

INSPECTION REPORT

HEACHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL

Heacham, King's Lynn

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121191

Headteacher: Mrs E Corner

Reporting inspector: Mr G T Storer
19830

Dates of inspection: 12th – 14th November 2001

Inspection number: 242794

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Middle deemed Primary

School category: Foundation

Age range of pupils: 8 - 12

Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: College Drive
Heacham
King's Lynn
Norfolk

Postcode: PE31 7EJ

Telephone number: 01485 571013

Fax number: 01485 572367

Appropriate authority: The governing body

Name of chair of governors: Mr R Lambert

Date of previous inspection: 21st July 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members		Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
G T Storer 19830	Registered inspector	English as an additional language Art French Physical education	What sort of school is it? The school's results and pupils' achievements What should the school do to improve further?
A Taylor 19743	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development Attendance How well does the school care for its pupils? Partnership with parents
D Matthews 18505	Team Inspector	Equal opportunities Mathematics Design and technology Information and communication technology	How well is the school led and managed?
M A Palmer 20646	Team inspector	English Music Religious education	How well are pupils taught?
D Pattinson 19120	Team inspector	Special educational needs Science Geography History	How good are curricular and other opportunities?

The inspection contractor was:

TWA Inspections Ltd.
5 Lakeside
Werrington
Peterborough
PE4 6QZ

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Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

The school is situated in a residential area on the edge of the village of Heacham. The school serves the local community living in nearby private and local authority housing, although a number of pupils travel from villages further afield. With 204 pupils on the school roll, this school is smaller than other middle schools nationally. The school faces a variety of social and educational problems. There is unemployment in the area and some families experience hardship. Almost 10 per cent of pupils are eligible for free school meals. This is below the national average. Pupils' attainments on entry to the school are below average and a considerable number of pupils face difficulties in their learning. There are 58 pupils on the school's register of special educational needs and eight pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. This is well above the average for a school of this size. The number of pupils with special educational needs varies considerably from year to year, with the result that some year groups have a much higher proportion of pupils needing additional support for their learning. One pupil speaks English as an additional language. This is similar to schools nationally. The school deals with a fairly low turnover of pupils; during the last school year eight pupils (3.9 per cent) left the school at times other than at the end of Year 7.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is an effective school that provides a sound education for its pupils. Pupils make satisfactory progress. Whilst the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected standard in English by the age of 11 is below the national average, almost all make considerable gains in relation to their attainment on entry or to the special educational needs that they face. The quality of teaching is good and there are examples of very good teaching throughout the school. The headteacher and senior staff provide good leadership with satisfactory support from the governing body. Together they have generated an effective climate for learning that reflects in pupils' very positive response to all that the school offers. The school manages its budget effectively and provides sound value for money.

What the school does well

- The headteacher provides strong and effective leadership that ensures that the school's aims and values are reflected very well in all aspects of its work.
- Standards in art, design and technology, French and information and communication technology (ICT) are higher than those normally found in schools with pupils of this age.
- There are frequent examples of good and very good teaching throughout the school.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to school. Most behave well and work hard.
- Pupils form very constructive relationships with their teachers and with each other. These improve the quality of their learning.
- Pupils with special educational needs are fully included and make good progress.
- The school promotes pupils' personal development very effectively; procedures that foster pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are equally successful.

What could be improved

- Standards in English are not high enough.
- The school does not devote enough time to teaching the skills of reading and writing.
- Teachers are not using assessment information systematically enough in planning the next steps in pupils' learning.

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 improvements since the last inspection in 1997. Standards in English, mathematics and science are higher than at the time of the previous inspection. Pupils' attendance has improved steadily year on year and is now above the national average. The school uses assessment data more effectively to track the progress of individuals and groups of pupils and to identify strengths and weaknesses in the curriculum, although there are still weaknesses in teachers' use of assessment in the planning of their lessons. There is a more consistent approach to termly planning that ensures that pupils gain knowledge, understanding and skills progressively as they move through the school. Staffing levels are better; there are more additional adults to support the work of pupils and their teachers. The school has devised and introduced a programme of personal, social, health education and citizenship so that provision for this aspect of pupils' learning is better than it was. There have been improvements to the school's facilities; a fully equipped information and communication technology suite has improved teaching and learning in this area of the curriculum and there are now suitable changing rooms for boys and girls.

The school does more to seek the views and opinions of parents and to respond to their concerns. Similarly the school has taken steps to respond to the views of its pupils by the introduction of a School Council.

STANDARDS

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

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

Key

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

In relation to their attainment on entry, most pupils make satisfactory progress and achieve sound gains in knowledge, understanding and skills. Assessments taken in the last two years indicate that pupils' attainment on entry is below average overall and that in writing it is well below average. In 2001, the results of national tests for 11-year-olds were below average in English and science and in line with the national average in mathematics. This picture of attainment is largely consistent with the inspection evidence, although in the current Year 6, standards in science are somewhat higher; more pupils are on course to attain the nationally expected standard¹ than in the preceding year. Taken together, the 2001 results were below those in similar schools. However, these apparently low standards do not indicate serious weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning or in the achievements that pupils make. Most pupils are doing as well as they should be. Whilst standards have remained below the national average in English, overall standards have improved at a similar rate to those in schools nationally. The school has achieved these improvements despite educational circumstances that have become more challenging. The number of pupils with special educational needs is rising and the number of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need is well above average for a school of this size. Many of these pupils experience particular difficulties with language and literacy and, whilst most are making good progress, many will not attain the nationally expected levels and this affects pupils' performance in the annual tests. Standards in religious education are in line with those set out in the local guidance. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in most other subjects. However, in design and technology, French, ICT and art standards are above the expected level at the end of Year 6 and by the time pupils leave the school and their progress in these subjects is good.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic and enjoy coming to school; most work hard and make a real effort to improve.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Very good. Pupils behave very well in lessons and there is little evidence of bullying or other unpleasant behaviour in the playground.
Personal development and relationships	Very good. Pupils treat each other with respect and this contributes to the very pleasant and harmonious atmosphere in and around school.
Attendance	Good. Pupils' attendance is improving steadily and is now above the national average.

¹ Most pupils are expected to attain National Curriculum Level 4 at the age of 11 years.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Years 4 - 6	Year 7
Quality of teaching	Good	Good

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

The quality of teaching is good. During the inspection, teaching was satisfactory or better in all but one of the lessons observed. There was a high proportion of good teaching and one lesson in ten was very good or excellent. The teaching of the basic skills in English is satisfactory. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has brought greater consistency to the teaching of English. However, current arrangements do not allow teachers to give enough time to activities that consolidate and extend pupils' competence in reading and writing and this reduces the progress that all pupils make, but in particular the less able. The teaching of mathematical skills is good and as a result, the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected standard is higher than in many other schools. Teachers have high expectations of pupils' attitudes and behaviour and of their capacity to cope with challenging work. As a result, most pupils are attentive, join in well and persevere with their work. A consistent strength of teaching is teachers' effective management of their pupils. Teachers provide a good variety of stimulating activities that ensure that pupils are interested, concentrate well and persevere with their work. This improves the quality of their learning. Teachers use assessments in English, mathematics and science to group pupils according to their prior attainment and to plan work for them that is matched to their needs. However, this planning for pupils of all levels of attainment is often on the basis of broad target levels from the National Curriculum and not on what individual pupils know, understand and can do. Whilst work is sufficiently challenging to allow higher attaining pupils to achieve above average standards in English, mathematics and science, teachers are not using on-going assessments to match work to the specific needs of less able pupils. As a result, these pupils do not always make the progress that they should and this is reflected in the results of national tests. In contrast, the assessment that informs the teaching of pupils with special educational needs is effective. Consequently, these pupils make good progress and achieve satisfactory standards in their work in both key stages.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory. The school teaches all subjects of the National Curriculum, although current teaching time allowances are preventing teachers from raising the standard of pupils' reading and writing. Educational visits and visitors add to the quality of the curriculum and there are more activities outside lessons than in many schools.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Very good. Pupils with special educational needs receive good support. They take part in all that the school has to offer and so make good progress.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Good. Pupils who speak English as an additional language make rapid gains in confidence and competence and achieve satisfactory standards in all subjects.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Very good. Teachers plan carefully to ensure that work in subjects such as English, history, art, music and physical education contributes strongly to these aspects of pupils' learning and development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	This is a caring school. Arrangements for child protection and pupils' welfare are secure and teachers use their knowledge of the pupils effectively to support academic and personal development. However, teachers' use of assessment information in their planning is currently unsatisfactory.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and key staff	Good. The headteacher and senior staff provide effective leadership that results in a consistency of approach and a good level of teamwork amongst all of the staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactory. Governors are very supportive. They know most of the school's strengths and weaknesses but are not playing an active enough role in the drive to raise standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. The headteacher and senior staff monitor the quality of teaching and learning in order to plan for school improvement. However, some subject co-ordinators and governors are not sufficiently involved in this process.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The governing body uses the school's budget and other grants effectively, according to principles of best value.

Staffing levels in the school are good. Classroom assistants and staff who support pupils with special educational needs make a valuable contribution to pupils' learning. The school has plentiful resources for the teaching of most subjects.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Their children like school. • The school is well managed and led. • Teaching is good. • Their children make good progress. • Teachers have high expectations of their pupils. • The school provides a good range of activities outside lessons. • Pupils' behaviour is good. • The school helps pupils to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The amount of homework that pupils receive. • How the school works with parents. • The school's response to questions or problems. • Information about pupils' progress.

