

INSPECTION REPORT

HOCKERING C.E. V.C. PRIMARY SCHOOL

Hockering, Dereham

LEA area: Norfolk

Unique reference number: 121094

Headteacher: Mr Henry Byrne

Reporting inspector: Michael Raven
3961

Dates of inspection: 7 – 8 May 2002

Inspection number: 245280

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

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INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school: Infant/Junior
School category: Voluntary Controlled
Age range of pupils: 4 to 11 years
Gender of pupils: Mixed

School address: The Street
Hockering
Dereham
Norfolk

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Appropriate authority: The Governing Body

Name of chair of governors: Mrs Penny Hawker

Date of previous inspection: 23 March 1998

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
3961	Michael Raven	Registered inspector	Mathematics Science Geography History Physical education	Foundation Stage What sort of school is it? The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed?
9370	Ros Wingrove	Lay inspector		Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
18241	Wendy Harknett	Team inspector	Equal opportunities Special educational needs English Information and communication technology Art and Design Design and technology Music Religious education	How good are curricular and other opportunities offered to parents?

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PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Hockering Church of England Primary School is a small school for boys and girls aged from four to 11. There are 42 pupils on roll, with equal numbers of girls and boys. Most pupils live in the village of Hockering and they are all of white United Kingdom heritage. A very high proportion of pupils has special educational needs – almost double the proportion found in primary schools nationally. These needs stem almost exclusively from learning difficulties. Attainment on starting school varies greatly from year to year, depending on the particular characteristics of the very small numbers of children involved. Last September, for example, only one child started school in September and now there are only two on roll in the reception year.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

The school offers a sound education. Although standards are below average in English and mathematics at the top of the school, in Year 6, this is not surprising, given that most of the pupils in this year have special educational needs. The school has done well to achieve average standards in science in Year 6 and in most of the other subjects, except information and communication technology (ICT), where standards are below average. In art and music standards are above average. The quality of teaching is satisfactory and this means that, overall, pupils make satisfactory progress in their learning. The headteacher provides sound leadership and has a clear commitment to school improvement. The school offers satisfactory value for money.

What the school does well

- The school promotes high standards in art and music.
- It promotes very good attitudes to learning and enthusiasm for school, so that pupils enjoy school and behave well.
- It looks after its pupils well. There are good procedures for ensuring child protection and pupils' welfare.
- The school provides a good range of activities outside lessons.
- It has established a strong partnership with the local community.

What could be improved

- Standards in literacy and numeracy, in Year 6.
- Standards in ICT in Years 2 and 6.
- The quality of teachers' marking.

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

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected four years ago. Improvement since then has been satisfactory, despite a long period of great disruption caused by major building works. The school has successfully tackled all of the key issues for improvement. It has maintained high standards in music and raised standards in art. Standards in literacy and numeracy in Year 6 are not as high as they were, but this is because so many pupils have learning difficulties.

STANDARDS

Only four Year 6 pupils took national tests in English, mathematics and science in 2001. With so few pupils in the year group, results have to be interpreted with caution, as individual characteristics have a strong impact on overall results. For this reason, the table of test results is omitted from this report. It is important to note that two of the Year 6 pupils last year had special educational needs. Although the standards achieved in mathematics were well above average and those in science were average, in English standards were well below average. Standards were similar when compared to other schools in similar socio-economic circumstances, although these comparisons do not take into account the high proportion of pupils with special needs. Trends in standards over time are very difficult to detect with any certainty, where such small numbers are involved. There are more pupils in Year 6 this year, 11 in all, but again there is a very high incidence of learning difficulties, with eight of the pupils having special educational needs. The inspection shows that standards are again average in science, but they are below average in English and mathematics. Standards are also below average in ICT, but in art and music they are above average. Standards in the other subjects are average, although it is not possible to judge standards in physical education because no lessons were taught during the inspection. The school has set appropriate targets for pupils to reach in this year's tests. These targets are realistically low and pupils are on course to meet them.

Standards in the Year 2 tests in reading were well below average and in writing they were below average. Again, they were high in mathematics. Here too, few pupils took the tests and a high proportion had learning difficulties. Now, standards in reading and writing are better. A much smaller proportion of pupils has special educational needs. Standards are average in reading and writing, mathematics and science and in most of the other subjects. Standards are high in art and music.

There are very few children at present in Reception. These children are on course to reach expected standards in personal, social and emotional development, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development by the time they go up to Year 1. They are likely also to meet expectations in their knowledge and understanding of the world, physical development and creative development. The satisfactory teaching they receive and the enthusiasm with which they tackle their work mean that pupils make reasonable progress in their learning.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Very good. Pupils are enthusiastic about the school and what it has to offer. They are pleased about the new buildings and appreciate the improved facilities.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good. Pupils pay close attention in class and try hard. There is little bullying and the school deals promptly and effectively with any which does arise.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Boys and girls and those with different levels of ability all get on well together. They respect one another's feelings and work and play together sensibly.
Attendance	Very good. It has improved well this year.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils in:	Reception	Years 1 – 2	Years 3 – 6
Quality of teaching	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory

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

In English and mathematics lessons, the basic skills of reading, writing and the use of numbers are taught satisfactorily, promoting sound learning. The teaching meets satisfactorily the needs of all the pupils of different ages. The needs of boys and girls are met equally well. Plenty of good, clear whole-class teaching ensures that pupils understand what they are being taught and know what they are expected to do and learn. Pupils are managed well and good discipline is maintained, so that pupils behave well and can get on and learn. Support staff and other adults are used particularly well in the class for the youngest pupils to help meet all the very wide range of learning needs. Teachers spend too little time at the end of lessons reinforcing the learning that has taken place.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Satisfactory overall. All the required subjects are taught and there is a good range of activities offered outside lessons. The physical education curriculum is limited by the lack of a hall for gymnastics, so that pupils have to travel to another school. The time allocations to subjects are too uneven, with physical education, including swimming, taking up too much time and not enough being devoted to ICT.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory. In the circumstances, with such a high proportion of pupils with special educational needs and with three or four different age groups in each class, the school does a reasonable job in meeting everyone's needs, including those who find learning more difficult.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Satisfactory overall. Moral and social development are promoted well. Pupils have satisfactory opportunities to learn about their own culture and about the cultures of some other groups in society, for example through religious education and through the books they read. Too little is done to promote pupils' spiritual development.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Good overall. There are good procedures for child protection and to ensure pupils' welfare. A sound check is kept on pupils' attainment and progress as they pass through the school from Reception to Year 6.

The school has established an effective partnership with parents, who are welcomed into school and find it easy to talk to staff if they have a concern or question.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Satisfactory. The headteacher has a clear vision for school improvement and a convincing commitment to succeed. He delegates responsibilities as well as can be expected where there are so few staff.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Good. The governing body is well informed about the school and shows a clear understanding of what it needs to do to improve. They play an appropriate role in setting the agenda for school development and improvement and in advising the school about spending its budget.
The school's evaluation of its performance	Satisfactory. Although the headteacher has very little time away from his class, he has established a sound programme for the monitoring, evaluation and development of teaching and he also makes good use of local education authority advisers to help monitor the school's performance.
The strategic use of resources	Satisfactory. The school uses its money appropriately, especially to support the education of pupils who have special needs.

There are sufficient teachers to meet pupils' needs and learning resources are satisfactory. The accommodation, although much improved by the recent building programme, is not adequate to enable the teaching of the full physical education curriculum.

The main weakness in leadership and management comes about because there are too few full-time staff to share out the management of subjects equably, so that the headteacher in particular has an unrealistic work load.

