

INSPECTION REPORT

HOWARD COMMUNITY PRIMARY SCHOOL

Bury St. Edmunds

LEA area: Suffolk

Unique reference number: 124555

Headteacher: Mr. R. M. Peacock

Reporting inspector: Mrs. J. Catlin
21685

Dates of inspection: 11th – 14th March 2002

Inspection number: 242895

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

© Crown copyright 2002

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	First
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	3 – 9 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	St Olaves Road Bury St. Edmunds
Postcode:	IP32 6RW
Telephone number:	01284 754450
Fax number:	01284 705041
Appropriate authority:	Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mrs. J. Watson
Date of previous inspection:	September 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
21685	Jenny Catlin	Registered inspector	Mathematics Geography History Information and communication technology Special educational needs Foundation stage	What sort of school is it? How high are standards? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school managed?
9619	Robert Miller	Lay inspector		How high are standards? Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17756	Heather Monaghan	Team inspector	English Design technology Art and design	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?
27698	Gordon Phillips	Team inspector	Science Music Physical education Religious education English as an additional language Equal opportunities	

The inspection contractor was:

PkR Educational Consultants Ltd
6 Sherman Road
Bromley
Kent
BR1 3JH

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

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

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	17
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	18
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	21
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	22
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	26

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Howard Primary School has 182 pupils on roll and is about the same size as other schools of this type. There is one pupil from an ethnic minority background. The proportion of pupils entitled to free school meals is just over eleven per cent; this is average nationally. Two pupils speak English as an additional language. This is lower than in most schools. There are a total of 52 children in the Foundation Stage classes. Children's overall attainment on entry is below average. The percentage of pupils identified as having special educational needs, just over 33 per cent, is above the national average. Two pupils have a statement of special educational need; this figure is about average nationally.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

Howard Primary School is a caring and supportive school and provides a secure learning environment for its pupils. Pupils attain average standards in most subjects at the end of Year 2. Standards at the end of Year 4 in English and mathematics are below the national average although progress in these subjects is at least satisfactory and often good. This is due to a high number of pupils with special educational needs. Across the school, the quality of teaching and learning is good with some that is very good. The leadership and management by the headteacher and key members of staff are good overall. The below average attainment on entry to the school; the overall good progress of most pupils in both the Foundation Stage and Key Stage 1; the improvements in the school since the previous inspection; the higher proportion of good teaching and the school's average expenditure per pupil, when taken together, indicate that value for money is good.

What the school does well

- Teaching and learning are good across the school.
- Children are given a good start to their education.
- The provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and they make good progress.
- There are very good opportunities offered for extra-curricular activities.
- The behaviour in the school is very good.
- Pupils have very good attitudes to learning.

What could be improved

- Assessment procedures to track progress across the school, particularly for higher attaining pupils.
- Improve the resources for design and technology and increase teachers confidence in their use.
- The monitoring of teaching and learning by subject managers.
- Improve curriculum coverage of religious education

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 effectively addressed the majority of the key issues from the previous report. The previous inspection in October 1997 required the school to develop a greater range of teaching strategies. This has been implemented well, due in part to the introduction of the numeracy and literacy strategies which encourages this. There was a need for the school to develop the management of the subject managers especially their monitoring role. Although systems are in place to ensure subject managers are able to lead, develop and monitor their area of the curriculum within and across the key stages, further development is required as they are not yet fully confident in observing teaching and learning. The school has maintained, as was required, its focus on language skills development and has extended it successfully to include the development of pupils' speaking skills. At the time of the previous inspection the school's provision for pupils' spiritual development was unsatisfactory. This has improved and is now satisfactory because a policy has been developed which is understood by staff and this is beginning to impact on the spiritual awareness of the pupils. As a result of these initiatives the school's progress since the previous inspection is good.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by pupils at the end of Year 2 based on National Curriculum test results.

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

Key

well above average A

above average B

average C

below average D

well below average E

At the end of Key Stage 1, the average National Curriculum points scores for 2001, show that in comparison with all schools nationally, the school's performance in reading is average and in writing and mathematics performance is below the national average. There are variations in test results from year to year so no overall trend is discernible. The performance of girls and boys in all three tests indicates that girls are performing better than boys, which generally matches that seen nationally. Attainment in science, based on teacher assessment, is average for pupils of this age. The proportion of pupils claiming entitlement to free school meals is not an accurate reflection of the socio-economic background of pupils at the school. Grades for similar schools have therefore been adjusted to show comparisons with schools in a similar context. Results show that compared with these schools, reading is above average and writing and mathematics standards are average. For pupils currently in Year 2, evidence during inspection confirms that standards in reading match those found nationally and in writing they are below average. In mathematics, standards have improved considerably and are now average.

For pupils currently in Years 3 and 4, the inspection confirms that standards in English remain similar to those indicated by test results for both 2000 and 2001, which were below average. In science, standards are now average but in mathematics they remain below average. Across the school, standards in art and design, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education are in line with those expected for pupils of these ages. In design and technology and religious education standards across the school are below those expected. There are no significant differences in achievement by the two pupils with English as an additional language and they have made good progress. In all classes, progress is at least satisfactory and often good, both in the lessons observed and as seen in previously recorded work. Across the school, most pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their abilities and their individual education plans. The attainment of children at the end of the Foundation Stage is below average although they make good progress. This is because they have not been in school long enough to compensate for their low language development skills that are evident on entry.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Pupils have very positive attitudes to their learning and this has continued to improve since the previous inspection.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Behaviour observed in lessons, the dining hall, assemblies and in the playground was very good.
Personal development and	Relationships are good and pupils are polite to each other and adults.

relationships	Independence, confidence and self-esteem continue to be encouraged.
Attendance	Attendance has declined since the last inspection although it is broadly in line with the national average.

Pupils show respect for each other during discussions and clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. They clearly understand how what they do may affect others. There are, however, limited opportunities for pupils to show initiative and undertake independent learning. The rate of authorised absence is higher than that of similar schools nationally. Punctuality is good for the vast majority of pupils and lessons start and finish on time.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Nursery and Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 4
Quality of teaching	Good	Good	Good

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

Across the school, the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a secure command of the subjects to be taught and planning for lessons specifies the content to be taught to the whole class, to specified groups and to certain individual pupils. Most lessons incorporate appropriately high expectations and challenge for pupils with different levels of attainment. There are effective links with what pupils have already achieved and new learning makes progressive demands on them. Relationships are good and pupils are expected to have high standards of behaviour. Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to their work and most are keen to complete work to an acceptable standard within set time limits. Most lessons have a brisk pace, and resources, pupil groupings and adult assistance are all well managed and are used to promote the learning of specific knowledge or skills and to keep pupils on task. However, although teachers know their pupils well, their lesson planning rarely identifies how particular aspects of the work will be assessed and the evidence that will be gathered in order to measure attainment and progress. Homework, particularly reading, is set and caters appropriately for pupils of differing abilities. When teaching is satisfactory rather than good, some of the above features are not so well developed, particularly the aspects of providing challenge for higher attaining pupils and effectively using lesson time to ensure all pupils remain on task. The weaknesses in teaching identified at the time of the previous inspection are no longer as evident as they were at that time. There is some good practice in evaluating the success of lessons by teachers. Best practice includes identifying what progress individual pupils have made and how the methods and content for the next lesson need to be adjusted as a result. Overall, this is inconsistent across the school.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	The school provides a broad and balanced curriculum, which is well adapted to the particular needs of its pupils. Provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Provision for children with special educational needs is good. Good planning and effective use of resources enables pupils to work successfully towards their identified targets.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Provision for pupils with English as an additional language is good and the school provides effective support for these pupils.
Provision for pupils'	Overall, the school's provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and

personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	cultural education is good.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Pupils continue to be provided with a caring and supportive environment as reported at the last inspection.

Curriculum provision is enriched by the many lunchtime and after school clubs which pupils are encouraged to join. These range from sports and gymnastics to sewing and art and craft, and are enthusiastically supported. Teachers show concern for pupils' personal development and the school gives very good support to individual pupils with problems. The effectiveness of the school's links with parents is satisfactory. However, the school had identified in its development plan the need to improve partnerships by adopting a number of strategies and these are beginning to take effect.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Leadership and management by the headteacher and key members of staff are good overall. He provides clear educational direction to the school and shares a commitment to improving standards with the staff and governors.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	The governing body is effective in carrying out its statutory duties. It is clear about its role to ensure that pupils receive a good education and that the school continues to strive to raise standards.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school improvement plan reviews effectively the aims of the school and sets out the long-term strategic view of staff and governors, as well as short and medium-term priorities.
The strategic use of resources	Financial management is good and full and effective use is made of available grants, funds and resources.

The headteacher provides clear educational direction to the school and shares a commitment to improving standards with the staff and governors. He has also established good relationships in the local community and the school. The system established for monitoring and evaluating teaching needs to be further developed. Staffing levels are good and teachers' individual qualifications and expertise are well deployed. The accommodation is good and effective use is made of space to provide areas for oral teaching and written work with easy access to information and communication technology equipment. Resources for learning are satisfactory for most subjects and good for physical education. The school is aware of the need to review and supplement resources for all areas of design and technology. The school makes appropriate efforts to seek best value when purchasing goods and services and all specific grants have been used appropriately for their intended purpose.

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 are making good progress and enjoy coming to school. • The teaching is good. • They enjoy good relationships with the school. • The school is well led and managed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no major concerns.

