beginning to realise that mathematics is part of everyday life. For example, children count how many children are present and how many are absent in registration times. Children enjoy looking at a card game and in a quick-fire activity most show that they recognise the numerals 0 to 10 confidently by choosing cards that match the number line. In a lesson about measuring, children set about their task confidently, distinguishing longer and shorter items. In conversation children enjoyed ordering themselves according to their birthdays (including twins) and knew the days of the week correctly. Teachers build on this knowledge when organising activities. For example, they pick groups of four children to carry the mats in physical education and use the terms 'corner' and 'side' as they move the mats. In conversation children confidently identify a wide range of shapes, for example squares, circles and triangles. Children learn a significant number of mathematical terms such as 'beside', 'higher', 'bigger than', 'smaller than' and 'about the same as'. Children enjoy practical activities, sorting a range of items such as pens, straws and paintbrushes into sets according to their lengths. When they find items the same length they set up a third set. In discussion afterwards they explain to their classmates how they sorted their items and why some remain outside the sets. The provision for the development of children's numeracy skills is good. They achieve the appropriate early learning goals for their age.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

75. Children are on course to reach the expected early learning goals by the time they begin Year 1. They become increasingly curious about the world around them, ask sensible questions and show interest. For instance, they develop an awareness of the changing seasons in the environment around them. They have looked closely at autumn leaves, noticed the different colours and used the leaves to print their own designs. They have studied ants (until they escaped) and have a class pet, 'Wally the Worm', and they have used magnifying glasses to observe these creatures in greater detail. They planted sunflower seeds and watched the seedlings become plants. This provided them with day-to-day first-hand experience of the growth of plants and their need for light, warmth and water. Some children measured the plants as they grew and noticed the speedy way the plants grew, studying the development of leaves and petals. In studying their senses, they have constructed a suitably spiky hedgehog using straws and a fluffy sheep using cotton wool. These activities enable children to gain knowledge and understanding of the sense of touch. Children are given good opportunities to use a range of resources in their investigations. For example, in their study of the sense of smell they experienced several different items such as lemon and vinegar. They are beginning to recognise the power of technology in their use of the computer. They show skill in their adept use of the mouse, controlling the cursor's movements around the screen to match numerals and objects accurately. Indoors, they explain why the bridges they have made using their hands and feet are firm and steady. In discussion they show an awareness of special festivals and occasions in their lives and the lives of their families, such as Christmas and Easter.

Physical development

76. The constraints of the accommodation hinder children's progress and attainment in this aspect of their curriculum. As there is no easy access to a secure outdoor area, children's outdoor structured playtimes have to be timetabled. Even then, children's experience of climbing, jumping, balancing and crawling is severely curtailed since there is no suitable apparatus. Children are not experiencing these activities on a daily basis as an integrated part of their work. To some extent this has an impact upon behaviour and upon the development of their self-esteem and self-confidence. However, while they are outside using small apparatus they are well supervised. Staff engage them in conversation about their activities and help them use the small apparatus well, for example throwing and catching small balls or throwing quoits over a pole. There is a limited quantity of wheeled toys, one of which has pedals but children find this hard to use on the slight slope of the playground and prefer to push it along with their feet. It is even harder when they have a passenger.
77. Indoors, physical education lessons are affected by the amount of furniture that remains in the space made available in the classroom used by Years 3 and 4. The teacher pays appropriate attention to health and safety matters and reminds children to take care. Children stretch forwards, sideways, up and down before moving around the space in different ways and at different speeds, hopping, jumping, skipping, running at both slow and fast rates. They are nimble and take care not to bump into each other as they move around. All practise their listening skills as the teacher gives instructions, praise and encouragement. They are learning to work quietly at these times. All handle apparatus such as mats carefully. They work sensibly in pairs making bridges for each other to travel through, balancing on various parts of their bodies, heads, feet, hands and elbows. They work hard, concentrate well and show perseverance. Children are developing their fine motor control well in painting and drawing, using the mouse and construction apparatus. They are adept at using glue sticks and position small labels in their writing books with precision.

Creative development

78. Children make satisfactory progress in creative development in reception and are on course to reach the expected early learning goals by the time that they reach Year 1. They enjoy using paint and glue and like drawing, for instance when they have completed their writing. They use crayons carefully, show increasing control and evaluate their success or otherwise. They have studied the work of real artists and produced similar paintings of their own. For example, they have used scarlet paint and appropriate brush strokes to paint a flock of red roosters with wild feathery tails. Opportunities for role-play, drama and imaginative play are provided in the home corner, which at present is a 'book shop', and they take turns being customers or shopkeepers. Staff reorganise this area regularly to provide different but familiar situations beyond school to stimulate language development as well as personal and social skills. For example, recently the home corner was converted into a doctor's surgery complete with waiting room.
79. Opportunities to respond to music by expressing their feelings in paintings are provided, for instance having listened to 'Carnival of the Animals', children expressed their feelings in large paintings. They have a planned music lesson regularly, which includes singing and playing a range of tuned and untuned percussion instruments such as a vibro-slap, glockenspiels, Indian bells and tambourines. They enjoy playing but their enthusiasm to perform overtakes their listening skills by a considerable margin so their progress is limited. In assemblies, older children handle hymnbooks appropriately and sing along with all the other pupils. They listen well to the music being played and offer good ideas about the music and what it makes them feel like.