The school takes care to secure value for money in obtaining goods and services.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They would feel comfortable approaching the school if they had a question or concern. • The school is helping their children to become mature and responsible. • A good range of activities is offered outside lessons. • Teachers expect their children to work hard and do their best. 	

Only three parents attended the meeting with the registered inspector before the inspection and 13 parents returned the parents' questionnaire. The feeling of those parents who responded was strongly in support of the school, the education it provides and the way it works with parents. Parents spoken to during the inspection expressed concern about the wide age range in classes and the difficulty in teaching physical education. The inspection supports parents' positive views of the school in all respects. Their concerns about the wide age range in classes and about the need to travel for physical education are valid.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. The low standards in English recorded in last year's national tests for Year 6 pupils were due to the fact that there were only four pupils in the year group and two of these had special educational needs. This situation is not uncommon in very small schools. It is similar this year. Most of the 11 pupils in Year 6 have learning difficulties and standards are again below the national average, this time in mathematics as well as in English. The very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs explains why standards in English and mathematics have fallen since the last inspection, when they were average. Those few pupils who do not have special educational needs are achieving the standards expected for their age. Although they produce joined-up writing in their handwriting books, many pupils in Year 6 still print most of their work. This is unusual at this age and does not meet expectations. Most pupils join their writing by the end of Year 4. Although they are beginning to use punctuation such as apostrophes, they do so inconsistently and not as well as most pupils nationally by the end of Year 6. In reading, most pupils have skills more usually found at the age of nine. In mathematics, most Year 6 pupils are working at about the level reached by most pupils in Year 4. For example, during the inspection they were learning how information about pupils' favourite days in school could be represented in a bar chart.
2. It is significant that in most subjects where they are not hampered by poor literacy and numeracy skills, most pupils do better. The exception is in ICT, where standards reached by pupils about to go on to secondary school are below average and do not fit them well for the next stage of their education, where better skills will be expected. There are several reasons why standards in ICT are low. During the recently completed prolonged building programme there were technical difficulties, for example limiting pupils' access to the Internet. Too little time is allocated to the teaching of ICT skills in Reception and Years 1, 2 and 3. The main reason why standards are below average is that pupils do not have enough opportunities to use ICT and practise their skills, for example to support their learning in the other subjects. Although there is some computer use, for example in mathematics in Years 4, 5 and 6, this is not enough to bring pupils' skills up to the expected standard.
3. In art and music, where standards are above average, pupils are not held back by their difficulties in reading and writing. They also benefit from the good quality teaching they receive, which is better than that in the other subjects. This is most obvious in music, where a specialist teacher sets high standards of work and behaviour and stimulates pupils with her own enthusiasm and good subject knowledge. Of particular value in promoting pupils' interest and positive attitudes is her playing of her own instrument, the oboe, as pupils learn about the woodwind family.
4. Just as in Year 6, standards in the Year 2 national tests last year were below average in English, where pupils did less well than most pupils of their age in both reading and writing. Here too, there were very few pupils in the year group and a much higher than average proportion of pupils had special educational needs. This year there are even fewer pupils in Year 2 – only five – but the proportion of pupils with special educational needs is closer to the national average. As a result, standards are average in reading, writing and mathematics and in most other subjects. They are above average in art and music, due to the good teaching in these subjects.

5. It is not possible to make a secure judgement about standards reached by the end of the reception year, as there are so few children of this age in school. Pupils of all ages, both boys and girls, including those who have special educational needs, make reasonable progress in most subjects, from a generally low starting point. This is because they are taught satisfactorily and they have very good attitudes to their work. They behave sensibly, listen carefully and try to do their best.
6. There is little difference between the standards achieved by boys and girls. The differences evident in their performance in national tests in 2001 are not significant because of the very small numbers of pupils involved.
7. Pupils with special educational needs make steady progress in meeting the targets set in their individual education plans. They make satisfactory progress in lessons when work is set to match their learning needs closely. They are well supported by the classroom assistants who work with them. When the task does not take their learning needs into account then progress is limited.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

8. The last inspection found that pupils' attitudes to their work were positive. On this occasion inspectors were impressed by the pupils' enthusiasm for their lessons and school. Parents confirm that their children are very keen to come to school and to be there on time. Pupils were appreciative of the number of extra-curricular activities arranged for them and made sure that inspectors realised that these activities are available to every member of the school community as soon as they are old enough to participate. Behaviour in classes is very good and the pupils listen well to their teachers, the support assistants and one another. They are keen to answer questions, which often set them thinking beyond the obvious response. An example of this occurred when Class 2 pupils were completing a diagram of their relationships. They began to realise the growing number of relationships an individual forms during a lifetime, with family and friends, and also with all the people who help them and whom they are able to help.
9. In assembly, at lunchtime and when moving to and from classes, the children are well behaved and remember that they are supposed to be careful on the pathway and steps. Before school and at playtimes there is some boisterous play but it is good-humoured and comes quickly to a halt when one of the pupils rings the school bell. Children then file inside in an orderly fashion. They are well mannered, remember to say "please" and "thank-you", and hold doors open for adults and for their friends. Personal development and relationships are good. Some pupils help with daily routines around the school, such as preparing for assemblies and ringing the school bell, but although they are ready and willing to help, there are not many chances for them to use their own initiative.
10. Pupils show respect for their teachers and relationships between pupils and all the adults working at the school are good. In class, boys and girls work well together in pairs or groups and make friends irrespective of age. They are careful with the equipment and materials provided for their work and are very proud of the recent improvements in their buildings. Pupils also take care of one another and realise how their actions may affect other people. They are learning to respect the feelings, values and beliefs of people from other cultural backgrounds. For example, they learn about a range of different faiths in religious education lessons and attend a multi-cultural event at the local high school.

11. The school has a good behaviour policy and parents and pupils sign up to the home/school agreement. A high proportion of the parents who replied to the questionnaire before the inspection agreed that the school was helping their children to become mature and responsible. Parents also welcome the absence of bullying. There have been no exclusions. Signs of deteriorating behaviour are dealt with very quickly.
12. Attendance is good. Last year, the frequent absences of a small minority brought down the average. There have been no unauthorised absences and lateness is not a problem.
13. The many pupils with special educational needs have positive attitudes towards school. Although most of them find learning more difficult, they still try hard and do their best. They want to improve their work. They work co-operatively with their peers and adults. They take pride in their work and behave well. Their work is valued by the school community in displays, at assemblies and in review sessions at the end of lessons.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

14. The quality of teaching in both classes, including the reception year, is satisfactory. The teaching seen during the inspection was never less than satisfactory and in three lessons in ten it was good. The analysis of pupils' work paints a similar picture. In response to the generally satisfactory teaching they receive, pupils make reasonable progress in their learning, even though many, particularly in Year 6, start from a very low base.
15. Teaching is satisfactory in all subjects except art and music, where it is good, and ICT, where it is unsatisfactory. The basic skills of reading, writing and the use of numbers are soundly taught. The children in Reception get off to a steady start, so that they have the skills expected at their age by the time they go up to Year 1 and make a start on the National Curriculum. From their first days in school, appropriate use is made of national guidance on teaching literacy and numeracy, suitably modified to meet their learning needs. The employment of a specialist teacher for music has a very beneficial effect on standards, which have been maintained at a high level since the last inspection. The good teaching in art has seen standards rise since the last inspection, when they were average in Year 2 and below average in Year 6. Because they receive too little teaching of ICT skills in Class 1, pupils do not get off to a good enough start. They do not have enough opportunities in either class to practise their skills and apply them to their learning in other subjects. This results in a patchy picture by the end of Year 6, where some pupils who use computers at home have reasonably good skills, but others are well behind expectations, and standards overall are too low.
16. It is a particular challenge in this very small school to meet the needs of all the different age groups of pupils within each class. The age range in Class 1 spans four years and three year groups are grouped together in Class 2. In addition, Class 2 in particular has a very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties. The school rises to the challenge reasonably well, so that the diverse learning needs of pupils of different ages are met generally satisfactorily. In English and mathematics in particular, and to a lesser extent in the other subjects, teachers set different work for the different age groups, giving them all a chance to work on the same subject matter, but at different levels and in different ways. Pupils with special educational needs receive extra support to help them learn. This is most effective when it is given in class, where these pupils work alongside their friends and are fully included in lessons and helped to have access to the same subject matter as the others. It is less effective when they are taken out of class individually, often for lengthy periods of time.