There were 106 questionnaires (52 per cent) returned and 23 parents attended the meeting for parents. Most parents' responses supported the school and the quality of education provided for their children. However, a number of parents expressed concerns. The inspection endorses the positive views but also finds evidence to support one of their concerns. Most homework relates well to the work that pupils are doing and so adds to the quality of their learning. The school is working hard to improve its partnership with parents by, for example, seeking parents' views and responding to their concerns. Staff welcome questions from parents and respond positively to problems that arise. Information for parents is satisfactory, although the pupils' annual progress reports do not contain a thorough evaluation of their learning. They do not give parents clear information about what pupils know, understand and can do.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Standards of attainment are improving throughout the school. Pupils of all abilities in both key stages are making better progress than at the time of the previous inspection. Whilst remaining below average in some subjects, standards of attainment are improving at a similar rate to those in schools nationally. Throughout the school, pupils of average and above average abilities are making satisfactory progress in most subjects, both in relation to their attainment at the age of seven and to their attainment on entry to the school. A number of the school's lower attaining pupils are not yet doing well enough, although pupils with special educational needs are making good progress towards the targets that have been set for them.
2. The 2001 test results for pupils aged 11 were below the national average in English and science and in line with the national average in mathematics. In English, standards were particularly low in writing. Taken together, these results were also below the average for similar schools. In 2001, fewer pupils attained or exceeded the nationally expected standard in English, mathematics and science than in the 2000 tests. Pupils' work largely confirms this picture, although in the current Year 6, standards in science are somewhat higher; more pupils are on course to attain the nationally expected standard than in the preceding year. However, these apparently declining standards do not indicate serious weaknesses in the quality of teaching and learning or in the achievements that pupils make. The school has achieved a similar rate of improvement to schools nationally, despite social and educational circumstances that have become more challenging. In the 2001 test group and in the current Year 6 classes almost a third of pupils have special educational needs. Most of these pupils are making good progress but many do not attain the nationally expected levels and this affects the school's performance in the annual tests. There are also many more boys than girls in this year group and, whilst teachers are conscientious in ensuring equality of opportunity, boys do less well than girls in English, as they do in schools nationally, and this reflects in the school's results for 2001.
3. Despite these circumstances almost all pupils make satisfactory progress. Indeed, some average and above average attaining pupils are achieving better results than their Year 2 results suggested and almost all have made satisfactory gains in relation to their attainment on entry. Work for more able pupils is sufficiently challenging to enable most to achieve above average standards. However, some lower attaining pupils do not currently make enough progress because teachers are not using assessment information systematically to set specific tasks that move these pupils forward at the same rate as others. The school sets suitable targets for the raising of attainment on the basis of pupils' attainment on entry and on its subsequent tracking of assessment data. The school has exceeded its targets for the last two years.
4. Standards in religious education are in line with those set out in the local authority's guidance for pupils in both key stages. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in most other subjects. However, in art, design and technology, French and ICT standards are higher than in many schools with pupils of this age. Pupils' progress in these subjects is good. All pupils make good progress in their personal and social development. This progress is an important factor that allows most pupils to adopt very helpful patterns of behaviour and response and enables teachers to establish conditions in which successful learning can take place.

5. Pupils gain satisfactory literacy skills. The introduction of the National Literacy Strategy has brought greater consistency to the teaching of English. However, current arrangements do not allow teachers to give enough time to activities that consolidate and extend pupils' competence in reading and writing and this reduces the progress that all pupils make. This is a particularly important factor in the attainment and progress of the less able pupils. Pupils are gaining mathematical skills at a good rate and as a result, the proportion of pupils exceeding the expected standard in recent years is higher than in many other schools. There are no significant differences in the attainments of pupils of different gender or background, although the performance of the high number of boys in some year groups reflects the national trend. The number of pupils with special educational needs is above average for a school of this size. Despite good levels of achievement, some face quite profound difficulties that result in below average standards by the end of Year 6 and by the time they leave school and this affects overall standards as reflected by test results. Nevertheless, pupils with special educational needs make good progress in most subjects. Where pupils have Statements of Special Educational Need or speak English as an additional language, the good support, closely focused on the individual, results in at least satisfactory progress across a wide range of areas.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

6. This is a school where pupils' attitudes to learning, the quality of relationships and the standard of behaviour are all very good. These are important strengths, which contribute positively to the good quality of pupils' learning. The high standards seen during the previous inspection are still evident around school.
7. Pupils enjoy school and parents confirm this is the case. They become fully involved in their lessons and are very keen and interested. These very good attitudes were typified in a geography lesson in the computer suite, where pupils were using Internet web sites to 'cut and paste' information about India to produce their own holiday leaflet. Pupils worked very sensibly and co-operatively, sharing information with each other, with those who were more skilled helping those who were struggling. Pupils worked independently, confidently applying the skills that they had learned. As a result, the pace of learning was good, with pupils discovering for themselves much about the different locations in India where a tourist might go and what kind of shops and entertainment would be found.
8. Behaviour in lessons and around the school is very good. Pupils are polite and welcoming. They look after visitors and are keen to talk about their work. The school is a calm friendly place and the very good relationships that exist between all members of the school's community mean that pupils are happy to talk to adults if they are worried. This good behaviour was evident during wet lunchtimes, when pupils showed how responsible and sensible they were when playing games such as chess and draughts in their classrooms. There was no evidence of any kind of oppressive behaviour or bullying during the inspection. There were no exclusions for poor behaviour last year; in fact, there have been none since the previous inspection.
9. The school successfully helps pupils to become mature and responsible. Pupils are playing an increasing role in the life of the school and show themselves to be developing into well-rounded individuals. Through the School Council, their views are starting to influence the way the school is working. For instance, older pupils now sell stationery at break times and help younger pupils to select suitable library books. In response to problems over queuing for lunches, pupils' ideas about having a class rota have been adopted and lunchtimes have improved as a result. Last year, the oldest Year 7 pupils organised different events to raise money for Children in Need. They carry out responsibilities as house captains, library monitors and prefects in an exemplary manner, setting a good example to younger pupils. Those involved in football matches with others

schools write their own reports for the sports notice board. In assemblies, pupils sing and perform to a high standard and show considerable respect and sense of occasion.

10. Pupils' attendance has improved since the last inspection and it is now above national averages. The most recent figure for 2000/2001 shows a slight fall compared to the previous year. The school attributes this to a greater degree of illness than is often seen, combined with a growing trend amongst some families to take holidays during term time. The school's seaside location and the nature of parents' occupations make it very difficult for some families to take their family holiday during school holiday times. In spite of this, the school has set a very challenging target of 96 per cent attendance for the current year. There is no unauthorised absence because of the school's good procedures in ensuring that parents say why pupils are absent. Time is used extremely well during the day; pupils move swiftly between different classrooms and this ensures that lessons start promptly.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

11. The quality of teaching is good throughout Key Stage 2 and in Year 7. This contributes strongly to pupils' very positive attitudes to learning and to the standards that they achieve. Teaching was satisfactory or better in almost all lessons observed. More than two thirds of lessons were good. One in ten lessons were very good and one lesson was excellent. There were examples of very good teaching throughout the school. Teaching was unsatisfactory in one lesson.
12. Teachers use their skills, experience and interests well for the benefit of pupils throughout the school, both within and outside lessons. From Year 4 to Year 7, successful teaching occurs because teachers have a good command of their subjects and use this enthusiastically to support pupils' learning. In a Year 6 French lesson, for example, the teacher's skilful presentation motivated pupils very well. In the course of the very lively lesson pupils had frequent opportunities to respond to and speak in French and made excellent progress. Also, music lessons in all classes are taken by the co-ordinator, whose confident approach and carefully structured lessons are effective in promoting pupils' progress in learning.
13. The quality of teaching in literacy lessons is good. Teachers give all pupils many worthwhile opportunities to extend their vocabulary and talk and listen constructively in lessons. Pupils respond eagerly and they develop their skills well. Teachers successfully promote pupils' interest in reading and writing and, in relation to their attainment on entry, many pupils make satisfactory progress as they move through the school, although their overall standards are below expected levels. Teachers strongly encourage home reading and most pupils enjoy books and are keen readers. Despite these good features in teaching, current curriculum arrangements do not allow teachers to devote enough time to activities that reinforce and extend pupils' individual reading and writing skills and this is reflected in the standards that pupils achieve.
14. Teachers have responded positively to the National Numeracy Strategy. Consistently effective teaching in mathematics is enabling pupils to progress well and attain expected standards for their age. Teachers commence lessons briskly with short, sharp question and answer sessions. This is improving pupils' mental work, although many still struggle with rapid manipulation of numbers and recall of number facts. Teachers support pupils well and consistently build up their confidence in working with number. Pupils clearly enjoy mathematics lessons. They try hard and make good gains in learning.
15. Teachers check pupils' understanding through assessment activities, direct questioning and by marking their work very carefully. However, teachers do not use the information

they gain well enough in planning work which effectively addresses pupils' weaknesses, builds on their strengths and further raises levels of attainment. Teachers are not using assessment information to refine their planning, either for ability groups in English, mathematics and science or for mixed ability classes in other subjects. Planning is based on broad target levels from the National Curriculum rather than on what pupils know, understand, can do and need to learn next. Whilst work is sufficiently challenging to allow higher attaining pupils to achieve above average standards in English, mathematics and science, teachers are not using on-going assessments to match work to the specific needs of less able pupils. As a result, these pupils do not always make the progress that they should and this is reflected in the results of national tests.

16. Teachers make strong and effective links between different subjects. This gives added coherence to pupils' work and improves the progress that they make. For example, pupils practised their use of descriptive language well in art, when they explained their response to the work of famous artists, including John Constable. Teachers use information and communication technology successfully to support learning in most subjects. In geography, for example, Year 6 pupils made good gains in their knowledge of India when they used an Internet web site as a secondary source of information.
17. Very good relationships between teachers and pupils enable teachers to manage pupils very well and successfully promote a high level of pupils' involvement in lessons. Teachers make clear their very high expectations of pupils' active participation and good behaviour. They are consistently good-humoured. They know their pupils well and readily respond to their efforts with encouragement. They show the value they place on pupils' work by carefully mounting and displaying it throughout the school. By these means, teachers throughout the school successfully foster pupils' very good attitudes and willingness to learn.
18. **Teachers question pupils skilfully. This is particularly successful at the beginning of lessons, when previous work is reviewed and new work introduced. Also, in lessons when sufficient time is allocated at the end of the session, useful discussions enable pupils to consolidate their learning. In a Year 6 mathematics lesson, for example, the teacher's initial, well-structured questions successfully reinforced pupils' understanding as they interpreted data on a bar chart. In a Year 7 science lesson, the final summing up of what pupils had learned about dissolving a sherbet lemon formed a valuable starting point for their investigations in the next lesson.**
19. Teachers plan thoroughly for lessons and have a clear understanding of what they want pupils to learn. They ensure that classroom assistants are clear about their specific role and books and items to support teaching are prepared in advance. Lessons start promptly and a good pace is usually maintained throughout. When teachers prepare lively introductions, this engages pupils' interest and promotes their active involvement. In music lessons, for example, the teacher successfully sets the scene for the lesson by arranging for the pupils to enter to taped music linked to their topic.