Teaching

80. The overall quality of teaching is good as the teacher and the team of support staff have good knowledge and understanding of how young children learn. Other features that contribute to the quality of teaching include the teaching of basic skills such as listening and reading, effective teaching methods such as group-work and individual tasks, and the management of the children. The teacher makes good use of a range of visual aids to help children focus their attention and makes the learning objectives very explicit at the beginning of lessons. Members of the support staff make a significant contribution to the good teaching as they use their skills well to support the teacher's plans. The staff work together as a team with regular communication to ensure all know as much as possible about the children, their progress and achievement. All staff provide good role models for the children. They listen carefully, show interest in the children's remarks and speak courteously to them. They provide a happy and interesting environment for the children who benefit from the good relationships that the staff have established. Indoor accommodation and resources for the reception children in the Foundation Stage are good. The teacher makes good use of the accommodation by deploying support staff to particular areas where the children can use their equipment safely. For instance, small groups use a quantity of small constructional apparatus on a carpeted area where they work well, safe in the knowledge that their fingers will not be trodden on.

ENGLISH

81. At the time of the last inspection, overall standards were in line with national expectations. The report noted weaknesses in the planning for more able pupils and in the pupils' progress in writing. Since then the school has satisfactorily introduced the National Literacy Strategy and, through its planning procedures, takes greater account of the needs of different groups of pupils, including more able pupils. Overall, pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress during the time that they are in the school. The quality of learning is sound and standards throughout the school have been maintained since the last inspection, but weaknesses in writing, particularly in Key Stage 2, remain.
82. National tests for seven-year-olds in 2000 showed that overall pupils' standards were average in reading. Three-quarters of pupils achieved Level 2 or above, which is well below the national average. This was due to a larger than normal proportion of pupils with special educational needs within this group. However, the proportion that achieved Level 3, the higher standard, at 30 per cent was similar to that found nationally. An analysis of the results of national reading tests over recent years confirms that standards are normally similar to that found nationally. Results of local education authority reading tests for pupils aged six and eight also confirm that standards in reading are broadly average.
83. The results of the end of Key Stage 1 tests in 2000 showed that standards in writing were below average. This was due to the fact that no pupils achieved the higher standard, Level 3. Over recent years the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard, Level 2, has been broadly similar to that found nationally, but the proportion achieving the higher standard has been below the national average. The school has correctly identified writing as an area for development. It has increased the time given to writing within the literacy lesson. However, as yet this has had little impact on raising standards.
84. Teaching in literacy lessons is satisfactory overall and results in sound learning. Inspection evidence confirms that standards in reading and speaking and listening throughout the school are average. While standards in writing are close to national expectations in the present Key Stage 1, they remain below what they should be for the majority of pupils in Key Stage 2, particularly given the pupils' achievements in mathematics and science. The weaknesses identified in national tests when these pupils were seven have not yet been fully addressed.

85. Throughout the school pupils make satisfactory progress in speaking and listening. By the age of nine they achieve appropriate standards. Teachers plan suitable opportunities for pupils to listen carefully to stories and to each other. For example, in a literacy lesson, pupils discussed what they thought might happen next, having listened to the first half of a story. They confidently 'brainstormed' their ideas, though they did not always express the ideas clearly and in a structured manner. Teachers give pupils regular opportunities to discuss their work and to explain what they have learned and enjoyed during the day. Pupils use appropriate vocabulary, as when discussing their ideas in religious education. The use of careful questioning and the teachers' enthusiastic approach ensures pupils develop appropriate listening skills. A small number of pupils find listening difficult, particularly if introductions to lessons are lengthy. Most listen attentively to both staff and other pupils. For example, pupils listened with great interest to a teacher in assembly telling a story about 'fair weather friends', and to classmates as they discussed caring for others in a personal and social education lesson.
86. Pupils in Key Stage 1 read their books confidently and accurately. They use their increasing knowledge of letter sounds to help them read unfamiliar words. However, few use picture clues or context to help their understanding. In reading groups, teachers give appropriate help by drawing attention to words that might be difficult to understand. More able pupils have good ideas about what might happen next in a story and they read with expression and appropriate intonation related to the punctuation. Most pupils know what an author is and what an illustrator does. Pupils in Key Stage 2 continue the sound progress made earlier in the school. Pupils know a limited range of books and authors, with Roald Dahl a favourite. While the majority of pupils enjoy reading, several do not.
87. Teachers keep relevant records to monitor pupils' reading progress. They also use reading diaries, which act as a good two-way dialogue between home and school. Pupils read regularly at home. A good number of parents listen to readers in the classroom. These links with parents have a positive impact on pupils' progress. Pupils, throughout the school, develop suitable research and library skills. They use an index and find words in a dictionary, as they know they are in alphabetical order. The school has an adequate range of fiction and non-fiction books, supplemented by books from the county library service. However, books are not well displayed in classrooms and in the library and so do not stimulate pupils' interest in reading.
88. Progress in pupils' writing skills at both key stages is satisfactory. Teachers concentrate on teaching the basic skills of grammar and vocabulary. Pupils in Year 1 develop their awareness of words by recognising the sounds made by single letters and blends of letters. For example, they used letter shapes and a computer program to explore words in the 'in' family, such as 'bin', 'pin' and 'win'. They also explore rhyming patterns, as when predicting words that the teacher had covered over in a poem in a 'big book'. While this satisfactorily develops their phonic skills, pupils do not get sufficient opportunity to develop their early writing skills when recording their work. For example, they cut and stuck pictures of the rhyming words and did not attempt to write them. In Year 2, pupils know the alphabet and develop an understanding of the terms 'vowel' and 'consonant'. Many pupils are confident writers. They write using a wide range of vocabulary and they are beginning to use capital letters and full stops to mark the start and end of a sentence. The majority of pupils produce writing of an appropriate standard for their age, as when writing their ending to a story read to them in a literacy lesson. Teachers in Years 3 and 4 satisfactorily develop pupils' literacy skills through a good range of activities. For example, pupils learn that words have different functions within a sentence, as when using nouns, verbs and adjectives to create a nonsense rhyming poem. Pupils develop an appropriate understanding of the use of speech marks as when rewriting the words within a speech

bubble as direct speech. While teachers provide some opportunities for pupils to draft and redraft their work, which is an improvement on the last inspection, these remain limited.