17. In Class 1, particularly good use is made of skilled learning support staff and also volunteers to see that the needs of all pupils are met. Lessons are well organised so that the children in Reception often spend part of the lesson with the whole class and part with support staff, so that the work they do is more easily matched to their needs and geared towards helping them meet the early learning goals for children of this age. This was seen, for example, in both literacy and numeracy lessons. The learning needs of boys and girls are met equally well, so that there is no difference in the progress they make. Teachers are alert to the need to bring out the best in the most able and some work is planned, mostly in English and mathematics, to make the most of their abilities.
18. Teachers manage pupils well and ensure good discipline. Pupils, including those who find learning more difficult, respond well to teachers' firm, fair and gentle class control. They behave well. They listen carefully, get on well with their work and try hard to do their best. Teachers explain things clearly, so that pupils easily understand what they are to do and what it is they are meant to learn. Good examples of this were seen, for example, in a Class 2 mathematics lesson on the use of data to solve problems and in a Class 1 science lesson on plants. In Class 2 the teacher took care to explain to pupils at the outset the purpose of the lesson and to ensure that they understood the meaning of key words, which were essential to their understanding, such as *data*, *represent* and *interpret*.
19. Teachers make good links between different subjects, making learning more meaningful. For example, pupils draw on their knowledge of geography in history lessons as they use maps to find place names with Anglo Saxon roots.
20. Lessons feature plenty of good, clear whole-class teaching, followed by group and individual activities. However, a weakness in the way the different parts of the lesson are balanced lies in the time allocated to summarising the lesson at the end. It is important to consider at the end how much pupils have learned and identify any gaps that will need filling in later lessons. Teachers give too little time to this activity. So, in a Class 2 mathematics lesson, for example, the end of the lesson was too rushed. An English lesson in Class 1 ended unsatisfactorily as the teacher failed to gather all the pupils together to discuss what had been learned. Not all pupils paid attention and little was gained.
21. The marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. It consists mainly of ticks and simple comments, such as *good* and *well done*. Teachers give pupils too little written feedback on how they are getting on and insufficient advice on what they need to do to improve. Although teachers talk to the pupils about their work, there is a place for written feedback, especially for the older pupils in Class 1 and those in Class 2.

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

22. The curriculum meets statutory requirements but there are some weaknesses. The full National Curriculum is taught, together with religious education, but the balance of the curriculum is unsatisfactory. Far too little time is spent on ICT in Class 1 and this contributes to the low standards in that subject. Far too much time is spent on physical education because of the time spent travelling to and from the swimming pool and another school where gymnastics lessons are held. There are also imbalances between the classes in the proportion of time allocated to science, religious education, geography and history. The curriculum meets the needs of boys and girls equally and it

is suitably modified to meet the needs of the high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties.

23. There are now schemes of work for all subjects. The school makes appropriate use of national guidance on the teaching of literacy, numeracy and the other subjects. This is an improvement since the last inspection.
24. The school makes appropriate provision for pupils' personal, social and health education. Time is devoted specifically to this in Class 1, for the younger pupils, and it is addressed through other subjects, such as science, in Class 2. Pupils are given sex education appropriate to their age and there is also appropriate education on the misuse of drugs.
25. The curriculum is effectively enriched by the work of the specialist music teacher, leading to high standards in music throughout the school. The provision of activities outside lessons is good. This is especially commendable in such a small school, with so few full-time staff. Parents and pupils commented to the inspectors that they were particularly pleased with the wide range of after-school activities offered. Both sporting and creative arts activities are offered. For example, pupils have opportunities at different times throughout the year to play cricket and football, with some coaching by outside experts, and take part in cross-country running. There are opportunities to play the recorder or join the library or book club. The homework club is particularly effective in supporting those pupils who find it hard to work at home, or who want to work under the guidance of a teacher. Educational visits to places of interest, such as the village church, Norwich Cathedral and the science museum, enhance the curriculum for science, history, geography and religious education. The oldest pupils go canoeing in the summer term. Visitors to the school include the local police officer and the dog warden.
26. The school successfully prepares pupils for the next stage of their education. Homework is gradually increased in range and content as pupils become older, from daily reading and spellings in Year 1 to specific research tasks or extended writing activities by Year 6.
27. There are very good relationships with the community and partner schools. There are strong links with the playgroup in the village and the children visit the school in the summer to help them prepare to start school in September. Pupils take part in dance with other schools and there is an annual event with the local 'cluster' of schools, which this year is to be helpfully on a multi-cultural theme.
28. The school's provision for the pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is satisfactory overall. However, the school still makes too little of opportunities for spiritual development and this aspect is unsatisfactory.
29. There are daily acts of collective worship and these, together with religious education, make some contribution to pupils' knowledge and understanding of other people's values and beliefs. However, opportunities are missed for pupils to contemplate things beyond the here and now, or to reflect on the beauty in music, paintings and the natural world. For example, the opportunity to reflect on the wonders of nature was overlooked as pupils collected creatures from the pond in a science lesson and as they looked at the development of plants they were growing. Pupils are encouraged to consider other people's feelings and needs, for example to include everyone at playtime.

30. Provision for pupils' moral development is good. They are taught to show care and respect for people and property and to think how their actions affect others. In a geography lesson, older pupils read items of news and discussed how world or local events and decisions affected them. The discussion included the use of money, the need to care for the environment and the scarcity of public transport in the village. All pupils are aware of the school rules and their emphasis on safety for everyone. The school has an appropriate 'dignity policy', that reflects the importance attached to human interaction and relationships by the school.
31. The school's provision for pupils' social development is good and this is an improvement since the last inspection. Pupils and adults treat each other with respect. In lessons and in the playground, pupils work and play well together, supporting each other and actively helping each other. Lessons are appropriately planned to involve collaboration between pupils and boys and girls are comfortable working with each other. Pupils have minor responsibilities such as clearing away books and equipment. However, there are insufficient opportunities for pupils to show initiative and take responsibility. One example of good practice was seen in music, where pupils had to select instruments that would reflect the meanings of different lines of a poem. They had to justify their choice by playing while the class evaluated the effect.
32. There is satisfactory provision for pupils' cultural development. In music, instruments and music from a wide range of countries are used. In art, the work of famous artists, such as Cezanne, is studied. Working with other local schools, pupils have participated in a multicultural dance day at the local secondary school. There are sound opportunities for pupils to learn about their own cultural heritage and traditions in history and geography. Wherever possible, the community and the local environment are used, as in a visit to a local Victorian school and other places of cultural interest, such as the theatre.
33. A weakness in the provision for pupils' personal development lies in the fact that the school has not yet tackled the issue of promoting race equality and promoting good relations between people of different racial groups. This is particularly important in the all-white school situated in an all-white community.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

34. One of the strengths of Hockering Primary School is the way that everyone who works at the school cares for the pupils. They appreciate this caring atmosphere and, in their turn, care for one another.
35. As this is a small school, the staff know the pupils and their families very well and newcomers are made to feel welcome, both by the other pupils and their teachers. There is a real family atmosphere to this village school and parents comment on how well their children are cared for. Pupils feel safe and secure, knowing that bullying is not tolerated. They are happy to come to school and are quite confident that they could discuss any problems with a member of staff and would receive help and advice. One of the teachers is responsible for child protection and has received appropriate training. She has reported on this to her colleagues and the governors. As a consequence, staff are more likely to identify pupils' needs.
36. Health, safety and security issues have been taken into careful consideration during the alterations to the building and the last phase of the work includes the replacement of the secure gates between classrooms and the playground.