The inspection team agrees with the very positive views of the parents. There is a very happy, caring ethos which is appreciated by parents and the wider community. The parents are very happy with the school and appreciate its achievements.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. Baseline assessment shows that attainment on entry to the Foundation Stage is, overall, below that expected for children of this age, although for many their language development skills are well below average. By the time they enter Year 1, most pupils are on course to attain, or exceed, the nationally expected Early Learning Goals. Whilst children have made good progress in their communication, language and literacy skills, attainment in this area of learning is below average on entry to Year 1.
2. At the end of Key Stage 1, the average National Curriculum points scores for 2001, show that in comparison with all schools nationally, the school's performance in reading is average and in writing and mathematics performance is below the national average. There are variations in test results from year to year so no overall trend is discernible. The performance of girls and boys in all three tests indicates that girls are performing better than boys, which generally matches that seen nationally. Attainment in science, based on teacher assessment, is average for pupils of this age.
3. The proportion of pupils claiming entitlement to free school meals is not an accurate reflection of the socio-economic background of pupils at the school. Grades for similar schools have therefore been adjusted to show comparisons with schools in a similar context. Results show that compared with these schools, reading is above average and writing and mathematics standards are average.
4. For pupils currently in Year 2, evidence during inspection confirms that standards in reading match those found nationally and in writing are below average. In mathematics, standards have improved considerably and are now average.
5. For pupils currently in Years 3 and 4, the inspection confirms that standards in English remain similar to those indicated by test results for both 1999 and 2000, which were below average. This is due to the high number of pupils with special educational needs in these two age groups. In science, standards have improved and are now average but in mathematics they remain below average due to few pupils attaining at the higher levels.
6. By the end of Year 2 and Year 4, standards in art and design, geography, history, information and communication technology, music and physical education are in line with those expected for pupils of these ages. In design and technology and religious education standards across the school are below those expected.
7. There are no significant differences in achievement by the two pupils with English as an additional language and they have made good progress during their time in the school. In all classes, progress is at least satisfactory and often good, both in the lessons observed and as seen in previously recorded work.
8. Across the school, most pupils with special educational needs make good progress in relation to their abilities and their individual education plans, especially in their acquisition of literacy skills. Progress in numeracy skills is also good. They are well supported by both teachers and learning support assistants. These pupils are offered work providing appropriate challenge. The tasks they are set closely mirror those offered to other pupils, so that they feel included in all of the activities of the class. For

example, teachers at both key stages ensure that pupils with special educational needs have sufficient opportunity to take part in class discussion during literacy lessons, to show the sequences of movement they have devised in gymnastics or to read aloud their written work. Teaching assistants develop close working relationships with the pupils for whom they are responsible, and this enhances their progress.

9. Overall, higher attaining pupils in both key stages do not make the progress of which some are capable, particularly in mathematics. This is due firstly to weaknesses in teachers' daily assessments of what pupils know, understand and can do. As a result, lesson planning does not sufficiently challenge these pupils to enable them to make good progress overall, and achieve their full potential.
10. Most pupils' standards of literacy are in line with national expectations by the end of each key stage and are sufficient to support learning in subjects across the curriculum. Across the school, writing is often used well to support development in other subjects, for example, in geography and history. Standards of numeracy are satisfactory overall.
11. Links between subjects are very well developed and children are given the opportunity to apply the skills they have learned in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. For example, in Year 1 some children chose to use the computer to draw a design for their moving model in their design and technology lesson, and in a Year 3 and 4 class, pupils used a story they had studied as the theme for movement activities in physical education.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

12. Children in the nursery and reception classes have very good attitudes to learning. Their personal and social development continues to be a significant strength of the school since the previous inspection. They love coming to school and are very keen to learn and please their teacher. They play well together and learn how to co-operate with one another. They look after the classrooms well, keeping them tidy and well organised.
13. Pupils in Year 1 to Year 4, also have very positive attitudes to their learning and this has continued to improve since the previous inspection. Most pupils are keen to come to school and are co-operative throughout the school day. In lessons, pupils listen attentively and undertake written and practical tasks conscientiously. They are positive about school, respond keenly to their teachers and almost all are enthusiastic in lessons. Most pupils are capable of sustained interest. For example, pupils in a Year 3 and Year 4 mathematics lesson gave their full attention to the teacher when she was explaining fractions on the whiteboard. Pupils enjoy stories and listen well, often joining in at suitable points. They respond well to praise and rewards, taking much pride from having their achievements recognised both in the classroom and at the end of the week in the school's celebration assembly.
14. Pupils show respect for each other during discussions and clearly understand the difference between right and wrong. They clearly understand that what they do may affect others. Behaviour observed in lessons, the dining hall, assemblies and in the playground is very good. There have been no exclusions in the past year or any incidents of bullying or racist remarks.
15. Pupils with special educational needs, who have identified emotional and behavioural difficulties are well managed in class and during breaks. They are well supported by teachers, teaching assistants and midday supervisors. The school ensures that they

are fully included in the life of the school and that their behaviour is not detrimental to their own learning or to that of their peers.

16. Relationships are good and pupils are polite to each other and adults. Pupils benefit from circle time, which allows their voices to be heard on a number of issues. Independence, confidence and self-esteem continue to be encouraged since the previous inspection. There are, however, limited opportunities for pupils to show initiative and undertake independent learning.
17. The good relationships in the school are, among other things, a result of the overall good provision for pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development, which is the underlying foundation for the positive ethos of the school and the good learning environment.
18. Attendance has declined since the previous inspection and at around 94 per cent is broadly in line with the national average. The rate of authorised absence is higher than that of similar schools nationally. Punctuality is good for the vast majority of pupils and lessons start and finish on time.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

19. Across the school, the quality of teaching is good with many very good features and this has been maintained since the previous inspection. There was no unsatisfactory teaching. The quality of teaching in both literacy and numeracy across the school is good in both key stages.
20. The quality of teaching for children in the Foundation Stage is good overall and has been maintained since the previous inspection. Teachers have a clear understanding of how children learn; they plan work carefully to meet the needs of each child. Teachers' expectations are high for all children and their management of children's behaviour is very good, which results in positive attitudes to learning. They develop children's understanding of acceptable and unacceptable behaviour very well. Children are actively encouraged to share their work and successes. Children are continuously assessed and this, together with the results of their initial assessments and ongoing testing, forms the basis of a very good range of assessment data. This information is used very well to set individual targets and inform future teaching plans. Very good use is made of teaching assistants and they have regular involvement in assessing and recording children's progress.
21. Throughout the school the quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a secure command of the subjects to be taught. Planning for lessons specifies the content to be taught to the whole class, to specified groups and to certain individual pupils. Most lessons incorporate appropriately high expectations and challenge for pupils with different levels of attainment. There are effective links with what pupils have already achieved and new learning makes progressive demands on them. Relationships are good and pupils are expected to have high standards of behaviour. Pupils demonstrate very good attitudes to their work and most are keen to complete work to an acceptable standard within set time limits. They are, on occasions, given choices about how the work is to be done and this makes a positive contribution to their independent learning skills. In most lessons time is used effectively, and resources, pupil groupings and adult assistance are all well managed and are used to promote the learning of specific knowledge or skills and to keep pupils on task. However, although teachers know their pupils well, lesson planning rarely identifies how particular aspects of the work will be assessed and the evidence that will be gathered in order to measure attainment and

progress. Homework, particularly reading, is set and caters appropriately for pupils of differing abilities. When teaching is satisfactory rather than good, some of the above features are not so well developed, particularly the aspects of providing challenge for higher attaining pupils and ensuring all pupils remain on task. The weaknesses in teaching identified at the time of the previous inspection are no longer as evident as they were at that time. There is some good practice in evaluating the success of lessons by teachers. Best practice includes identifying what progress individual pupils have made and how the methods and content for the next lesson need to be adjusted as a result. Overall, this is inconsistent across the school.

22. Overall, teachers have a good understanding of the National Curriculum in most subjects. Teachers throughout the school encourage pupils to take reading books home and, where homework is set, it is often used appropriately to support pupils' learning. A positive aspect of teaching across the school is the very good classroom management and discipline, which most teachers maintain. There is usually a consistent approach to behaviour, which enhances the quality of pupils' learning. A further strength of the very good teaching is the sharing of the aims of lessons with the pupils. This enables them to have a clear understanding of what is to be covered during the session and for them to recognise what they have learned. When marking pupils' work, teachers assess the work constructively and their comments are usually sufficiently diagnostic to help pupils know what they have done well and what they need to work on to improve. There are good quality, long-term written curriculum plans to provide a framework for lesson planning, and ensure progression across and through year groups. Across the school, there is good development of literacy skills and these are taught effectively, with a specific emphasis on phonic skills. The numeracy sessions are usually well taught, particularly in Key Stage 2 and teachers question pupils carefully to check their understanding of the work covered. Overall, the use of teaching assistants to support pupils in their learning is good. However, best use is not always made of their skills; this is particularly noticeable in the introductory sessions of literacy and numeracy lessons.
23. Weaknesses in teaching include a lack of challenge in some lessons, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Lessons are sometimes not exciting or rigorous enough to capture pupils' attention and enthusiasm. All teachers state that pupils have targets in literacy and numeracy. However, it was rare to see these referred to in lessons and many pupils are unclear as to what their targets are. Therefore, they have limited value in increasing pupils' knowledge and understanding of their own learning.
24. There is a good working partnership between class teachers and the special educational needs manager, which facilitates the prompt identification of pupils with learning difficulties or behaviour problems. Their needs are efficiently assessed and an appropriate level of support is provided. Individual education plans are used effectively by class teachers to guide lesson planning, providing a good blend of help and challenge, and a range of graded tasks are matched to their needs. Targets are clearly defined and regularly reviewed. Work is set at an appropriate level across the curriculum and pupils receive good in-class support from teaching assistants. The part-time special educational needs teacher and teaching assistants provide well-planned and clearly-focussed teaching for pupils who are withdrawn for additional work in literacy and mathematics. Progress is carefully monitored against the targets set on the individual education plans.