89. Despite the satisfactory quality of teaching and the sound learning observed during the inspection, the overall standard of writing, particularly at Key Stage 2, remains below average. The reasons for this are complex and result from a series of weaknesses. Opportunities to develop early writing skills are not always sufficient to ensure pupils make the best possible progress at the beginning of Key Stage 1. In Key Stage 2, many pupils' spelling is weak, as they do not always recognise spelling patterns and common irregular words appropriate for their age. Pupils have few strategies to help them to learn to spell and this is reflected in the many mis-spellings in their everyday work. Standards of handwriting and presentation vary greatly, but overall they are below average. By the age of nine, many pupils do not use clear, neat, joined handwriting. Pupils do not take sufficient care to ensure they produce written work of the highest standard. In English lessons, the teaching of literacy skills such as grammar, punctuation and the structure of writing are satisfactory but there is insufficient focus on transferring these skills into pupils' extended and creative writing. This results in inconsistencies in the standard of pupils' written work.
90. Teachers plan their literacy lessons well and make the activities interesting. As a result, pupils respond well and enjoy the lessons. Occasionally, teachers plan too many different activities within a lesson and this results in a lack of focus in the teaching and insufficient opportunity to consolidate pupils' learning. Teachers use encouraging praise most effectively to motivate pupils. As a result, the vast majority of pupils behave well throughout lessons. Teachers have a secure subject knowledge though their expectations of the standard of work pupils should achieve are not always high enough. Pupils get good opportunities to use their literacy skills in some other subjects, particularly in religious education, history and geography. However, teachers do not widely use information and communication technology as a tool in literacy lessons. The subject co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop the subject further and has produced a relevant action plan aimed at raising standards.

MATHEMATICS

91. Results from recent end of Key Stage 1 national tests show that pupils' standards are above average by the age of seven. In national tests in 2000, the proportion of pupils achieving the expected standard, Level 2, was above the national average and the proportion achieving the higher standard was well above average. County assessment tests and inspection evidence confirm that overall standards at ages seven and nine are above average. This represents a good level of achievement for the pupils and an improvement on the standards noted at the time of the last inspection, which were in line with national expectations.
92. The school has fully implemented the National Numeracy Strategy and this is having a positive impact upon standards, upon pupils' learning and on the content of their work. By the age of nine, pupils are competent in number work, accurately calculating the answers to sums such as 50 more than 325 in their heads. They use and apply their knowledge of number when calculating which unit of measurement would be most appropriate to use when measuring a pencil, a table top or an airport runway. They have acquired a good mathematical vocabulary and use words such as 'multiple', 'sphere' and 'symmetry' confidently. They have a good knowledge of two-dimensional shapes and are beginning to identify the properties of three-dimensional shapes such as cuboids and spheres. Pupils understand the link between tallying and constructing a bar chart or pictogram.
93. Teachers build on the good foundation achieved in reception and pupils make good progress through the school. Most pupils begin Year 1 with levels of attainment that are in

line with the national average for pupils of their age. By the time pupils are seven many work confidently using large numbers as they count in twos, fives and tens up to and beyond 100. Teachers' planning ensures pupils enjoy using their skills in number as when measuring a range of items found in their classroom. Pupils successfully measure the length of tabletops and the height of chairs. They measure lines accurately in centimetres, count amounts of money in purses and make up various amounts for themselves using a range of different coins. They tell the time using both analogue and digital clock displays, and construct robots and rockets using two-dimensional shapes such as triangles, rectangles and circles. Pupils enjoy putting the months of the year in order by pegging the names of the months in order on a clothes line, and then identifying the months in which their birthdays fall. Teachers use appropriate mathematical vocabulary, which results in pupils correctly identifying the properties of hexagons, squares and triangles by referring to 'corners', 'sides' and 'faces'. Pupils are beginning to understand and recognise rotational symmetry of shapes such as squares. They express surprise when they discover that a circle has an infinite order of rotational symmetry.

94. In Key Stage 2 pupils have covered a range of activities across all aspects of the subject including data handling. Up to now much of their work has been recorded on worksheets so it is not possible to judge pupils' skills at developing their own ideas. This not only makes progression and continuity difficult to track but also prevents pupils improving their presentation skills. More importantly the over-use of worksheets denies pupils the opportunity to engage in problem-solving activities, to work things out for themselves using a range of different strategies and to make mistakes and correct themselves. However, the school has recently purchased a mathematics scheme which it intends to implement in full in the near future.
95. By the age of nine, pupils have a good understanding of place value and show competence in addition, subtraction, multiplication and division equally well. They double and halve numbers up to 100, count forwards and backwards in fives, tens and 20s from 70 and complete number patterns involving thousands in sequences involving 50s. They calculate minus number patterns and describe where these would be found in everyday life. They consolidate past work in the use of grids and plot co-ordinates using the strategy 'along the corridor and up the stairs' to place them accurately. They use pairs of dice to help them position draughts or counters on grids correctly. Most know and use the correct mathematical vocabulary 'horizontal' 'vertical' and 'diagonal.' Using a computer in pairs, they plot co-ordinates on a grid. They know that a right angle contains 90 degrees and some calculate that the angles of a square add up to 360 degrees. They are less sure about the mathematical terms 'circumference', 'diameter' and 'radius'.
96. Teachers often miss making links between mathematics and other subjects. The use of information and communication technology is limited, for instance in collecting and recording data and in the use of control technology to show angles of turn. However, in history they have constructed some time-lines which enable pupils to gain knowledge and understanding of the passage of time. In conversation pupils recognise that co-ordinates would be useful in geography when trying to locate places. Links with literacy are minimal since most work has been through the use of worksheets. For example, there are no instances of pupils writing up the 'story of a sum' or writing about solving a mathematical problem.
97. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress throughout the school. It is particularly fast in Key Stage 1. Teachers structure the numeracy lessons so as to give pupils in Key Stage 1 and reception good opportunities to develop their mental agility skills and confidence. For instance, these pupils calculate at speed number pairs that add up to 20, 50 or 100. These opportunities lack sufficient challenge in Key Stage 2, however, and pupils' individual mental agility skills are not being developed as fully as