37. There are good arrangements for familiarising the children with school life when they first start school. Good links with the local playgroup make this easier. The pupils in Year 6, who will shortly move on to secondary school, are confident and excited about this change. They are given appropriate opportunities to get to know their new schools and teachers.
38. Attendance rates are normally high, with no unauthorised absences, but in 2000/01 the rate dropped below the national average. However, in a small school the irregular attendance of one child can make this difference. The school works closely with the education welfare officer who regularly checks on school registers and follows up any regular non-attendance.
39. Systems for assessing pupils' attainment are developing well and have improved significantly since the last inspection. An appropriate range of tests, for example in reading, English and mathematics, is now used in addition to the statutory tests and assessments undertaken in Years 2 and 6. The results are used to track the attainment and progress of each individual pupil as he/she goes up through the school and to identify strengths and weaknesses in pupils' learning. For example, a need to improve spelling was identified through testing last year. In response to this, the school purchased a new scheme of work for spelling and standards have begun to rise as a consequence. The system of reading diaries is well maintained, with teachers and parents recording when pupils have read and how well they got on.
40. A satisfactory check is kept on the progress of pupils who have special educational needs. Progress towards the targets set for them in their individual education plans is regularly reviewed, but a weakness is that new targets do not always link sufficiently clearly to the old ones. This makes it more difficult to ensure that their learning proceeds smoothly.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

41. Parents welcome the good discipline and the caring ethos of the school. They are pleased that their children are happy to be at Hockering School. All parents seen during the inspection felt that their children were being given a good start in their education and encouraged to work hard. There are worries about the different age ranges within the classes, and there are regrets about the lack of facilities for physical education, but on balance parents find the small school has other advantages that they prefer. One parent felt that her child benefited from being taught with older children.
42. The quality of information for parents is satisfactory overall. Brief newsletters are sent home, informing parents about events and activities in school, and good use is made of the informative notice board. End of year reports on pupils' progress are informative and descriptive of how the child is coping with the curriculum. However, they do not all give clear information about what pupils need to do to improve. The school brochure, which contains some parts of an annual report to parents, does not contain all the information which is required by law. For example, it does not include information about facilities for the disabled.
43. Parents are given very good opportunities to discuss any concerns they may have with teachers, provided these do not impinge on teaching time. Meetings on specific curriculum changes, in numeracy and literacy teaching for example, have been very useful. There are two meetings a year to discuss pupils' progress, as well as a chance to talk about their reports in the summer. Attendance by some parents at these meetings is not very good because of work and family commitments, but parents do

manage to support several fund-raising events. Attempts to involve parents in running events and to get responses to questionnaires have met with little success.

44. Parents do help their children at home with reading, and most feel that the amount of homework set is about right. A few parents are able to help in school with reading and other activities and all appreciate how much the school is doing for their children.
45. Most parents attend the statutory annual reviews for pupils with statements of special educational needs. Parents are also involved in discussions about individual learning targets for pupils with special educational needs. However, there is no written evidence of parents' involvement and the co-ordinator is aware of the need to develop the current procedures to incorporate this aspect.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

46. The leadership and management given by the headteacher are satisfactory. In this very small school, where there is only one other full-time member of staff, there are particular challenges in leading and managing the school. The co-ordination of subjects is shared satisfactorily between the head and the other full-time member of staff, with part-time teachers lending a hand with the co-ordination of music and design and technology. The extent to which teaching and learning are monitored is limited. However, there is a sound programme for checking on teaching, and things are better in this respect than they were at the time of the last inspection. The head has carried out a number of lesson observations this year and fed back strengths and weaknesses to staff, indicating some ways in which teaching could be improved. The school also makes good use of local education authority advisors to check on teaching and give suggestions for improvement. The monitoring of pupils' performance in national and other tests and assessments has improved considerably since the last inspection. In addition to statutory tests in Years 2 and 6, the school uses a range of measures of pupils' performance in English, mathematics and reading. On the basis of the information gathered, appropriate action is taken to meet pupils' learning needs, for example through the provision of additional support for literacy in Class 2.
47. The education of pupils with special educational needs is managed by a part-time teacher. There are weaknesses in the administration of this work. Some information is missing from pupils' individual education plans, for example the stage they are at on the special needs register. These plans are not numbered sequentially, no signatures of those involved in the plans are evident and dates can be hard to find. This makes it difficult to assess progress and to know who has been involved in drawing up the plan and checking on its implementation. Although a new draft policy has been written to reflect the new Code of Practice, several changes are not highlighted sufficiently clearly. These include how the new categories compare to the previous stages, the heightened role of parents and the emphasis on the importance of pupils' involvement. The deployment of the part-time special needs co-ordinator to work with individual pupils withdrawn from class is not the best use of her time. Pupils would be better supported in most cases working alongside the other pupils in class.
48. The headteacher shares with the governing body a clear commitment to school improvement. They know that the top priority is to raise standards. They are also keen to make full use of the new facilities for the good of pupils and to improve the school's partnership with parents. They see that improved use of the new buildings will be an important factor in raising standards in ICT. The governors know the school well. They are well informed. The chair of governors makes a point of visiting the school regularly and she liaises very closely with the headteacher. Other members make visits into

school and observe lessons. The governing body plays an appropriate role in identifying key issues for improvement to be included in the school development and improvement plan. They also play their part in advising the school on spending its budget and seeing that the budget serves school improvement targets. The governing body makes good use of the funds available to the school. It is just beginning to look at ways of evaluating the cost-effectiveness of its spending decisions in terms of effects on the quality of education provided and the standards achieved. As a start, governors have evaluated how the additional management time given to the headteacher this year has helped him fulfil his management responsibilities. The headteacher applies for every possible grant. Funding for the building improvements was carefully assembled from a number of sources and specific grants. The school has benefited from the local education authority's small schools' package, which provides administrative assistance with accounting procedures. Modern technology is used to very good effect in the administration of the school.