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

25. The provision for children in the Foundation Stage is good. Across the school, the curriculum is broad and balanced and is well adapted to the particular needs of its pupils. Provision for pupils with special educational needs is good and for those with English as an additional language it is also good. The allocation of curriculum time has been adjusted since the last inspection and this planning is now in line with national recommendations. The school continues to review this and currently there is some flexibility within the planned timetable to extend teaching time where appropriate. Curriculum provision is enriched by the many lunchtime and after school clubs which pupils are encouraged to join. These range from sports and gymnastics to sewing and art and craft, and are enthusiastically supported.
26. In both key stages, links between subjects are very well developed and pupils are given the opportunity to apply the skills they have learned in literacy, numeracy and information and communication technology. For example, in Year 1, some pupils chose to use the computer to draw a design for their moving model in design and technology, and in Years 3 and 4 pupils used a story they had studied as the theme for movement activities in physical education.
27. Teachers use and adapt national and county curriculum planning documents and have produced written schemes of work for most subjects. They plan together in year groups and the teachers responsible for each subject monitor the work covered throughout the school.
28. The school has a marking policy with a strong emphasis on celebrating achievement. Pupils' work is marked regularly but teachers do not often link their comments to the learning objective for the lesson nor set targets for improvement based on these.
29. The school has a strong commitment to equality in education and this is clearly laid out in a good policy document. All pupils with special educational needs receive the full National Curriculum offered by the school with some areas of work modified for their specific needs. They are fully included in all activities organised by the school, which supports their social and moral development well. Arrangements for identifying and supporting pupils' individual needs are good. A comprehensive register of special educational needs is kept by the special educational needs manager. Appropriately detailed and specific individual educational plans are provided for pupils on the register, written by the class teachers in conjunction with the special educational needs manager and the part-time special needs teacher and these are reviewed regularly. There are two pupils with statements of special educational needs in the school who receive the support detailed in these statements and who are included well in all school activities. The teaching and support provided in withdrawal groups for pupils with special educational needs are effective. On occasions, because pupils are withdrawn for additional support in English and mathematics, they miss parts of lessons in other curriculum subjects. The school has plans to address this area by reviewing the timetable arrangements for these pupils. The provision and support for pupils with English as an additional language is good and there is good liaison between the school and outside agencies.
30. In many of its policies, the school makes strong statements about its intention to ensure that it does not discriminate against any pupil on the grounds of disability, sex or race, and that each has equal access to the curriculum. Pupils of different levels of aptitude and ability are generally given similar opportunities to make progress in their

work. In some classes, however, those who achieve well in English, mathematics and science are not offered sufficient opportunities to explore the limits of their knowledge and understanding because the tasks they are set are sometimes not challenging enough.

31. The school continues to offer a very good range of extra-curricular activities since the previous inspection. There is a wide variety of clubs run by the school. These include dance, design and technology, art and gardening. There is also a good range of educational visits, which enrich the curriculum and aid progress. For example, Year 4 pupils have a residential trip to the Norfolk coast. Visits include the local Abbey, the science museum in Norwich, a Country Park and an Anglo-Saxon village. The local environment is also used well as a learning resource, including visits to shops.
32. The relationships with other schools are constructive and effective. There are good links with the local middle and upper schools and these are benefiting pupils in Year 4 by ensuring a smooth transfer into the former of these two.
33. The provision for pupils' personal, social and health education is satisfactory. The introduction of discussion sessions called "Circle Time" has helped pupils explore personal and emotional concerns in a sensitive and secure context. The school makes good use of visiting speakers, including parents who are also nurses, to raise the awareness of health issues and suitable provision is made for sex education. The community police officer is a regular visitor to talk about personal safety. The personal, social and health education programme, which has yet to be monitored consistently across the school, is making a positive contribution to pupils' achievement.
34. The provision for pupils' moral, social and cultural education is good. A policy has been developed since the previous inspection, which is understood by staff and beginning to impact on the curriculum generally and the spiritual awareness of pupils in particular.
35. The school plans well for a daily act of collective worship, which meets statutory requirements. Pupils are familiar with the format, which is similar on different days. The opportunity to listen to music, sing a hymn and say a prayer helps provide for their spiritual development. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
36. The story that is told provides well for their moral and social development. The school works hard on fostering a sense of community with common, inclusive values. A clear moral code is provided as a basis for behaviour, which is promoted consistently through all aspects of the school. The school has rules about behaviour and in all classrooms these are prominently displayed and pupils have a clear understanding about right and wrong. The school operates as a well-ordered community where pupils know what is expected of them. A range of opportunities for older pupils to take part in sporting activities supports the understanding of the need for rules and fair play.
37. The provision for the cultural development of the pupils is satisfactory. There are visits to local places of interest. There are talks given by visitors to the school, which serve to enrich the curriculum and broaden pupils' horizons. The school has a range of sporting activities and pupils take part in, among other sports, football and netball. The school makes good provision for pupils to learn to work together and live as part of a community through the annual residential trip for Years 3 and 4. Drama helps to enrich the cultural life of the pupils and they have taken part in regular productions. The high quality of the art displays around the school and especially in a Years 3 and 4 class enhances the environment and contribute to pupils' self-esteem and both their spiritual and cultural awareness. Investigative work in history and an appreciation of art and

horticulture showed that pupils develop a sense of wonder. However, there are few other opportunities for the pupils to appreciate and value the contribution made by other cultures to subjects such as art, music and dance. There is also insufficient attention given to the contributions made in the arts, public life and the professions by members of the ethnic minority groups that are represented both in the local area and in the diverse society that is Britain today.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

38. Pupils continue to be provided with a caring and supportive environment as reported at the last inspection. Staff know pupils very well and child protection procedures are sound. Parents are pleased with the care the school offers to their children and say that their children like school.
39. There are effective systems for safeguarding children's health and safety. Regular safety checks are made of the premises and equipment and formal written risk assessments are undertaken. Fire drills and electrical checks are carried out at regular intervals. Satisfactory first aid arrangements are in place for dealing with accidents and illness. Teaching staff are qualified in first aid but the midday supervisors have not received training. These supervisors, however, do meet with teachers on a regular, formal basis to discuss school policies that affect their working and to ensure a consistent approach to matters such as discipline. This is an improvement on the previous inspection.
40. Procedures for promoting good attendance and punctuality are unsatisfactory. Unexplained absences are not always followed up quickly and registers are not always completed correctly. There is currently no formal service level agreement between the school and the educational welfare service. Consequently, some families of pupils who are persistent non-attenders are not pursued rigorously. This is having an adverse affect on the overall attendance figures at the school.
41. The very good arrangements for promoting high standards of behaviour, including measures to prevent bullying, still exist since the previous inspection. There are simple rules for pupils, rewards for good behaviour and sanctions for dealing with misbehaviour. These rules were a result of staff consulting with pupils themselves and are well understood and appreciated by parents and carers. Rules are consistently applied by all staff.
42. Teachers show concern for pupils' personal development and the school gives very good support to individual pupils with problems. Targets are set and monitored for such things as concentration and behaviour and these are discussed with the relevant pupils and their parents.
43. Pupils' work is assessed each year using a range of tests. The results are analysed and pupils' progress is recorded. The school uses this data very effectively to identify and support pupils with special educational needs. It does not yet analyse the progress of the higher attaining pupils and work planned for these pupils is sometimes insufficiently challenging. An education record for each pupil is updated once a year and this information is reported to parents and passed on to the teacher in the next class.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

44. Parents view Howard Primary is a very good school. Overall, the effectiveness of the school's links with parents is good. The school has identified in its development plan the need to improve further their partnership by adopting a number of strategies and these are beginning to take effect.
45. Overall, parental involvement in pupils' learning is good. A small number help in school by supporting pupils' learning in the classroom. Some parents contribute to their child's learning at home. The school has developed a number of classes for parents to attend to give them a greater understanding of their child's learning. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the Parent Teacher Association and there is good support for social events. This group has been instrumental in raising funds that have been used effectively in paying for school trips and the purchase of learning resources. Most parents find it easy to approach the school with questions or concerns and these are effectively dealt with.
46. All parents are invited to attend meetings to discuss the achievement and progress of their child and they are closely involved in target setting and supporting their child. The detailed individual education plans for pupils with special educational needs identify how parents can contribute to the provision of support for their child.
47. The quality of information provided for parents is good overall. Newsletters from the headteacher and Parent Teacher Association keep parents informed about day-to-day matters, forthcoming events and curriculum areas that are being covered in the ensuing period. The prospectus is comprehensive but lacks detail about the school's special educational needs policy. The annual governors' report to parents is informative but lacks detail concerning absence rates and the professional development of staff. Parents are kept effectively informed about their child's progress through meetings with staff and detailed end of year academic reports that contain specific targets. This is an improvement on the previous inspection. The reports do not contain a space for parents and carers to add comments.
48. Links with parents are good. There is a high attendance at the formal meetings with staff and parents value the support they receive from the school.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

49. Leadership and management by the headteacher and key members of staff are good. He provides clear educational direction to the school and shares a commitment to improving standards with the staff and governors. He has also established good relationships in the local community. As a result, there is a high level of commitment from parents, many of whom help in the school. The procedures for determining priorities of the school have been improved to ensure that raising standards is the basis of improvement. The school has established a good assessment system with the potential for raising standards; this is beginning to have an impact on standards, particularly in mathematics. Its aim is to support staff in both tracking pupils' progress and revising school targets to ensure pupils are challenged to improve on their previous best. It has yet to have a significant impact on challenging higher attaining pupils.
50. The system established for monitoring and evaluating teaching is currently not consistent. As a result, it is not always effective in supporting the raising of standards across the school, particularly for higher attaining pupils. Although subject managers have had opportunities to observe lessons in the past, these activities have lacked

rigour. The monitoring and evaluation of teaching are insufficiently focussed to ensure that all lessons display the same features as the best observed during the inspection week. The senior management team has not yet ensured that the system they have established addresses weaknesses resulting out of low expectations for higher attaining pupils. Performance management has been introduced and is linked to job descriptions and subject managers' action plans. The headteacher and teaching staff have had appropriate training and are now embarking on this year's performance management review cycle. The school's aims of improving standards and providing a caring community are reflected effectively in the work of the school and, as a result, the school provides good value for money.