possible. A scrutiny of pupils' work throughout the school shows that pupils are not recording their mathematics systematically. Given that most lessons have central sections when pupils could reasonably be expected to record some of their investigations, there is a low level of productivity. Additionally, work is frequently not dated and there are few titles. Presentation is poor overall with little attention paid to spelling, a lack of appropriate use of rulers and corrections not being done.

98. Pupils respond to mathematics well. In Key Stage 1 they particularly enjoy the challenging 'quick-fire' question and answer times at the start of lessons. They are enthusiastic and respond eagerly. Most are beginning to acquire the 'hands up' convention rather than calling out the answers. They settle quickly to their tasks and most work busily to complete the task in the given time. They discuss their work, checking occasionally with each other through questioning and listening. They enjoy using individual whiteboards and large felt-tipped pens to record their responses to the teachers' questioning. In Key Stage 2, most pupils work well together at their paired activities, for instance when placing draughts in the correct square on a grid. The majority pay attention in the oral time at the start of the lesson and in the summary session at the end. However, a small number of pupils have not learnt to consider the needs of others. They disrupt the discussion by calling out or talking to each other, distracting others.
99. The quality of teaching is good, though there are some minor weaknesses. Teachers have good subject knowledge. They are confident and prepare their lessons well. They deploy their support staff well, especially for those pupils who have special educational needs. In the best lessons teachers devise 'quick-fire' mental agility activities that engage all pupils' efforts and concentration. Teachers set problems thick and fast, requiring written responses to be noted down quickly by all the children, then held up to be checked. They announce their learning objectives in one or two sentences to set the scene and then move the lesson along at a brisk pace so that pupils are 'kept on their toes' with no time to waste. In the central part of the lesson they patrol groups to check for an appropriate rate and amount of work. They insist on a low noise level so that everyone can concentrate and do their best. They punctuate their lessons with comments like "Quick as you can!", creating a sense of urgency. The summary sessions at the end of the lesson are dynamic and purposeful, leaving pupils with a strong sense of achievement. In the satisfactory lessons some of these elements are less robust and defined. For instance, the pace is sometimes too leisurely or tasks not challenging enough. The initial mental and oral session is not quick enough, or does not involve every pupil in calculating an answer. This means that some pupils sit back and let others do the work. Sometimes some parts of lessons last too long so that pupils' concentration is lost, leading to a drop in the standards of behaviour. There is not enough insistence on getting pupils to put everything down, pay attention and observe class rules, for instance "Hands up – remember, no calling out". However, all teachers use correct mathematical vocabulary confidently and they all want their pupils to succeed. They show respect for their pupils and create a positive supportive atmosphere for mathematics.

SCIENCE

100. At the time of the last inspection standards throughout the school were in line with national expectations. End of Key Stage 1 teacher assessments since the last inspection show a clear trend. The proportion of pupils achieving both the expected standard, Level 2, and the higher standard, Level 3, are above that found nationally. In 2000 the proportions were well above the national averages. This represents a good level of achievement for the pupils. Teachers have successfully addressed weaknesses observed at the last inspection. Pupils are given more opportunities to carry out experiments independently. They record their results carefully using a range of methods. This has resulted in an improvement in

standards, which are now above average both at age seven and age nine. There are no marked differences in the performance of girls and boys.

101. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress. This is a result of the overall good quality of teaching and pupils' enthusiasm for the subject. Particular strengths in the teaching are the effective methods used and good use of support staff and resources. These successfully develop pupils' investigative skills. Teachers place an increasing emphasis on pupils undertaking their own experiments. Pupils in Year 1 learn to observe carefully and sort objects. For example, they used the categories fruit, vegetable and meat to sort foods. In Year 2, the teacher effectively uses the pupils' knowledge of how materials change to find the warmest place in school. The pupils understand that ice will melt more quickly where it is warmest. Careful questioning by the teacher helps the pupils to use this knowledge to identify warm places. They thoughtfully predict where the warmest place will be, with all pupils choosing either by the radiator or near the boiler. They already understand that the pieces of ice must be the same size if their experiment is to be fair. They record their findings using a simple chart. Pupils in Years 3 use their knowledge of force to investigate successfully on which surface objects slide most easily. In Year 4, pupils investigate the effect of slope on the force required. They predict the outcome of their experiment and then use a force-meter accurately to measure in newtons the forces required. They record their observations and successfully explain what it is they have found.
102. Pupils have a good understanding of physical processes. They make simple electric circuits using a battery, wires and a bulb. They understand that if their simple paperclip switch is open then the light will not work. Pupils develop their experimental skills further when they build and test a simple electromagnet then predict and test what will happen if they add more batteries.
103. Pupils develop an appropriate knowledge of materials. On a walk around the playground, pupils in Year 1 correctly identified objects made of wood and metal. For example, they recognised the railings were made of metal and described them as hard and smooth. Older pupils, through an experiment to find how to keep the teachers' coffee warm, investigate how well different materials act as insulation. Pupils have a satisfactory understanding of life processes. For example, younger pupils in Key Stage 1 understand that exercise will make their bodies feel hot, sticky and tired. They know that living things grow, as when babies develop into toddlers.
104. Teachers' management of the pupils is generally good. Pupils enjoy the experimental nature of the subject. The immature and fussy behaviour of a small number of pupils quickly evaporates once they are able to begin their investigations. They work hard at ensuring that their experiments are carried out 'fairly' and take care in recording their results. However, pupils do not use computers often enough to support the recording of evidence and the presentation of results. Teachers have secure subject knowledge and they use questioning to good effect, both to further pupils' knowledge and to check informally on their understanding. Teaching is most effective when the use of appropriate scientific vocabulary is stressed within lessons. They do this particularly well in Key Stage 2, but they miss opportunities to develop the use of correct vocabulary at Key Stage 1. The co-ordination of the subject is satisfactory. Weekly planning and pupils' work is monitored, though the co-ordinator is not fully aware of the curriculum throughout the school.