49. Although the governing body has a set of appropriate policies for most aspects of the school's work, they have not yet taken steps to put in place a race equality policy. They are therefore not on course to meet the statutory requirement to have such a policy in place and procedures to monitor its operation and assess its impact by the end of May 2002 – just over three weeks after the inspection.
50. Staffing is adequate for a small school. Teachers are fully trained and rich in experience. Classroom assistants are dedicated and provide very good support for all the pupils. They are well deployed and involved in the lesson planning. Administrative and site staff play an important role in the smooth running of this small community.
51. The school is well resourced and these resources are in good condition. There are suitable computers in both classrooms and plenty of useful software, although not much use of computers was seen during the inspection. The school has the services of a computer technician once a week. There is a very good library, with book supplies enhanced by the local library service.
52. The recent building improvement has overcome many of the difficulties that the school was experiencing with classroom space, office space and toilets. The mobile classrooms are in good condition too. Security measures have been incorporated in the improvements to the building. The school still lacks a hall for assemblies, gym and drama or musical performances so that the village hall has to be used. The playground is not large and the field is too small for a football or hockey pitch. The school site is on a very busy road, which is a problem when children have to walk to other parts of the village. Although swimming is included in the curriculum for part of the year, the distance to the swimming pool eats into lesson time and the coach travel is expensive.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

The governing body, headteacher and staff should now:

- (1) Raise standards in English and mathematics in Year 6.
(Paragraphs 1, 61, 64, 65, 69, 70)
- (2) Raise standards in ICT by devoting more time to the subject and seeing that pupils have far more opportunities to learn and practise their skills, applying ICT as they learn in other subjects across the curriculum.
(Paragraphs 2, 91, 92, 93, 94)
- (3) Ensure that the marking of pupils' work gives them plenty of clear advice on what they need to do to improve.
(Paragraph 21)

MINOR WEAKNESSES

The school should also plan to address the following:

- (1) Take appropriate steps to put in place a race equality policy and procedures for monitoring its operation and assessing its impact, as required by legislation.
(Paragraph 49)
- (2) Ensure that the provision for pupils with special educational needs is more efficiently managed. (Already identified in the school improvement and development plan).
(Paragraph 47)
- (3) Ensure that the information provided for parents meets statutory requirements.
(Paragraph 42)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	17
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	10

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

	Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
Number	0	0	6	11	0	0	0
Percentage	0	0	35	65	0	0	0

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

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll	YR – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	42
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	8

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Special educational needs	YR – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	2
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	16

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

Pupil mobility in the last school year	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	1
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	3

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	7.2

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.0

National comparative data	5.6
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National comparative data	0.5
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Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	0
Black – African heritage	0
Black – other	0
Indian	0
Pakistani	0
Bangladeshi	0
Chinese	0
White	40
Any other minority ethnic group	0

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: YR – Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	2.69
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	15.6
Average class size	21

Education support staff: YR – Y6

Total number of education support staff	2
Total aggregate hours worked per week	35

FTE means full-time equivalent.

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.

Financial information

Financial year	2000/2001
	£
Total income	172710
Total expenditure	150918
Expenditure per pupil	3211
Balance brought forward from previous year	622
Balance carried forward to next year	21170

Recruitment of teachers

Number of teachers who left the school during the last two years	0.5
Number of teachers appointed to the school during the last two years	0.6
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	42
Number of questionnaires returned	12

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	25	58	8	8	0
My child is making good progress in school.	17	58	17	0	8
Behaviour in the school is good.	17	75	0	8	0
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	25	58	8	8	0
The teaching is good.	17	58	17	0	8
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	17	67	17	0	0
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	50	50	0	0	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	33	58	8	0	0
The school works closely with parents.	8	75	17	0	0
The school is well led and managed.	8	75	17	0	0
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	25	67	8	0	0
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	25	67	8	0	0

Some parents are concerned about the wide age range of pupils in each class. They are also concerned that the school does not have suitable facilities for physical education.

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

53. There were only two children in the reception year at the time of the inspection. Where there are such small numbers of children, attainment on starting school varies a lot from year to year, depending on the particular characteristics of the children, and so the extent to which children are on course to meet expected standards by the end of their time in reception also varies. Because of the very small numbers involved, this section of the report focuses mainly on the appropriateness of the provision for the children in reception and its impact on their learning.
54. The children in reception are grouped together in a class with three other year groups. This makes it difficult for the school to meet their needs and provide an appropriate curriculum. However, the school has thought carefully about this and it has made a resourceful response to this challenge. The curriculum for the children in the reception year is appropriately planned taking into account national guidance and the learning needs of the children. The quality of teaching for these children meets their learning needs satisfactorily, so that they make sound progress in all the six areas of learning for children of this age. This is because good use is made of skilled support staff to provide work that is well matched to their learning needs. The children appropriately spend some of their time working with the rest of the class, for example during the introductory parts of literacy and numeracy lessons, but then they are taken aside to develop what they have learned in ways appropriate to their particular needs. They gradually take a fuller part in whole class activities as the year goes on.

Personal, social and emotional development

55. The provision for the children's personal, social and emotional development is satisfactory, as it is for all the areas of learning. This means that their personal development proceeds at a steady pace. The children are stimulated by the activities on offer, so that they enjoy learning. A good example of this was seen during the inspection when the children took turns to go pond dipping in the school's nature area. They excitedly fished for tadpoles, water beetles, worms and even a newt and enjoyed trying to identify and record what they had found. They learned that it is important to respect and care for living things, as they carefully returned the creatures they had collected to the pond after studying them. Their inclusion in whole class lessons, such as at the start of the literacy and numeracy lessons and during story sessions, helps encourage them to sit quietly and pay attention when it is appropriate to do so. It also helps them to learn how to work as part of a larger group as well as their own small age group, to wait their turn and share. The children develop their understanding of aspects of their own culture and beliefs, for example as they take part in the whole school visit to Norwich Cathedral and learn some of the features of a church that make it a special place for Christians. They learn independence and personal responsibility, for example as they wash and dry their own hands after pond dipping.

Communication, language and literacy

56. The programme for the development of the children's communication, language and literacy skills ensures that they get off to a sound start with speaking and listening, reading and writing. Good use is made of national guidance on teaching literacy in the reception year. The children have many good opportunities to enjoy listening to stories, for example as the teacher reads the story *My Naughty Little Sister Goes Fishing* to

round off an afternoon's pond dipping. They learn the names of the letters of the alphabet and the sounds they make and start to learn how letters and sounds combine in reading and writing. They learn to read a range of common words. A good start is made as they learn to recognise their own name on their coat peg and book bag. They read simple reading books by the end of the reception year. The children write their own name independently and copy other words competently from the board, such as the date. They use talk to clarify their thinking and express their ideas, for example as they recount their visit to the Cathedral and describe what they saw there and why it is special.

Mathematical development

57. Teaching is appropriately based on national guidance on the teaching of numeracy to children in the reception year and this forms a firm foundation for the children's mathematical development. They learn the names of the numbers from one to ten and to count to ten and sometimes beyond. They learn to understand the idea of 'more' and 'less', 'greater' and 'smaller' and 'heavier' and 'lighter'. The children have many good opportunities to learn these things in a practical way, as is appropriate at this age. For example, they weigh and balance a variety of different objects, such as toys and the 'compare bears'. They learn about 'full' and 'empty' as they play with a range of different containers in the sand and water. They compare strips of paper of different lengths and long and short rulers. The children start to learn to add and subtract in a practical way, for example, they group two cars and three cars and count to see how many cars they have altogether. They count to find how many are left when one car 'drives away'. There are appropriate opportunities for the children to recognise and recreate simple patterns, for example as they recognise and continue the sequence of one red cube, one blue cube and so on. They learn to recognise a number of common shapes, such as a square, triangle and circle.