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

20. The school provides a sound curriculum for its pupils. All subjects required by the National Curriculum are securely represented. There is satisfactory emphasis on the development of knowledge, skills and understanding in most subjects to ensure that work carefully builds on previous learning for most pupils. This leads to high standards in some subjects, such as art, information technology and singing in music. The grouping of pupils by ability in English, mathematics and science is helping to ensure that work is

matched more carefully to their needs. There are many opportunities in most subjects and assemblies for pupils to develop their ability to speak clearly and confidently and to listen attentively, and this is contributing to their personal development as well as their learning.

21. However, there are weaknesses in the structure and planning of the curriculum, which slow progress for pupils over time.
 - The school does not allocate enough time to the teaching of English. Current arrangements do not provide teachers with any time beyond the basic Literacy Hour to develop and reinforce pupils' competence in reading and writing. This is preventing pupils of all abilities from achieving higher standards, but particularly affects those lower attaining pupils who need this additional intensive practice and support if they are to attain the nationally expected standard.
 - Planning for some lessons in subjects other than English and mathematics, includes too many targets, is insufficiently precise, or is not well matched to pupils' different abilities. This prevents pupils from making the gains in learning of which they are capable.
22. The curriculum is well organised to meet the needs of pupils with special educational needs, enabling them to make good gains in learning over time. Work is almost always matched to their particular needs, and where additional support is available, it is carefully targeted to ensure that pupils make the best possible progress.
23. The curriculum places good emphasis on the development of numeracy skills. The school has successfully introduced the National Numeracy Strategy to help raise standards. Number work is well represented in other subjects, such as geography, ICT and science, and this is helping pupils to realise its importance in their daily lives. Teachers promote soundly the development of literacy skills in other subjects, such as history, ICT and religious education and this is helping to improve pupils' competence in spoken English and, to a lesser extent, written English. However, these additional opportunities are not enough to compensate for the inadequate time allowance given to the subject as a whole.
24. A good range of visits, such as those to Duxford museum, the World of Robin Hood, Walsingham, the local beach, and an annual residential visit to France for some older pupils, extend pupils' learning. A small number of visitors, such as the local nurse and an artist also help to enrich pupils' learning experiences. However, there are too few opportunities in some subjects, such as history for pupils to handle materials to help them to develop enthusiasm and a thirst for knowledge. The school also adds to the learning of a considerable number of its pupils by providing a good number and range of clubs and activities outside lessons that appeal to their interests. Most clubs, such as football, netball, art, country dancing and science, are well supported and greatly appreciated by pupils. The quality of this provision is an important contributory factor to pupils' enjoyment of school and to their positive attitudes to all that the school offers.
25. This is an inclusive school. Teachers make every effort in all lessons and activities that support the curriculum to ensure that the contributions of all pupils are valued and celebrated. Pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language take a full part in the life of the school. All pupils learn to respect one another and support each other's learning. The school successfully provides learning opportunities for all pupils, whatever their age, ability, background or ethnicity, to help them make mostly sound progress.
26. Teachers give sound emphasis to pupils' personal, social and health education. They promote them actively and consistently as part of a structured programme. However, as this programme is new, it is not yet fully embedded in the school's work and teachers

have not yet had the opportunity to assess its impact on pupils' development. Inspection evidence indicates that the school's arrangements are working well. School Council representatives are enabling pupils to have an increasing say in the running of their school and this helps develop responsibility and initiative. Pupils become good citizens by considering issues, which affect their local area, such as the provision of a new supermarket and by supporting local and national charities. They learn to respect and care for other people's property by considering the causes and effects of vandalism. They develop an awareness of the need for rules based on safety, protection and fairness. They learn how to relate to others and work effectively as part of a group in activities, such as scientific investigations. Teachers regularly give praise to enhance pupils' self-esteem and encourage them to do their best. Sex education is taught in line with agreed policy. Pupils in Year 5 learn about the use and misuse of drugs. The health education programme in science makes pupils aware of a healthy diet, hygiene and exercise for maintaining a healthy life style.

27. The community makes a satisfactory contribution to pupils' learning. A small number of committed adults help in school. The community nurse and the local doctor both help pupils develop knowledge and understanding in subjects, such as science. A local newspaper regularly includes pupils' work, such as poetry. There are well-established links with other schools. There are satisfactory links with the schools that provide Year 4 pupils and to the school to which most pupils move at the end of Year 7. There is regular and effective liaison between staff of all involved schools to ensure that the transfer of pupils is as smooth as possible. There are regular meetings for headteachers and some subject leaders of first, middle and high schools to help ensure that learning is not interrupted when pupils move from one school to another.
28. The arrangements for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are very good. Daily acts of collective worship are of a broadly Christian character and meet statutory requirements. They contribute very effectively to the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The school is maintaining the high standards reported by the previous inspection.
29. Teachers and other staff promote pupils' spiritual development very effectively. In services, assemblies, classroom discussions and individual interactions with their pupils, teachers consistently encourage them to recognise their own individuality and worth. This is consolidated in work such as Year 6's 'About Myself' and Year 7's 'Self Images'. They also provide pupils with appropriate insights into their own and others' values and beliefs. Pupils have regular opportunities to join in prayer, to sing hymns, to reflect and to feel positive about themselves. Staff create a strong sense of thoughtfulness when they provide a visual focus such as lighted candles and a cross at whole school assembly, although moments of quiet stillness are sometimes too fleeting. Pupils' awareness of beauty and their sense of wonder develop well as a result of their work in a range of subjects, including art and science. For example, Year 4 pupils have the opportunity to observe the 'magic' of beans and peas germinating in their classroom. Involvement in projects such as the construction of the willow tunnel on the school site further heightens pupils' appreciation of their environment and the natural world.
30. The school fosters pupils' moral development very well. Members of staff are consistent in applying and reinforcing the school's fundamental aims and values in their promotion of the school behaviour policy and codes of conduct. Staff have high expectations of pupils' behaviour and response and successfully make pupils aware of what is expected of them. As a result, pupils' doing 'the right thing' is the norm in this school. All staff treat pupils fairly and give time to explaining the consequences of their actions. This helps pupils to develop a clear understanding of right and wrong and influences the way they relate to others. Pupils' personal achievements and efforts are unfailingly encouraged and

recognised. In assemblies, teachers regularly give worthwhile consideration to such moral issues as 'duty' and 'fairness'. However, much of the school's provision is embedded in its everyday life and teaching. Pupils confront moral issues in subjects such as geography when they consider the effects of human intervention on the rain forests. The headteacher and staff provide extremely good, calm role models because of the way that they consistently treat pupils, other members of the school community and each other with courtesy and respect.

31. Arrangements for pupils' social development are very good. Fully supportive and constructive relationships between pupils and teachers very successfully promote pupils' self esteem and social interaction. Assemblies often focus on such themes as 'caring for each other' and 'working together' and pupils very regularly participate in co-operative activities in lessons, for example in information and communication technology and in physical education. Pupils are given some opportunities to develop a sense of responsibility and to contribute to the running of the school, notably by serving on the School Council or acting as librarians, prefects and house captains. Pupils develop a sense of teamwork and a sense of fair play through participating in team games and inter-school matches. The oldest pupils also have an opportunity to develop their skills of social interaction by participating in a residential school trip to Normandy. Pupils are also encouraged to reflect on the needs of others. The school promotes a range of charitable causes, including Children in Need, and aid is given to a child in Botswana. The school introduces pupils to some aspects of life in a multi-cultural society through work in subjects such as French, physical education, geography and citizenship, but most notably through its religious education and assemblies. For example, during the inspection an assembly focused on the Christian celebration of Advent and festivals of light in other faith communities.
32. The school is very successful in promoting the cultural dimension of pupils' development. Pupils learn about their cultural heritage through involvement in local community activities, such as the Hunstanton Festival of Arts, the after school drama club and their local studies in history. The school is endeavouring to extend pupils' awareness and understanding of life in other European countries through its links with schools in Austria, Cyprus, Denmark and Finland. Pupils know and appreciate the works of famous artists because they feature prominently in many art lessons. Pupils are also introduced to the richness and diversity of art and music from other cultures. For example, they take an active part in gospel singing workshops, use the artistic traditions of India and China as a starting point for their own work and perform dances inspired by aspects of African culture. This aspect of the school's work is amplified by the many stimulating displays that incorporate pupils' work and cultural artefacts from around the world.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

33. The school provides a caring environment where staff and pupils work together in harmony. The headteacher gives a strong lead in creating a calm, secure yet purposeful feel to the school.
34. The school's arrangements for ensuring pupils' health and safety are good. A committee of governors and staff makes regular checks of the premises and the school makes the most of the expertise of governors in carrying out risk assessments rigorously. The school makes sure that staff keep abreast of new developments in health and safety and the headteacher has recently attended training to this end. Child protection procedures are good and are consistent with locally agreed guidelines. Recent training has ensured that the school's designated teacher responsible for child protection and the staff as a whole are fully aware of current procedures and how they should be applied in school.

35. Staff work hard to maintain a high standard of behaviour throughout the school and they achieve a good level of success relating to the way behaviour is managed both in the classroom and around the school. Teachers are skilled in encouraging pupils to behave well. They are alert to any signs of standards deteriorating in lessons, taking prompt steps to encourage pupils to behave well. The behaviour policy clearly explains mutually agreed perceptions of good behaviour and by so doing, helps to ensure consistency of approach by all staff. Staff treat pupils with respect and take the trouble to explain the consequences of their actions. This helps develop pupils' understanding of right and wrong and influences the way they treat others in return. In the pre-inspection questionnaire, parents agreed they were pleased with the standards of behaviour. However, the results of the school's own annual survey showed that some parents were unsure if incidents of poor behaviour and bullying were being dealt with fairly. Responding to this, the school is currently conducting a confidential survey of pupils, to find out their experiences of poor behaviour and bullying. This project reveals how seriously the school takes these issues and confirms inspection evidence that procedures in this area are very good.
36. The school's procedures for monitoring and improving attendance are good. The school has set itself a very challenging target for improving attendance, aiming to reach 96 per cent over the academic year. This is because staff are not complacent about their already good attendance and believe it could be even higher. Monitoring of attendance, carried out by the headteacher, is thorough and the school follows up those families where non-attendance is causing concern. This monitoring shows a growing number of families taking holidays during term time. Through the prospectus, governors are conscientious in making parents aware of the detrimental effect that taking children away from school can have on their child's education. However, this trend is closely associated with the school's seaside location; some parents involved in the tourism industry find it almost impossible to take their holidays when the school is closed.
37. The monitoring of and support for pupils' personal development are good. This results in part from the detailed, informal knowledge teachers have of their pupils and from the supportive relationships in school that create an environment where pupils are happy to turn to staff for help, if the need arises. However, the school also has procedures that provide good support and guidance for all pupils, including those with special educational needs, physical disabilities and English as an additional language. There is a good induction programme for pupils coming into school and good liaison with the high school ensures a smooth transition to the next stage of education. The policy of including every child is effective; this ensures that all pupils have equality of access to what the school offers and that all pupils receive the support that they need to succeed and make progress. The progress that pupils' make is recorded as part of their annual report.
38. The school's arrangements for monitoring pupils' academic progress are sound in the core subjects. Pupils are regularly assessed in English and mathematics using a variety of approaches. Assessment of progress in other subjects is less secure. Current procedures include a range of tests and assessments, which provide comprehensive information about pupils' achievements in English and mathematics. The school knows what pupils achieve in national tests and carries out further optional tests at the end of Years 4, 5 and 7. There are termly tests for English and mathematics and all teachers carefully record the results of these. Arrangements in science and in other subjects are more informal. For example, there is little assessment of how the skills of scientific enquiry develop as pupils move through the school. However, assessment in science has already been targeted for development. Teachers' termly plans highlight suitable opportunities for assessment and so in most other subjects, pupils' achievement is assessed at the end of each topic. Some teachers carry out thorough assessments and record pupils' attainments in detail but inconsistencies in the quality of this work mean