ART AND DESIGN

105. Only one lesson at Key Stage 2 took place during the inspection. Other evidence was gained from scrutinising pupils' previous work and teachers' planning, and discussions with pupils and teachers. The school has maintained the average standards observed at the last

inspection. Pupils continue to achieve appropriate standards for their age by the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of nine.

106. In the one lesson observed, the teacher's enthusiasm, good pace and secure subject knowledge resulted in pupils achieving well. Satisfactory questioning and the appropriate use of resources and learning support staff helped pupils build on their previous knowledge of the artist David Hockney. Pupils produce portraits in his style using photographs of themselves or pictures drawn using felt-tip pens. In doing so, pupils made good progress in developing their cutting and reassembling techniques. Pupils work with concentration and sustain interest and the majority behave well. However, a small number fail to maintain the good standards of behaviour shown by their classmates and this reduces their individual creative effort.
107. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and results in pupils making satisfactory progress in the development of their imaginative and practical skills. Teachers make effective links between art and other subjects. For example, pupils in Year 2 use their artistic skills well to illustrate work in history, as when drawing Greek pots and vases. They colour them to look like terracotta and show a range of black figures dancing or running around them. Pupils satisfactorily develop their understanding of shape and form. Pupils in Year 1 use feathers, corks and sponge brushes to print colourful pictures of Marc Chagall's 'Red Rooster'. In Year 2, pupils make sound progress in their understanding of form and pattern through, for example, weaving textiles through dyed pieces of hessian and producing symmetrical designs using sticky-paper shapes.
108. Much of the pupils' work on display resulted from their visit to a local arts centre at the end of the summer term. This successfully developed their interest in the work of artists and their understanding of shape, colour and line. For example, pupils in Year 3 followed up their visit by producing pictures using straight and curved lines in the style of Bridget Riley. Pupils were keen to discuss their work and explain what they like and what they do not like. This visit made a positive contribution to pupils' cultural development. There are two general areas for development in art. The first is in pupils' pencil drawings. For example, younger pupils' observational drawings of houses in the village lacked an appropriate awareness of detail. Sketchbooks used by older pupils showed little development over time in the use of line and tone in their drawings. Secondly, insufficient use is made of information and communication technology to enhance and develop pupils' standards in art.
109. The subject co-ordinator has recently produced a draft policy for the subject that reflects the school's move towards using national guidelines. This ensures progression in pupils' learning, which is an improvement since the last inspection.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

110. At the time of the last inspection, standards were in line with national expectations and pupils throughout the school made satisfactory progress. During this inspection, only one lesson in Key Stage 1 was observed. Additional evidence came from a scrutiny of pupils' previous work and teachers' plans, and discussions with pupils and teachers. The school has maintained standards and pupils, both at the end of Key Stage 1 and when they leave they school at age nine, achieve average standards. Pupils throughout the school make satisfactory progress in their development of designing and making skills.
111. In the one lesson seen, pupils in Year 2 continued making a wall-hanging using a piece of material they had previously tie-dyed. They based their simple designs around the main circular marks on their material. Many pupils showed good use of imagination. For example, one pupil developed two large circular marks into the eyes of an owl. The good quality teaching ensured that pupils had a good range of resources available from which to choose. Within a purposeful atmosphere, pupils confidently used needle and thread and

glue to attach strips of fabric, buttons and pom-poms to their material. The teacher and the learning support assistant provided good levels of individual support and advice. This ensured that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, showed good levels of perseverance and made good progress in completing their final product. The teacher provided effective opportunities for pupils to assess their work through discussions at the end of the lesson. This made a positive contribution to their speaking and listening skills. Pupils showed appropriate levels of skill in cutting, sewing and gluing materials.

112. Pupils in Year 1 draw simple pictures of swings and seesaws observed in a local play area. They use suitable construction kits to make models of these items. Pupils successfully amend their ideas so that the models will stand upright. They develop their practical use of tools satisfactorily. For example, they use a hole-punch so that they can thread a string through a section of egg-box when making a seat for their swing. Pupils show great interest in the subject and happily discuss how they made their models.
113. The overall quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' planning ensures pupils use a range of relevant techniques and material. For example, pupils in Key Stage 2 designed interesting hats, which they made from papier-mâché and decorated using a range of materials. They use clay to make simple artefacts and mix common ingredients to make a cake mix. Teachers satisfactorily develop pupils' skill through focused practical tasks, such as making a model wagon from a cardboard net. Pupils then use these ideas to design and make a model vehicle from recycled materials and wooden wheels. Their models show appropriate levels of skill and care in finishing. While pupils are beginning to show progression in their designing skills, this and the evaluation of their work are areas for further development.