Knowledge and understanding of the world

58. There are some good opportunities for the children to find out about living things. For example, they plant seeds and watch them grow. They look at the roots of plants that have been growing for some time and wonder at the extensive root ball of a bean planted in a small pot. They build and construct a wide range of objects using many different construction kits and also select appropriately from a good supply of junk materials. They use the computer, for example to 'paint' their own picture on the screen, manipulating the mouse with increasing control to make their own shapes and choose colours. They use games from the Internet, for example to practise their reading skills and the use of numbers. The children learn about the past and the present and how people and things change over time. For example, they watch a video about cars in the past and notice how they are different today. They look at photographs of children growing up. They learn about some of the features of the local environment, for example as they walk through the village to the church. They learn to appreciate some of the festivals of their own culture, for example as they take part in the school's celebration of Harvest Festival and Christmas.

Physical development

59. There are limitations in the programme for the children's physical development because the school does not have its own hall. However, good use is made of the hall at another local school and the children enjoy developing their physical control and co-ordination and get great satisfaction at their developing skills, for example learning to swing on the ropes. The school has its own area for outdoor activities, with a safe

surface, and this is easily accessed from the classroom. The children learn to move with confidence and imagination, developing bodily control, balance and co-ordination, for example as they play on the wheeled toys, bicycles and scooters. They have many good opportunities to develop their small muscle control as they use tools such as scissors, glue sticks and paint brushes for art and construction. For example, they have cut and worked skilfully with paper, card and wool and natural materials such as twigs to make attractive pieces of weaving. They use play dough and construction kits safely and this increasing control, for example as they fashion the numbers they are learning about in mathematics.

Creative development

60. There are plenty of appropriate opportunities for the children's creative development. They make imaginative models and cards to take home, for example for Mothering Sunday, Christmas and Easter. They sing songs and number rhymes and enjoy playing a wide range of percussion instrument with the specialist music teacher. In dance lessons they interpret stories through movement, for example as they respond to the story of a magical balloon, and they move like falling leaves, gusts of wind and scampering squirrels in response to the sound of a variety of musical instruments.

ENGLISH

61. In this very small school, standards fluctuate a lot from year to year, as do children's skills in communication, language and literacy on starting school. Much depends on the characteristics of the pupils involved. Standards in English are currently below average by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. They are not as good as they were when the school was last inspected. This is because a very high proportion of this small group of pupils has learning difficulties. When an even smaller number of pupils took national tests last year, standards were well below average. They were also well below average when compared with similar schools. Standards in reading and writing are now average by the end of Year 2. Last year they were well below average in national tests in reading and below average in writing. They were similarly low when compared with similar schools. The inspection finds no great differences between the standards achieved by boys and girls.
62. Most pupils develop confidence in speaking clearly and listening carefully to adults and each other. The younger pupils are able to listen attentively and respond appropriately. All pupils can take part in discussions. As they become older they are able to develop their ideas and use more complex vocabulary and sentence structures to convey their meaning. The more able 11-year-olds can engage confidently in discussions, and can make effective use of humour in conversation. They can persuade others to change their opinions by offering alternative points of view.
63. By the time they leave school, most pupils read confidently, with clear signs of enjoyment, from a variety of books and from their own work. The younger pupils develop a secure sight vocabulary of familiar words and know how to break down unfamiliar words in order to pronounce them. This phonic knowledge is well developed as pupils pass through the school. Most pupils are able to self-correct their occasional errors when reading aloud. As well as phonics, they use the clues provided by pictures and the context in which they occur. Younger pupils can use contents and index pages and know how to use key words to skim a page for information. Older pupils can discuss their favourite characters in books and justify their reasons. Many belong to

local libraries and are frequent borrowers. Those pupils with special educational needs are hesitant readers, but they are willing to read aloud.

64. The standard attained in writing is mainly in line with expectations in Year 2. The analysis of pupils' work indicates that they make a sound start in forming letters correctly and developing a secure grasp of simple sentence structure, with the appropriate use of full stops and capital letters. Familiar words are increasingly spelled correctly at this stage. Although they can produce a clear joined script in their handwriting books, this is not used in their other work. By the age of eleven, the majority of pupils do not join their letters automatically.
65. The school has been working hard to improve the standards of spelling and purchased a new spelling scheme last year. There is evidence that this is being effective, as spelling is mainly correct at all ages. A conscious effort is also made to provide opportunities to write for a variety of purposes in both classes. Literacy skills are used well in other subjects. For example, in a geography lesson, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 had to skim recent newspaper articles to identify the place of origin and make a decision about the impact of the subject matter on their own lives. They had to record the results of their discussions in note form. In extended writing, pupils are less successful. The range of vocabulary being used is limited and the majority of pupils are content to write simple sentences without using a range of conjunctions or clauses. In Year 6, most pupils use a more restricted vocabulary than most pupils of their age and their construction of sentences is more limited.
66. The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Lessons are carefully planned and appropriate learning intentions are spelled out. In Class 1, work is carefully matched to the age and ability of pupils. Planning is sometimes less effective for the older pupils. Occasionally, work is insufficiently challenging for more able pupils, and too difficult for those with learning difficulties. This results in questions and explanations having to be repeated, and pupils being unable to learn independently of supporting adults. In both classes, lessons are conducted at a good pace, and are well balanced between whole-class teaching and group work. However, too little time is given at the end of lessons to discussing and consolidating what has been learned, and checking for pupils' understanding. There are smooth transfers between the different stages of the lessons, positive management of behaviour and clear explanation of tasks. Supporting adults are used well in promoting the progress of the younger pupils. However, pupils with learning difficulties in Class 2 are too often withdrawn from class for lengthy periods of individual support.
67. Too little use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning. Good use is made of homework. Pupils take their reading books home on a regular basis and have weekly lists of spellings to learn. Less frequent writing tasks are also set for the older pupils.
68. English is managed satisfactorily. There is a limited programme for checking on teaching due to time constraints, but the school makes some appropriate use of specialist advisors from the local education authority to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching. The school's arrangements for assessing and recording pupils' attainment and progress in English are developing well through tracking of pupils' results in tests, and this is being used to help teachers plan their next steps in teaching. The marking of pupils' work is unsatisfactory. There are few instances of constructive marking that gives pupils feedback and guidance for improvement. There has been limited improvement in marking since the last report.

MATHEMATICS

69. By the age of 11, standards are below average. They were well above average in the national tests for 11 year olds taken last summer. There were only four pupils in Year 6 last year and this year there are 11. Test results depend on the particular abilities of a small number of individuals, and one pupil's score counts for up to one quarter of the total points scored. Standards are low this year because the year group contains a very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties – about three-quarters. Pupils who do not have learning difficulties are on course to meet nationally expected standards by the time they leave to go to secondary school. There are no great differences between the standards achieved by boys and girls, taking the year group as a whole.
70. The lessons seen and pupils' work analysed show that the standards reached by most pupils are similar to those more usually found in Year 4, when pupils are aged nine. For example, in a lesson seen on the organisation and interpretation of data, pupils were learning to answer questions and solve simple problems by interpreting a bar chart, which most pupils can do by the end of Year 4. Although they are coming to the end of their time in Year 6, they were not familiar with terms such as *statistics*, *distribution*, *median* and *mean*, which most pupils know at this age. Nor could they pose and test out their own questions based on the information they were given. Most pupils can divide two-digit numbers by a single number, without a remainder. They can double and halve numbers. They know that there are both metric and imperial systems of measurement and weight and they are familiar with some units of measurement, such as the gram, kilogram, pounds and ounces. They can multiply tens and units by single digits, showing for example, that $62 \times 5 = 310$.
71. By the age of seven, standards were very high in last year's national tests and assessments. They are average now. As in Year 6, standards fluctuate from year to year because there are so few pupils. There were eight pupils in Year 2 last year and this year there are only five. Most pupils can count to 100 using a number square. They identify coins and use 10p and 1p coins to add sums of money up to £1. They know the difference between odd and even numbers. They know that weight can be measured in kilograms and they can find a number of different items, such as three gym shoes that will balance a 1kg weight on the scales. Most pupils are beginning to tell the time and can reliably tell the time to the hour and half-hour. They know the names of common solid shapes, such as cube, cuboid, cylinder, cone, pyramid and sphere.
72. The teaching of mathematics is satisfactory. Teachers make good use of national guidance and this, together with a published scheme of work, is a great help in ensuring the smooth progression in pupils' learning as they move through the school. It also means that all the required elements of mathematics are included – the use of numbers, algebra, shape, space and measures, data handling and the practical application of mathematical skills to real-life situations. Teachers explain things clearly, so that pupils can understand and learn. A good example of this was seen in Class 2. The teacher carefully explained to pupils what data is and how information gathered can be used as evidence to support action, for example on which is the most popular school day. Pupils are helped to understand their own learning, as teachers explain to them clearly at the outset what it is they are to do and what they are expected to learn. Classes are well controlled, so that pupils behave well and concentrate on their work. Teachers make some appropriate use of ICT to support pupils' learning, for example for data handling in Class 2 and as pupils use a programmable toy or 'roamer' to learn about angles in Class 1. However, overall, ICT is used insufficiently to enhance pupils' mathematical skills and understanding. Lessons are well balanced between plenty of clear whole-class teaching and group and individual activities that are planned carefully