that some teachers do not have the information needed to plan pupils learning at an individual level in some subjects when areas of learning are revisited. There are useful portfolios of pupils' work in many subjects, but they are not levelled to National Curriculum requirements to help chart pupils' progress against national standards.

39. The way in which the school and individual teachers use assessment information as a guide to planning the curriculum and the content of teaching is unsatisfactory. The school uses assessment in the longer term to track different groups of pupils as they move through the school, to identify differences in the performance of boys and girls, to place pupils into ability groups and to set targets for particular year groups. These arrangements work well. However, the school also analyses national test data to discover strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, but does not always use the information it gains effectively to help raise standards. For example, the school knows, as a result of data analysis, that standards are particularly low in writing, but has not introduced strategies in English lessons to improve them, addressing the issue instead through targeted homework. As a result of this, some pupils are not making the best possible progress in developing their literacy skills as they move through the school.
40. The use of assessment as a guide to planning in the medium and shorter term is also unsatisfactory. Teachers do not use pupils' individual records and their on-going assessments consistently to plan the next steps in pupils' learning. The progress pupils are making is not assessed with sufficient precision or consistency in all classes to enable teachers to build carefully on what pupils know and understand. What some teachers currently regard as assessments are really little more than general evaluations of the lesson as a whole. They do not pinpoint accurately those pupils who have not achieved the lesson's target or those pupils who have made particularly good progress. Consequently, tasks are often set on the basis of broad target levels and not on the basis of what pupils know, understand and can do. This means that there are times when work is either too easy or too difficult for particular pupils and this reduces the progress that they make.
41. The school methodically assesses pupils with special education needs and pupils who speak English as an additional language in order to gain a good picture of their difficulties. Teachers use this information effectively to place pupils on appropriate levels on the special needs register or to direct specific linguistic support to them. Individual education plans record clearly what these pupils need to concentrate on in order to improve. As a result, pupils with special educational needs and pupils at an early stage of English language development are making good progress against the targets that are set for them

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

42. The school works in effective partnership with parents and many good features of this relationship seen during the previous inspection are still evident. Parents are positive about the school. Their supportive views, expressed at the parents' meeting with inspectors and through an inspection questionnaire confirm high levels of satisfaction with nearly all areas of the school's work. The inspection endorses parents' positive views of the school.
43. The fact that the Friends' Association was re-formed last year and has been successful in organising a profitable Summer Fair is an encouraging sign of parents making a difference to the education the school is providing. Money raised is earmarked for the development of the school grounds.

44. A few parents expressed some reservations about homework. These relate to how closely the school works with parents and how comfortable parents felt in approaching the school with questions or problems. There were also concerns about the quality of the information they received about their child's progress. Inspectors do not agree with parents' concerns about homework. Work set relates well to classwork, extends pupils' learning and is of good quality. The school has a sincere desire to work with parents and contact between home and school is usually good. There is some evidence to support parents' concerns about the quality of information about pupil's progress, particularly relating to annual reports. This is explained in greater detail below.
45. The school has improved the quality and effectiveness of its contacts with parents since the last inspection. It shows its desire to work with and respond to parents through an annual consultation process where parents are sent a questionnaire. It asks them questions such as 'Do you understand about how the literacy and numeracy is taught?' and 'Do you agree that the school cares well for pupils with special educational needs?'. The school takes any issue of parents' concern seriously, such as that over behaviour and bullying, referred to already in paragraphs 35. Similarly, the school has used survey results to target additional information for parents on how to listen more effectively to their children's reading. Contact with parents of pupils with special educational needs is regular and they are fully involved in each stage of their child's education. Contact regarding individual pupils is also good; the school will often take the initiative and write and ask parents to come in and talk to the headteacher when there is a concern. However, the school is missing further opportunities to harness parental support in raising standards. The reading diary is not used as an important link between home and school because its layout does not encourage parents to use it to comment on how well their child is coping with books brought home.
46. The information that the school provides for parents is generally satisfactory. There is regular, useful information regarding school news and events through the headteacher's newsletters, complemented well by class letters from teachers. Parents receive information about the curriculum in class letters explaining what is being studied. However, these do not usually explain to parents the ways in which they can work with the school by supporting their child at home. An exception to this, was a recent letter sent to a particular group of parents outlining exactly how they can help with spelling and reading. This is an example of good practice, but this is not part of a whole school approach.
47. Pupils' annual reports are satisfactory. The profile section reveals a good insight into how pupils are developing and maturing and confirms that teachers have good individual knowledge of their pupils. However, comments about pupils' attainment and progress are often not precise enough. They tend to dwell on what has been taught rather than on what pupils know, understand and can do and on how much progress has been made. Reports are not strengthened by references to National Curriculum levels, in order that parents can tell if their child is performing in line with, above or below national expectations.
48. Many parents make a good contribution to their children's learning. They are invited to help their child to complete the half-termly homework topics and are given a good level of detail to allow them to do this in the right manner. Advice offered, such as 'help them in looking at different recipes from a range of sources but do not do it for them' is relevant and useful. The school has recently introduced a meeting for parents of Year 6 pupils, to which most attended, so they can help their child prepare for the national tests in the summer term. This is another move in the right direction. The school is pleased that invitations specially produced by pupils have encouraged more parents to attend than a conventional letter of invitation has done in the past.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. The headteacher is a strong, effective leader. She ensures that the school's aims and values are reflected very well in its life and work. The establishing of high standards with regard to pupils' attitudes, behaviour, personal development and relationships are matters of priority to all staff. This is evident in the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development and in the very positive atmosphere that pervades all aspects of the school's work.
50. The school sets suitable targets to improve pupils' standards of attainment. For example, the school has identified the need to raise standards in writing and has included this in its development plan for a second year. Whilst most of the school's proposed action plans for improvement enable it to achieve its intentions, some action plans are not specific enough to ensure that the intended developments have the desired impact. For example the school does not make explicit what it intends to do in school time to improve pupils' writing and this continues to contribute to the weaknesses in standards in English. Despite this, staff share a commitment to improve what the school does and all work hard to maintain the pupils' very good attitudes and behaviour.
51. Staff with management responsibilities make an effective contribution. The deputy headteacher and assistant headteacher support the headteacher well, particularly in promoting a strong work ethic amongst pupils and furthering the school's partnership with parents. The two co-ordinators for the provision of pupils with special educational needs manage this area of the school's work very effectively. They ensure that the school adheres to the Code of Practice and that pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need receive their full entitlement to additional support. This makes a strong contribution to the learning of about a quarter of the pupils in the school, and as a result, these pupils are fully included and they make good progress. However, some subject co-ordinators have only had a limited impact on the development of teaching in their subjects. This is because not all teachers with subject responsibilities have had the opportunity to gather first-hand information by observing the quality of teaching and learning or to discover what needs to be done to improve things further. This reduces their effectiveness as curriculum managers. Even where monitoring has taken place, as for example in English, development initiatives have not yet resulted in the raising of standards.
52. The school has effective procedures for judging how well it provides for different groups of pupils and for developing this. For example, senior staff monitor any differences in the attainments of boys and girls, and ensure that those pupils who need encouragement are identified. Similarly, members of the governing body monitor provision for pupils with special educational needs in order to ensure that the school meets its statutory requirements with respect to these pupils.
53. The school has sound strategies in place for the appraisal of teachers and for managing their performance. The monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching is sound. The headteacher and senior staff monitor the quality of teaching and learning in order to plan for school improvement. They inform teachers about what makes their teaching effective and they point out what they need to do to make it better. Teachers who are new to the school receive suitable guidance and are supported by the school's induction arrangements to enable them to play a full part in the life and work of the school. The school has responded thoughtfully to national initiatives such as the National Numeracy and Literacy Strategies and to revisions to the National Curriculum. This has resulted in developments in teachers' planning and in their teaching, notably in the teaching of basic numeracy skills.