GEOGRAPHY

114. During the inspection there were no lessons in geography. This report draws judgements from a scrutiny of samples of pupils' work, displays, photographs and teachers' planning. Based on this evidence, standards in geography are in line with national expectations and progress is satisfactory. The school has maintained the standards observed at the last inspection. Teachers' planning, assessment based on weekly evaluation sheets and the monitoring of the subject have all improved since the last inspection.
115. In Key Stage 1 teachers satisfactorily develop pupils' knowledge of local places through tours of the village and observations of the roads, houses and other buildings there. Pupils have identified the position of the church and the school and know that the road to Yoxford is at a crossroads around the corner. Some can name nearby villages such as Leiston, Dunwich and Sibton. They know that the sea is close by, but too far to walk in a day, they think. Pupils know that Ipswich is a big town with lots of roads and traffic lights. They are not sure where they go to shop at a big supermarket, but they do know that there is no bookshop in Middleton. One pupil knows there is a bookshop in school and that it is at present in Class 1, in the role-play area! Teachers ensure pupils gain an appropriate knowledge of environmental changes. Pupils know that the weather is changing as winter comes and that "it is getting dark at tea-time". The very heavy rainfall means they have to play inside, but they have all seen pictures of floods on the television and know that the floods came because the rain made the rivers bigger. They have noticed that there are big puddles in the lanes around the village but that no roads are closed.
116. Teachers make good use of cross-curricular themes. In a topic on the Olympic Games, pupils learned that Greece is a long way away and that it is very hot there. Pupils are developing their skills of observation and are beginning to communicate their knowledge and understanding of geographical features using words such as 'far off', 'crossroads', 'hilly'

and 'sea-side' appropriately. The youngest pupils have drawn houses from other lands, for example a chalet, an igloo and a mud hut.

117. Teaching is clearly based on sound subject knowledge and satisfactory planning. Key Stage 2 pupils make satisfactory progress in developing their geographical knowledge. They understand the water cycle and name local rivers such as the Rivers Alde, Stour and Minsmere. They recall how rivers are formed and have used their writing skills in describing this. However, insufficient emphasis is given to subject vocabulary as pupils have forgotten the geographical terms 'estuary' and 'meander'. They name the continents and know some of the capital cities of Europe such as Paris and Lisbon. They know that the earth travels around the sun, which is why we have seasons and that Australia has summer when we have winter. Older pupils further develop their knowledge of the locality. They name local villages and towns easily and estimate how long it would take to travel to some of them by car. They describe features of the village, such as the crossroads, but they are unsure about the number of shops and whether there is a post office. They know that there is no petrol station here.
118. Teachers enrich the geographical experience of their pupils by organising a range of suitable visits to local places such as West Stowe and Colchester and to localities further afield, such as Hathersage in Derbyshire. Following the residential visit to Derbyshire pupils write detailed diaries of their time there and describe geographical features using appropriate vocabulary. For example, one pupil wrote: "The river is deep and fast. It goes through steep cliffy banks. There are big boulders sticking up out of the water making little waterfalls". Pupils are developing their geographical skills and beginning to understand how locality affects the way people live. A senior citizen who lives in the village brings his model of the village into school to demonstrate how the village has grown in the past by the addition of new housing and roads. This visit, together with others, clearly makes a deep impression upon pupils and serves very well to enhance their knowledge and understanding of geography.

HISTORY

119. During the inspection there were no history lessons. The report therefore draws judgements from discussions with pupils and staff, and a scrutiny of pupils' work, teachers' planning, displays and photographs. Based on this evidence, pupils reach the expected standards for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, are making satisfactory progress. The school has maintained standards since the last inspection.
120. Teachers in Key Stage 1 make good use of the village to enhance pupils' historical knowledge and understanding. For instance pupils have toured the village and have sketched some houses, deciding whether they are old or new. They have compared these with the picture of an old house from Victorian times, identifying the kitchen, the nursery and the hall. Pupils have visited the village church and they know that it has been there for a long time, and that their school is an old building, too.
121. Pupils achieve an appropriate understanding of people and events in history. For example, they have studied the Olympic Games and used a timeline dating from 776 BC to 2000 AD. They recall that the first games took place a very long time ago. They have used their drawing skills to make pictures of Greek pots and vases. They recall that the Ancient Greeks had temples where they worshipped their gods, such as Zeus, and describe that their temples had columns all around to hold up the high roof.
122. In Key Stage 2 pupils organise and communicate their findings in different ways. They write first-hand accounts of Viking raids. For example, one pupil wrote, "My arms really ache now

because I was rowing for a long time and it was very hard". On a map of the British Isles pupils indicate where the Vikings struck and showed the first raid was on Lindisfarne in 793 AD. When studying the Anglo-Saxons pupils identify the meanings that lie behind local place names such as Yoxford and Middleton – that ford meant there had been a river crossing and that ton meant there had been a settlement. Pupils show that they are beginning to gain an understanding of how people of the past lived, how they felt as well as how they behaved towards one another. They know that archaeologists find out about this by digging up ruins and finding bits of pots, swords or sandals.