to meet the learning needs of the many different groups of pupils. However, too little time is given over to checking pupils' progress in knowledge and understanding at the end.

73. The subject is managed as well as possible, given the heavy demands made on the head and full-time teacher, who share responsibility for most subjects. Lack of management time means that there is only a limited programme for checking on teaching and formally monitoring the quality of planning. However, staff work closely together informally and overcome most of these difficulties reasonably well.

SCIENCE

74. Standards in science are average by the age of 11. Most pupils have knowledge and understanding of all the elements of science studied – life and living processes, materials and their properties and physical processes – which are expected for their age. This is a similar picture to that when the school was last inspected and when pupils took national tests in 2001. Given the very high proportion of pupils with learning difficulties, the school has done well to maintain average standards. What has helped keep standards up is the fact that pupils are given plenty of good opportunities to investigate science. They are encouraged to pose questions and find things out for themselves. This makes them think and deepens their understanding. Although they learn many scientific facts, their learning goes beyond this as they carry out scientific investigations. For example, as they learn about magnetic forces, they investigate to find the strongest magnet and to see that like poles repel and unlike poles attract. They learn how the heart rate quickens with increasing exertion, as they exercise and then take their pulse. They learn about the insulating properties of different materials through investigating, for example, how well cardboard and polystyrene keep things warm.
75. By the age of seven, standards are also average, as they were at the time of the last inspection. Although standards were assessed by teachers as being very low last year, the small group concerned had a very high proportion of pupils with special educational needs. As in Year 6, pupils' understanding is promoted through a number of appropriate opportunities to investigate and find things out for themselves, although there is less of this sort of work than for the older pupils. Pupils learn about the parts of a plant in a practical way, as well as through looking at pictures, as they plant their own seeds and watch them develop. They know that the roots anchor the plant in the soil and take up food and moisture. In Year 3 they go on to learn more about this, as they investigate the way moisture travels up the stem by placing sticks of celery in coloured water. This work is developed well in Year 6, where pupils learn, for example, about plant reproduction and investigate the conditions necessary for germination. Pupils know that some changes are permanent and some reversible and this point is made well as pupils bake buns, combining ingredients and seeing how they change as they are mixed and then baked. Pupils learn about electrical circuits through practical investigation. They construct a simple circuit using bulbs, wires, batteries and see what happens to the bulb when they add additional batteries.
76. The teaching of science is satisfactory. Teachers give pupils some appropriate opportunities to apply basic ICT skills, for example as they use a simple computer program in Class 1 to label the parts of a plant. They also use some of their mathematical skills, for instance as they carry out a survey of their favourite drinks, in connection with work on food.
77. Science is managed satisfactorily by the headteacher, although there are only limited opportunities for checking on teaching. The close co-operation between staff and the

use of national guidance mean that full National Curriculum coverage and the smooth progression of pupils' learning as they move through the school are assured.

ART AND DESIGN

78. Only one art lesson was seen during the inspection, and it is therefore not possible to make a judgement about the quality of teaching in art. However, a review of the teachers' planning, scrutiny of a range of pupils' displayed work and discussions with pupils and staff indicate that the pupils achieve standards which exceed those expected for their age and that they make good progress. Standards have improved well since the last inspection, when they were below average in Year 6.
79. Pupils work confidently with a range of materials including paint, crayon, textiles and clay. They observe carefully and can represent what they see with good attention to detail. Pupils in Years 1 and 2 can use wool and other materials to weave on a variety of frames, selecting colours and fabrics to create stimulating contrasting effects. Pupils make good progress in mixing colours and their ability to control various media improves as they become older. For example, pupils in Year 6 can paint a still life based on a picture by Cézanne, using the tints of only one colour. They are developing the techniques of shading and perspective. In the lesson observed, pupils in Years 4, 5 and 6 modelled pots from clay. Close attention was paid to the construction as well as the final decoration of the pots. Pupils selected tools, such as pen tops and ruler edges, deciding which would give the particular effect that was desired. A calm, orderly atmosphere was maintained throughout the lesson, with the pupils being highly motivated and collaborating well with each other.
80. Teachers appropriately plan in accordance with national guidance on the teaching of art. There are some very good links with other subjects. For example, the clay pots were based on artefacts from the Anglo Saxons being studied in history. Portraits were drawn in pencil, illustrating headgear designed in design and technology lessons. Pupils' skills are valued highly, as demonstrated by a carefully observed pencil sketch of a church and a monk illustrating a bible. This was displayed alongside the illuminated manuscripts the class had been making showing the arrival of Christianity in Britain. However, no use is being made of ICT in art and design. There are no formal assessment procedures for evaluating pupils' progress. Although there are sketchbooks in use, the work produced does not reflect the quality on display.
81. There is a thriving art club where pupils from both classes develop their skills further. The paintings produced based on a food and farming project showed sensitive use of colour, mixed with skill, and are well-proportioned on the paper. Art makes a good contribution to pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Attractive displays contribute to the school's policy of valuing pupils' work.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

82. No design and technology lessons were seen during the inspection, and no judgement can be made about the quality of teaching. However, a review of pupils' work and teachers' planning, and discussion with pupils and staff, indicate that pupils achieve standards that are in line with those expected for their age by the time they leave the school at the age of 11. There are no significant differences in the standards achieved by boys and girls or those who have special educational needs. Pupils are able to develop their skills throughout the curriculum, mainly in the context of topic work.

83. Most pupils understand the importance of planning when designing and making things. Displays of models show that they explore a variety of materials and use a range of tools and techniques. There is a good use of construction kits to model work in other subjects. For example, pupils in Years 1, 2 and 3 were using construction kits to show the strength of structures, such as oilrigs and chairs. This work in science was developed using paper and tape to create slides and ladders. Pupils could demonstrate an understanding of the comparative strength of structures such as a cylinder. The care in presentation and attention to detail by younger pupils, such as the use of tape and paper, is developed in both classes. By Year 6 pupils can design and construct slippers, which show careful joining techniques, such as stitching, and creativity in the variety of designs.
84. Teachers appropriately base their lessons on national guidance. This is an improvement since the last inspection. A weakness remains, in that pupils' evaluations of their finished products are too limited, and do not identify how they might improve their work.
85. The subject is managed satisfactorily by the headteacher, but he has no time to check on the quality of teaching.