54. Governors are very supportive of the school and they are proud of the high esteem in which it is held in the community. They fulfil their statutory duties effectively and they are well informed by the headteacher about the school's work. The headteacher encourages governors to become more involved in the school by fostering a climate in which questions and challenge play an increasing role. Governors know and value the strengths of the school and the quality of leadership that the headteacher provides. However, although their role in shaping its direction is satisfactory, they do not monitor many aspects of the school's provision at first hand and so do not hold the school to account in relation to its main priorities in raising pupils' standards of attainment.
55. There are sound financial links between the school's budget and the priorities set out in the school's development plan. Governors understand and consider best value principles in their financial dealings, as well as comparing the pupils' attainments with those in other schools. Funds for special purposes are used well. Notably, their effective use of grants for pupils with special needs results in very good provision for these pupils, and this fosters their good progress. Recently the school has held a relatively large amount of surplus money in its budget. This has been earmarked for a range of suitable purposes, including maintaining staffing levels, renewing the library roof and replacing the boilers. The school is taking suitable steps to ensure that future contingency funds are kept to a lesser amount, so that the vast majority of the school's funds are spent on the school's current pupils.
56. There is a good match of teachers and support staff to the demands of the curriculum. The school makes good use of the specialist expertise of subject co-ordinators, for example, in the teaching of mathematics, French, music, physical education and information and communication technology. Support assistants work well alongside the teachers, providing good support to pupils with special educational needs. Everyone employed at the school contributes effectively, under the headteacher's leadership, to its good climate for learning.
57. The school is attractively set in extensive grounds bordered by mature trees. Accommodation is of good quality, well maintained and enhanced by interesting displays of children's work and associated artefacts, such as local history work with locally made bricks, pottery and ironmongery. The accommodation has been improved since the previous inspection with the building of an ICT suite, music room and changing rooms. The school still does not have a proper hall for assemblies and drama performances but manages well, making best use of the accommodation at its disposal.
58. The quality and range of resources for learning is good overall and add to the quality of pupils' learning. This is particularly so for mathematics, science, ICT, French, physical education, music, religious education and geography. In art and design, resources are very good with an extensive range of good quality media and materials.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

59. In order to extend the school's current achievements, the governors, headteacher and staff should jointly:

- (1) raise standards in reading and writing by:
 - i) allocating more time to the teaching of English and ensuring that teachers use this time to provide activities that reinforce and extend pupils' reading and writing skills;
 - ii) ensuring that teachers use assessment information more systematically to identify what pupils of different levels of attainment, but particularly the lower attaining, need to learn next.

OTHER ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE CONSIDERED BY THE SCHOOL

- (1) providing time for subject co-ordinators and governors to monitor the quality of teaching and learning more rigorously.
- (2) improving the information contained in pupils' annual progress reports.

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed

50

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
Number	1	5	29	14	1	0	0
Percentage	2	10	58	28	2	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	204
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	19
Special educational needs	Y4 – Y7
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	58
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	8
English as an additional language	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	1
Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	0
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	8

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	4.6
National comparative data	5.9

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.4

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	2001	33	16	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	23	23	29
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	33	32	39
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	67 (72)	65 (80)	80 (90)
	National	74 (75)	71 (72)	87 (85)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	17	22	27
	Girls	10	9	10
	Total	27	31	37
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	55 (54)	63 (75)	76 (86)
	National	72 (70)	74 (72)	82 (79)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	2
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	202
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y4 – Y7

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.89
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21
Average class size	26

Education support staff: Y4 – Y7

Total number of education support staff	4
Total aggregate hours worked per week	111.25

Financial information

Financial year	2000 / 01
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	£
Total income	491, 586
Total expenditure	482, 715
Expenditure per pupil	2, 389
Balance brought forward from previous year	30, 893
Balance carried forward to next year	39, 764

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0

Total number of vacant teaching posts (FTE)	0
Number of vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of a term or more (FTE)	0
Number of unfilled vacancies or vacancies filled by teachers on temporary contract of less than one term (FTE)	0

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate 52%

Number of questionnaires sent out	204
Number of questionnaires returned	106

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	58	38	2	2	0
My child is making good progress in school.	45	38	3	0	14
Behaviour in the school is good.	32	51	4	1	12
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	32	54	10	0	4
The teaching is good.	51	39	1	0	9
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	32	46	7	2	13
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	36	9	2	3
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	66	30	0	0	4
The school works closely with parents.	38	42	9	2	9
The school is well led and managed.	54	36	1	1	8
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	50	39	2	0	9
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	45	48	2	0	5

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

ENGLISH

60. Standards of attainment in English have fluctuated in recent years but show improvement over time and are now higher than at the time of the previous inspection. Standards have risen at a similar rate to those in schools nationally. Pupils attain nationally expected standards in speaking and listening by the age of 11 and by the time they leave the school but standards are lower in reading and much lower in writing. This is because the school does not allocate enough time beyond the daily Literacy Hour for pupils to reinforce and extend their reading and writing skills. Homework and work in other subjects go some way to compensate but this is not enough to enable lower attaining pupils to achieve the nationally expected standard.
61. In the national tests in 2001, pupils' attainments in English at the end of Key Stage 2 were below average when compared to all schools nationally. Inspection evidence indicates that standards in the current Year 6 are similarly below average. In comparison with schools of a similar character, the school's results in 2001 were well below average. However, despite these comparisons, most pupils are achieving satisfactory standards in relation to their age and prior attainment. This is because:
- pupils' attainment on entry to the school is below average in reading and well below average in writing;
 - most pupils make the expected amount of progress between the ages of 7 and 11 and some pupils (around 10 per cent) achieved higher standards at the age of 11 than their results at the age of 7 had suggested;²
 - the 2001 test group is made up of many more boys than girls. The boys attained lower average scores than the girls. This reflects the situation nationally, but the fact that boys outnumbered girls by two to one means that this trend in attainment, common to most schools, had a disproportionately negative impact on this school's results;
 - the school has a higher-than-average proportion of pupils on the special educational needs register and a very high proportion of pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need. Almost all of these pupils experience some difficulties in learning to read and write. They work in smaller groups and respond well to the level of assistance provided by teaching and non-teaching staff. They make good progress towards the targets set for them but achieve levels of attainment that are below national expectations. This also reflects in the school's recent test results;
 - pupils for whom English is an additional language receive effective support. They make rapid gains in confidence and competence, especially in their spoken English, and in their capacity to cope with reading and writing tasks at an appropriately lower level.
62. Pupils successfully improve their speaking and listening skills. Teachers consistently extend pupils' vocabulary and promote their interest in new words. Pupils have frequent opportunities to speak purposefully. They answer questions and offer suggestions willingly because teachers accept them with unfailing interest. Older pupils confidently express their own ideas and listen carefully to those of others, as when they prepared persuasive arguments for and against school dinners. Pupils also to speak well in more formal situations. For example, Year 5 pupils spoke clearly and with assurance when addressing the whole school in assembly. Pupils in all year groups listen well. They demonstrate their attention by answering questions thoughtfully and responding to instructions. Pupils use their speaking and listening skills effectively to support their

² Pupils are normally expected to improve by two National Curriculum levels during the four years of Key Stage 2. Those who do so are making satisfactory progress whilst those gaining three levels are making good progress.

learning in all subjects. In a science lesson, for example, Year 7 pupils revised their knowledge of fair testing by thoroughly discussing how to set up and organise their investigations. .

63. Standards in reading are barely adequate. By the end of Year 6 and in Year 7, most pupils attain a sound level of competence in the most basic reading skills but more advanced skills are slow to develop in all but the most able. When reading independently, most pupils show an understanding of the story and read with expression. However, from time to time less able pupils select books that are not closely matched to their reading ability. They then frequently encounter unfamiliar words and do not recognise when they have made an error. Pupils understand the structure of books. They talk readily about the characters and key events in their current reading books but make few references to the text to support their views. Many pupils are reticent when predicting what might happen next and only the more able compare the book with others they have read or offer opinions about its author. Pupils confidently locate books in the library. They confidently approach a good range of both fiction and non-fiction with interest and use contents and index pages competently. Most of the pupils interviewed are keen readers and regularly use the well-resourced school library. During literacy lessons, lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs participate in carefully planned guided reading sessions and begin to develop their skills. They learn to use their knowledge of sounds and other clues in the text to help them with unfamiliar words. However, standards are as they are because pupils of all levels of attainment do not read often enough in school. They do not read aloud regularly enough to enable teachers or other adults to determine their individual strengths and weaknesses. There is no consistent system of regular assessment of their progress and teachers devote insufficient time to teaching specific reading skills and improving pupils' standards.
64. Pupils' attainment in writing is generally below the level expected for their age. By age 11, pupils are still often reluctant to write, despite their animated presentation of ideas in group discussions. Higher attaining pupils are beginning to organise their writing using complex sentences and paragraphs but about a third of the age group work hard to develop the fundamental skills of writing, with some needing support to use basic grammatical sentence structure accurately. This is not simply a result of the high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. Lower attaining pupils and those with special educational needs are taught well. For example, in a carefully structured lesson, lower attaining Year 6 pupils received constructive support and successfully practised their skills of biographical and autobiographical writing. Tasks are matched to pupils' general levels of attainment and classroom assistants give well-targeted support enabling pupils to participate actively. However, there are significant shortcomings in the opportunities offered to these and many other pupils. Teaching during the Literacy Hour helps pupils to think imaginatively, to generate ideas and to gain insights into different styles of writing. Nevertheless, within the time allocated, pupils do not have enough opportunities to express their own thoughts in writing. Throughout the school, teachers focus on the spelling of commonly used words. However, in their writing, pupils often pay inadequate attention to both punctuation and spelling. Pupils have opportunities to practise their writing skills through work in other subjects. For example, as part of their history topic, Year 6 pupils wrote accounts of incidents from the Second World War from the point of view of those who were there. Pupils also use ICT skills to good effect, for example in combining pictures and text to produce a travel brochure about Paris. Such opportunities are beneficial but do not make up for the inadequate amount of time for English within the curriculum as a whole.
65. The quality of teaching and learning that takes place during the Literacy Hour is good and in the lessons observed pupils made good progress in their learning. Teachers have secure subject knowledge. Their clear planning indicates that they know what they want the pupils to learn and this is often shared with pupils at the beginning of the lesson. As a

result, pupils are interested and approach their work very purposefully. Teachers have high expectations of behaviour, attitudes and use of time, so that lessons usually move at a brisk pace and pupils' motivation is successfully maintained. Teachers regularly use well-directed questions to stimulate pupils' thinking, check their understanding and reinforce their learning. They plan work at sufficiently challenging levels to extend most pupils' learning within the teaching group. Moreover, in teaching groups where there are pupils with special educational needs, classroom assistants make a valuable contribution to pupils' progress as they support individuals and small groups as they tackle the set tasks. Teachers regularly set reading, spelling and writing homework, which is linked well to their work in school. Whilst many pupils receive support at home and so benefit from these activities, there are not enough, especially for lower attaining pupils, to make good the current deficit in pupils' skills.