123. Teachers make good use of the locality, visits and visitors to enrich pupils' knowledge and understanding of history. For instance, they regularly welcome a senior citizen who brings to school his model village which shows all the houses and other buildings of Middleton. He knows when houses were built and, by removing them one by one, shows pupils how the village has grown over the years and what it used to look like. Pupils visit Colchester when they study the Romans and West Stowe when studying the Anglo-Saxon period.
124. Teachers' planning shows appropriate coverage of the National Curriculum. In line with other subject areas of the curriculum, teachers assess pupils' work weekly, recording what has been achieved and what needs attention in forthcoming lessons. The headteacher monitors these documents and the governing body is reviewing all subjects of the curriculum, including history, on a four-year basis. These areas are an improvement on the situation at the last inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

125. At the time of the last inspection standards of attainment were in line with national expectations at the end of Key Stage 1. It was not possible to make a judgement on standards by the end of Year 4. Currently, attainment is below national expectations at the end of both Key Stage 1 and Year 4 and pupils' progress is unsatisfactory. This represents a decline in standards.
126. Pupils in Year 1 show appropriate keyboard skills for their age when using a program that reinforces spelling. They successfully use the mouse to click on words and pictures based on the letter combination 'in'. Older pupils in the key stage use the computer to create text. They use a word processing program to type their work. For example in a literacy lesson, pupils used a new personal computer and two laptop computers to type their ideas after listening to a story about a cat that had eaten six dinners. Pupils had difficulty in using the word processing program, as their keyboard skills were weak. For example, they were unsure on how to produce capital letters and spaces between words. As a result they produced little writing. This highlighted their lack of experience in using computers. In Years 3 and 4 pupils, with the help of their teacher, enlarged the size of the font when printing headlines for newspaper articles. This again illustrated pupils' low attainment in the communication aspect of the subject.
127. In order to improve pupils' standards, teachers have introduced a weekly lesson during which they teach specific skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 made satisfactory progress in entering a series of commands into a programmable toy robot. Using the 'forward' and 'backward' commands they successfully programmed it to move across the square in which they were sitting. However, their knowledge of how to program such a toy is not yet secure.
128. In Key Stage 2, pupils have had some experience of using an art package, a data handling program to draw graphs and a simple program in which they enter commands to move an object around the screen. However, they have had insufficient opportunities to develop their confidence in using such programs or develop their learning so that they achieve appropriate standards. Pupils have had limited experience of computer games to support

their learning in mathematics and of CD-ROMs to obtain information, for example in science. However, teachers miss many opportunities to use information and communication technology to enhance and support learning in other areas. Pupils draw graphs showing the results of science experiments by hand rather than by using a data-handling program. Pupils throughout the school have not sufficiently developed their skills in each of the main aspects of the subject as a result of too few opportunities to use information and communication technology resources. However, they enjoy using computers and, when given the opportunity, work sensibly and independently. Those who have computers at home happily offer advice to their classmates.

129. As a result of the low standards and the lack of confidence of some staff in using computers, the overall quality of teaching is unsatisfactory. Where teachers and learning support staff were observed supporting pupils working on computers, it indicated a wide range of subject knowledge in the use of information and communication technology. An example of timely intervention resulted in pupils making good progress in the use of the mouse to control a spelling program. Other observations showed a lack of confidence in the use of information and communication technology and in the progression of skills required to achieve an appropriate standard. This weakness in teaching and in standards has been recognised by the school. It is attempting to address it through a variety of measures. The lack of resources has been a major cause of the low standards. The school has improved resources following recent funding from the National Grid for Learning initiative. However, they remain barely adequate to meet the needs of the school. The subject co-ordinator has updated the school's policy for the subject and produced a satisfactory list of key skills to be achieved in each year group. As yet these initiatives have had little impact on raising standards.

MUSIC

130. Pupils' standards at the end of Key Stage 1 and by the age of nine are in line with national expectations for their age. All pupils, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress. This was the case at the time of the last inspection. Pupils' behaviour is a weakness in their music-making in class. In assembly and in Music Club pupils' behaviour is better.
131. In Key Stage 1 pupils are beginning to understand that music can be loud or soft, quick or slow. Sitting in a circle, they pass around a tambourine trying to prevent its jingles from sounding. They practise singing 'The Owl', a song that they have previously learnt, to guitar accompaniment. At first they sing well as requested, joining in at the places where it repeats a refrain. Overall their singing lacks control and clarity. They enjoy playing a range of percussion, tuned and untuned, but their playing is unrefined and they handle the instruments carelessly. However, they make satisfactory progress in listening and appraising, and in their understanding of musical ideas, for example that Indian bells make an appropriate sound to reflect the owl's eyes. All but two or three pupils are also beginning to understand and respond to signals indicating when to play and when to stop.
132. In Key Stage 2 pupils sing strongly in two parts, standing. They consolidate past learning of an African warrior song and sing appropriately. They stop on a signal. They are beginning to gain knowledge and understanding of the musical form A-B-A, as they sing and play alternate sections. Working in small groups, they use a wide range of percussion instruments, tuned and untuned, composing rhythmic patterns to fit eight beats. Some groups work well and succeed in composing, appraising and reorganising their work as they go. At the end of the lesson, they perform their compositions satisfactorily to the rest of the class as they sing the refrain.

133. Pupils enjoy the initial singing part of their lessons and some enjoy using the instruments treating them with appropriate care and respect. Unfortunately, a few pupils in each lesson treated the instruments inappropriately and were discourteous towards each other and adults. They disrupted the pace of the lesson and these pupils made unsatisfactory progress as they did not concentrate for the required time.
134. Teaching in the lessons seen was satisfactory. The teacher has good subject knowledge, sings and plays well, and plans the lessons with appropriate development points, making the objectives clear at the outset. In discussions at the end of lessons, she supports the pupils with appropriate praise and encouragement. Generally class management is satisfactory, although poor behaviour from a small number of pupils in both classes spoils the pace and flow of the lessons. The school has an adequate stock of musical instruments and stores them centrally and conveniently for ease of use.
135. Singing and the playing of instruments in assemblies and in the Music Club are better than in lessons. A few pupils are beginning to learn to play the descant recorder and play the notes *b* and *a* as echoes to their teacher. These pupils behave well and respond promptly to stop and start signals and to requests to play or sing quietly or loudly, slowly or quickly. The school prepares pupils for concerts at special times such as Christmas and a number of visits and visitors enrich the pupils' experience of music from time to time during the school year. In assemblies, the school expects pupils to listen to music while they prepare for the occasion and the music co-ordinator uses those moments to provide pupils with information about the music.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