GEOGRAPHY AND HISTORY

86. Standards in geography and history are average by the time pupils leave the school at the end of Year 6. They are also average in Year 2. This was also the case at the time of the last inspection. It was only possible to observe one lesson in each subject during the inspection, both in Class 2. Evidence was also gathered by analysing pupils' work, examining teachers' planning and talking to pupils.
87. Teaching is satisfactory overall, promoting interest and enthusiasm and leading to sound learning. Pupils are helped to see links between geography and history. This makes their learning more meaningful and brings the subjects alive. They are encouraged to use some of their geographical skills in history lessons, for example as they use maps to locate local sites of Anglo Saxon influence. More links are made as pupils study newspaper reports about world news. They learn where places in the news are in the world, what is happening there and why. They learn, for example, about the Arab/Israeli conflict and how the current conflict relates to the creation of Israel. They know that there was a major conflict in the region in 1967 and that fighting continues to this day. They also know about conflict between Pakistan and India and there are disputes about borders and the ownership of land.
88. Pupils understand some of the reasons why people move away from where they were born. They know that, both now and in the past, some of the reasons for moving away have been to seek work, land or shelter. Pupils understand some of the issues surrounding transport in their own village. They know, for example, why some villagers need a local bus service to get to work and for shopping.
89. Pupils in Year 6 also have a reasonable knowledge of ancient history. They know there were some major differences between the Romans and the Celts, for example that the Roman language was Latin and that the Celts had no way of writing down their language. Pupils are familiar with the story of Romulus and Remus about the founding of Rome. They know that the Romans built good roads, some of which survive today, and that they were often very straight. They know that in Roman times some houses had a form of central heating. Pupils understand that in times gone by there were no

chemical dyes and that the Saxons, for example, dyed their clothes using natural dyes, derived from plants.

90. Too little use is made of ICT to support pupils' learning. These subjects are managed satisfactorily by the headteacher, who keeps an eye on planning in both classes and sees that national guidance is followed, to ensure the smooth progression of pupils' learning as they go through the school. However, there is no time to check on the quality of teaching.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

91. Standards are below average in Year 2 and they remain below average by the end of Year 6. Pupils do not have the skills expected of them when they transfer to secondary school at the age of 11. Although resources have improved, standards in this subject have deteriorated since the last inspection. The school is satisfactorily equipped for ICT, with at least two computers in each classroom, one of which is linked to the Internet. No use of ICT was seen during the inspection. Apart from one display of names printed using different fonts and colours in Class 1, there was no evidence of ICT on display or in pupils' books.
92. The major building work now completed, disrupted the networking of computers and limited pupils' access. This has had an adverse effect on standards. Even so, more use could be made of the facilities which the school has available, so that pupils have more opportunities to develop and use their skills in all subjects. Pupils are interested in ICT, but see the opportunities to use computers as restricted to those who finish their work quickly. Teachers have received appropriate training in the use of ICT across the curriculum, but this is not being put into practice. There is no systematic assessment and recording of pupils' knowledge, skills and understanding in ICT, and therefore no planning for pupils' specific learning needs.
93. Many pupils do not have access to computers at home and are therefore being prevented from developing the skills they need. The allocation of time for ICT is very low in Class 1, so that pupils do not get off to a good enough start.
94. The management of ICT is unsatisfactory, as there is not enough checking on teaching to see that pupils have appropriate opportunities to develop and apply their skills.

MUSIC

95. Pupils in Years 2 and 6 reach standards which are above average for their age. High standards have been maintained since the last inspection. This is due to the good quality teaching by the specialist teacher, who also runs an after-school recorder club.
96. Younger pupils are familiar with the names of a very wide variety of pitched and unpitched instruments from a range of different countries and cultures. They know how to play them properly and take great care when handling them. They can select the appropriate instrument to accompany different lines of a poem about plants and growing. They have a very good sense of rhythm and listen carefully to each other. Older pupils can listen to a tape of modern music and identify the woodwind instruments playing with electronic accompaniment. They use the correct musical vocabulary and know the meaning of terms such as 'pitch', 'dynamics' and 'ostinato'. In assembly, pupils can sing in tune and keep good time.

97. Care is taken to link music with topics being studied in classes, such as growth. Lessons are well planned to provide a good balance between listening, performing and evaluating. In one lesson the teacher's own oboe was used to enable the pupils to correctly identify the instrument on the recording. Her infectious enthusiasm for the subject enabled every pupil to achieve well and enjoy making music. Lessons proceed at a good pace with the teacher ensuring that the work is appropriate for the youngest pupils and those with special educational needs. Pupils maintain their concentration well throughout the lesson. Those pupils who learn to play an instrument outside school are enabled to use their knowledge and skills appropriately in lessons. The management of behaviour is very good, with opportunities carefully planned to allow pupils choice and to experiment with musical effects. There is satisfactory use of ICT with regard to tape recorders and electric keyboards. However, although the specialist teacher has printed instructions that are on display in both classrooms for use of the Music Box computer program, there is no evidence that pupils have used it to compose in classes.
98. Music lessons are well planned and a good check is kept on pupils' progress. Opportunities are further enhanced by the recorder club, which is well attended by both boys and girls. They can play simple tunes and accompany recorded music, which requires skills in keeping time, dynamics and changes in tempo.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

99. No physical education lessons were taught during the inspection. It is not possible to make a judgement about standards or the quality of teaching. It is clear from discussions with staff and pupils, and from the examination of teachers' planning, that the full National Curriculum is provided. The accommodation, however, is unsuitable for gymnastics, so that pupils and teachers travel on alternate weeks to another local school for these lessons. This, together with the need to travel to a nearby town for swimming lessons, means that physical education takes up a disproportionate amount of teaching time and other subjects suffer, most notably ICT.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

100. In Year 2 and by the time they leave the school at the end of Year 6, standards are average and they meet the expectations of the locally agreed syllabus. Standards have been maintained since the previous inspection.
101. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection, so no overall judgement can be made about the quality of teaching. However, discussions with staff and pupils and a review of their work in folders and on display show that pupils make steady progress in their understanding of Christianity and the other main faiths.
102. Pupils in Year 6 know the main similarities and differences between Christianity and Islam. They can identify the key features of a mosque and how it is used. They can compare differences between Norwich Cathedral and the local parish church, following visits to both buildings. Younger pupils demonstrate their understanding of how the Sabbath is celebrated in Judaism compared with Christianity. Work on worksheets and loose paper tends to be untidy and does not reflect the care taken in other subjects. Marking indicates that work is seen, but does not offer guidance on how pupils' understanding could be improved. There were some instances of contradictory facts being marked correct on older pupils' work on Islam.

103. In the lesson seen, the teaching was satisfactory. The oldest pupils were enthusiastic and interested in the subject, but pupils in Year 4 were more passive, as the discussion was dominated by the older pupils. The range of activities was appropriate for the different levels of ability and ages in the class, enabling all to make satisfactory progress.
104. Although work is planned using the locally agreed syllabus, pupils' work is mainly concerned with gathering knowledge. There is too little reflection on values and beliefs, which would aid pupils' spiritual development. Good use is made of the locality to visit places of worship, which are principally Christian.
105. Good links are made with other subjects. For example older pupils studying invaders in history reproduced illuminated manuscripts in art.
106. The management of the subject is satisfactory, but there is no systematic checking on the quality of teaching and learning, due to time constraints.