66. Throughout the school teachers have very good relationships with pupils. They are consistently supportive and successfully boost pupils' self-esteem. This promotes pupils' very positive approach to work and eager involvement in lessons. Pupils behave very well. They follow their teachers' instructions and settle readily to work, both independently and in a range of co-operative activities. Pupils' very positive response significantly improves the quality of their learning and the progress that they make.
67. Through its analysis of test and assessment data, the school has identified the raising of standards in writing as a priority in its development planning. However, there have been no substantial changes in the curriculum aimed at bringing about improvements. The intention of driving up standards is seriously limited by the time allocated to the specific teaching and practising of reading and writing skills. Although all classes have a daily literacy hour, less time is devoted to English than in most other schools nationally. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory overall but teachers' use of assessment information as a guide to planning is unsatisfactory. Assessments are used appropriately in planning teaching groups, setting overall targets and focusing support for identified pupils. Teachers regularly check pupils' work in the course of lessons and their marking of completed work is meticulous. This sometimes forms the basis of individual literacy targets, but no consistent system is in place. A writing assessment record has been introduced within the last year but this is not yet being used to plan pupils' progression to the next stage of learning. Reading age assessments do not identify pupils' specific strengths and weaknesses and therefore teachers do not have a detailed knowledge of pupils' learning needs to use as a basis for planning lessons which fully extend the learning of pupils of all different abilities.

MATHEMATICS

68. Standards in mathematics are close to the national average. This is consistent with the most recent national tests at the end of Year 6, when pupils' average scores in mathematics were similar to those in schools nationally. A high proportion of pupils in that year (33 per cent) had special educational needs and this accounts for the fall in pupils' scores compared with the previous year, when pupils' average scores were above those nationally. Despite this recent dip in results, standards are now higher than at the time of the previous inspection.
69. Most pupils make satisfactory progress and for some, progress is good. The school groups pupils according to their prior attainment and this helps teachers to plan work for them that is matched to their needs. The most notable effect of this is the good progress of pupils with special educational needs and of the higher attaining pupils. Pupils with special educational needs do well because they are taught in small groups, with additional teachers and assistants to give them the individual support that they need. Teachers set suitably challenging work for the more able pupils and as a result, the proportion exceeding the expected standard by the end of Year 6 is higher than in many

other schools. However, the progress of lower attaining pupils, although satisfactory overall, is not always as good as it could be in some lessons. Teachers are not using their assessments carefully enough in planning for individuals or groups within the class and this means that some weaknesses in pupils' learning are not rectified quickly enough. This limits the number of lower attaining pupils that reach the expected Level 4 by the age of 11 years. Support for the pupils who speak English as an additional language takes place in a higher attaining set for mathematics. This ensures that he makes good progress in mathematics as well as in relation to speaking English.

70. By the time they are 11 years old, most pupils use their mathematical understanding to multiply and divide whole numbers by 10 and 100 and they employ efficient written methods of short multiplication and short division. Lower attaining pupils are less sure of the value of the digits in numbers with up to five digits and how to record amounts of money using the pound or pence sign. However, they use the correct terms when they handle data, for example 'mode' and 'range'. Brighter pupils confidently divide decimals by ten and a hundred and they have a higher understanding of how to handle data. Some higher attaining pupils in Year 6 do not yet have fast enough mental skills, for example when adding three two-digit numbers. Lower attaining Year 6 pupils currently have limited knowledge of the properties of two and three-dimensional shapes. They are not yet using measuring instruments accurately to measure angles without considerable support.
71. By the time that they leave the school, most pupils have a systematic approach to their calculations. They identify relationships and patterns, and they work with satisfactory accuracy, presenting their findings in suitable forms, such as graphs. Some lower attaining pupils have difficulty with short multiplication methods, though they make sound progress in handling data and in their work on two-dimensional shapes, accurately identifying the lines of symmetry. Higher attaining pupils progress to understanding and using the formula for calculating the area of a rectangle and they increase their competence in working with co-ordinates.
72. The teaching of mathematical skills is generally good. Mental agility work forms a part of most lessons, improving pupils' confidence and the accuracy of their thinking. However, the pace of some teaching of mental mathematics should be brisker, in order to improve the speed of pupils' mental calculation. Teachers use homework effectively to build on what pupils learn in their lessons. The written comments on pupils' homework, such as 'show your working', foster their good progress. Classroom assistants give good support to pupils, particularly those with physical difficulties, and some have good levels of mathematical knowledge that they use well to foster learning.
73. Most pupils respond very well to the teaching of mathematics and the quality of their learning is good because teachers' expectations of pupils' behaviour are high and they manage pupils very effectively. This has a positive impact on their progress. It creates a good climate for learning that ensures that pupils apply themselves well, maintain their effort and concentration and present their written work very carefully. Teachers get on really well with the pupils and as a result, pupils show respect for the teachers and have the confidence to offer ideas and suggestions.
74. The teachers' use of assessments to plan the next step in pupils' learning is too limited to make a significant impact on their progress. There is evidence that some teachers use on-going assessments to modify plans in order to match tasks more closely to the needs of identified pupils. When this happens, as in a lesson in Year 4, it improves the quality of pupils' learning and the progress that they make. In this instance, the teacher gave pupils who had understood the previous lesson more challenging work to extend their knowledge, while he supported those who had not at first grasped the new ideas. However, the effective use of day-to-day assessment in mathematics is not yet rigorously

established throughout the school.

75. The school's successful introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy has had a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning. Teachers have better subject knowledge and have quickly developed a good understanding of new approaches to the teaching of mathematics. They use these effectively to produce increasingly efficient learning. There are opportunities for pupils to apply their developing numeracy skills in other subjects, notably ICT, where pupils' use of information handling programs improves their understanding of graphs and charts. The subject co-ordinator leads and manages the development of mathematics effectively. He has provided valuable support for staff during training and throughout the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy.

SCIENCE

76. Standards in science are close to national levels by the end of Year 6 and when pupils leave the school. Recent falls in national test results have been caused by a gradual increase in the numbers of pupils with special educational needs but despite this, standards in 2001 are higher than at the time of the last inspection. Progress for most pupils is at least satisfactory and for some higher attaining pupils it is good. This is because:
- teachers give suitable emphasis to all components of the curriculum and plan regular investigative and experimental work for all pupils;
 - classes for science are formed on the basis of pupils' ability and this allows teachers to match work to pupils' prior attainment in the subject;
 - the school uses the expertise of its teachers effectively by allowing good teachers of science to teach more than one group. For example, the subject co-ordinator takes groups of pupils from Years 4, 5 and 6;
 - pupils show good attitudes to learning in science, especially when they are involved in carefully structured scientific investigations. Most work very sensibly and take pride in their work;
 - pupils with special educational needs make similar progress to most other pupils because they receive very effective support from teachers and classroom assistants.
77. However, some pupils of lower ability do not make the best possible progress. Reasons for this include:
- teachers are not making enough use of on-going assessments to refine their planning. They rarely give pupils different tasks to complete in their ability groups with the result that some lower attaining pupils struggle to understand or to complete work in the time available. This is unsatisfactory;
 - teachers sometimes give pupils undemanding tasks, such as colouring activities, which do not extend scientific understanding;
 - the subject co-ordinator does not monitor teaching and learning in lessons to help her to identify specific weaknesses.
78. Pupils throughout the school have a sound understanding of the skills of scientific enquiry. They know that predicting, gathering and presenting data, considering and evaluating evidence and drawing conclusions are important in effective work in science. They use and apply these skills to different aspects of their work in science and as a result, most gain a secure understanding of the underlying principles. For example, pupils in Year 4 know about the properties of materials because they have discovered through investigation what materials keep water hot and stop ice cubes from melting. Similarly they have discovered that friction is a force, which slows objects. Year 5 pupils know that when materials are burned new materials are made and that these new materials cannot be returned to their original state. By the end of Year 6 pupils clearly understand that scientific ideas are based on evidence and are presenting observations

and measurements taken as part of their work on light in different ways. They know that shiny surfaces reflect light better than dull surfaces and have discovered that when a light source is closer to an object more light is blocked and the shadow is larger.

79. By the end of Year 7, pupils have discovered through investigation which indigestion remedy is most effective in neutralising acid. When investigating solubility, pupils discover whether all types of sugar dissolve equally well, and learn the effects of altering different variables on the outcome of the investigation. In a particularly enjoyable lesson for pupils, they discover how sucking a sherbet lemon can be applied to a scientific investigation about solubility.
80. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall, although there were examples of very effective teaching during the inspection notably in Year 7. Teachers have secure knowledge and understanding of the subject and use this to provide a good range of opportunities for pupils to undertake scientific investigations. Teachers' relationships with pupils are very positive; they use much encouragement and praise to motivate them and build their confidence and self-esteem. The school has good resources for science and teachers use them effectively to provide first hand investigations that interest pupils and to make teaching points clear. Teachers use purposeful and regular questioning to make pupils think and to extend their learning. Marking is often used well in science to help pupils develop their understanding and teachers make good links with English and mathematics, which are helping to improve pupils' writing and number skills. These strengths help to ensure that pupils are fully involved in lessons and make good gains in learning. Where teaching is less successful, there are unclear or inadequate explanations because important information is given before all pupils are listening carefully. There are no opportunities for pupils to share problems encountered during the investigation because too much is planned for the limited time available. These relative weaknesses hinder the development of scientific knowledge and understanding and slow progress, in particular for lower attaining pupils.
81. Leadership of the subject is sound and there are suitable plans for its further development. These include improving assessment arrangements in science and developing more links with information and communication technology. The subject co-ordinator has helped raise the profile of the subject amongst staff by ensuring that investigative approaches are now undertaken more regularly in all years and amongst pupils by running a successful weekly science club.