51. The school improvement plan reviews effectively the aims of the school and sets out the long-term strategic view of staff and governors, as well as short and medium-term priorities. The plan is presented in a clear format with initiatives aimed at improving standards. All teaching staff have the opportunity to make an input to school development planning and policy development. Funds are allocated to individual priorities appropriately in consultation with the finance committee of the governing body, and specific staff responsibilities are outlined. There is a suitable time-scale for each priority and initiatives are evaluated against the stated success criteria. Governors and staff are consulted by the headteacher as the plan is being drafted and reviewed and the final plan is presented to the full governing body for ratification. Financial management is good and effectively supported by the school's administrative staff. Information and communication technology is used to support financial planning and regular budget statements are monitored by the school. The school makes appropriate efforts to seek best value when purchasing goods and services and all specific grants have been used appropriately for their intended purpose.
52. The governing body is effective in carrying out its statutory duties. It is clear about its role to ensure that pupils in the school receive a good education and that the school continues to strive to raise standards. It is well organised in that appropriate committees have been set up to carry out its statutory duties. It has a rolling programme of reviewing subjects and it receives reports from the headteacher and subject managers. Governors have been trained for performance management and are fulfilling their statutory duty in terms of performance review of the headteacher. He encourages governors to take an active role in the management of the school and as a result governors have a good long-term strategic view of the school. He also ensures that they are well informed through formal reports at governors' meetings where they are able to raise questions. They make regular visits to ensure the school's activities are monitored effectively.
53. Staffing levels are good and teachers' individual qualifications and expertise are well deployed. Class teachers are well supported by the four teaching assistants, one being allocated to each of the classes in Years 1 and 2 and one being shared between the classes in Years 3 and 4. These, and teachers who support their colleagues in the classroom or withdraw groups, make a significant impact on the standards achieved by pupils with special educational needs. The special educational needs manager works closely with class teachers to ensure that pupils' needs are met effectively. The school has a high level of commitment to all pupils and, as a result, most make good progress. The special educational needs manager analyses assessment data, tracks progress and monitors and co-ordinates these groups very effectively. Subject managers are given time to monitor teachers' planning and the coverage of their curriculum area, but as yet there is no planned programme for them to work alongside teachers in the classroom in order to share their expertise. The headteacher and deputy headteacher are responsible for monitoring performance management, which

involves observing teachers work in the classroom. Further staff training is arranged on a whole school basis and usually involves experts from within the school or local schools. A recent focus has been the analysis of boys' and girls' performance, which has been effective in raising the standard of boys' reading and writing throughout the school. Pupils are well supervised at lunchtime by the extra staff employed for this purpose, and they are supported by teachers and the systems in place.

54. The school's accommodation is good. Classrooms and the separate nursery are large and good use is made of the space within them to accommodate areas for oral teaching and written work with easy access to information and communication technology equipment. The extra classroom and rooms in the bungalow are used for group teaching and provide opportunities for teachers to work with small groups of pupils without disruption to the rest of the class. The bungalow is also a good facility for meetings and working groups for parents, carers and the community. The large hall provides plenty of space for the whole school to meet for assembly and for class physical education activities. The school is fortunate in having a separate dining room and makes good use of this facility at other times, for example, for class practical activities in science.
55. Displays of work throughout the school celebrate pupils' achievement and are of a high standard. Some illustrate events within the life of the school and others prompt reflection. The courtyard and area in front of the school are attractive and used by the pupils for growing seeds and bulbs. The small library areas have recently been developed and books are labelled for easy access. They would benefit from a greater number of books both, fiction and non-fiction. The rain forest décor in the fiction area really appeals to the pupils and makes this a very attractive place for them to choose books and sit and read. Outside both the hard play area and large field provide good facilities for physical education and recreation.
56. Resources for learning are satisfactory for most subjects and good for physical education. There are appropriate storage areas for equipment, which are easily accessible and most are well labelled. Teachers keep a collection of library books, and some science and art and craft materials, in their classrooms for easy access. There is a small group room, which is used for food technology. The school is aware of the need to review and supplement resources for all areas of design and technology.
57. The school makes good use of educational facilities outside school and the older pupils go on a residential course. Pupils contribute to the town festival and, through the artist in residence scheme, have produced some spectacular large three-dimensional models.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

58. In order to build on the existing standards in the school, the governors, headteacher and staff should:

- (1) Broaden the analysis of assessment data to include tracking the progress of higher attaining pupils and raising teachers' expectations of their achievement; (paragraphs 43 and 49)
- (2) Improve the resources for design and technology and increase teachers' confidence in their use in order to make all aspects of this subject available to pupils; (paragraph 103)
- (3) Ensure that all subject managers effectively monitor and evaluate teaching and learning in their subjects; (paragraph 50)
- (4) Review the time allocated to religious education to ensure pupils build step-by-step on their knowledge, skills and understanding. (paragraph 36)

In addition to the key issues above, the following weaknesses should be considered for inclusion in the action plan:

- I. Ensure that outdoor resources for the physical development of children in the Foundation Stage of learning are effectively used; (paragraph 66)
- II. Improve the monitoring of pupils' attendance in partnership with the Education Welfare Officer. (paragraph 40)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	43
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	22

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	13	15	15	0	0	0
Percentage	0	30	35	35	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	16	182
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	N/a	23

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	Nursery	YR – Y4
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	0	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	2	60

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	2
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.2
National comparative data	5.6

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0
National comparative data	0.5

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

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

	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 1 for the latest reporting year	2001	28	21	49

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		Reading	Writing	Mathematics
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	25	26
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	40	45	46
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (56)	92 (81)	94 (78)
	National	84 (83)	86 (84)	91 (90)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 2 and above	Boys	21	26	26
	Girls	19	20	20
	Total	40	46	4
Percentage of pupils at NC level 2 or above	School	82 (69)	94 (91)	94 (91)
	National	85 (84)	89 (88)	89 (88)

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

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	1
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	182
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Exclusions in the last school year

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

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

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y4

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	9.3
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	19.7
Average class size	26.1

Education support staff: YR – Y4

Total number of education support staff	9
Total aggregate hours worked per week	182.5

Qualified teachers and support staff: nursery

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	1
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	16
Total number of education support staff	1
Total aggregate hours worked per week	12.5
Number of pupils per FTE adult	10.7

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/1
----------------	--------

	£
Total income	452,896
Total expenditure	440,966
Expenditure per pupil	2,080
Balance brought forward from previous year	7,391
Balance carried forward to next year	19,321

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	2
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	2.4

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

Number of questionnaires sent out

199

Number of questionnaires returned

88

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	57	39	4	0	0
My child is making good progress in school.	52	46	2	0	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	40	52	6	0	2
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	40	48	6	3	3
The teaching is good.	60	37	2	0	1
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	50	41	8	1	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	73	24	2	1	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	58	39	2	1	0
The school works closely with parents.	45	51	1	2	1
The school is well led and managed.	55	42	1	1	1
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	48	48	1	0	3
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	44	47	4	2	3

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

AREAS OF LEARNING FOR CHILDREN IN THE FOUNDATION STAGE

59. The provision for children at the Foundation Stage is good overall. At the time of the last inspection, curriculum provision for children aged under five was judged to be good and the hard work and commitment of staff have ensured that this good provision has been maintained. Children are admitted into the nursery class at the beginning of the term in which they are 4 years old. They have two terms in the morning group and then transfer to the afternoon group for the term before entering the reception class. This brings the benefit of small classes, with 21 in the morning nursery session and 11 in the afternoon session and 20 children in the reception class. As a result, teachers and learning support assistants have time to concentrate on individual children's needs. Both classes are well organised and provide a stimulating and caring environment into which children settle quickly.
60. The quality and range of the curriculum is good. Teachers are familiar with, and knowledgeable about, the Foundation Stage curriculum and they use this well to inform their lesson planning. Assessment of children's attainment is mainly judged against the early learning goals, which it is expected most children will achieve by the end of their reception year. However, the 'stepping stones' for learning, as outlined in the curriculum guidance for this age range, could be more formally included in the day-to-day lesson planning. Use of these smaller steps in children's learning would enable teachers to more accurately assess and record progress throughout the year. This would enable them to identify more effectively aspects of the early learning goals with which some children experience difficulties and to plan activities with greater precision to ensure that children build effectively on previous learning.
61. As a result of the adults' skill in settling the children into school and establishing well-understood routines, children feel happy and secure in their new environment and are well-motivated and enthusiastic learners. The school plans the curriculum based on the Early Learning Goals in the six areas of learning: personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy, mathematics development, knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. In their planning for learning, teachers allow time each day for child initiated activities when children are encouraged to pursue their natural curiosity and drive for learning. Children engage in activities set out under each of the six areas of learning. Staff interact effectively with children to build on the knowledge and understanding children bring to school. They keep careful records of what they learn about each child and use this to inform their planning for new learning experiences. Consequently, all children are making rapid progress. Baseline assessment, which is administered on entry to the reception class, shows that children's attainment is below average and that there are very few achieving above average scores. Children score least well in the speaking and listening and the oral mathematics' activities. By the end of the reception year many pupils attain the expected level in each area of learning with the exception of communication, literacy and language development.

Personal, social and emotional development

62. Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted very well. Staff are extremely skilful at settling children into the routines of the school day and their learning environment. Children respond in a positive manner to the high expectations of the adults who work with them. They work very well in small groups and are able to take

turns waiting to use the computer or a favourite toy. They know they are expected to tidy up after they have used equipment and have learned to return things to their designated places. Ensuring that children understand the importance of washing their hands before handling food, develops good standards of personal hygiene. Staff develop good manners in the children through gentle reminders, such as saying 'please' and 'thank you'. They also encourage children to take turns and to line up without pushing in. This has created a calm environment in all rooms, in which children can enjoy learning and playing. Reception age children socialise with peers and dinner ladies over their lunch and handle knives and forks with improved dexterity. Children make very good progress in this area from a low base, to reach standards that are in line with those expected when they leave the reception classes.