136. At the time of the last inspection it was not possible to make any judgements on the subject. During this inspection it was possible to observe lessons only at Key Stage 1. By the end of this key stage, pupils achieve average standards. Pupils in Key Stage 1, including those with special educational needs, make satisfactory progress in the development of their understanding and skills. The school continues to do as much as it can to compensate for the limited accommodation that it has.
137. Pupils in Year 1 work enthusiastically in gymnastics. They are attentive to the teacher's instructions, which are clearly given, and they work hard at improving their performance. For example, pupils are eager to suggest different ways of moving. They show satisfactory control and vary their speed as they move around the restricted space within the classroom. They carefully change from 'snail-speed', to 'bike-speed' and to 'car-speed'. When balancing on various parts of their bodies, they show appropriate co-ordination for their age. Pupils work well in pairs, as when making 'bridges'. The teacher encourages pupils to show what they can do at the end of the lesson, which satisfactorily promotes pupils' confidence. However, there are too few opportunities during the lesson itself to view the work of others. As a result, pupils are unable to evaluate and modify their movements so as to improve their performance.
138. Pupils in Year 2 enjoy the opportunity to use the large space and apparatus available when they visit a nearby primary school for a series of gymnastics lessons. They work sensibly when performing simple sequences involving climbing over and balancing on the large apparatus. As a result of their enthusiasm and a good pace to the lesson, pupils make good progress during these visits. They take full advantage of these opportunities, which ensures that by the end of the key stage pupils achieve average standards in gymnastics.
139. Overall, teaching is satisfactory and at times good. Teachers show an appropriate awareness of safety and their management of pupils is good. This is particularly important in the lessons that take place within the classroom as the space is restrictive and there are

many pieces of equipment stored around the edge. Teachers make effective use of learning support assistants and voluntary helpers to assist pupils with special educational needs. This allows them to take a full part in lessons. While teachers give clear instructions, they do not always highlight specific teaching points and skills that pupils need to develop to ensure better progress.

140. Teachers' planning ensures that they teach all appropriate areas of activity, including dance, games and athletics. The exception is outdoor and adventurous activities, which pupils undertake at the middle school. Pupils throughout the school are taught swimming. Pupils in the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1 make use of the school's small learner-pool during the summer term. Pupils in Key Stage 2 visit a nearby swimming pool for a weekly lesson during the autumn term. Pupils successfully develop their confidence in water and are taught a range of strokes. By the time they leave the school, most pupils can swim 25 metres. The school gives awards to encourage pupils' performance in swimming. The subject co-ordinator satisfactorily manages the subject. There is an appropriate policy in place and teachers make effective use of both national and local guidelines when planning activities.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

141. Standards at the end of Key Stage 1, and by the age of nine, are in line with the expectations of the Suffolk Agreed Syllabus for the subject. This is a similar finding to that of the last inspection. Lessons were observed in Years 3 and 4 and in the class with reception and Year 1 pupils. A scrutiny of work, discussions with pupils and observation of teachers' planning show that pupils have a satisfactory knowledge of the principal teachings of Christianity, Judaism and Hinduism. The teaching of religious education is at least satisfactory and there are some good features.
142. Teachers have good subject knowledge. As a result, pupils know the main Christian festivals of Christmas and Easter. They write in detail about the customs and practices associated with Judaism and Hinduism, as well as Christianity. They use a wide range of correct vocabulary such as 'shalom', 'menorah', 'diva', 'cross', 'font' and 'pulpit'. Pupils recall their visit to the village church and describe some of the special religious artefacts they saw there, for example the altar and the stained glass windows.
143. Teachers make good use of resources. For example, pupils satisfactorily develop their knowledge of the importance of symbolism through their drawings of religious artefacts such as different types of crosses, lamps and candlesticks. Well-led discussions ensure pupils gain an appropriate understanding of religious thinking. Pupils are interested in religious education. They work well in lessons and contribute willingly to discussions, and some offer thoughtful and personal ideas and opinions. For example, by the age of nine, pupils consider the necessity for rules. In a discussion, they acknowledge that certain establishments and communities such as schools and libraries need a code so that they are orderly places. Pupils draw sensible conclusions in the discussion, realising that in libraries the rule 'to be quiet' is so that people can study and concentrate. They acknowledge that it is important to follow the 'rules' when driving and that there are penalties for not following rules, such as when playing football. Some also acknowledge that failing to follow the rules in certain circumstances can put themselves and others in danger, for instance refusing to follow the instructions of the 'lollipop lady'.
144. Teachers plan lessons well. Samples of pupils' work show that pupils have covered a wide range of religious topics. Teachers record clearly the amount of work that pupils produce in each lesson and they make good use of pupils' literacy skills. For example, pupils in Year 2 use their literacy skills well when making 'thank you' cards and record their thanks for a wide range of items or events that are precious and special to them. Teachers mark written

work in religious education well. They manage lessons satisfactorily. Pupils listen well to their teachers and to each other, although some call out and interrupt others, forgetting to follow the 'hands up' convention. Their immature attitudes interrupt the flow of the lesson.

145. The subject co-ordinator has ensured planning corresponds to the locally agreed syllabus. Assessment and evaluation of pupils' work follow the same effective system as that for other subject areas: weekly sheets annotate progress and achievement and these help teachers to plan ensuing work. The governing body will be reviewing religious education as part of their four-yearly cycle of curriculum review.