ART AND DESIGN

82. Pupils' work in both key stages is above the nationally expected standard for pupils of this age. Pupils of all levels of ability are making good progress and are maintaining the good standards reported in the last inspection. They do this because:
- improved planning to national guidelines ensures that pupils learn and develop skills and techniques progressively as they move through the school;
 - effective cross-curricular links to subjects such as English, ICT, mathematics, science and history bring added coherence and purpose to projects in art. For example, when the teacher introduces a lesson with illustrations from pupils' favourite books by Roald Dahl, their interest and enthusiasm for the project are high and the quality of their response and of their finished work improves;
 - teachers make extensive use of the heritage of art and the works of great artists as the starting points for pupils' work. Pupils often use the works of artists such as Monet, Van Gogh, Picasso, Seurat, Warhol, Henry Moore and Clarice Cliffe as their inspiration, but what they produce is usually their own original work. This contributes effectively to pupils' knowledge and understanding of art and to their wider cultural development;

- teachers place a strong emphasis on the teaching of skills and so pupils learn to use a wide range of media and techniques effectively; these include paint, pencil, pastel, crayon, textiles, collage, computer art, print making, marbling, papier mache and clay;
 - pupils are given regular opportunities to practise and experiment in order to extend skills such as representing movement in their drawings of figures or using tools other than brushes to apply paint in pictures in the style of Australian aboriginal art;
 - teachers successfully communicate their high expectations to the pupils. As a result, pupils are very attentive, behave well and make a real effort to improve the quality of their work.
83. In the lessons seen during the inspection, teaching was consistently good. Teachers had a secure understanding of the techniques they were teaching and enough skill to demonstrate them effectively. This meant that teaching was clear and authoritative and pupils knew exactly what to do. Pupils, including those with learning difficulties and those speaking English as an additional language were drawn into the activity by the teachers' enthusiastic presentations and by the quality of the support when the pupils worked independently. The quality of pupils' learning was good because all were fully involved and making good progress.
84. The school has plentiful resources that allow teachers to cover the curriculum thoroughly. Resources that focus on the work of artists and on the heritage of art from our own and from other cultures are particularly good. As a result, pupils know a considerable amount about the works of famous artists and are beginning to appreciate the richness and diversity of art from other cultures. This is a strong contributory factor in pupils' very good overall levels of cultural development.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

85. By the end of Year 6 and when pupils leave the school a year later, standards are above those expected nationally. This is because teaching has securely established a pattern of designing, making, and evaluating what they do, so that pupils clearly see the links between these stages and apply them in their work. This improves the quality and accuracy of their work and as a result, they produce effective end products. Pupils develop positive attitudes to their work, take pride in what they make and this adds to the quality of their learning. They develop good skills in making by using a good variety of methods, tools and materials. The curriculum is broad and includes a good range of projects based on the technology of food, textiles, mechanisms and structures. Pupils' evaluations of their end products are generally sound, but sometimes they are too general and they do not always reflect back to what the plans said the result would be like. For example, pupils' judgements about their cushions did not always refer to what the design said would be accomplished.
86. By the end of Year 6, pupils collect information from books to help them with their designing and making projects. Most produce a good range of their own design ideas by looking at how things work and developing a prototype, for example when producing an egg-carrier. Pupils know several ways to join materials such as using glue and card triangles when joining wood. In Year 7 they design and make products such as bookmarks that require precision and care. By the end of Year 7, pupils have improved their understanding of the features of some products and bring this knowledge to their designs, for example by concluding that a fabric bookmark needs a rigid insert to make it useful.
87. Teaching and learning are good. Most pupils respond well to the opportunities that teachers provide, behaving well and finding their learning fun. Teaching effectively focuses pupils' attention on who will use the things that they make, and on the views of

the user. Teachers effectively teach specific skills that pupils will need in their work. They provide good opportunities for pupils to generate their own ideas by collecting information from books, but more particularly through experimentation and making prototypes. As a result, most pupils confidently try out their ideas and learning is good. Teaching successfully includes all pupils. Pupils with special educational needs receive effective support. For example, classroom assistants help pupils with physical and learning difficulties work alongside more able pupils. Similarly, in Year 7 boys are encouraged when sewing and in Year 6 a pupil with English as an additional language is fully included in the teachers' direct questioning. This positive approach ensures that all pupils succeed and make good progress.

88. The subject co-ordinator is keen to improve work in design and technology. She has organised a collection of pupils' work in different aspects of the subject and across the year groups that provides good examples to which teachers and pupils refer. There are, however, no agreed methods for assessing pupils' attainment. As a result, teachers' knowledge of what pupils can and cannot do is of limited value in planning future learning.

GEOGRAPHY and HISTORY

89. Pupils' learning is sound as they move through the school. They reach standards in both subjects that are close to nationally expected levels by the end of Years 6 and 7. Some higher attaining pupils make good progress and exceed national levels in both subjects by the time they leave the school. Standards in history and geography are satisfactory because:
- teachers place a suitable emphasis on developing important skills, such as mapping skills in geography and the use of different sources of information in history and these form a sound basis for pupils' learning;
 - both subjects are well represented in the curriculum for all years, with all components taught thoroughly;
 - the skills of literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology are given suitable emphasis and this helps pupils to learn more effectively;
 - the quality of teaching is at least satisfactory and is sometimes good or better;
90. By the end of Years 6 and 7 pupils know about historical events, people in the past and change that has taken place over time. The standards they achieve are broadly typical of those found nationally. For example, from a study of the Tudor period, Year 4 pupils understand why Sir Thomas More was beheaded and why Henry VIII divorced Queen Catherine. Year 5 pupils know about the rise of the ancient Egyptian civilisation and why the pharaoh was so important. Year 6 pupils appreciate how rationing had such a profound effect on daily life during the Second World War and understand the impact of the Blitz during night air raids in wartime London. Year 7 pupils understand why castles were built, know the main facts leading to the Norman invasion and the death of King Harold in 1066.
91. In geography, pupils know about places in this country and in different parts of the world, to levels close to those found nationally by the end of Years 6 and in Year 7. For example, Year 4 pupils compare farms, weather, schools, land use and the physical geography of Jamaica with Norfolk. Year 5 pupils use atlases competently to find out where the world's highest mountains and rain forests are located. They know how human intervention can change the features of places, such as through the destruction of the rain forests. By the end of Year 6, pupils know about village life in India, make comparisons with their own homes and compare London with Delhi. In a good link with information and communication technology, pupils use different web sites to identify land use in India. By the end of Year 7, pupils know where some of the world's most active volcanoes are located, and why eruptions sometimes take place. Pupils make satisfactory gains in their

understanding and use of maps. For example, they develop from drawing plans of their classroom in Year 4 to locating the edges of tectonic plates on a world map as part of a study of volcanoes in Year 7.

92. Teaching is satisfactory over time, with good teaching seen in both subjects during the inspection. Because teaching is sound or better, most pupils enjoy geography and history. Teachers form constructive relationships with pupils. In a Year 6 lesson on the effects of the Blitz, the teacher used praise and encouragement effectively to motivate pupils and build their confidence. Most teachers use their secure subject knowledge to give clear explanations, to respond to pupils' comments and to ask questions that develop understanding and help pupils to learn effectively. For example, in a Year 7 geography lesson on grid references, the teacher's confident and accurate demonstrations and her challenging questions enabled most pupils to master complex mapping skills. Teachers are enthusiastic and so teaching is brisk and lively. This keeps pupils interested and involved. However, teachers do not use outside visits sufficiently in geography to develop fieldwork skills or artefacts in history to help bring the subject to life.
93. Teachers make good links with mathematics and English in both geography and history. For example, in history, pupils develop an understanding of the passage of time through the use of time lines. In geography, pupils learn how to locate features precisely on ordnance survey maps through the use of co-ordinates, moving from understanding of two figure co-ordinates in Year 4 to six figure co-ordinates by the end of Year 7. Pupils develop speaking and listening skills through discussion, such as when Year 4 pupils consider whether Henry VIII was a good or bad king. Similarly, Year 6 pupils discuss whether evacuation was cruel or kind to wartime children. They consider the merits of building a new supermarket in Hunstanton.
94. The curriculum arrangements for both geography and history are satisfactory. However, some weaknesses are evident. There are no consistent approaches to assessing pupils' progress as they move through the school. Portfolios of pupils' work are not levelled to National Curriculum requirements and so it is difficult for teachers to track their achievements over time. As a result, teachers often give all pupils the same work. This slows the progress of some pupils, mostly those of low to average attainment, who sometimes do not finish their work in the allotted time. The subject co-ordinator has no opportunity to monitor the quality of teaching and learning by observing lessons. This is a weakness in current arrangements for identifying strengths and weaknesses in both subjects.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

95. Attainment at the end of Year 6 and in Year 7 is above that normally expected of pupils of these ages. This is largely because of the extent to which ICT is incorporated into the curriculum as a whole and the confidence with which most pupils apply their ICT skills. This improves the quality of pupils' learning in ICT and in most other subjects by enabling them to progress more quickly.
96. By the end of Year 6, most pupils know about the use of information and communication technology in the wider world, such as its use for security. They gain good levels of basic competence in using a computer and as a result, most are able to do so independently in the course of work in other subjects. Most know how to switch the computer on and select and open programs from the desktop. Once into the program, they know how to use the various icons and select from menus in order to retrieve, amend, save or print their work. They competently gather information from the Internet. Some pupils have used search engines to find suitable web sites for gathering information about land uses in India. This has enabled them to understand the need to word questions carefully in

order to find the facts they require. Pupils are very confident when they combine text and pictures to present information. They skilfully edit, copy and paste and use the tools that the computer offers to produce a style of work that is suited to its intended reader. Good examples of this are the leaflets that they produce for imaginary tourists visiting Paris. Most pupils know how to use computers to programme simple robots, and they are competent in using ICT to sense physical data such as temperature. Current Year 6 and year 7 pupils have had no opportunities to send e-mails and this limits the skills with which they can exchange information and ideas with others. Year 7 pupils, however continue to apply their skills to support their learning in other subjects well.

97. Too little direct teaching and learning of ICT skills were seen during the inspection to judge their overall quality throughout the school. The teaching seen took place within the context of the school's policy of using other subjects as a vehicle for teaching the skills of ICT and of using ICT to support learning in other subjects. These arrangements work well because teachers plan their lessons carefully and this gives added coherence and purpose to the tasks that pupils undertake. Teaching in the Year 7 lesson was very effective because it enabled pupils to solve increasingly complex mathematical equations and to do so at their own pace. Consequently, pupils were very well motivated and their productivity and pace of working were high. The teacher had good knowledge and understanding of ICT and mathematics, so that he could provide the pupils with good guidance and foster their good progress. Teaching in the geography lesson in Year 6 was effective because it provided pupils with good opportunities for independent research by exploring and gathering information from the Internet. As a result, they made good progress in learning about foreign locations and improved their capacity to locate, retrieve and use information electronically. Teachers' assessment of pupils' work is not consistent throughout the school and it is not effectively used to plan the next stage in their learning. As a result, their progress, although good, is not as consistent as it might be. There is no system for the co-ordinator to formally monitor teaching, to share with staff what is good, and to further develop its impact on pupils' learning.
98. Pupils have good attitudes to their work in ICT and talk about it enthusiastically. They work co-operatively together in the computer room. They are confident and independent in their use of computers. They behave very sensibly at all times and use the school's resources with care. Pupils with well-developed skills support those with less confidence, sharing what they know and enhancing their learning.
99. Pupils' completed work and discussions with pupils indicate that the school uses ICT effectively to develop work in history, music and art. The work that Year 7 pupils do on moods in art and the thoughtful comments of Year 6 pupils on the characteristics of the work of famous artists contribute positively to standards in art and to pupils' cultural development. Although pupils' word processed work is generally sound, ICT does not reinforce the school's priority for improving spelling, by ensuring that pupils systematically use the spell check facility on the programmes that they use. The school's good resources, and the timed use of its computer room, have a positive impact on pupils' learning and progress.