Communication, language and literacy

63. Many children have poorly developed listening and speaking skills when they enter the Foundation Stage. Children quickly recognise their names through the good system of self registration, and every opportunity is taken to reinforce language skills. Children's listening skills are enhanced by careful questioning about the day, to which they are encouraged to answer. By the end of their time in both classes most children have improved considerably their listening skills and respond to questioning with appropriate answers. The few higher attaining children enter into quite lengthy discussions about themselves and the tasks they are engaged in. Nursery age children know the difference between writing and pictures on the teacher's organising board and in the reception class some already identify punctuation such as a full-stop. Together they recognise the letter 'd' written in both lower and upper case formats and identify objects that begin with this letter. Children use the computer independently to produce symmetrical patterns and demonstrate good mouse control. In the role-play area children are 'telephoning' their mothers, asking them what they would like for lunch and recording the order using written strings of clearly formed letters. Teachers and support staff are very aware of what children can do and write detailed notes about children's activities. The adults are very good role models using language effectively to communicate with children. They have high expectations and praise children for their efforts making them feel valued. Children experience a language rich environment. Everything is clearly labelled and children already have an understanding of what the different labels communicate. A wide selection of books is available to them to peruse. Children are already benefiting from appropriate elements of the literacy framework. They are encouraged to write their names on all work that they do, and they try very hard to do this. As a result of the good teaching they experience, children see themselves as readers, writers and confident communicators. Although most children make good, and often very good progress, at the end of the reception year, children's development in this area is below that expected because of their restricted vocabulary.

Mathematical development

64. Teaching is good and children make good progress in this area of development from a low base, to reach levels of attainment that are below those expected when they enter Year 1. All adults are extremely adept at recognising the mathematical knowledge children are bringing with them to school and every opportunity is used to develop children's skills in this area. For example, when tasting yoghurt, the round shape of the containers was emphasised and explored with further work planned on recording findings on a bar chart. During this session there was also good development of children's mathematical vocabulary when children were encouraged to compare lengths of various items of cutlery and threads in a spider's web. Counting is constantly reinforced, and this was seen when children were asked how many legs a

spider has. Counting rhymes are used, and children count the number of boys, girls, how many have milk and how many do not. The majority of children in the nursery know the number sequence to five, although not all are able to count objects accurately. The variety of activities in the reception classes reinforces difficult concepts, such as adding on. Many recognise and count numbers to 9, although some are unsure of their place value. They show a developing understanding of the signs for 'plus' and 'more than'. They concentrate for a considerable length of time enjoying mathematics; they are mathematicians and problem solvers already as a result of the good teaching.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

65. Most children enter the school with sound general knowledge and with the benefit of good teaching many are likely to achieve the Early Learning Goal for this area of learning by the end of the reception year. They know their learning environment well and move confidently and with independence around the different areas on offer to them, both inside and outside the classrooms, the practical area and the shared room. They talk about where they live and are knowledgeable about how seeds grow into plants. They understand that plants have leaves, flowers and roots and are very enthusiastic about the nasturtium plants that they have grown from seed. They have a clear understanding of how to look after the class goldfish and hamster. They are familiar with the people in their school who help them, such as the dinner ladies who serve their meals and look after them during lunchtime and the caretaker and cleaners who look after their classrooms, keeping them clean.

Physical development

66. The nursery and reception classes provide many opportunities for children to develop their skills of cutting, sticking, and using construction kits. However, although nursery age children have the opportunity to play on wheeled toys, to climb and to balance this provision is very under-used. At the time of inspection no reception age children were given the opportunity to use these facilities. Also, the provision for outdoor play is not planned effectively to ensure that these facilities are an integral part of planned classroom activities. Children in the nursery use the outdoor space with an awareness of others, and travel around the hard paved area without collisions. Their skills of balancing, climbing and riding two and three-wheeled toys is that expected for their age. Satisfactory provision is made for reception age children's physical development through their use of the school hall in timetabled physical education lessons. Children's cutting and sticking skills are poor on entry to the nursery, and are below those expected by the end of the foundation stage although they handle tools, objects and pencils with growing confidence and skill. Very good teaching in the reception class gives children excellent opportunities to develop their physical skills and mathematical development at the same time, for example, when children are asked to 'stop in the red hexagon.' They were totally absorbed exploring body movement and finding different ways of moving on and off large climbing apparatus. Already, they have good control over their bodies, have a sense of their own and other people's space and most will achieve the learning goal for this area by the end of their time in reception.

Creative development

67. Progress in this area of children's development is very good and many meet the expected goals by the end of reception. Adults ensure that children have good and at times very good opportunities for being creative. This area of development is enhanced in all classes by the displays, and by children's paintings. They are encouraged to use paint to represent what they see or imagine. Children's drawings of people is very poor. On entry to the nursery, people are often drawn without faces and arms. In reception, some children draw faces that are a good representation of what they see, but some children still draw figures without hands or feet. By the use of rhyme and song, children develop a sense of pitch. Through the use of instruments, children learn about the different sounds that can be made. Through painting and modelling, children explore shape and texture. Imaginative painting shows clearly the development of their creativity. The impact of good teaching is evident in the confidence these children demonstrate and the enthusiasm, as well as their ability to concentrate.

ENGLISH

68. Standards in some aspects of English, most notably reading at the higher level 3, spelling and the performance of boys, have improved since the last inspection. National test results in 2001 show that standards at age 7 are in line with national expectations in reading but are below expectations for speaking and listening and for writing.
69. However, when compared to those in similar schools, standards are above average in reading and average in writing. The standards achieved by higher attaining pupils are in line with national expectations for reading but below for writing and speaking and listening. Teachers identified boys' achievement to be weak and have made this a particular focus for teaching. Results show that in national tests in 2001, boys' performance is now almost in line with that of girls. Inspection findings reflect these test results. By the end of Year 4, pupils mainly attain level 3 in reading and achieve national expectations but the standard of writing of the most able pupils remains below national averages.
70. When pupils enter the school the range of their vocabulary is limited and their speaking and listening skills are poor. Their experience of books and pencil control is also limited. Effective teaching in Years 1 and 2 addresses this and teachers use good strategies to develop pupils' skills and to keep them on task and increase their span of concentration. Teachers in all year groups are adept at identifying opportunities for pupils to express themselves verbally and make very good use of other subjects as contexts to develop their speaking and listening skills. In Year 1, some pupils still have difficulty in communicating effectively but most talk about their work and describe what they are doing. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 express opinions and most offer limited explanations, for example, when carrying out practical science activities. Some pupils read a prepared sports report to the whole school and others describe briefly their involvement in lunchtime clubs to their year groups. Despite their best efforts the standards of pupils' speaking and listening remains below national expectations by the end of year. This is mainly due to their limited vocabulary.
71. Given the limitations of many pupils' skills on entry to Year 1 this group does well to attain satisfactory standards in reading by the age of seven. All pupils respond well to oral teaching and this emphasis in the literacy strategy supports them as they learn to read. In Year 1, pupils are heard reading several times a week and reading records related to skills are kept. Regular reading related activities during literacy group work increase pupils' confidence. Pupils in Year 1 enjoy looking at books and recognise

some words in the text. Most pupils in Year 2 read their books accurately and use the context and pictures to correct their errors and their knowledge of phonics to build up unfamiliar words. Higher attaining pupils read fluently and with expression and talk about the story.

72. Years 3 and 4 pupils are more confident readers. Group reading in the literacy hour is well managed and thoughtful questioning encourages pupils to analyse the text. They are heard reading individually less frequently and although reading records are kept they are on occasions brief and not diagnostic. Pupils have 15 minutes' silent reading a day and are encouraged to borrow a book at the weekend, although some say they rarely read at home. In school, pupils listen to story tapes, they enjoy reading poetry as well as fiction books and talk about their favourite authors. Most use an index to find information in a reference book and some scan text to find information quickly. These skills support their learning in other areas of the curriculum.
73. The development of writing is slow for many pupils as they have poor pencil control at the beginning of Year 1. However, due to very regular structured teaching, pupils build up these skills and make good progress. In the oral part of the lesson, teachers use familiar contexts and pupils can contribute with confidence. For example, a class of Year 1 pupils developed a conversation between two characters based on the school play, Jack and the Beanstalk. Much of the written work is focussed at word and sentence level with a particular focus on spelling and punctuation, but they seldom put these skills together. The work in pupils' books indicates that they have insufficient opportunities to complete extended pieces of writing. Higher attaining pupils complete the exercises they are set accurately. This work is sometimes insufficiently challenging and does not enable them to reach their full potential.
74. Pupils have difficulty in expressing themselves clearly in written form, and this has an impact on their work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 3 and 4 draw clear oral conclusions from practical science investigations but for many the written work did not reflect this level of understanding.
75. Overall, teaching is good and some very good teaching was seen. There were no unsatisfactory lessons. Teachers have a clear understanding of their subject. Most use the structure of the literacy hour well and are effective at keeping pupils on task. Teachers' planning shows attention to detail and lessons are well prepared. They use questioning effectively and involve pupils of all abilities in the oral part of the lesson. Group work is differentiated but is sometimes insufficiently challenging for the most able pupils. Test results show that teachers underestimate the ability of these pupils, especially in reading. Where teaching is good, learning objectives are made explicit to pupils and are used as the main focus for oral feedback. This has a significant impact on pupils' progress in lessons. Teachers mark work regularly, written comments usually give a quality judgement or relate to spellings and are insufficiently analytical of pupils' achievement so they do not always know what to do to improve.
76. Classes, especially those in Years 1 and 2, are very well supported by special needs teachers and teaching assistants and they make a significant impact on standards achieved in group work. Teachers plan well with them and make time for informal feedback at the end of the lesson. Their time could be used more effectively during oral sessions and in the plenary in some lessons. Pupils with special educational needs are very well taught and the system of withdrawing groups is well managed so that they return to the class and are included in the plenary session.