MODERN FOREIGN LANGUAGES

French

100. Pupils in Years 6 and 7 are making very good progress in French. They are likely to exceed the standard expected for their age by the time that they leave the school. The quality of their learning is very good and standards have remained high since the time of the last inspection. This is because the teachers charged with teaching French to both Years 6 and 7 classes have the necessary knowledge and understanding to teach the subject very effectively.
101. The teaching of French is very good because the teachers' command of the language is strong. Teaching methods are highly appropriate to pupils at an early stage of foreign language acquisition. This improves pupils' quality of learning because:
- the teachers conduct all lessons entirely in French and this increases pupils' exposure to the language;
 - the French sentence patterns that pupils copy are always accurate and in line with current usage and the pronunciation that pupils hear is consistent and correct. This presents a very effective model for pupils' learning;
 - the teachers are very confident and conduct their lessons at a brisk pace. This gives pupils abundant opportunities to consolidate the language they know by speaking in response to questions or by responding to simple commands;
 - there are frequent opportunities for pupils to use French creatively in active, role-play situations. This builds the confidence of all pupils and allows the more able to be adventurous in their responses;
 - teachers make the most of the time available. Lessons are varied and enjoyable and teachers use activities such as songs, games, quizzes or role-play very effectively to interest and motivate pupils;
 - pupils with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language are fully involved in all activities and make progress at a similar rate to others in the class;
 - teachers use a suitable amount of written work to support pupils' learning but only when pupils have the necessary linguistic concepts to understand and use it effectively.
102. As a result of these strengths in teaching and learning, pupils' attitudes to French and their behaviour in lessons are very good. Most pupils are confident and willingly join in the various activities. They enter into the spirit of the lesson, making a real effort to reproduce the language fluently, accurately or with accurate pronunciation. They sustain a high level of concentration throughout quite long and challenging lessons.

MUSIC

103. Pupils attain nationally expected standards in music by the end of Year 6 and in Year 7. They achieve high standards in singing. The subject co-ordinator has recently taken over the teaching of music in all classes. Her detailed planning ensures that all pupils have regular opportunities to sing, play musical instruments, listen to and appraise music. She makes sure that pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are fully involved in all musical activities. This enables them to make as much progress as other pupils.
104. Pupils have good opportunities to sing both in every music lesson and in assemblies and school services. They know a wide range of songs and hymns. They also have experience of singing in unfamiliar rhythms and styles from other parts of the world, such as Hawaii. Pupils have a good awareness of pitch and sing tunefully. They follow instructions well, control their voices and sing expressively. Pupils particularly enjoy

singing in 'rounds', which they do with confidence. Planning is well structured to promote the progressive build up of pupils' musical skills as they move through the school. The younger pupils learn the names of a good range of percussion instruments. They handle them with care and confidence. By Year 5 pupils listen well and repeat a range of steady rhythms, using untuned percussion instruments. Year 6 pupils have a secure understanding of musical terms, such as 'tempo'. They demonstrate increasing listening skills and are able to 'match' rhythms they hear with the appropriate notation. Year 7 pupils are introduced to 'polyrhythms' and make good progress in learning to clap and play these complex rhythms, often heard in Afro-American music. Pupils listen attentively to the music being played as they enter the music room for their lesson. They eagerly identify the sounds of orchestral instruments. They also listen with interest to each other's work, but can offer very few constructive comments about how it could be improved.

105. The quality of teaching is good and successfully promotes pupils' learning. This marks an improvement since the last inspection, when teachers displayed a lack of confidence. The teacher has good subject knowledge, which enables her to plan lessons, which include varied and interesting activities. All pupils are actively involved. This increases their enjoyment of music and stimulates their motivation to learn. The teacher maintains high expectations of pupils' attention and rewards all efforts with praise and encouragement. This boosts pupils' confidence and fosters an enjoyment of music. Pupils are keen to take part in musical activities and almost all behave very well. The teacher supports lower attaining pupils well and ensures that they are clear about what they have to do. However, no system for assessing pupils' progress is in place to enable the teacher to plan work, which closely matches pupils' abilities. In the lessons observed, all pupils were given similar tasks, with no reference to their individual skills and experience. This limited the progress of more able pupils.
106. The enthusiastic co-ordinator is committed to raising standards of attainment in music throughout the school by ensuring that, over time, pupils experience a broad range of musical activities incorporating performing, composing and appraising. She ensures that the music room and the good range of resources are used well to promote pupils' learning. Participation in musical events, such as the annual Carol Service, and occasional recitals, given by members of the county music service, successfully support pupils' musical development. After school groups including the choir and recorder group, also give pupils further opportunities to extend their skills. Pupils often enter and leave assembly to the sound of 'live' or recorded music. This satisfactorily promotes pupils' awareness and listening skills. Pupils' learning in music makes a valuable contribution to their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

107. Pupils up to the age of 11 reach the expected standards in the aspects of the physical education curriculum that were seen during the inspection. Inspection evidence and teachers' planning for physical education indicate that all elements of the National Curriculum receive appropriate attention. Most pupils of all levels of attainment in both key stages make satisfactory progress in the areas covered. Pupils with physical and learning difficulties receive good support that enables them to take a part in physical education lessons, experience success and make sound progress. There is insufficient evidence against which to make judgements about standards in Year 7, as no lessons for this year group took place during the inspection.
108. Pupils in Years 4 to 6 learn to swim and some attain standards above those normally expected of pupils at the end of Year 6. They develop their gymnastics skills, so that by Year 6, they are performing sequences and moving with suitable precision and control.

Dance features prominently in the school's curriculum for physical education and many pupils in Years 4 and 5 are on course to exceed nationally expected standards by the end of Year 6. Their movement is controlled and expressive, levels of group co-operation are good and higher attaining pupils are beginning to evaluate their own and others' performance as a means of achieving further improvements. These lessons, featuring dance from traditions such as tribal Africa, historic Egypt and the court of the Tudor monarchs, make a strong contribution to pupils' cultural development. The school organises a good range of activities outside lessons that help motivate pupils and expose them to additional coaching. There are also suitable opportunities for pupils to extend their skills by participating in local competitive events.

109. The teaching of physical education in Key Stage 2 is sound. Teachers' planning is satisfactory. It identifies appropriate objectives. When these are shared with pupils, for example in an effective dance lesson in Year 4, they give a clear focus to teaching and learning that improves pupils' progress. Most teachers have secure subject knowledge. They give clear explanations and monitor pupils' responses carefully. This ensures that all pupils are able to work confidently and to make appropriate progress. Teaching is most effective when the teachers' awareness of pupils' performance is good and results in effective individual and group coaching that helps pupils improve aspects of their technique. This worked to good effect in a Year 5 dance lesson, when the teacher's analysis of pupils' movement helped pupils to achieve greater precision and control. Teachers manage their pupils effectively. They expect and achieve good standards of behaviour and response and this ensures that pupils make good use of their time in most lessons. There is insufficient evidence to make sound judgements about teaching in Key Stage 3.
110. Pupils have good attitudes to their work in physical education. They are attentive and follow instructions promptly and accurately. This allows the lesson to flow and effectively maintains the pace of pupils' learning, as was seen to good effect in lessons in Years 4 and 5. Pupils are responsive to effective coaching and rise to the challenge to improve as, for example, in the Year 5 dance lesson. Most pupils work sensibly in pairs or groups, giving each other constructive help to succeed. This is particularly effective when pupils work with and support those with special educational needs, enabling them to be fully involved and make good progress. The quality of pupils' learning is satisfactory. This results from pupils' positive response and from the satisfactory range and variety of experiences that the school provides.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

111. Standards meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus for religious education by the end of Year 6 and in Year 7. Pupils with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language are satisfactorily supported and make progress in line with the others in their class.
112. Year 4 pupils make sound progress in developing self-awareness through topics such as 'Belonging'. They begin to understand what it means to be part of 'the school community'. They learn about aspects of Christianity. Following a visit to the local church and a talk from the vicar, they know what is found in a Christian place of worship. They demonstrate a good grasp of what Christians believe, including 'God's rules'. In Year 5, pupils make good progress in learning about aspects of Jewish daily life and worship. They become aware of significant milestones in the lives of both Christians and Jews, such as baptism, confirmation, bar mitzvah and marriage. By Year 6 pupils demonstrate a satisfactory knowledge of some aspects of the beliefs and practices of major faith communities, including Buddhism and Islam. They consider places that are special to them personally and understand that the church is of particular importance to

Christians. They identify Christian symbols, including candles and a cross, and learn about the role of the vicar. In Year 7, pupils gain a sound awareness of the range of Christian denominations, such as Methodism and Roman Catholicism. They make satisfactory progress in extending their knowledge of Christian beliefs and how this affects the way people live.

113. Well-prepared assemblies soundly support pupils' learning as they move through the school. They learn that the Bible is a special book for Christians and are introduced to a good range of Bible stories. They learn about significant Old Testament figures, including Abraham and Moses. They are familiar with events in the life of Jesus. They know that he was a teacher and are familiar with stories he told, such as The Prodigal Son. By the time they leave the school, pupils have a sound knowledge of major feasts of the Christian calendar, including Christmas and Easter.
 114. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the subject are sound. The co-ordinator has ensured that planning is based on the locally agreed syllabus and provides useful guidance for teachers. They introduce topics clearly and engage pupils' interest well. Pupils maintain their concentration during lessons and their work is carefully completed and neatly presented. Teachers in all classes value pupils' opinions. This boosts pupils' confidence and encourages them to contribute their ideas. For example, Year 4 pupils readily suggest incidents, which demonstrate how they can, 'love their neighbour'. The school has a good collection of items associated with major world faiths. Teachers use this well to capture pupils' attention and promote knowledge and understanding. For example, Year 5 pupils were well motivated and made good progress in learning about Jewish sacred writings by looking at an example of a Torah scroll. The teacher also used this opportunity well to demonstrate respect for the views of others, by the careful way in which she handled the scroll. Teachers use well-directed questions to check pupils' understanding. However, systems are not in place for the regular assessment of pupils' progress as a basis for planning and preparation of further work. The local vicar visits school regularly to lead assembly. This successfully supports and extends pupils' learning and also makes a positive contribution to their spiritual development.
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