77. Management of English is satisfactory. The subject manager has improved the library environment and facilities and it is now a very attractive area where pupils enjoy selecting books and reading. Books available are in good condition and well labelled so that pupils can make an appropriate selection.
78. The subject manager has done some analysis of assessment data and identified boys' reading as an area for improvement. They have used the East Anglian daily times reading project to good effect to raise standards. They have also increased the choice and use of non-fiction books to appeal to boys and this has been effective in raising boys' achievement, which is now almost in line with the national average. The school also identified spelling as a weakness and made this a focus for improvement. The subject manager devised a whole-school progression for the teaching of spelling which has been effective in raising standards.
79. The school actively encourages parents to support their child's reading at home and has run a "Reading together" evening, which was well attended. Time is allocated to manage the subject and this has been used to monitor planning and coverage of the subject. There are as yet no plans for the subject manager to share her expertise and support teachers in the classroom and currently the quality of teaching and learning varies between classrooms

MATHEMATICS

80. By the end of Year 2, at the time of the last inspection in 1997, overall national test results were below the national average. Since then results at the expected level 2 have improved considerably, with 2001 national test results showing that pupils' performance at the expected level 2 was in line with the national average. However, the performance of pupils at the higher levels was below average. As a result, the average National Curriculum points scores show overall attainment at below the national average for all schools nationally. Standards in Years 3 and 4 are below the national average and this is supported by the results in the 1999 and 2000 national tests. However, these two year groups are now making satisfactory, and often good, progress due to the focus the school have recently given to improving standards and the introduction of the Numeracy Strategy. There is some difference in the performance of girls and boys in the mathematics tests with girls performing better than boys. However, this mirrors the national picture which shows that girls usually do attain better than boys. When compared with similar schools attainment was in line with the average for these schools.
81. Analysis of test scores prior to inspection shows weaknesses in teacher assessments at the higher levels with teachers under-estimating pupils' achievements. A contributory factor to this weakness was that some teachers lacked a secure knowledge of what higher attaining pupils should be able to do at age seven. Consequently, the work pupils were asked to do was at a lower level than it should have been and, as a result, these pupils were not making the good progress of which they are capable. Current Year 4 pupils are attaining below average standards but their progress has improved due to the good teaching they receive. Also, the school is setting by ability across both Key Stage 2 classes and higher attaining pupils are being effectively challenged.
82. Inspection evidence based on lesson observations, an analysis of pupils' past and present work and discussion with them and their teachers, indicates that current attainment is close to the national average in Year 2 and they are on course to attain national averages at the end of Year 2. Achievement for the current Year 2 pupils,

including those with special educational needs and the pupils with English as an additional language, is good overall. In Year 4, evidence indicates that current attainment is below the national.

83. Pupils in Year 1 and Year 2 are developing good mathematical vocabulary, which reflects the care taken by teachers to use appropriate terminology. In Year 1, many pupils add or subtract numbers when solving problems involving up to 10 objects and explain how they arrived at their answers. By the end of Year 2, pupils count to 100 and put numbers in order, reading and recording them accurately, and matching the number word to the correct digits. In mental arithmetic, most know addition facts to ten and higher attaining pupils know them to 20. Most readily identify odd and even numbers. They decide which number they will record on paper first when adding a larger and a smaller number. They are familiar with all coins and find the total price of two items in the class shop. Higher attaining pupils extend their knowledge by finding the change from £5. Pupils understand simple place value, use number bonds competently, recognise coins of different value and predict missing numbers when sequencing. Pupils are beginning to learn their two, five and ten times tables and use this knowledge to solve simple number problems. There is a strong emphasis on mental arithmetic, which is beginning to have a positive effect on recall of number facts. Pupils double numbers up to a total of 20 accurately in their heads. Many estimate the weight of objects and compare lengths, capacities and masses. They weigh a variety of objects using non-standard measurements. There is little evidence that pupils are involved in collecting data in order to record results in charts. A satisfactory amount of work on shape and measures is included in pupils' work samples. For example, many name two-dimensional shapes, such as octagon, hexagon, circle, pentagon and rectangle. They also identify correctly how many sides and corners in each shape. Pupils with special educational needs are supported well in smaller groups and reach appropriate levels of attainment, as do the pupils with English as an additional language.
84. By the end of Year 4, most pupils have a sound understanding of place value to 100, which they apply in calculation. Higher attaining pupils have sound computation skills, which enable them to solve mathematical problems using their skills and knowledge. Pupils of all abilities show some increasing speed and accuracy in using their mental and oral arithmetic skills. However, this is not a strength and few have an instant recall of multiplication facts. In Year 3, higher attaining pupils use their knowledge of the multiplication tables of 2, 5 and 10 to calculate division facts. Higher attaining pupils in Year 4 use the multiplication tables of 4 to solve problems. Average attaining pupils divide accurately simple two-digit numbers by 2. Pupils in Year 4 record numbers on a grid to show that division is the inverse of multiplication. Occasionally, higher attaining pupils use their numeracy skills in investigations involving the four rules in fractions and in decimals using money. However, investigations do not feature highly in samples of pupils' work. They have collected some data, for example, favourite food and colours, but the use of information and communication technology is not well developed in mathematics lessons at present. Those with special educational needs are supported well in smaller groups and reach appropriate levels of attainment.
85. The quality of teaching is variable but is good overall. In Key Stage 1 it is good and has been effective in raising current standards. However, much of the work for this year group rarely shows that tasks set for pupils take account of differing levels of ability. This also contributes to a lack of challenge for some higher attaining pupils. In the lessons observed in Key Stage 2, teaching overall is also good. There is clear evidence in pupils' samples of work and in lessons for these two year groups that teachers plan their lessons to ensure that the work set is appropriate for different levels

of ability. The teachers are helped in this because the school has decided to teach these pupils in ability sets and therefore there is appropriate challenge for pupils of different ability. All teachers are enthusiastic about the National Numeracy Strategy and are implementing it thoughtfully. Effective lesson planning based on this usually takes into account the needs of pupils at different levels of attainment but is more effective with older pupils. As a consequence of below average standards in the past, most teaching is now more rigorous. In the best lessons, teachers communicate explicitly the learning objectives. However, not all teachers constantly refer to them at regular intervals during the lesson to assess what pupils have done and learnt. During the good quality plenary parts of the lesson teachers check what pupils have done and learnt in the lesson and elicit from them what they need to do to extend further their mathematical knowledge, understanding and skills. This gives pupils an opportunity to recognise their own learning and to understand what they need to know next. The quality of teaching in these lessons is very good because the teachers demonstrate very good subject knowledge. Lessons build progressively on the objectives introduced earlier in the week. A strength of most teachers is the direct teaching of the basic numeracy skills, which is thorough, and opportunities are provided for pupils to use them in problem solving, which they enjoy. Management of pupils is a significant strength in many classrooms. As a result, pupils generally concentrate hard and persevere when given challenging work and teacher attention, but those left to work more independently allow their attention to wander away from their tasks.

86. A strength of many lessons is the mental and oral starter, which gives a clear start to the lesson and maintains a brisk pace. Significant weaknesses in previous teaching of the subject were low expectations of some teachers and ineffective teaching methods, which resulted in many pupils not being challenged in their work. In many classes, work is set with no indication from the teacher of how long pupils have to complete tasks. Consequently, pupils, rather than teachers, are setting the pace of the lesson and are dictating how much work will be completed. As a result, pupils complete less work than they should to reinforce new learning or to consolidate previous skills. This has a negative impact on the progress made by some pupils, both in lessons and over time. Although the school states that targets are set for all pupils there was little evidence that pupils in all year groups were reminded in lessons of their individual targets. The use of the final session to review pupils' learning is not used effectively in some classes. Marking of work is satisfactory. There were some good examples of marking, which inform pupils of their strengths and of areas for development. Setting of homework is inconsistent, with pupils and parents not aware of either its regularity or expectations.
87. Pupils' attitudes towards mathematics are good or better throughout the school. They show a positive interest and enthusiasm, behave well in lessons and demonstrate good relationships with peers, teachers and classroom assistants. They usually show initiative and take responsibility for their work and learning. Good relationships between staff and pupils help to create a stimulating working environment and a growing interest and enjoyment in the subject. Occasionally, where teaching is less successful, pupils do not always listen to the teacher and there is, on occasions, a considerable amount of off-task behaviour.
88. The implementation of the National Numeracy Strategy is a key feature in the school's efforts to raise standards. Much time and effort has been given to ensure that members of staff were well prepared for this. Classrooms have lively notice boards listing mathematics vocabulary and large and small number lines are used to good effect. There are few stimulating displays of work around the school, which would help to give the subject importance in pupils' eyes. There are bright and colourful

resources, especially now in Key Stage 1, which are used well in lessons. There has been some monitoring of mathematics by the new subject leader but this has not been effective in ensuring that all teaching is of an equally high quality. Mathematics is brought to the pupils' attention in subjects such as design and technology, art and design, science and geography and also makes a suitable contribution to pupils' developing literacy skills

89. The subject manager has only held responsibility for a short while and has observed some learning. However, she has yet to monitor teachers' lesson planning against work achieved in the lessons. She has analysed the national test papers to gain information about areas of weaknesses in pupils' knowledge and understanding. As a result, the school's curriculum is being modified to ensure that all aspects of the National Curriculum are covered in sufficient detail. There are now suitable assessment procedures in place to monitor progress over the short-term but procedures to track progress since entry to school has yet to be developed. Currently, although she has a good understanding of necessary developments in the subject she has yet to fully manage and lead the subject to ensure that every pupil is making the best progress they can. However, there are considerable improvements since the last inspection, particularly in standards being achieved and overall progress being made. There are some samples of assessed, moderated and levelled. However, these have not been kept up-to-date and therefore their use in assisting teachers in identifying correctly the levels pupils are working at, or to assist teachers in measuring pupils' progress, is limited.

SCIENCE

90. Standards in science across the school are broadly in line with the national average.
91. By the end of Key Stage 1 in 2001, 94 per cent of pupils had achieved the expected level 2 for their age as compared with 88 per cent nationally. At the same time, the number of pupils reaching the higher level 3 was slightly below the national average. These findings are very similar to those observed in the inspection. Evidence from lessons and scrutiny of work show pupils reaching level 2 quite swiftly; for example, a good proportion of Year 1 pupils already name the main parts of a vegetable (stem, leaf, root etc) and know that plants need minerals, light, warmth and air to flourish. There is, however, little evidence that many Year 2 pupils have moved beyond this level. Less able pupils at the end of the key stage have, as a result of careful teaching and support, also achieved the expected level. An example of this was observed in a lesson on materials where these pupils, including some with special educational needs, described confidently how they sorted different types of paper into groups based upon the appropriateness of the material for wrapping a present.
92. Standards in Key Stage 2 show a similar pattern. Year 3 pupils are having some success in using scientific terms to name the different parts of the body but the work shows that Year 4 pupils are achieving similar results. Pupils in this key stage demonstrate that they understand what a fair test is but there is less evidence to suggest that they know why such tests are a vital ingredient in scientific enquiry. For example, in an experiment to find out if people with longer legs can jump further than their shorter legged counterparts they could not explain why it would be necessary to carry out more than one jump each. There is no evidence of differences in performance at either key stage between boys and girls or those for whom English is an additional language.

93. The attitudes and behaviour of pupils in science lessons is good. They work well in groups and, although they are excited by practical challenges, they behave sensibly.
94. There is evidence of good progress in the subject since the last inspection. At that time 75 per cent of pupils were attaining the expected level for their age at the end of Key Stage 1, some 20 percent less than now. Although the numbers of children achieving the higher level 3 is still below the national average, at the time of the last inspection no pupils were reaching that level. Standards across the two key stages were below the national average previously but in line now. The curriculum is broader now, with the school having successfully included more investigative and experimental work. The last inspection did, however, point out the need to include more open-ended enquiry to improve the standards of more able pupils and the school still needs to do more work on this. The degree of progress suggests that the school is well placed to continue to improve in the subject.
95. All of the teaching seen in science was at least good. In Key Stage 1 only one lesson was observed and this was very good. Particular features of this lesson were the ways in which the teacher gave pupils opportunities to reflect on what they had learned and setting new challenge. She repeatedly modelled scientific terminology and the need to predict and then test. Both lessons seen in Key Stage 2 were good. The work in the lessons was well linked by the teachers to previous knowledge and good planning and use of resources enabled the children to experiment successfully in their groups. In one lesson on measuring to see if bones grow as we get older there was an opportunity for more able pupils to attempt to explain why they thought the measurements were different, while a less able group was given a simpler task. Evidence from pupils' books shows that such differentiation does not happen frequently enough, with groups in most cases all completing the same tasks and recording in the same manner. Teachers use assessment of previous work in their introductions to lessons but there is little evidence in books of assessment being used to direct specific challenges to individual pupils. A new system of periodic testing at the end of units has recently been introduced.
96. In the last two years the subject manager has worked to reshape the policy for the subject. She uses a termly evaluation sheet to monitor the content of the curriculum based upon comments from class teachers. Although there are plans to introduce monitoring of lessons this has not yet started. A recent focus has ensured that there are good links between the subject and literacy sessions; for example, books used in those lessons include some on food and others on animal adaptation in polar regions. The subject is also used in conjunction with art and mathematics to produce very attractive displays in all classrooms; for example in Key Stage 1 there are accurate displays highlighting the growth of plants and in Key Stage 2 some very good visual work on bones, including X-ray. The subject also contributes to the personal social and health education programme with work on sex education and healthy eating.

ART AND DESIGN

97. Only one art lesson was seen during the inspection week due to timetable limitations and inspection priorities. Judgements are also based on sketchbooks, wall displays and discussions with pupils and teachers. Pupils in both key stages attain the standard expected for their age.
98. Pupils in all years are taught to work with a range of media and many examples of drawing, painting, printing and collage are displayed around the school. Pupils are proud of what they have done and their work is valued. A "picture of the week" is displayed outside the non-fiction library. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 are taught techniques

and use their experimentation with pencil to make three-dimensional pictures. All pupils have easy access to the computer and confidence in its use. This allows some pupils in Year 1 to use a graphics and paint program to develop their own design.

99. Pupils in Years 3 and 4 have a sketch-book in which they practise techniques and experiment with materials. They study the work of famous painters. Prints of paintings by Rembrandt and Renoir are studied by pupils in Years 3 and 4, who then produced their own portraits in paint and chalk. A very good lesson was seen with Years 3 and 4 pupils when they worked co-operatively in pairs to create a three-dimensional paper face. They work with sustained concentration and apply their knowledge of materials and joining techniques to produce effective and creative masks. Pupils search the portrait site on the Internet and print out their choice with confidence.
100. The school has made good use of the artist in residence for the past two years and displays and photographs show the results of collaborative work to produce some large puppets, an eye-catching crane, and an enormous dragon.
101. There is a policy and scheme of work for art and design, which guides progression of skills and techniques and indicates appropriate contexts, including those in other curriculum subjects. The quality of work displayed in classrooms is variable. Class teaching is monitored and supported by the subject manager, but she has not yet had the opportunity to work with teachers in their classrooms to share her considerable expertise.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

102. Attainment in design and technology in both key stages is below national expectations. Standards have not improved since the last inspection but the school is aware of this and the subject manager has identified the problems.
103. Resources, both equipment and materials, for working with food, textiles, resistant materials and construction are inadequate to teach all areas of the curriculum. Many teachers are not confident in the safe use of tools and the appropriate techniques to allow pupils to work with the full range of resistant materials. The school has some equipment, a small mobile tool store and work-station for working with resistant materials, and a food area with sink, microwave and cooker and some equipment for the teaching of food technology. These are insufficient for group or class teaching at present and are not stored to allow easy access or use.
104. However, pupils are being taught some design and technology and teaching seen was satisfactory and some was good. Good use is made of links with literacy. Pupils refer to illustrations of lever mechanisms in Years 1 and 2. In Years 3 and 4 they use recipe books and write their own list of instructions for making sandwiches.
105. When pupils come into the school their manipulative skills are poor. This is soon addressed and they are given repeated opportunities for cutting and shaping paper and card and are taught a range of techniques for joining pieces together. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 make faces with moving parts as a focussed practical task. Their work shows that there is some scope for individuality of design. In discussion, pupils evaluate their work and say how it could be improved. In a Year 1 class, pupils applied their cutting and joining skills to make a variety of Easter baskets. Focussed practical tasks are followed up by more open opportunities for pupils to design. Good teaching was observed where instructions were clear and the pupils developed their own designs from a range of possibilities. They work enthusiastically and persevere when they have

difficulties. Work is well matched to pupils' ability and they are all able to complete the task. All designs are different and many pupils evolve creative solutions.

- 106. In Key Stage 2, pupils make sandwiches and select appropriate fillings. The practical opportunity is limited by lack of equipment and facilities, and teaching opportunities are missed. For example, there is no examination or evaluation of products on the market.
- 107. The subject manager has prepared a scheme of work, which teachers are trialling within the current limitations of materials and equipment. At present, design and technology is not an established part of the curriculum at Key Stage 2 and there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to be taught the subject.

GEOGRAPHY

- 108. By both the ages of seven and eleven, the standards that pupils attain in geography are in line with those expected nationally. They are similar to those seen the last time the school was inspected. Only one lesson, in Years 3 and 4 was seen during this inspection, but sufficient evidence to form a judgement on standards was obtained by analysing work, talking to pupils and examining planning.
- 109. At Key Stage 1, pupils have studied the area in which they live. They have completed a local study of the shops on their estate and the goods that are sold. They give opinions for the suggested use of an empty shop unit. They match a two-dimensional plan of the shopping area to various businesses and give appropriate reasons for the advantages of supermarkets. They understand and use the four main compass points and have an early knowledge of grid references for finding items on a map.
- 110. Building on the sound progress they have made, pupils at Key Stage 2 become increasingly familiar with the wider world, and with some of the issues surrounding man's use of the environment. Sometimes, topical issues are used very effectively to make their learning more meaningful; for example, pupils discuss the school environment and put forward suggestions on how it could be improved. They have also looked in detail at aspects of physical geography, including climate and weather and the effect of weather on what we do. In this area of work there were good links with their science work on keeping warm. Across the key stage, written work is at the expected level and pupils make satisfactory progress. Many pupils illustrate their work well with large and careful drawings. Across the school, art is used well to support the geography curriculum.
- 111. Only one lesson was observed, but some conclusions may still be drawn about the quality of teaching and learning. Pupils are offered a suitable range of work, but tasks set in some classes across the school do not always encourage higher attaining pupils to express themselves in depth, nor do they allow them sufficient scope for independent learning. However, pupils are encouraged to work at a good pace, and the content of the work indicates that teachers display satisfactory knowledge of the subject.
- 112. The curriculum is sufficiently broad, and has been reviewed recently to ensure that year groups appropriately cover each of its aspects. Leadership of the subject is generally sound and progress since the previous inspection has been satisfactory. There is a sound understanding of current strengths and weaknesses in the school's provision for geography and appropriate steps have been taken to address its shortcomings. Resources for the subject require further improvement in range and quality. Local studies and visits further afield are sometimes made, but these resources are not used

extensively. Arrangements for assessing pupils' attainment in the subject have been made recently, but these have not yet been put into practice. Maps and photographs are used effectively to support and enhance pupils' understanding, and the subject is linked imaginatively to some aspects of the history curriculum at Key Stage 1.

HISTORY

113. By the age of seven, standards in history are in line with those expected nationally for this age and pupils make satisfactory progress in the subject during Key Stage 1. This is because they are offered a well-founded curriculum that links well their limited experience of different aspects of life today with those of life in the past. By the age of nine, standards are in line with those expected. Pupils' progress between the ages of five and nine is satisfactory. Current standards across the school are similar to those found at the last inspection.
114. At Key Stage 1, pupils compare toys and fashions of today with those in the 1960's. They write about differences and contrast the activities that children enjoyed then with those that are available now. Some pupils write about what they know and understand, and illustrate their work with large, detailed drawings. Artefacts and pictures are used well to support learning. Building on this work, pupils in Years 3 and 4 learn about life in Ancient Greece, investigating features such as houses, clothes, beliefs and culture of the time. Historical documents or artefacts are often suitably used to make pupils' learning interesting and relevant. For example, pupils deduce facts about aspects of life in Ancient Greece from an examination of copied artefacts. Pupils of different aptitude and ability make equally sound progress in history. Those with special educational needs are well supported in their work.
115. Two lessons were seen in Key Stage 1 both of which were well planned and built on pupils' enthusiasm about the past life of monks at the local Abbey. The earlier visit from Brother Jocelyn had captured their imagination and photographs were used as a valuable resource to assist pupils in recalling his visit and the information and historical knowledge gained. No lessons were seen at Key Stage 2, and there was insufficient evidence from an analysis of the work to form a judgement on teaching.
116. The two lessons in Key Stage 1 contained elements of good teaching. Across the key stage, teachers display good knowledge of the subject and make learning interesting by using resources sensitively and thoughtfully. These two teachers planned their work well, creating the positive climate for learning that fosters pupils' interest and makes them enthusiastic about the tasks they are set. Lessons are generally well structured and managed and their pace generally is good, with the result that pupils make at least the expected progress during the time that they are given. Teachers are mindful to include all pupils in discussion, and those reluctant to contribute are sympathetically encouraged to take part.
117. The curriculum is sufficiently broad and balanced, and teachers make good use of the time allocated to the subject. Leadership of the subject is overall satisfactory although no teaching has been monitored. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' teaching plans to ensure appropriate coverage. There is little examination of pupils' work in order to evaluate the progress they are making. However, procedures have been drawn up very recently to assess pupils' learning more systematically. These have not yet been implemented and so the school has no clear idea of the pupils' individual attainment in the different aspects of the subject. Visits are sometimes used to enhance pupils' learning, but are not frequent enough to make a strong contribution to the curriculum. The school's own resources are satisfactory to support the curriculum, and are well

employed. Teachers make very good use of other resources for artefacts and materials, using these inventively and discerningly to support their work. The co-ordinator is aware of the strengths and areas for development in the subject and there is an action plan in place to address these areas. There has been satisfactory progress since the previous inspection.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

118. During the inspection only a very limited amount of teaching of information and communication technology was observed. Judgements, therefore, have been based on discussions with teachers and pupils, scrutiny of pupils' work and a limited observation of individual pupils' work at the computer.
119. The previous report identified that standards were below those expected, largely because insufficient opportunities were provided for pupils to develop skills and learning appropriate to the National Curriculum Programmes of Study. Since the last inspection the number of computers available to the school has been significantly increased. Standards of achievement by the age of seven and nine match those expected for pupils of these ages.
120. Pupils' progress is satisfactory overall with most pupils competent in keyboard skills. They know that a spreadsheet is useful for collecting and presenting data, for example that collected during a science lesson investigating whether our bones grow as we get older. Some effective work is seen where pupils use the computer in an art and design lesson to log on to a portrait site and confidently print out their choice. On other occasions, they search the Internet and print out information on historical topics and maps to support work in geography.
121. Work covered by younger children includes using "Paint" to draw on a background and to colour-fill the space. There was very good use of a programmable toy and pupils were proficient at entering instructions for how far they wanted the turtle to move and in what direction. These two sessions made a considerable contribution to the pupils' spiritual development.
122. Insufficient teaching was observed to make an overall judgement about its quality. However, in the one lesson observed, teaching was satisfactory with clear instructions provided so that pupils knew what to do and could get on with tasks independently. They helped and supported each other, for example, when increasing the size of a cell on a spreadsheet. Pupils respond well in discussion and the teacher spends time effectively sorting out individual problems and checking understanding.
123. The school uses nationally recommended materials to plan the work in this subject. However, there are inconsistencies in the quality and depth of the planning, in assessment procedures and in the time allocated to the subject across the school. This adversely affects pupils' progress and continuity of experiences.
124. The confidence of class teachers has improved considerably due to the good management skills of the co-ordinator. A significant strength of the subject is the links with other subjects. As yet planning and teaching have not been monitored to assess their impact on pupils' progress. In order to improve the provision for information and communication technology, the school runs a computer club where pupils learn new skills and they then cascade this new knowledge to other pupils. The school has made good progress since the last inspection because standards, by the time pupils leave the school, are now in line with those expected for pupils of this age.

MUSIC

125. It was only possible to observe one lesson in each key stage in music during the inspection. In both lessons pupils were performing at levels appropriate for their age. In Key Stage 1, pupils accompany a song with simple percussion. They sing mostly in tune and their singing maintains the shape of the melody. They show enjoyment for singing and great enthusiasm to use percussion. In Key Stage 2, they try very hard to keep singing and percussion going at the same time and exhibit good appraisal skills when commenting on their own performance. They also show imagination when challenged to sing high and low, loudly and softly and in manners based upon the emotions (tired, fed up etc.) It is not possible to comment on other instrumental work as this was not seen during the inspection. The limited amount of work seen also makes it impossible to judge improvements in the subject since the last inspection.
126. The teaching seen was satisfactory. The lesson seen at Key Stage 1 progressed well from listening and appraisal of a song heard in a Church, through to singing the song and adding accompaniment. The lesson at Key Stage 2 was taken by a student teacher. This contained some excellent elements which really enthused the pupils but was ultimately too challenging for a proportion of pupils with special educational needs.
127. The subject manager is currently working on incorporating extra elements into the music scheme of work with the aim of developing the confidence and creativity of teachers. He monitors pupil standards by taking each class himself. The resources available to the subject are good, with an impressive range of instruments and recorded music for the children to appraise. The subject is enriched by visits from professional musicians and by clubs which include recorder and guitar for the Key Stage 2 pupils.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

128. Standards in the subject are at the level expected nationally in both key stages in all aspects of physical education. Pupils in Key Stage 1 control a ball with their feet in a confined space, moving between obstacles and are beginning to realise that they can pass, shoot etc. with different parts of the foot. They work well together and adjust their passing to make it easier for their partner to control the ball. In Key Stage 2 they show good control of a hockey stick and are developing the skill of turning the stick to strike the ball on either side of their bodies. Years 3 and 4 pupils also show a very good sense of space and dodge and weave confidently around each other. In the two lessons observed in dance pupils worked very well with partners, matching each others' movements and showing a good contrast of strong and controlled gesture.
129. The attitudes of pupils towards the subject is enthusiastic and their behaviour is at least good. One pupil showed particular sensitivity when helping a partner with very restricted vision and all co-operate well.
130. The standards observed are similar to those seen at the last inspection, despite the fact that the time available to the subject has been reduced. The last inspection pointed out the need to further develop dance and creative work. The lessons seen in this inspection show that considerable progress has been made.

131. Teaching in both key stages is good. Pupils enter all sessions extremely sensibly and go straight into a space as a result of careful and consistent teaching. Sessions all include an appropriate warm up but in only one lesson observed did the teacher explain the reason for this and made the pupils reflect on the effect of the exercise on their bodies. Lessons are well planned and progress well from individual activity through to pair and group work, with resources well arranged to support the activities. In all the sessions seen teachers modelled movements and skills well and used praise and example appropriately.
132. The school has very good resources for all aspects of the subject. There is an adequate scheme of work and the subject manager is trying out a new sports scheme which is due to be added to the existing plans in March 2003. There is a range of well attended after school clubs including football, gymnastics and karate. The subject contributes towards the social education of pupils with the very good encouragement of co-operative activities and to their cultural development with both traditional English and African dance.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

133. It was only possible to observe one lesson from each key stage during the inspection, but scrutiny of work and discussion with some of the oldest pupils show that standards are below those expected nationally. The locally agreed syllabus for the subject covers a limited number of religions with the aim of not confusing pupils and giving them a good basis for comparing similarities and differences. Discussion with Year 4 pupils shows that this has not succeeded, with pupils having a range of inaccurate views about the main religion covered other than Christianity, Judaism. One pupil stated that, "Jews believe that Jesus was God's Son", another that "Jews wear turbans and are vegetarian."
134. At Key Stage 1, the main focus this year has been on the pupils themselves, moving onto what it is like to be a Christian. The work seen shows that there is insufficient time allocated during the unit to really develop an understanding of what it is like to be a member of a faith community. During Key Stage 2 there is evidence of appropriate work on Christian stories, with moral comparisons made with the lives of the pupils. There are, however, no examples of pupils comparing Christian moral stories with those of other religions. The last inspection stated that standards in the subject were satisfactory and it is clear, therefore, that there has been a decline in standards in the intervening period.
135. The teaching observed in both key stages was satisfactory. The lesson seen in Key Stage 1 was based upon the build up to Easter. Although well planned and executed, by the end of it, only half of the pupils had an understanding how Christians of Palm Sunday. The lesson seen in Key Stage 2 fulfilled the objective of getting pupils to relate the moral message in a Christian story to their own lives, but the session was too short to allow pupils to develop and consolidate their understanding.
136. The two-year cycle of work means that some pupils can go three years between coverage of a religion other than Christianity in any detail. This means that more content about religions needs to be put into intervening topics. The subject manager is aware of this and it is in her own development plan to do so. The limited amount of time available to the subject is another factor that the school needs to look at to ensure the raising of standards. The resources, artefacts, books etc. available to the subject are adequate. The subject contributes to the social and moral education of pupils through the work on comparing the moral choices in Bible stories with situations in their

own lives. The lack of depth in the pupils' knowledge of other religions, however, has a detrimental effect on their spiritual and cultural understanding.